

2019-01-01

Critical Political Correctness In The Era Of Properness

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CRITICAL POLITICAL CORRECTNESS IN THE ERA OF PROPERNESS

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by

Isaac Tapia Martinez

2019

DEDICATION

A ti mi madresita querida que siempre has sido una fuente inagotable de inspiración y motivación. Tus enseñanzas y amor incondicional me han guiado a alcanzar esta meta y muchas más. Gracias madre por ser incondicionalmente quien más me ha apoyado en las buenas y las malas. Tu amor de madre continúa inspirando me a ser mejor persona día a día.

To Ralph, thank you for being the father I needed, your guidance and support are invaluable. To my brother Abraham, seek the truth at all times and reach the inner peace we all need. To my brother Jesus, remain loving and never stop searching who you are and how you can get there. To my sister Fabiola, remain as the loving sister you are and forgive what hurts to embrace love. To my love Angie, thank you for giving me strength when I was weak.

To my beautiful daughter Monze. Sweetheart you are my main motivation in life to do what I do. The moment you were born, I born again and my life had a higher purpose. Dear Monze, always prioritize happiness, follow your heart, respect yourself, don't betray what you believe in and validate your ideology and who you are every time is needed.

To my brother of cause, Gerardo Fernández Noroña, you have inspired greatly much of my academic work and personal worldview. Your social justice rhetoric has empowered me and instigates me to fight for what's right. The passion and truth that derives from your social justice rhetoric is not only inspiring, but awakens in me the desire of speaking truth, regardless of the consequences and punishment that might derive from it.

To my brothers and sisters from *Sin Censura*, your rhetoric and truth has inspired me to embrace the political incorrectness that helps me speak truth. Your rhetoric and brave agenda of speaking truth has not only empowered my academic work but also has inspired in me a political incorrectness that clarifies my worldview and the pathway I follow personally and professionally.

Vicente my brother, stay uncensored and never stop speaking truth as its empowering to those who seek clarity on an obscured world.

To every revolutionary who stood up for what they believed in, it was your actions that greatly inspired and continues to inspire my academic work and personal journey in life. Your bravery to speak truth and to stand for what is right played a critical role in my academic identity and most importantly in my ideology. Every act of resistance done by you is an inspiration to those who don't conform with hegemonic paradigms and seek truth and justice for all. Your courage transcends to untouched spaces, such as the mind where they go in as a seed and flourish into actions of truth where the limit is not established by norms but by the mind, just like it did in this academic document that I humbly offer to you.

Humanity's biggest problem is not their natural instinct to practice stupidity, but their
extraordinary talent of making it an art.

“Lord Have Mercy on my Rough and Rowdy Ways”

The Head and the Heart (2011)

CRITICAL POLITICAL CORRECTNESS IN THE ERA OF PROPERNESS

by

ISAAC TAPIA MARTINEZ, M.S.

DISSERTATION

Presented to the Faculty of the Graduate School of

The University of Texas at El Paso

In Partial Fulfillment

of Requirements

for the Degree of

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

Department of Teacher Education

THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS AT EL PASO

December 2019

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to acknowledge everyone who played a role directly and indirectly on this academic achievement. I would like to acknowledge my dissertation chair and mentor “Josie” Dr. Josefina V. Tinajero for her support. Thank you Josie for giving me hope to finish this academic endeavor, for empowering me academically and for guiding me in the right direction. Also, would like to thank my dissertation committee members, Dr. Ernesto Castaneda, “Chema” Dr. Jose Maria Herrera and Dr. William Medina-Jerez for their critical support. Ernesto, your unconditional support not only gave me hope but motivated me to not give up, you are a true friend. Chema, thank you for those academic rich conversations we had, they helped me tremendously in this academic endeavor. William, thank you for the key academic feedback and suggestions I received from you, they helped me reach this goal. Also, I want to acknowledge everyone who I have come across that was politically incorrect because of the truth they were speaking and sharing with others. Your politically incorrect rhetoric has and continues to inspire my academic journey and purpose in life. I have been fortunate to learn directly or indirectly from many great minds during my lifetime, and it is that knowledge and wisdom you have shared that not only inspired this academic work but also my ideology to reach new heights. Thanks to everyone who at some point during this academic journey shared some of their worldviews, ideologies, perspectives and knowledge directly or indirectly, they truly motivated and inspired me in invaluable manners. Some shared it with music, films, art, visuals, rhetoric and others with conversations that I treasure and continue to inspire and motivate me to advance my purpose in life. Please excuse If you have contributed to my academic development and I do not mention you by name, many are the names and little the space to adequately honor them.

"Solitude"

Somewhere
Back in time
I left a part of me
I wanna see if you can try
To bring it back to me

You've got to go
Where I cry
And take in all the tears
I wanna see if you can try
Drink a little bit of me

No
No

Just a little lonely
Where I am
Take me back in time
I wanna see if you can smile
If I become a better man

I need you
Now I know
Just give me one more time
I'm gonna try and be your friend
So we can beat the end

No
No

No
No

M83 (2016)

ABSTRACT

In an *Era of Properness*, opinions, beliefs, expressions, attitudes, and actions are suppressed through *Repressing Situationalities* with the ultimate goal of portraying an acceptable and mainstream proper personal display. *Repressing situationalities* are stances an individual takes that limits it from attempting or reaching their full potential on diverse objectives as they are disempowering states of mind and body linked to deterministic, fatalistic and conformist ideological frameworks. Inner motives and external pressures play a critical role in how decisions are made, especially those related to behavior. This dissertation investigates and describes from an advocacy and participatory worldview, how mainstream *Repressing Situationalities* influence people's decision-making under a Social Desirability Bias framework or in a politically correct context. It is under the control and influence of mainstream settings that Political Correctness and Social Desirability Bias flourish and thrive. Behaving in mainstream manners are not only expected but welcomed and rewarded by validated institutions, organizations, and entities. Multidisciplinary research has pointed out that *Repressing Situationalities* are related to doctrines, ideologies, paradigms and worldviews; however, this study integrates the role of Political Correctness and Social Desirability Bias into the equation. Research participants' perception and use of time and space were examined to understand how they relate to *Repressing Situationalities*. The theoretical perspectives used in this study were Social Psychology, Critical Socio Psychology and Critical Theory. The study used a Sequential Transformative Mixed Methods Research Design with the intention of encouraging social justice through the findings of the study.

Key words: *Advocacy Stance, Sequential Transformative Mixed Methods, Contextual Situationalities, Repressing Situationalities, Transitional Situationalities, Liberating Situationalities, Decision Making, Political Correctness, Hegemonic Paradigms, Social Desirability Bias, Critical Political Correctness, Era of Properness*

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Overview of the Study

This mixed methods study describes the perceptions of higher education students and graduates in regards to repressing situationalities. In the context of this study, repressing situationalities refer to a self-regulatory stance an individual takes to limit expressing their true inner feelings and perspectives on diverse matters. This study takes into consideration not only the perspectives of the research participants but the context where their perspectives emerged, as some scholars have argued to be critically important. Freire (1972) illustrates that “in the culture of silence the masses are mute that is, they are prohibited from creatively taking part in the transformations of their society and therefore prohibited from being. Even if they can occasionally read and write because they were taught in humanitarian but not humanistic literacy campaigns, they are nevertheless alienated from the power responsible for their silence” (p. 7). The inspiration for this dissertation study emerged from the desire to develop a newer and broader understanding of how repressing situationalities such as determinism, fatalism, and conformism may influence people’s decision making as well as its possible relationship to education and schooling.

Although many scholars have argued that rationalization and perceptions may be influenced by constructs, ideologies, paradigms and worldviews (Apple, 2004; Creswell, 2011; Freire, 1970; Kuhr, 1975; Runes, 1962) additional research is needed to further explore in depth the complexity of the phenomena under study in this dissertation. The very process of how humans make decisions has been generally studied by scholars from the fields of philosophy, anthropology, education, sociology and psychology, among others. While each academic field presents a unique perspective of the rationale people may use to make decisions, some relationships as well as

contradictory arguments and interpretations of the phenomenon exist. Among the arguments presented by those who have previously researched the phenomena under study in this dissertation, a research gap exists. Moreover, the commonalities and non-commonalities that repressing situationalities such as determinism, fatalism and conformism share, in part guided the development of this dissertation study. For the purpose of this dissertation study, determinism, conformism and fatalism were categorized as repressing situationalities based on the rationalization that they are constructs that in some ways may limit people's full potential to pursue their goals and ambitions.

The perception of the surrounding context has also been linked to fatalistic, conformist and deterministic constructs, which stresses the importance of understanding the context before, during and after the decision-making process. As decision-making determines one's present and possible future pathways, it becomes critical to study how decisions are made, and what factors and/or constructs are influential in the decision making process. With equal importance, it is critical to understand and determine how culture and identity influence the decision making process. Furthermore, it's necessary to not only understand how culture and identity factors are influential in decision making but also how and why they are formed in specific manners. In addition, it's essential to develop an understanding of who and what is influential in the formation of repressing situationalities.

With equal importance, social engineering is believed to be a critical force molding societies. In social engineering, prescribed pathways are created for targeted populations. Several scholars from diverse disciplines attribute social engineering to elite socio-economic powers due to their control and possession of the majority of the socio-economic wealth (Apple, 2004; Creswell, 2011; Freire, 1970; Kuhr, 1975; Runes, 1962). Those who possess the socio-economic

wealth tend to control the entertainment industry that is believed to be critical in ideological formation. It is argued that social engineering is linked to social reproduction and cultural capital. Social reproduction and cultural capital are established on systematic structures and institutionalized systems, where specific populations are targeted to succeed and others to be socio-economically reproduced (Apple 2004, Freire 2000). As most governments in the world dictate formal education as a mandatory pathway for their citizens, it becomes critical to understand why education and the schooling process function the way they do.

In regards to schooling and education, the academic challenges that minority and marginalized populations tend to encounter have been well-documented. Immigrants are one of the most affected populations in regards to academic completion. Migration has and will likely continue to be a major feature of human development around the world. Ever since the human race has existed, it has engaged in migration, whether in emigrating or immigrating to other places. The main reasons why most people migrate are attributed by some scholars to push and pull factors, where push factors are oppressive and/or unpleasant reasons that make people emigrate to other places, and where pull factors are attractive reasons for people to immigrate to another place (Shobha, 2012).

In addition, scholars and governmental agencies have identified that immigrants from developing countries and even from developed countries have a tendency to reside in areas of poverty. Residing in areas of poverty often leads to lack of access to fundamental and critical community services. Moreover, the educational conditions they often encounter and become a part of lack the required structure to lead these immigrant communities and students to academic success. Anyon (2005) explains that “low-achieving urban schools are not primarily a consequence of failed educational policy, or such deficit theories as urban family dynamics, as mainstream

analysts and public policies typically imply. Failing public schools in cities are, rather, a logical consequence of the U.S. macro-economy – and the federal and regional policies and practices that support it” (p. 2). Furthermore, (Apple 2004, Bowles & Gintis, 1976) have stated that social reproduction and hidden curricula may be linked to the circumstances that minorities and marginalized populations encounter; however, there seems to always be exceptions to the case resulting in some members of those marginalized communities academically succeeding. Why only some can overcome the obstacles that a marginalized context presents to them is a question that in part drives this dissertation study. The question of if there is a relationship between repressing situationalities and academic failure guided in part the development of this study. A research gap exists concerning if repressing situationalities are determinant on achieving educational success. No research was found in academic online research platforms that illustrated if repressing situationalities such as fatalism, conformism or determinism play a determinant role on achieving educational success. Moreover, no research was found in academic online research platforms that illustrated the impact of repressing situationalities on schooling and the impact of schooling on repressing situationalities. Lastly, no research was found in academic online research platforms that explained what happens to repressing situationalities after people complete their educational journey.

Statement of the Problem

Societies are often reproduced at large and frequently minority and marginalized groups such as immigrants tend to be underprivileged by these sociological predispositions (Apple 2004, Freire 2000). Furthermore, the educational system and schooling process tend to facilitate social reproduction and cultural capital (Apple 2004, Bowles & Gintis, 1976). Regrettably, this is

knowledge that has been brought to light for decades. Often, the emphasis is placed on the education and schooling mechanisms as well as on the sociological context where minorities and marginalized groups reside. However, little knowledge exists in regards to how repressing situationalities may play a role in facilitating social reproduction and cultural capital. Furthermore, minimal knowledge exists in regards to how repressing situationalities can be transformed into empowering situationalities that can contribute to the progressive transformation of marginalized environments.

In regards to Latino, Hispanic and Mexican immigrants, the challenge of inequality and cultural capital becomes more evident and has been linked to the challenges this population often encounters in schooling and in education. Fry (2003) points out that “because of the enormous growth in the number of Hispanic youth derived from immigration and high birth rates, the number of Latino 16- to 19-year-old dropouts grew dramatically, from 347,000 to 529,000 between 1990 and 2000” and that “of the 529,000 16- to 19-year-old Latino high school dropouts in 2000, one-out-of-three, or roughly 175,000, are immigrants who had little or no contact with U.S. schools” (p. 4).

Although some scholars such as Valenzuela (1999) argues that the first generation of Mexican immigrants do better academically than second and consecutive generations, the low graduation rates and high dropout rates are still a very severe problem in the educational field. The challenging reality that Latinos and Hispanics face in regards to education is more severe when it comes to Mexican immigrants as Fry (2003) illustrates that “nearly 40 percent of immigrant Mexican 16- to 19-year-olds are dropouts” (p.5). It is evident that minority and marginalized groups such as immigrants are not taking full advantage of the benefits that a high school and college education can provide them. Furthermore, the lack of speaking and dominating the English

language for immigrants has been attributed as the main reason for this educational challenge (Fry, 2003) further research investigation is needed to understand why some are not letting the language barrier stop them from completing their studies and why some are.

Purpose of the study

The main purpose of this study is to contribute with new knowledge and a new perspective on how disempowering states of mind and body could be linked to political correctness and social desirability bias. This study provides a new perspective on repressing situationalities and their possible influence on schooling and education. Furthermore, the study examined if those who manifested the presence of repressing situationalities in their decision-making were aware of the presence of repressing situationalities in them and on the influence that might have on them. In addition, the study examined how a repressing situationality could be transformed into a liberating situationality. Lastly, the study intends to empower minority and marginalized groups through the findings and recommendations.

Research Questions

1. How are social reproduction stratifications influenced by contextual hegemonic paradigms?
2. What stages of awareness are present in the social order when repressing situationalities are adopted or rejected?
3. How are deterministic, fatalistic, and conformist situationalities taught and learned through social engineering in society and why?
4. How can a critical examination of oppressive contextual ideologies and its impact on schooling be deconstructed and transformed into liberating situationalities?

Research Hypotheses

Hypothesis 1: Repressing contextual situationalities such as *fatalism, determinism and educational conformism* are existent in most research participants.

Hypothesis 2: Research participants with minimal to no socio-economic support from relatives manifest higher levels of *fatalism, determinism and educational conformism*.

Hypothesis 3: Research participants unemployed or in stressed socio-economic conditions manifest higher levels of *fatalism, determinism and educational conformism*.

Hypothesis 4: Research participants' responses in regards to *personal engagement, fatalism, social perception, educational perception, determinism and educational conformism* differ by their culture/ethnicity self-identification.

Hypothesis 5: Research participant's responses in regards to *personal engagement, fatalism, social perception, educational perception, determinism and educational conformism* are related to their parents' level of education.

Hypothesis 6: *Fatalism, determinism and educational conformism* will be negatively correlated with *personal engagement, educational perception and social perception*.

Theoretical Perspective

Social Psychology, Critical Social Psychology and Critical Theory were the theoretical perspectives used in this dissertation study. The incorporation of the theoretical perspectives were based on their relevance to the inquiries presented in this study and to the nature of it. Furthermore, they contributed theoretical and historical arguments highly relevant to the phenomena under study. A Social Psychology theoretical framework is concerned with matters of: perceptions, attitudes, feelings, thoughts, human behavior, impact of the surroundings, self-concepts, group dynamics, social relationships, and decision making among other relevant theoretical arguments (Forsyth 2006, Allport 1985). Critical Social Psychology permitted the inquiries and findings of this study to be examined from a stance of social justice and inequality. Moreover, Critical Social

Psychology empowers individuals and groups, as its main goal is to uncover and address issues of oppression (Fox, 1997; Tuffin, 2005). Critical Theory permitted for the integration of cultural, sociological, psychological dimensions with the purpose of linking them to domination and dominating institutional forms (Bohman, 2013, Horkheimer 1982). Lastly, Social Psychology, Critical Social Psychology and Critical Theory complement each other as theoretical frameworks and relate effectively to the methodology used in this study.

Social Psychology

Social Psychology is concerned with studying how people's feelings, thoughts and behaviors are influenced and determined by the influence of others (Forsyth 2006, Allport 1985). Furthermore, Social Psychology uses measurable psychological variables in human beings. Moreover, Social Psychology is concerned with understanding how the influence of cultural norms impacts people's perceptions and decisions (Forsyth 2006, Allport 1985). In addition, the self-concept of individuals and groups and human behavior that derive from the interaction of diverse mental states and social situations are often examined through Social Psychology (Forsyth 2006, Allport 1985). With equal importance, social cognition, people's perception and memories about others and group dynamics are of concern to Social Psychology (Forsyth 2006, Allport 1985). Lastly, how two or more individuals establish a connection with one another by social relationships and how those relationships influence their decision making and perception are often examined through Social Psychology frameworks (Forsyth 2006, Allport 1985).

Critical Social Psychology

Critical Social Psychology is a theoretical framework often used to research and understand issues of: social justice, the political context, inequality understanding how psychology contributes to unfair and unwanted social order, social factors, understanding the influence and nature of power, discriminating practices in regards to ethnic background, age, gender, sexuality, disability, religion, educational background, beliefs, etc., and places a special emphasis on how the context influences behavior. (Fox, 1997; Tuffin, 2005). Moreover, Critical Social Psychology acknowledges that a researcher cannot ever be neutral since complete control of subjectivity is inevitable. Furthermore, Critical Social Psychology argues beliefs and ideological formations are naturally formed by individuals based on lived experiences (Fox, 1997; Tuffin, 2005).

Critical Theory

Critical Theory is concerned with the development of knowledge, history formation, truth, justice and providing honest explanations through research. Critical Theory's main objective is reducing and eliminating domination through providing practical and functional descriptive and normative platforms for social inquiry (Bohman, 2013, Horkheimer 1982). Critical Theory links philosophy to the human and social sciences and through this process links empirical and interpretative social science to normative claims of morality. Furthermore, Critical Theory is concerned with human emancipation and illustrating how the oppressed can transition to a fair reality. Also, Critical Theory seeks to provide constructive and liberating criticism to deliver practical and achievable objectives for social transformation. To achieve social change, Critical Theory analyzes the dimensions of human domination in modern societies (Bohman, 2013,

Horkheimer 1982). Lastly, Critical Theory is often used in research with the intention of promoting emancipation and liberation of oppressional situations.

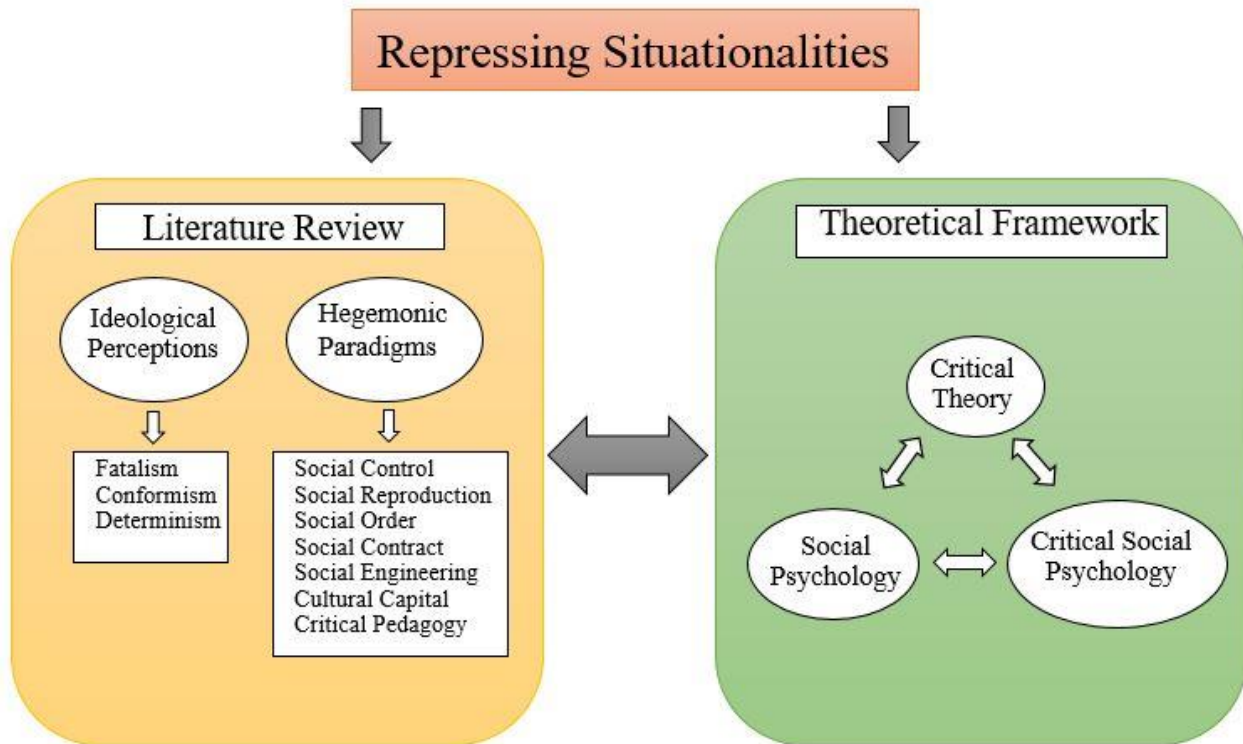


Figure 1.1 Visual model of the literature review/theoretical framework.

Methodology

A sequential transformative mixed methods research design served as the framework that guided this dissertation study, which allowed the study to take a transformative and advocacy stand. As this study took a transformative and advocacy stand, several counter actions to fatalism, conformism and or determinism were explored and theorized to understand the impacts of fatalistic, conformist and deterministic situationalities. For the purposes of this study, an advocacy stance refers to a method of research utilized to empower minority and marginalized populations. Based on the nature and purpose of this dissertation study, the methodology used a transformative

research design. The primary reason for using a sequential transformative research design was for developing a deep understanding of a phenomenon that affects and oppresses minority and or marginalized groups (Creswell, 2011). In addition, a sequential transformative research design uses a methodology sensible to the participants with the goal of empowering them through the research process (Creswell, 2011). Moreover, a sequential transformative research design utilizes an advocacy stance with the goal of developing findings that ultimately promotes constructive and progressive social policy change among those studied (Creswell, 2011). Scholars and those who have a special interest in the fields of education, sociology, psychology and philosophy among other fields, may find the results of this study relevant to their fields.

Phase One

Phase one of this study was the quantitative strand where the investigator relies on numerical data (Gravetter, 2012). Furthermore, a post-positivist paradigm is used for developing knowledge, such as: cause and effect thinking, reduction to specific variables, hypotheses and questions, use of measurement and observation and the test of theories. In addition, in quantitative research, the “researcher isolates variables and causally relates them to determine the magnitude and frequency of relationships. Furthermore, the researcher determines which variables to investigate and chooses instruments, which will yield highly reliable and valid scores (Gravetter, 2012).

Phase Two

Phase two of this study was the qualitative phase which is “an inquiry process of understanding” where the goal of the researcher is to develop a complex, holistic picture, which

emphasizes the analyzing of words, reporting detailed views of the informants, and aims at conducting the study in a natural setting (Marshall, 2011; Denzin, 2009; Madison, 2012; Creswell 2010). Furthermore, the qualitative research approach allows the researcher to build knowledge through a constructivist paradigm based on advocacy/participatory perspectives.

Integration

The quantitative and qualitative methods were integrated at the end of the quantitative phase and at the beginning of the qualitative phase when participants were selected for case study analysis. The quantitative and qualitative strands were integrated by developing interview questions based on the results of the quantitative phase. Lastly, during the analysis of the data, the results of the quantitative and qualitative phases were integrated and the discussion of the study outcomes reflected the integration.

Sequential Transformative Mixed Methods Design

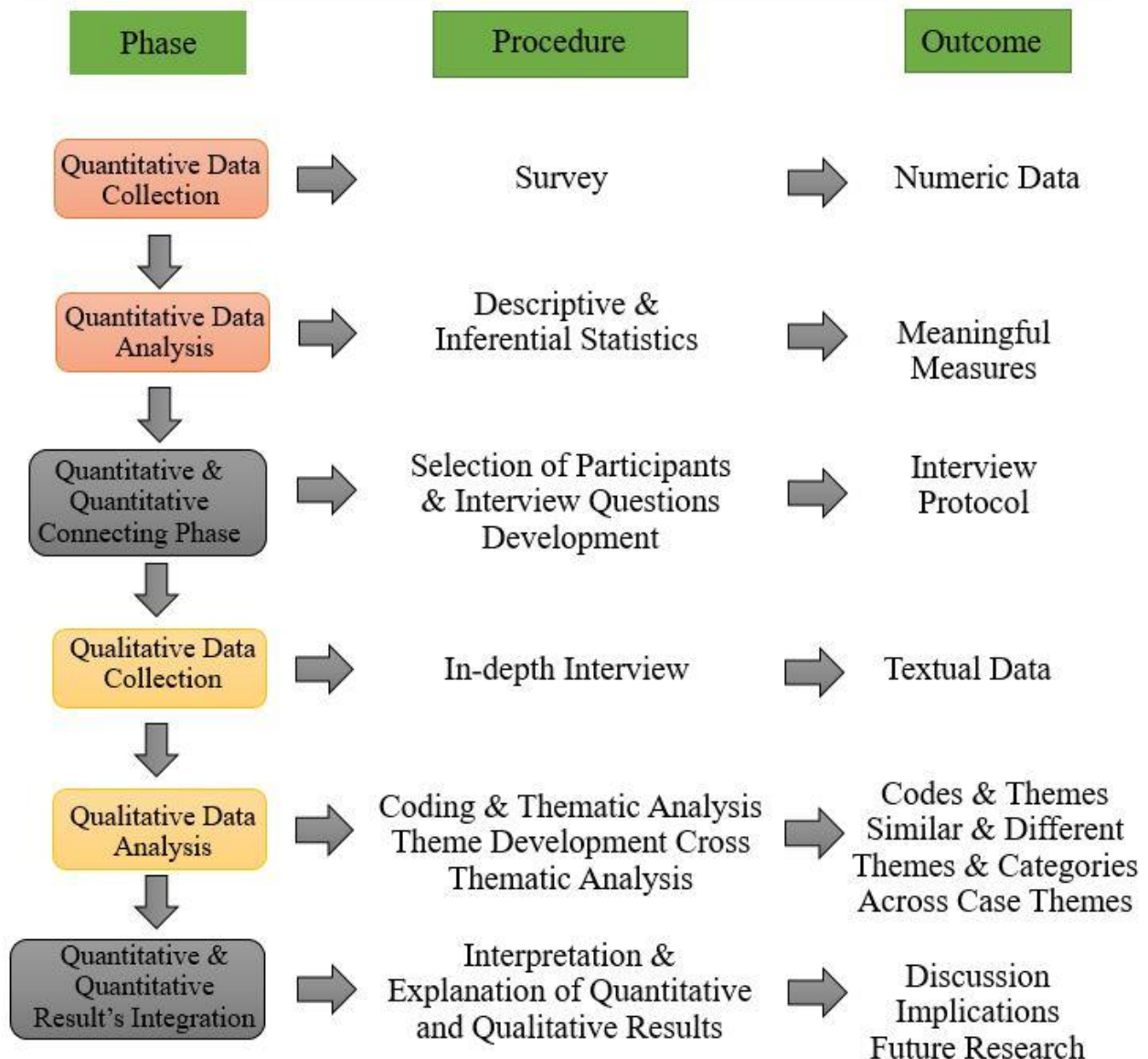


Figure 1.2 Visual model of study design

Paradigms

The study used “Participatory” and “Pragmatism” paradigms. As illustrated by Creswell (2010) “pragmatism, is typically associated with mixed methods research” which makes it essential to a

mixed methods study and “the focus is on the consequences of the research, on the primary importance of the question asked rather than the methods, and on the use of multiple methods of data collection to inform the problems under study” and is “pluralistic and oriented toward “what works” (p. 41). Due to the context of the study, a pragmatic paradigm was used to help achieve the goals of the mixed methods research design used in this research study. Furthermore, since multiple sources of data were used, pragmatism as a paradigm facilitated the process of validating both qualitative and quantitative methodologies in this research study. In addition, as illustrated by Creswell (2010) “participatory worldviews are influenced by political concerns, and this perspective is more often associated with qualitative approaches than quantitative approaches, although it does not always have this association” (p. 41). A participatory worldview was used to facilitate the incorporation of the political context, which is believed to play a significant role in the nature of the problem studied in this dissertation. Lastly, no priority emphasis was placed on either the quantitative or qualitative research strand as they both complemented each other in proving an answer to the inquiries presented in this study.

Rationale

The rationale for this study was based on the context and fundamental elements of this study. Multidisciplinary and critically relevant literature informed theoretically and historically the inquiries and phenomena studied in this dissertation. Furthermore, Social Psychology and Critical Social Psychology provided an adequate theoretical perspective to help guide the incorporation of data and protocols as well as the interpretation of the findings. Moreover, a sequential transformative mixed methods approach was used to develop a multi-strand understanding of the phenomena studied in this dissertation. A pragmatic paradigm allowed for the use and integration

of the quantitative and qualitative research strands. Lastly, an advocacy stance critically guided the interpretation of the findings and the recommendation made with the ultimate goal of empowering individuals and vulnerable groups affected by the phenomena studied in this dissertation.

Justification and Significance of the Study

At the time of the study, no research was found in academic online research platforms that explained if repressing situationalities have an influence on schooling and education. Furthermore, the study examined if those who manifested the presence of repressing situationalities in their decision-making were aware of the presence or the influence it might have on them. Moreover, this study provided a new perspective of how repressing situationalities such fatalism, conformism and determinism are formed and maintained in individuals and groups. Also, this study provides new theoretical argumentations on the relationship and dependencies that exist between repressing situationalities and social engineering, cultural capital, social reproduction and social order. Most importantly, this study provides new findings and recommendations from an advocacy stance that intend to transform repressing situationalities into liberating ones with the ultimate goal of empowering minority and marginalized individuals and groups. In regards to the methodology used, this research study's use of both quantitative and qualitative approaches within one study facilitated the empowerment of minority and marginalized groups through the findings and recommendations (Creswell, 2010; Tashakkori & Teddlie, 1998).

The selection of participants was inclusive with the objective of achieving a broader representation of the population under study. In the quantitative phase of the study, 226 research participants completed a survey. In the qualitative phase of the study ten information-rich

participants were invited for an in-person interview. Of the ten in-person interview research participants, four were woman and six were men. All interviewees have a diverse background and characteristics that made them unique to the study. Anna identified herself as a Latina woman. She is a single woman and she is in her 20s. Anna has and continues to live in Ciudad Juarez Mexico. She is employed now full-time and is a regular commuter that comes to the United States to study and work. Anna indicated that her mother and father both obtained a bachelor's degree and that influenced her to get a college education. Elizabeth identified herself as a Hispanic woman. She is married with children who she takes care of. She is in her 30s. Ariel identified herself as a Native American woman. She is a single woman and she is in her 20s. Ariel has always resided in the resides in El Paso, Texas. Ariel is employed full-time at the time of the study. She indicated that her mother obtained a master degree and her father a professional degree. Elizabeth has always resided in the United States. Elizabeth is employed full-time. She indicated that her mother obtained an associate degree and her father a doctorate degree. Hannah identified herself as a Hispanic woman. She is married and in her 20s. Hannah has always resided in the United States. Hannah is employed full-time. She indicated that her mother obtained a high school degree and her father a bachelor's degree. Daniel identified himself as a Hispanic man. He is in his 50s. He is married and currently resides in El Paso, Texas. Daniel indicated that his mother obtained an associate degree. He is employed full-time and has a business of his own. Adam identified himself as a white man. He is single and on his 30s. He indicated that he has always lived in the United States and currently reside in the El Paso, Texas. He is employed full-time at the time of the study. Adam indicated that his mother obtained a professional degree and his father an associate degree. Emmanuel identified himself as a Latino man. He is single and on his 20s. He is employed part-time. He indicated that he has always lived in the United States and currently reside in the El Paso,

Texas. Emmanuel indicated that his mother obtained a bachelor's degree and his father an associate's degree. Gabriel identified himself as a Hispanic man. He is single and on his 20s. He indicated that he has always lived in the United States and currently reside in the El Paso, Texas. He is employed part-time. Gabriel indicated that his mother obtained a high school degree and his father an associate degree. Elijah identified himself as a Hispanic man. He is married and on his 20s. He indicated that he has always lived in the United States and currently reside in the El Paso, Texas. He is employed full-time. Gabriel indicated that his mother and father obtained a high school degree. Benjamin identified himself as a Hispanic man. He is single and on his 20s. He indicated that he has always lived in the United States and currently reside in the El Paso, Texas. He is employed full-time. Benjamin indicated that his father obtained a bachelor's degree. All research participants possessed unique characteristics that enriched the study in diverse manners.

Assumptions

Four assumptions guided this research study: (1) Minority and marginalized groups are more vulnerable to develop and retain repressing situationalities. (2) Mainstream populations aren't aware of the presence of repressing situationalities in their actions and decision making. (3) Mainstream populations are targeted in diverse manners to achieve higher control over them. (4) Education and schooling can be critical tools of change when their agenda is principally concerned with the empowerment of students.

Limitations of the Study

In the quantitative phase of the study there is a potential risk of a non-response error according to quantitative research guidelines which can lead to problems caused by differences

between those who respond and those who do not in the event of a low response rate (Gravetter, 2012, Creswell, 2011). In addition, lack of multivariate normality, homogeneity of group variances and linearity among the predictors could potentially decrease the statistical power of the discriminant analysis procedure in the quantitative phase of the study (Gravetter, 2012). It's important to acknowledge that the results of discriminant analysis have limited generalizability since they usually generalize only to those populations from which the sample was obtained collected (Gravetter, 2012). Also, due to the nature of qualitative research, the data obtained in the second phase of the study could be subject to different and unique interpretations by different readers (Marshall, 2011; Denzin, 2009; Madison, 2012). Due to the interpretative nature of the qualitative research, the researcher may introduce a bias stance into the analysis of the findings (Marshall, 2011; Denzin, 2009; Madison, 2012).

Delimitations of the Study

The research study was constrained by the following foundations: the study was restricted to adult populations in the El Paso, Texas area and doesn't not necessarily represent the views of individuals and groups from other locations. Participant's responses are unique reflections of experiences lived by the participants; therefore, their perceptions of the topic under study in this research might not be generalized to other populations.

Definitions and Terms

Advocacy Stance: In this study, advocacy stance refers to a situationality of social justice that the researcher takes with the goal of using the research to empower the population under study in this dissertation.

Conformism: In this study, conformism refers to a repressing situationality where a “subject’s” behavior or attitudes are influenced and guided by the object. The “subject” is the individual who conforms. The object can be external or internal factors that cause conforming actions, in the form of individuals, groups, organizations, policies, rules and regulations, or the experience and natural instinct of the “subject” (Song, 2012, p. 1366).

Contextual Situationalities: In this study, contextual situationalities refer to a position an individual takes in regards to time and space. Furthermore, the position or stance that an individual takes can influence or be influenced by the surrounding context.

Critical Political Correctness: In this study, critical political correctness refers to a framework or lens used to understand and determine if political correctness influences social control and contributes to the existence of hegemonic paradigms.

Critical Rationalization: In this study, critical rationalization refers to the process of reevaluation a person goes through when they question ideology, personal behavior, and attitudes. During the critical rationalization process, an individual questions the decisions he/she makes and contrast those with hegemonic paradigms. The ultimate goal of critical rationalization is to understand if an individual makes decisions based on his/her inner desires/feelings or if those decisions are made to please the mainstream context.

Critical Social Psychology: In this study, Critical Socio Psychology refers to a theoretical perspective that targets the understanding of how psychology contributes to unfair and unwanted social order. Furthermore, it places stress on social factors that are often not address in depth by other theoretical frameworks with the goal of developing a more comprehensive contextual understanding of the researched phenomena.

Cultural Capital: In this study, cultural capital refers to protocols, mechanisms and techniques that are developed, implemented and evaluated to reproduce socio-economic groups in society. Furthermore, cultural capital serves the purpose of maintaining the status quo through mainstream sociological conduits.

Decision Making: In this study, decision-making refers to the process of evaluating the options implications when making a decision. Furthermore, during the decision making process a judgement is exercised based on information and other relevant sources.

Determinism: In this study, determinism refers to as the “belief that everything is predetermined: the doctrine or belief that everything, including every human act, is caused by something and that there is no real free will” (The Information Philosopher, 2013).

Era of Properness: In this study, *Era of Properness* refers to a lapse of time where individuals and groups are either directly or indirectly persuaded to repress and self-regulate their opinions, beliefs, expressions, attitudes, and actions with the ultimate goal of portraying a pleasant and mainstream proper personal display.

Fatalism: In this study, fatalism refers to as a repressing situationality that adopts an assumption that the future is prescribed. Furthermore, fatalism is a repressing situationality since often it is linked to pessimistic views of the future. In addition, in this study individuals and groups affected by fatalist attitudes feel that they have little to no control over their destiny. Furthermore, scholars

define fatalism as a dominating and ruling dictating doctrine where everything is predetermined and preordained by fate (Kuhr, 1975), as the accepted assimilation process of one's reality and current situation (Parker and Kleiner, 1966), as a pessimist belief and ideology where the individual on a regular basis has negative expectations of present and future outcomes (Scheier and Bridges, 1995), "the extent to which a given individual or collective group grants control and decision making authority over life's outcomes to cosmological or metaphysical powers" (Acevedo, 2005, p. 73), and as the condition of feeling un-empowered or powerless due to the system and power structures where a pronounced perception of lack of self-efficacy is strongly linked to lack of mastery and control on one's decision making process Acevedo (2005).

Hegemonic Paradigms: In this study, hegemonic paradigms refer to systems consisting of individuals, groups, institutions, organizations, customs, traditions, values among other influential structures that seek to maintain a dominant group over others. Furthermore, the dominating groups are responsible for developing, maintaining and evaluating the hegemonic paradigms.

Hispanic: In this study, Hispanic refers to a person who resides in the United States and who's first or second language is Spanish. Moreover it refers to a person whose parents were either born on the United States or migrated from a Spanish speaking country.

Latinos: In the context of this study, Latino refers to a person who identified himself or herself as a Latino/a. Moreover it refers to a person who identifies culturally and ethnically with Latin communities where many of them speak Spanish.

Liberating Situationalities: In this study, liberating situationalities refers to a stance an individual assumes that transitions an individual from a repressing situationality to an optimistic situationality. Furthermore, liberating situationalities empower the individual by recognizing and validating the power an individual has that is often ignored consciously or unconsciously.

Mainstream: In this study, mainstream refers to personal and sociological practices practiced by most members of society. In mainstream settings, individuals and groups are expected to behave like most members of society. Behaving in mainstream, manners are not only expected but welcomed by sociologically validated institutions, organizations, and entities.

Mexican-American: In this study, Mexican-American refers to a person who was born in Mexico and migrated to the United States at some point during his/her lifetime.

Political Correctness: In this study, political correctness refers to a stance an individual takes where decisions are made merely to conform to and satisfy mainstream socio-psychological economic and political expectations. Furthermore, political correctness guides the decisions an individual makes consciously or unconsciously. The ultimate goal of political correctness is to fit in and project a proper image to the surrounding socio-psychological, economic and political context. Political Correctness thrives in an *Era of Properness*.

Repressing Situationalities: In this study, repressing situationalities refer to a stance an individual takes that limits the individual from attempting or reaching their full potential on various objectives. Furthermore, repressing situationalities are disempowering states of mind and body linked to deterministic, fatalistic and conformist ideological frameworks.

Sequential Transformative Mixed Methods: In this study, Sequential Transformative Mixed Methods refers to as a research methodology that consists of a quantitative and a qualitative research phase. In addition, it confronts issues of social justice and requests for change. Moreover, it prioritizes the need to address the needs of underrepresented or marginalized populations (Creswell, 2011).

Social Contract: In this study, social contract refers to a social agreement with society and its ruling mechanisms to comply with accepted and validated behavior in society. The social contract involves sacrificing personal beliefs, opinions, traditions and freedoms.

Social Control: In this study, social control refers to the mechanisms and techniques used to supervise and maintain individuals and groups within a prescribed behavioral range prescribed by those in control of developing, enforcing and evaluating social control protocols.

Social Desirability Bias: In this study, social desirability bias refers to the favorable bias that participants take when they express their opinions and perspectives on diverse matters with the ultimate goal of projecting a version of themselves that would delight others and the social context.

Social Engineering: In this study, social engineering refers to the development, enforcement and evaluation of mechanisms and techniques to mold individuals and groups into prescribed pathways.

Social Order: In this study, social order refers to the prescribed behavioral range for mainstream societies. Furthermore, social order is enforced through social structures, institutions, customs, values and practices among other influential structures.

Socio Psychology: In this study, Socio Psychology refers to a theoretical perspective and empirical method of research and investigation which often is concerned with measurable psychological variables in human beings and with the influence of cultural norms, human behavior which derive from the interaction of diverse mental states and social situations (Allport, 1985). Furthermore, Social Psychology is concerned with group dynamics, which defines how two or more than two individuals establish a connection with one another by social relationships, and how those relationships influence their decision making and perceptions (Forsyth, 2006).

Transitional Situationalities: In this study, transitional situationalities refer to contextual situationalities an individual assumes that leads to optimistic or repressing situationalities. Under transitional situationalities and individual can transition from a repressing situationality to an optimistic situationality, from an optimist situationality to a repressing situationality, from an optimist situationality to a more comprehensive optimistic situationality, from a repressing situationality to a more comprehensive situationality.

The Role of the Researcher

As a researcher, I attempted to view social phenomena in historical and systematic manners. In addition, within my capacity I was sensitive to the experiences shared by the participants in this study. In addition, multifaceted and interactive complex reasoning was used to conduct adequate and responsible research within established and approved ethical research protocols as illustrated by scholars with research expertise (Lincoln and Guba, 1985; Marshall, 2011; Denzin, 2009; Madison, 2012; Creswell 2010).

Organization of the Study

The research design used in the study is a Sequential Transformative Research Design which consisted of two phases, a quantitative and a qualitative, both phases had the same priority in the study. The study had a sequence of the phases. The initial phase was the quantitative phase, where quantitative strategies for selection of participants and instrumentation was used. Once the quantitative phase was completed and the data processed and analyzed, a qualitative phase took place. The following phase in the study, the qualitative stage was influenced in diverse manners based on the findings of the quantitative phase. Ten information rich participants from the

quantitative phase were selected for the qualitative phase. Moreover, the qualitative instrumentation and methodology were influenced by the findings on the quantitative phase. Once the qualitative segment ended, the data was analyzed through a Social Psychology, Critical Social Psychology and Critical Theory theoretical frameworks. Lastly, the findings of both phases were integrated during the last stage of the study where findings and recommendations emerged from the integration phase.

Summary

The primary objective of this research study was to provide a new perspective on the influence of repressing situationalities. The presence and influence of repressing situationalities such as fatalism, conformism and determinism on individuals and groups may play a substantial role when making decisions. Furthermore, repressing situationalities may limit individuals and groups from pursuing and reaching their full potential on individual and collective matters. Social Psychology, Critical Social Psychology and Critical Theory are the theoretical perspectives used to examine the rationalization and responses of the research participants. A sequential transformative mixed methodology allows research to become an instrument of social justice; therefore, its justification in using it in this study. The study consisted of two phases, a quantitative and qualitative phase. Research findings obtained through this study aim to provide a new perspective on how repressing situationalities might be influential as it relates to education and schooling.

CHAPTER 2

REVIEW OF LITERATURE AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Overview of Literature and Theoretical Framework

Chapter two of the study is concerned with the review of literature which guided foundational development of the study. In addition, the incorporated theoretical perspectives are illustrated in this chapter. Fatalism, conformism and determinism are in this study interpreted as repressing situationalities that may play a not-so-optimistic role when making decisions. From a philosophical perspective determinism is the “belief that everything is caused: the doctrine or belief that everything, including every human act, is caused by something and that there is no real free will” (The Information Philosopher, 2013). In psychology, conformity is divided into two categories, irrational conformity (herd behavior) and rational conformity (abidance, compliance and obedience). Herd behavior occurs when the subject accepts the behaviors or attitudes of the object according to his or her intuition and genetic instinct. The subject is influenced by the herd behavior of objects such as individuals, groups, organizations, policies, rules, regulations, and the internal experience or natural instinct of the subject (Song, 2012, p. 1365). Furthermore, rational conformity is behavior guided by thinking, judgment, or reasoning. It occurs as a result of the influences exerted by the object’s behavior or attitude and includes abidance, compliance, and obedience (Song, 2012, p. 1365). Fatalism is a construct that has several definitions and descriptions, but what determinism, conformism and fatalism have in common is that they all limit the individual’s perception of their achievement capacities. Futa, Hsu, and Hansen (2001) describe fatalism as the unchallenging acceptance of one’s reality and current situation where the individual

doesn't feel capable to challenge his/her reality and the acceptance of that reality doesn't conflict with that individual's vision of the present and future.

Contextual Studies Paradigms

Fatalism and its Implications

Fatalism is often referred to as a cultural, sociological and psychological construct that is influential in people's behaviors and attitudes towards circumstances, decision making and visions of past, present and future, which might impact performance in academics. Kuhr (1975) describes fatalism as a dominating and ruling doctrine which dictates that everything is predetermined and preordained by fate, where often people have minimal to no control of the present and future based on the critical role of faith in those individuals and groups. Futa, Hsu, and Hansen (2001) describe fatalism as the unchallenging acceptance of one's reality and current situation where the individual doesn't feel capable to challenge his/her reality and the acceptance of that reality doesn't conflict with that individual's vision of the present and future.

Parker and Kleiner (1966) describe fatalism as the accepted assimilation process of one's reality and current situation which is highly pronounced in minority and marginalized groups, especially those who reside in developing countries. Wheaton (1983) describes fatalism as the process where the individual places more blame on the surrounding environment than on the personal factors in determining why success or failure is achieved throughout life. Scheier and Bridges (1995) describe fatalism as a pessimist belief and ideology where the individual on a regular basis have negative expectations of present and future outcomes. Comas-Diaz (1989) describe fatalism as the phenomenon where an individual feel that he/she has no control

whatsoever of their destiny where the individual blames his/ her reality on luck, fate and on powers and factors that are fully independent from that individual's behavior and attitude. Elder (1966) describes fatalism as “the belief that God or some moral order such as karma controls man's destiny and the outcome of his actions” (p. 229), where the individual shouldn't challenge his/her reality based on the fact that his/her reality is guided and dictated by supreme forces such as God: it is meant to be that way and that individual should gracefully accept it. *Webster's Dictionary* (1989) describes fatalism as the “doctrine that all events are subject to fate or inevitable predetermination; the acceptance of all things and events as inevitable; submission to fate” (p. 517).

There are several definitions and descriptions of fatalism, but what they all have in common is that they all limit the individual's perception of time and achievement. For instance, Acevedo (2005) points out that there are two types of fatalism, cosmological and structural, where cosmological fatalism is “the extent to which a given individual or collective group grants control and decision making authority over life's outcomes to cosmological or metaphysical powers” (p. 73) and where structural fatalism is the condition of feeling disempowered or powerless due to the system and power structures where a pronounced perception of lack of self-efficacy is strongly linked to lack of mastery and control on one's decision making process. With equal importance, Acevedo's (2008) describes fatalism as “a general characteristic of traditional value systems that are unreceptive to processes of modernization and economic development” (p. 1713). The diverse interpretations and perspectives of fatalism outline the significance and possible impacts of fatalism in individual and groups.

Furthermore, Acevedo (2008) points out another form of fatalism based on “Durkheim's cryptic account of the fatalistic condition as one resulting from social conditions where "futures

[are] pitilessly blocked and passions violently choked by oppressive discipline” which tends to be perceived as empirical fatalism based on the “belief that empirical phenomenon occur for no comprehensible reason, and [that consequently] they cannot be controlled" (p. 1715). All of the aforementioned interpretations of fatalism are diverse in the sense that they originated from diverse theoretical frameworks, but the most significant common factor is the assumption that the future is prescribed; therefore, those guided by fatalist attitudes and behaviors feel that they have no control of their destiny. Esparza (2008) illustrates in his study that:

“Fatalism is a psychological construct of particular interest to health psychologists because it has been related to drinking behaviors (e.g., Neff, 1993, 1994; Somlai et al., 2000), risky sexual behaviors (e.g., Amirkhanian et al., 2001; Beltrán, Ostrow, & Joseph, 1993; Kalichman, Kelly, Morgan, & Rompa, 1997), depression (e.g., Neff 1994; Neff & Hoppe, 1993; Roberts, Roberts, & Chen, 2000), cancer prevention (e.g., Niederdeppe & Gurmankin, 2007; Hoyo, Yarnall, Skinner, Moorman, Sellers, & LaVerne, 2005; Facione, Miaskowski, Dodd, & Paul, 2002; Randolph, Freeman, & Freeman, 2002), prenatal testing (e.g., Kuppermann et al., 2006), seatbelt use (e.g., Byrd, Cohn, Gonzalez, Parada, & Cortes, 1999; Colón, 1992), adolescent contraception (e.g., Herold, Goodwin, & Lero, 1979), work accidents (e.g., Harrel, 1995), smoking (e.g., Schnoll et al., 2002), substance use (Unger et al., 2002; Somlai et al., 2000), condom use (e.g., Hardeman, Pierro, & Mannetti, 1997), obesity (Thomason, 1983), exercise (e.g., Fruin, Pratt, & Owen, 1991), HIV testing (e.g., Parra, Doran, Ivy, Ramirez Aranda, & Hernandez, 2001), abortion attitudes (e.g., Learman et al., 2005), insulin intake for diabetes patients (Lange & Piette, 2006), pain management (e.g., Gunarsdottir, Donovan, Serlin, Voge, & Ward, 2002), and oral health behaviors and knowledge (e.g., Finlayson, Siefert, Ismail, Delva, & Sohn, 2005)” (p. 1, 2).

It is implied by many scholars from different disciplines that fatalism is potentially influential in any activity in which a person engages in, including the desire to pursue and successfully complete a higher education. It is widely argued that the implications of engaging in fatalist situationalities may be the primary factor that determines a person’s success and well-being in economic, social, political, psychological, health and educational contexts, among others. According to broad existing research, almost all populations of the world suffer from one or more forms of fatalism depending on their cultural, religious and sociological identities and or

ideologies. In addition, research has shown that upper socio-economic classes control and regulate their fatalism and conformism more efficiently than lower socio-economic classes, which often results in achieving better quality living standards, according to the western hemisphere interpretation of “good living standards,” which are mostly concerned with economical wealth, social mobility, educational achievement, among other governmentally controlled, dictated and recognized aspects of society. Lastly, little agreement exists in regards to what the nature of fatalism is, which is one of the primary reasons for not having a well-defined unifying theory of fatalism (Acevedo, 2005).

As theorized by some of the most recognized scholars illustrated above, fatalism can be interpreted as a construct that limits people’s situationalities in diverse manners, which allowed for this dissertation study to explore the potential that fatalism might have on the process of education and on schooling. As mentioned above, research studies have shown that fatalism significantly impacts people’s choices in regards to: drinking behaviors, risky sexual behaviors, depression, cancer prevention, prenatal testing, adolescent contraception, work accidents, smoking, substance abuse, condom use, obesity, exercise, HIV testing, abortion attitudes, insulin intake for diabetes patients, pain management, and oral health behaviors and knowledge; therefore, the need to expand the understanding of the impacts of fatalism in regards to education and schooling. Unlike fatalism, conformism is another construct that has been argued and theorized by scholars to influence people’s situationality and to influence people to regulate and self-regulate their actions.

Conformism from a Psychological Perspective

Conformism is a theoretical perspective and or construct that has been widely researched and theorized from the field of psychology and sociology. Although, there isn't a widely accepted definition of conformism, the major relationship that derives from most of the interpretations and definitions of conformism is the critical role of obedience in conformist situationalities. Being a conformist is in many ways to obey the widely accepted sociological parameters that society follows and hardly questions. Conformity is defined as a "subject's" behavior or attitudes following those of the object. The "subject" is the individual who conforms. The object can be external or internal factors that cause conforming actions, in the form of individuals, groups, organizations, policies, rules and regulations, or the experience and natural instinct of the "subject" (Song, 2012, p. 1366).

In a manner, conformism has to do with following pre-established sociological parameters. A person conforms when it adopts a similar behavior than those who surround them. It's by interacting with other people in a regular and permanent basis that people first learn to conform with modeled behaviors. Moreover, children grow up with tendencies to imitate behaviors, attitudes and lifestyles from their parents, caregivers, relatives, and eventually from society as they reach adulthood. In a sense, conformity occurs when the "subject" demonstrates the same behavior or attitude as the object. The "subject" is the individual who conforms. The "object(s)" [influential factors] may be individuals, groups, organizations, policies, rules and regulations, or the experience or natural instinct of the "subject" (Song, 2012, p. 1365). Although, the "object and subject" terminology used in psychology is conflictive with critical pedagogy, due to the objectification that is placed in people, its rationale is appropriate to illustrate the phenomenon studied in this dissertation.

In psychology, conformity is divided into two categories, irrational conformity (herd behavior) and rational conformity (abidance, compliance and obedience). Herd behavior occurs when the subject accepts the behaviors or attitudes of the object according to his or her intuition and genetic instinct. The subject is influenced by the herd behavior of objects such as individuals, groups, organizations, policies, rules, regulations, and the internal experience or natural instinct of the subject (Song, 2012, p. 1365). Rational conformity is behavior guided by thinking, judgment, or reasoning. It occurs as a result of the influences exerted by the object's behavior or attitude and includes abidance, compliance, and obedience (Song, 2012, p. 1365). Its critical to point out that conformity is the change of actions or attitudes caused by the pressure from some real or notional groups, such as family, peer pressure, educational settings, religion, cultural identity, ethnicity, race, and society as a whole (Myers, 2010). Furthermore, conformity is behaviorism oriented (Song, 2012, p. 1372).

As illustrated, conformism is a construct often taught in the local context where individuals and groups emerge and evolve. In addition, conformism is learned in ordinary manners and in some ways is a reflection of the characteristics of the context where individuals and groups emerge and evolve. Furthermore, conformism is enforced in diverse manners, such as peer group pressure (PGP), which often results in individuals and groups policing others to conform to the accepted norms and situationalities. As explained from a psychological perspective, conformism has a significant and real impact on individuals and groups; therefore, the need to further develop an understanding of the possible impact it may have in the process of education and on schooling. Unlike fatalism and conformism, determinism is a construct that illustrates how repressing situationality in life has nothing to do with pessimistic perceptions or ideologies.

Determinism & Free Will from a Philosophical Perspective

From a philosophical perspective determinism has historically been defined as the view “that the will is not free but determined by psychical or physical conditions” (Runes, 1962, p. 78). If the theoretical arguments in regards to determinism are true, then it is to imply that people aren’t in full control of their present, future and or decisions which to some will involve decisions about education and schooling. Adopting a deterministic situationality can be comfortable, safe and situated in a comfort zone where people can potentially perceive themselves as not fully responsible for the outcome of their actions since according to determinism, actions are influenced and dictated by external forces out of the control of people. Historically, theoretical argumentations of free will versus determinism have resulted in diverse perspectives of what free will stands for. Free will is theoretically concerned with the freedom of indeterminacy, where the will is independent from antecedent physiological and psychological conditions. Under the indeterminacy theoretical framework, the freedom of alternative choice occurs due to the agent’s ability to freely choose from alternative possibilities. Moreover, it illustrates that the freedom of self-determinism occurs when taken decisions are fully independent from external constraints and at the same time aligned and in accordance with the inner motives and goals of the agent making the decision (Runes, 1962, p. 112). It is implied that consciously engaging in free will situationality will result in conscious actions where the outcomes of those actions are to be appropriated and validated by the agent making those decisions whether the outcome is desirable or non-desirable.

Furthermore, it’s unclear to determine if a free will situationality is at all times embraced or if it’s a situationality only embraced under specific circumstances depending on the actor or agent. If it’s true that a free will situationality is embraced in certain circumstances, what criteria

is used by the agent or actor to determine a free will engagement? Furthermore, if a criteria is used to determine free will engagement, what ideologies, worldviews and paradigms impact, influence or determine the criteria used and why? Moreover, an agent and or actor may have a sense of freedom which is “the subjective feeling of an agent either at the moment of decision or in retrospect that the decision is free, and that one might have chosen to decide differently” (Runes, 1962, p. 112). If an actor or agent feels that a decision is being made differently and freely based on subjectivity, how truly real or imaginary is that perception? It is a well-known fact and standard practice that most people engage enthusiastically and more energetically in happenings and activities related to human pleasure, satisfaction and happiness. Contrarily, it’s commonly known that people struggle to engage in happenings or activities that are perceived as tedious, unattractive and boring, and that the level of engagement tends to be minimal and unenthusiastic. The inquiries that derived from rationalizing determinism and free will are: is there a relationship between determinism and fatalism, between free will and fatalism, between determinism and conformity, between free will and conformity. In addition, is it relevant to understand what commonalities and non-commonalities do determinism, free will, fatalism and conformity share? With equal importance as schooling and the process of getting educated is mainstreamly perceived as a tedious, boring, and unattractive activity among primary and secondary students in the United States and other parts of the world, this study searched to develop an understanding if relationships exist between determinism and schooling and between free will and schooling.

Social Control and Social Reproduction Theoretical Frameworks

Diverse literature in the fields of sociology, psychology, philosophy and education among others have pointed out that constructs of determinism, fatalism and conformism limit and regulate

individuals and groups' sense of power and control over the present and future. Apple (2004) explains that "the basic ways institutions, people and models of production, distribution, and consumption are organized and controlled dominate cultural life. This includes such day-to-day practices as schools and the teaching and curricula found within them" and argues that there is a strong "relationship between education and economic structure" and that there are critical linkages between "knowledge and power" (p. 1).

Additionally, the structuralization of education and the process of getting educated contributes to the development of societies in critical manners. Although some research has shown that individuals and groups learn to be conformist by voluntarily or involuntarily accepting and repeating their parents, friends and role models behaviors. Moreover, it is critical to understand if any repressing situationalities are learned through the educational system and through the process of getting educated. Apple (2004) explains that

as we learn to understand the way education acts in the economic sector of a society to reproduce important aspects of inequality, so too are we learning to unpack a second major sphere in which schooling operates. For not only is there an economic property, there also seems to be symbolic property—cultural capital—which schools preserve and distribute (p. 2).

Structural and sociological pressures are argued by scholars to exist in diverse manners to guide and persuade individuals and groups to properly fit into the mainstream accepted and validated norms. People often live in constant multilevel and multifaceted stages of fear, especially in an *Era of Properness*. People develop deterministic and conformist behaviors, attitudes and ideologies because of the direct and indirect control enforced over individuals and groups, and most importantly because of the apathy and or lack of concern that people develop towards stepping outside the comfort zone, outside of the conformist zone. Apple (2004) explains that "the

structuring of knowledge and symbol in our educational institutions is intimately related to the principles of social and cultural control in a society” (p. 2).

Conformism is a construct and or phenomenon that might be traced back to the origins of the human race according to several philosophers who have extensively written about it and who have developed theoretical frameworks that illustrates the rationale of the phenomena. Allan Watts (1976) points out that the nature and reason for the existence of conformism relies in the way humans rationalize and prioritize thoughts. Furthermore, the nature of fatalism is triggered by the feeling of fear that we, as society learn to embrace and serenely accept. Watts (1976) illustrates that “individualism, rouged individualism always leads to conformism because people get scared, they compound with industrial society” they desire the same cloth, the same living conditions, the same types of reward for working, the same types of entertainment, the same dreams, and most importantly the same mainstream identity. In diverse ways, being conformist means existing in a comfort zone that society imposes on people, in a stage of permanent acceptance of society’s tendencies and in a passive stage of acceptance to society’s demand of behavior and preferences on its members. Sleeter and McLaren (1995) explain that

both the instrumental literacy for the poor, in the form of a competency-based skills banking approach, and the highest form of instrumental literacy for the rich, acquired through the university in the form of professional specialization, share one common feature; they both prevent the development of the critical thinking that enables one to read the world critically and to understand the reasons and linkages behind the facts (p. 78).

The implications in regards to adopting a conformist situationality are several and severe. Respected philosopher Allan Watts argued that democracy as we know it presents an argument that we are all equal in the eye of god. Unfortunately, this is only true in a theoretical perspective, in practice we are equally inferior, and this reality is energized by the conformism that people learn to accept and embrace. Many are the implications and risks when conformism is present in

individuals and in society as a whole. Furthermore, a conformist society can quickly turn into a stage of fascism in a quick move because a conformist society tends to be scared of the outside and that's why they revolve around the pre-established sociological parameters that conformist societies tend to develop and adopt (Watts, 1976).

Non-mainstream people are in many ways non-conformist since mainstream societies and governments desire every member of society to play by its pre-established and always evolving rules. Watts (1976) argues that this occurs because governmental institutions might be insecure of the validity of the rules of their game and in this sense leads them to develop a very strong desire to have every member of society to play by those. Furthermore, the principal rule is that everyone must play, but they must play voluntarily. Playing this game must come from a free will stance, meaning that the players must take the first steps to enter the game. The player cannot be forced to enter the game in a direct manner, only in indirect manners; therefore, the reason for society to place a tremendous amount of pressure on people to be part of the game rules (Watts, 1976). The pressure placed to engage new players into the game is mostly sociological and psychological, rarely takes the form of physical punishment, and mostly occurs in areas where the mainstream society can't see those happenings.

It's important to point out in this matter that culture is multi-level and multi-faceted organized and engineered to mold the minds and rationales of individuals and groups with the ultimate goal of achieving control over their decision making processes; therefore, influencing and controlling their decisions in life. People by nature tend to mimic what they see, imitate what they are exposed too. They especially tend to imitate those who they see as role models and develop an ideology of becoming similar to those they admire and respect in society (Watts, 1976). People very early in life develop an understanding of what society admires or respects and people tend to

aim their identity and personal life choices to follow similar life pathways as those who they aim to become. Individuals and groups often develop the necessity to please society, and especially to please those who are observing them and regulating their decisions, such as family, community, friends, peers and society (Watts, 1976). A primary source nowadays for developing a conformist behavior and conformist attitudes comes from the media. The trick is very simple and complex at the same time. Mainstream media use emotional themes' oriented mechanisms to get the attention of individuals and groups and from there the programming of deeply rooted ideas (Apple, 2004). As illustrated by Sleeter and McLaren (1995), Watts (1976), Apple (2004) and previous research studies, control over individuals and groups happens in diverse manners and in different contexts; therefore, the need to further understand how and why individual and group control exists and to further understand who wins and losses with the existence of repressing situationalities. Furthermore, it's critical to explore and understand what relationships may exist between repressing situationalities and academic perseverance and success. If the theoretical arguments presented that argue the existence of social control over people are true, it implies that constrictive and repressing controls are enforced over specific populations; therefore, the success and failure of some groups in socio-economics and educational pathways. As illustrated above, social control plays an important role in society, especially in societies that constantly engage in migration, due to the vulnerability of those populations.

Migration, Marginalization and Social Impact

The practice of migration can be traced back to the origins of the human race. Historically, human beings have migrated from one place to another. For the purposes of this study, a well-

known and globally accepted definition of migration from the United Nations was used as framework for this study.

A migration is defined as a move from one migration-defining area to another (or a move of some specified minimum distance) that was made during a given migration interval and that involved a change of residence. A migrant is a person who has changed his usual place of residence from one migration-defining area to another (or who moved some specified minimum distance) at least once during the migration interval (United Nations, 1970).

Suarez-Orozco & Suro's (2006) findings point out the importance of migration by illustrating that "nearly 200 million migrants around the world; [thus], immigration today affects every continent on earth. And for the first time in history, nearly all nation-states have become either countries of immigration, emigration or transit countries" (p. 5). Mexico has very unique characteristics that make it both the number one source of emigration population to the United States, and the number one destination of immigration from Central and South America. It's because of its geographically central location in the American Continent, and its location next to the United States, that makes it very unique and vulnerable to experience migration and emigration of people. Border areas located between Mexico and the United States are highly transited areas and routes by migrant populations, some documented and some undocumented, which plays a crucial role in how immigrants conduct themselves and achieve economic, political, social, and personal success among other desirable objectives.

According to research done by the National Research Project (2011) "between 2000 and 2009, the foreign-born population in the U.S. grew from 31 million to 38.5 million, representing a change of 24 percent. By comparison, between 1990 and 2000, the foreign-born population changed from 20 million to 31 million, a difference of 57 percent" (p. 15). Based on the arguments presented by the migration push and pull factors theoretical framework, it is to assume that most of the population coming to the United States are in search of better living standards than the ones

available in their native countries. In addition, The National Research Project (2011) outlines that “during the last four decades, the foreign-born population of the U.S. has increased in size and percentage of the total population: from 10 million (5 percent) in 1970 to 14 million (6 percent) in 1980 to 20 million (8 percent) in 1990 and 31 million (11 percent) in 2000. 80 percent of the foreign-born residents in the U.S. were from Latin America and Asia; 53 percent were from Latin America, and 28 percent were from Asia in 2009. In 1960, 75 percent of the foreign-born residents were from Europe. Immigrants in the U.S. Fifty-six percent (22 million) of the foreign-born residents live in California, Florida, New York and Texas” (p. 21).

As previously explained, migration is a historical and common practice among the human race. Furthermore, the decision to migrate to other places is argued by some scholars through push and pull migration factors. Emigration and or push factors derive from circumstances and or realities that are oppressive and or unattractive to those who decide to migrate to another place. Social, political, economic, environmental, and or educational push factors are the main reasons for people to migrate to other places. Social push factors often take the shape of oppressive cultures that impose their cultural identity to other minority cultures that reside in the same area, sexism to woman that limits females to achieve equality and more control in their personal lifestyles and or decisions and the limitation of practice any type of faith and or religion. Political push factors often derive from wars, political oppression that limits the emergence of diverse and oppositional political leadership, views and governmental instability where the government can't efficiently and humanistically control the country which often leads to constant and radical governmental changes. Economic push factors include the limitedness of jobs, overwhelming rampant poverty, high cost of living and the desire to achieve better life standards. Environmental push factors regularly draw from high levels of pollution, manmade disasters such as nuclear radiation and

natural disasters such as hurricanes, flood storms, drastic temperature changes, the absence of water and other environmental conditions that make the living conditions difficult and or dangerous. Lastly, educational push factors emerge from the lack of educational opportunities for primary and secondary education (Shobha, 2012).

Furthermore, according to Shobha (2012) pull factors in opposite to push factors are attractive reasons that inspire and or influence people to immigrate to another place. Pull factors can either be social, political, economic, environmental and or educational. Social push factors derive from the desire and or aspiration to achieve personal freedom and or social equality where people feel equal to others even if the majority doesn't share ethnic, race, and or religion commonalities. Political pull factors emerge from the desire of people to reside in places where there are no wars where people live peaceful, from the need of feeling secure where justice can be served to anyone and from the desire to have respected individual rights where the government serves the primary purpose of protecting its people. Economic pull factors draw from the desire to achieve higher standards of living in well developed areas where there are plenty of job opportunities. Environmental pull factors emerge from the ambition of residing in areas where health problems such as epidemics are efficiently controlled, where the pollution levels are not a health hazard, where the climate is stable and where there aren't manmade natural disasters such as nuclear accidents and or contamination of the area. Lastly, educational pull factors emerge from the desire to have access to primary and or secondary educational opportunities where the educational institutions are updated and have good reputation (Shobha, 2012).

As illustrated, migration is determined by push and pull factors; furthermore, migration can be interpreted as a fatalistic and non-fatalistic situationality, depending on how migration is contextualized. Individuals and groups can be portrayed as fatalistic for giving up on the place

where they reside; therefore, assuming that they don't have enough control in improving the reality of the place they will emigrate from. In this instance, it can be argued that a fatalistic situationality has been assumed in regards to their ability to change that context. Furthermore, a conformist situationality can be argued to have taken place if other individuals and groups migrate due to the reasons of why others migrate. In contrast with this, migrating can be rationalized as a non-fatalistic and non-conformist situationality since those who migrate often do it with the goal of achieving better living standards. The phenomenon studied in this dissertation can benefit from the usage of a theoretical framework that is concerned with repressing situationalities, such as Social Psychology and Critical Social Psychology theory.

Deconstruction of Hegemonic Systems through Critical Pedagogy

Critical pedagogy allows the emergence of critical teaching and learning in empowering manners. Critical pedagogy is a powerful educational tool used to detect, reduce and eradicate oppression as its main goal is the liberation of oppressed and marginalized populations. Critical pedagogy became a widely known and respected field thanks to Paulo Freire's *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, a literature masterpiece that for the first time in the 1970s illustrated the critical relationship between oppression, schooling and conscientization. *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* by Paulo Freire is book that changed the overall perspective of education by linking it to issues of social justice, as well as issues of society in general, especially those that work against minority and marginalized groups. In essence, "Pedagogy of the Oppressed" challenges issues of power and social injustice, and Freire's work "was readily embraced in societies struggling against colonialism and other forms of totalitarianism, his acceptance in the so-called open and democratic societies, such as the United States and nations of Western Europe, has been more problematic"

due to the fact that often those societies tend to negate the overall issues of social injustice and oppression since those signs of social injustice and oppression are more hidden and less obvious than other societies where the oppression is easily visible and perceivable (Freire, 1970). Part of the problem relies on the fact that “advanced” societies are too distracted with superficial artifacts that often limits their perceptions regarding social injustices and oppression.

As Freire illustrates in *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, it’s fundamental for people, especially students to have curiosity about their realities. The problem as stated by Freire (1970) is that

when students lack both the necessary epistemological curiosity and a certain conviviality with the object of knowledge under study, it is difficult to create conditions that increase their epistemological curiosity in order to develop the necessary intellectual tools that will enable him or her to apprehend and comprehend the object of knowledge (p. 19).

With equal importance, Freire outlines that is through the schooling process that students should develop that fundamental curiosity, a key component of critical thinkers. In addition, Freire illustrates that the traditional educational approach offers a minimal space for critical thinking, since it’s mostly based on outdated pedagogies that rely on repetition and standardized testing. Freire argues that is in the schools where students should fully develop their critical thinking skills, where they question their realities and the realities of their loved ones, especially if they belong to a minority or marginalized group.

Critical pedagogy stimulates change, and *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* by Paulo Freire, became the first widely known educational perspective about social justice in society, from an educator’s perspective. In *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, Freire illustrates the traditional roles of the oppressor and of the oppressed, with a strong emphasis on conscientizing the oppressed about their role of oppressed. With equal importance Freire argues that it is everyone’s responsibility to alert and conscientize others about the nature and social injustice of oppression practices. Also, Freire points out that educators (teachers) have the critical and important role of conscientizing

their students, regardless of the oppression educational parameters established by the educational authorities. Furthermore, Freire points out that anyone who has been alerted or conscientized about oppression must share that knowledge with the overall goal of contributing a more fair and healthy society. Along with this ideology, Freire (1970) illustrates that very often oppressed people who become aware of their oppression react negatively to that reality which “almost always, during the initial stage of the struggle, the oppressed, instead of striving for liberation, tend themselves to become oppressors, or sub-oppressors” (p. 45). The problem illustrated above by Freire reflects one of the biggest challenges that the oppressor and the oppressed face, before and after realizing their role of either, oppressor or oppressed. Furthermore, Freire argues that conscientizing others about their roles of oppressed is only the beginning step of a transformational process, that we must also alert those individuals and groups of the devastating damages that oppression cause on others with the ultimate goal of avoiding oppressed individuals and groups to become oppressors and cause damage to others, just like it was done to them. Freire strongly emphasizes breaking the vicious cycle of oppressed and of the oppressor, especially in the classrooms, since it where students most learn the roles of being oppressed and of being oppressor.

In addition, Freire (1970) explains that “the humanist revolutionary educator cannot wait” or depend on the educational structures to change, that from the outset, the educator’s “efforts must coincide with those of the students to engage in critical thinking and the quest for mutual humanization” (p. 75). Freire (1970) explains that “it is only when the oppressed find the oppressor out and become involved in the organized struggle for their liberation that they begin to believe in themselves” (p. 65). In many ways, Freire argues that the oppressor and the oppressed must work together in order to fully eradicate oppression. The oppressor deals with struggles of ambition and power that are hard to let go. In contrast with this, the oppressed deals with struggles of

marginalization and very often fatalistic attitudes that most of the time makes the oppressed makes wrong, unproductive and unhumanistic decisional that tend to repeat the cycle of oppression with other vulnerable individuals and groups. In many ways, *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* was more than a book: it was and continues to be a wakeup call to educators and to society in general since it illustrates and outlines that oppression overwhelmingly exists in all societies. In addition, *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* outlines the need to be conscientized about oppression and social justices, since it affects the vast majority of the general population. Also, *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* offers educators and non-educators a view of oppression, its characteristics, its limitation and its implication from an educational and sociological point of view, where the ultimate goal is creating awareness of the historical and continuing problem of oppression. Lastly, *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* offers general guidance on how to approach the general struggles of minority and marginalized groups, with the ultimate goal of developing a sustainable and humanistic society that cares about all members of society.

Furthermore, in Memmi's (1967) *The Colonizer and the Colonized*, the topic of colonization is addressed from a critical perspective. A colony, as historically defined, has specific characteristics which don't apply to today's context. However, when analyzed from a critical perspective, some of the characteristics of traditionally known colonization can be related to today's context in regards to control. With equal importance, it's stated that the colonizer often ignores his situationality in a colonized context, as being in a privileged position usually results in not understanding and visualizing the struggles of the colonized. Sartre (1965) explains that "the colonizer has nevertheless not yet become aware of the historic role which will be his. He is lacking one step in understanding his new status" (p. 7). Furthermore, new colonizers often assume their roles of colonizers even if at first they don't assume it due to the exposure of cruel conditions that

derive from colonization. Sartre (1965) explains that “It sometimes happens at new arrival—astonished by the large number of beggars, the children wandering about half-naked, trachoma, etc., ill at ease before such obvious organization of injustice, revolted by the cynicism of his own fellow citizens” (p. 19). Colonizers are either willingly or unwillingly routed towards assuming their roles of colonizers, and refusing to become colonizers results in exclusion and punishment. It’s clear that doing the correct things in life, or making the most ethical decisions is not an easy task, and often requires joining the struggles of those marginalized and oppressed. Being a colonizer is simply being an oppressor, due to the fact that oppression derives from it directly or indirectly.

Moreover, critical pedagogy allows for the emergence of critical dialogue. In (1999) *Pedagogy, culture, language and race: A dialogue* Donaldo Macedo and Paulo Freire (1999) engage in a critical dialogue that covers a wide range of topics, from Freire’s work criticism to issues of a constantly evolving 21st century. A very important point that is illustrated in this dialogue, is the need for social justice advocates, liberators, educators and theorists to relate their work to their personal story as it makes their arguments more relevant and in some ways may increase the level of credibility that people assign to their work. With equal importance, Freire and Macedo (1999) illustrate the importance of teachers by explaining that “teachers who engage in an educational practice without curiosity, allowing their students to avoid engagement with critical readings, are not involved in dialogue as a process of learning and knowing” (p. 382). With this said, it’s clear that knowing critical content is not enough to teach critically, that knowing content that awakens critical thinking doesn’t transcend by itself in a pedagogy that facilitates critical dialogue. One must first deconstruct and then construct knowledge in manners that facilitate the creation of change, that is, liberation. Dialogue is key, however one must be cautious to maintain

a delicate and necessary balance between integrating personal experiences with theoretical content. One must learn to relearn, as it is key not only for critical educators but for people in general.

In *The Politics of Education: Culture, Power, and Liberation*, Paulo Freire (1985) reflects on several constructs predominant and neglected in education. Freire emphasizes the importance of knowledge as an instrument of either domestication or liberation. Freire (1985) argues that knowledge cannot be treated and approached as something artificial and that consciousness cannot be detached or separated from knowledge since both are interconnected; therefore, “knowledge is not something that’s made and finished. And consciousness is an intention toward the world” (p. 100). Furthermore, Freire emphasizes the critical role of history, and how it needs to play a primary role in education since history is knowledge and historical knowledge has the power of informing our consciousness in critical manners. Lastly, Freire emphasizes the importance of political literacy as in a regular basis it plays a critical role in people and in people’s perception in regards to their reality and in their awareness of the nature of their reality. Schools still serve the purpose of indoctrinating and facilitating social control; therefore, the need to literate politically students so that they reflect critically in their present, in their reality and in the choices they make.

Additionally, in *Paulo Freire on Higher Education: A Dialogue at the National University of Mexico*, Paulo Freire (1994) establishes a dialogue with the goal of understanding how education can become an instrument of liberation instead of oppression as traditionally is, especially in marginalized countries such as Mexico. Power is symbolically constructed in manners that are easy to indoctrinate to targeted populations. The importance of understanding how power is constructed, maintained and operated is strengthened by all scholars involved in this dialogue since “the power in power has domination as one of its instruments-by means of imposing limitations and depleting the symbolic forces that emerge from the popular classes in search for power”

(Freire, 1994, p. 78). Unless the oppressed and marginalized don't learn how to create power from within the struggles and how to maintain it, it will be impossible to obtain social justice, equity and equality. The lack of freedom of teaching and formation as well as the virtual, real and hidden curricula and the lack of democratization of higher education are the primary influential forces reproducing societies at large. The need for dialogue is critical not only in education, but in general, as is the most important teaching tool one can utilize to uncover oppression and to empower the oppressed.

As critical pedagogy is concerned with issues of social justice, the need to deconstruct privilege becomes necessary for a critical pedagogue. In *Critical Pedagogy and the Problem of Privilege*, the issue of teaching critically in privileged populations is examined. As illustrated in most critical pedagogy theoretical frameworks, teaching and learning critically involves analyzing and evaluating through an ethical scope their realities and situationalities in life. Critical pedagogy is concerned with analytical and critical thinking, not only in a theoretical; manner but in a relevant manner as well, where one self-evaluates her or his reality using a critical rationale. Teaching white populations critically often results in resistance due to the fact that they are often in privileged positions, which makes them perceive their reality in general as normal. In other words, it's hard for privileged people to relate to the struggles of oppressed and marginalized people unless they experience oppression. Teaching privileged populations critically is key for reducing and eradicating oppression, since conscientizing those in privileged positions about the implication of having dominant and non-dominant groups can potentially help in changing the paradigm of oppression.

Education, has the tremendous potential of empowering and conscientizing people with the goal of liberating oppressed and marginalized populations. In *A Critical Encounter*, Paulo

Freire (1993) illustrates some of the basic needs that a critical educator must possess, such as hope in the human race, and stresses the importance of setting up constructive and liberating dialogue as well as the integration of critical consciousness in every stage of dialogue. It's critical to understand the politics are present in almost any human interaction, especially in the classrooms as "politics also resides in the discourse of the classroom, in the way teachers and students talk to each other" (Freire, 1993, p. 27). The task of conscientization and liberation requires is a lot more comprehensive than just teaching, as actions say a lot more than words, and that's why critical pedagogy requires for educators to be fully engaged in the process, intellectually, verbally and physically. It's fundamental for critical educators to pose problems in manners that lead to constructive dialogue, empowerment and liberation. Critical consciousness is the main goal of a critical pedagogist and involves addressing power awareness, critical literacy, de-socialization and self-organization or self-education. Freire (1993) that in order to achieve critical consciousness in the classroom, the teacher must engage in a pedagogy that is participatory, situated, critical, democratic, dialogic, dissocialized, multicultural, research oriented, activist and affective.

In *Teachers as Cultural Workers*, Freire illustrates that the job of a teacher is a lot more complex and requires more effort than what the general perception encompasses. Freire (1998) explains that "teaching and learning take place in such a way that those who teach learn" (p. 17). Teaching critically requires to be critically humble in the classroom in order to openly and willingly learn from those who are there to learn. Freire illustrates that critical teaching requires more than what the traditional teaching practices go by, it requires initiative, extra effort, and most importantly reevaluating previously learned knowledge. Freire (1998) argues that it "is not appropriate for us to wait for material transformations before we begin to face up to the problem of reading and writing correctly" (p. 25). We educators are in a field that requires us to be part of

the change. Waiting for things to change or happen comes with a tremendous price, one that doesn't alleviate issues of oppression and inequality. If critical educators have decided to enter and stay in the field of education, they in many ways are daring to challenge the context where their teaching occurs.

Furthermore, in *Teaching to Transgress: Education as the Practice of Freedom*, bell hooks (1994) argues the need for teaching to serve as an instrument to help people in transitioning from a limited situationality to a more inclusive and liberating one where change occurs and where the teacher and student must work together to achieve constructive and liberating change. hooks (1994) acknowledges the critical importance of Freire's work in her persona, academically and non-academically and explains that Freire "gave me a language. He made me think deeply about the construction of an identity and resistance" (p. 46). Issues of colonization, dominance, privilege, oppression and many more are addressed by Hooks in manners that clearly make them relevant to Freire's work and most importantly to the struggles that a black woman faces on a regular basis. Hooks emphasizes the importance of education since it highly influences identity and rationale formation. Hooks (1994) makes reference to Terry Eagleton who argues that "children make the best theorist, since they have not yet been educated into accepting our routine social practices as natural" (p. 59). *Teaching to Transgress* is a literature piece that gave a strong voice to contemporary feminist, but also that acknowledges Freire's contributions to teaching to transgress.

Additionally, in *Education for Critical Consciousness*, Freire emphasizes not only the importance of education, but the critical need to have education recipients go through a consciousness process, which should ultimately be at the core of schooling. Freire (1998) argues that "the special contribution of the educator to the birth of the new society would have to be critical education which could help to form critical attitudes" (p. 32). In a way, teaching content

should not be the primary focus of education, but the relevance and application of content to the realities of people. The who's, why's, and how's of knowledge formation should be the primary focus of an educator, as it will awaken curiosity in learners about the adequateness of their realities. Freire (1998) describes it as an educational method that "helps a person to become consciously aware of his context and his condition as a human being as Subject" (p. 56). Educating others involves compassion for the oppressed which requires a commitment to address issues of oppression of others in pedagogical manners that allows the oppressed to realize the presence of oppression and to become aware of the mechanisms in which oppression operates.

Moreover, in *Cultural Action for Freedom: 2000*, Paulo Freire (1972) emphasizes the need to discover and critically analyze and understand the implications of the dominating culture. Cultural frameworks have historically been used to empower privileged groups and to marginalize and oppress others; therefore, the need to acknowledge the mechanisms in how culture operates. Freire (1972) argues that "education is cultural action for freedom and therefore an act of knowing and not memorization" (p. 1). Culture is everywhere, especially in the constructs and influential factors people engage in, such as education. Culture can very easily become an efficient instrument of oppression, such as the culture of silence, which enforces obedient and passive behavioral models to targeted populations, especially mainstream and working classes. Freire (1972) illustrates that

in the culture of silence the masses are mute that is, they are prohibited from creatively taking part in the transformations of their society and therefore prohibited from being. Even if they can occasionally read and write because they were taught in humanitarian but not humanistic literacy campaigns, they are nevertheless alienated from the power responsible for their silence (p. 7).

It is fundamental for critical educators to have a character of commitment where being cultural workers of change is at the core of their theory and practice.

In *I know why this doesn't feel empowering: A critical race analysis of critical pedagogy*, Gloria Ladson-Billings (1997) outlines factors and reasons why critical pedagogy and Critical Theory fail to serve its purpose in some circumstances. Ladson-Billings (1997) argues that often in Critical Theory/pedagogy “discourse of race is denied and muted in analysis of education and social inequality” (p. 11). It's critical not only to acknowledge the presence of social injustices, but most importantly to understand the presence of the identities of the oppressed and their relationship to the social inequalities and oppression. Race is and should always be at the core of Critical Theory; critical pedagogy and race are determinant on the emergence and existence of oppression. There is a strong and needed relationship between critical race theory and education and “the application of critical race theory to education means that critiques of education can no longer be race neutral or colorblind” (Ladson-Billings, 1997, p. 131). If Critical Theory and critical pedagogy's goals are empowering those who receive it, then it must have racial identity at the core of it since “any effort at critical pedagogy in the context of a racialized society without significant attention being paid to race will never be empowering” (Ladson-Billings, 1997, p. 137).

Critical pedagogy not only serves as a platform to critically analyze phenomena, but also offers pathways for critical self-reflection. In *Letters to Christina*, Paulo Freire (1998) reflects on his own past in a manner that allows the readers to understand how he became a critical pedagogue. *Letters to Christina* illustrates diverse meaningful stories, and the impact they had on him. Some letters clearly show how privilege played a role in his personal and academic identity. Freire's stories can be highly related to his literature masterpiece *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* since it is what he went through as a child and young adult that lead him to develop an identity guided by ethics, equality and social justice. *Letters to Christina* not only reveal his past but more importantly reveal Freire's compassionate side. As implied in *Letters to Christina*, one cannot become

something without a past. Whether people had a positive, negative, privileged or unprivileged past, it's our personal history that in many manners guides our pathways and leads us to become who we now are. A person without a past is a person without a foundational future. As Freire (1998) illustrates, our past has more to offer than what we sometimes think and is critical to appreciate our history even when it was challenging, because even struggling conditions later teach us to appreciate other things in life. We are the result of history, but most importantly, we decide on how our past is applied to our present.

With equal importance, in *Pedagogy of Hearth*, Paulo Freire elaborates on his own life in regards to his pathway as educator, political activist, democrat and radical reformer. Freire (1998) emphasizes the critical role of globalization and explains that “change represents a profound shift of economic time and space” (p. 9). Furthermore, Freire illustrates that whenever there is change, there is a possibility for change, however, change in the socio-economic world often favors the elite and aggravates the conditions of the oppressed since those in power are often the ones promoting and dictating change. In addition, Freire emphasizes the importance of the agreements and disagreements that exist between neoliberals and progressives, and that the differences that exist between them are primarily the main reason for disengaging in a coalition for change. Freire later illustrates that capitalism not only dictates economics but social order as well, since its mechanisms establish a strong relationship between economics and dominant sociological influential factors. Lastly, Freire stretches the importance of tolerance, because it is key in: finding midpoints, in finding solutions, in establishing dialogue and most importantly in connecting with others in meaningful manners.

Furthermore, in *Mentoring the Mentor*, Paulo Freire (1997) engages in a dialogue aimed at answering some of the questions presented in regards to his work. Freire's understanding of other

scholar's perceptions of his work transcends to a point of reinvention and with that said, Freire argues that questions and responses need to be reinvented. Freire acknowledges the importance of methods and the importance of accommodating those methods to the context where pedagogy occurs. With equal importance, Freire illustrates that without listening and talking, critical dialogue cannot emerge. Furthermore, Freire acknowledges that the complexity of the interconnection between race, class and gender, especially in privileged areas such as in the United States are critical and require constant assessment. Furthermore, Freire addressed the complexity of understanding multiple identities when it comes to oppression. In addition, the importance of ethics, ethical clarity, and the fear of ethics in educators are deconstructed from a critical perspective. With much importance, Freire emphasizes the role of mentors in creating democratic societies, which strengthens the importance of teachers as ethical mentors. Freire (1997) concludes by illustrating that as critical people "we are in the split of our understanding of dialogue and reinvention" and that agents of change need "to reinvent what is here and what makes it alive in history" (p. 329).

Additionally, in *Pedagogy of the City*, Paulo Freire (1991) reflects on his role as Secretary of Education in Brazil. Freire points out that becoming an education administrator validated his arguments about the importance of critical education in a democratic society. Freire (1991) explains that "it is an orchestrated effort by education conservatives to retain and foster the growth of an elitist system of schooling insulated from the impervious to students from increasingly varied economic, social, and ethnic backgrounds" (p. 10). Often oppression is perceived and even felt by some, however experiencing the mechanisms or oppression first hand, as Freire did, not only gives validity to his theoretical arguments, but also emphasizes the critical need to reevaluate the role of education in a democratic society. *Pedagogy of City* illustrates the importance of understanding

the context of the city and relate it to the reality encountered in the schooling process. As brilliantly described by Freire, the city itself is in many ways a mirror of the education taught and learned by the habitants of the city. Often in theory, the context of education is analyzed using a narrow scope that mostly addresses the issues inside of the educational system; however, it's outside the classrooms, in metropolitan, urban and rural areas where some of the main solutions to a broken educational system can be found.

Moreover, in *Pedagogy of Hope*, Paulo Freire (1994) emphasizes the importance of hope not only in an educational context, but in life in general. Critical education, can only occur under democratic educational frameworks, and in times where those are non-existing, they must be created by everyone who plays a role in the educational context, from teachers to janitors, as they all play a direct or indirect role in the schooling process. Freire reflects in a very personal manner on his memories as an exile, where desperation, frustration, and anxiety were always present in his thoughts; however, hope was also tin his thoughts, keeping him focus about the importance of his educational and social justice pathway. Freire (1994) explains that hope already exists in us, in diverse manners even though sometimes we don't perceive it present in us and argues that "hope of producing the objects is a basic to the worker as the hope of remaking the world is indispensable in the struggle of oppressed man and woman" (p. 31).

Critical pedagogy also offers a platform for critical analysis, which in diverse manners is the essence of critical pedagogy, where no one is excluded. In *Myths of Paulo Freire*, Kathleen Weiler (1996) presents her perspective on how Freire is often perceived, analyzed and criticized by academics and non-academics. Freire is often seen as the main influential educator of the century and as one of the most important intellectual activists of the century which has led people to appreciate his critical work and to critically analyze the gaps and flaws that his work might have.

For example, concerns of patriarchy and sexism are often argued to be a weakness of Freire's work. Weiler (1996) illustrates that Freire's "failure to address patriarchal privilege or sexist oppression" exemplify why some of his theory wasn't fully adopted by some minority and marginalized groups, such as by feminists. In addition, Weiler addresses some the commentary done by some of the main scholars that have based their work on Freire. Wailer (1996) outlines some important points such as that criticisms are important, but most importantly questions if "it is enough to reinvent Freire, as other do" without acknowledging the blind spots that are present in Freire's work. Weiler (1996) concludes by writing that

ultimately, it is Freire's stance against the values of the cruel and mean-spirited age which we live, and his affirmation of the possibility of a bohemian pedagogy of happiness that we have led to the creation and embracing of Paulo Freire by educators throughout the world (p. 371).

That is precisely what we should never lose, the origin of our curiosity and of our enchantment.

For example, in *Che Guevara, Paulo Freire and the Pedagogy of Revolution*, Peter McLaren (2002) establishes a connection between Che Guevara's legacy and Paulo Freire's contributions and how they contribute to the development of revolutionary theory and practice. McLaren illustrates how Freire's early life's stages along with the struggles he faced made Freire a revolutionary, not by choice but by conviction. McLaren (1998) illustrates that Freire's "work centered on the issues of social and political change" reflected his own struggles which in a way are still the struggles of some. In a way, one becomes an advocate of the struggles she or he faces, if critical consciousness guides the pathways and decisions made (p. 148). Becoming and being a revolutionary requires not only sympathizing with the struggles of the oppressed, but most importantly it requires to engage in a lifestyle that is relevant to the struggles one is fighting. Moreover, Freirean pedagogy was profoundly committed to honoring the experiences of the

oppresses, though not necessarily taking such experiences as face value but as reflections of struggling realities. In addition, the experiences of the oppressed served as a basis for interrogating the ideological dimensions of subjectivity and identity” (McLaren, 1998, p. 154). Addressing issues of the present context, not only requires understanding the origins and sources of the struggles, but also understanding the ideologies, worldviews, paradigms and identity of those facing the struggles.

With equal importance, in *Rereading Paulo Freire*, Moacir Gadotti analyzes several stances that Paulo Freire took during the several stages he went through as a writer, person and as a theorist. Gadotti’s observations about the rationale Freire uses clearly points out the desire for Freire to relate his theoretical arguments to other context, outside the classrooms. As Freire aged, he embraced a broader and optimistic perspective about the possible solutions of oppression in society. Gadotti (1994) illustrates that Freire’s argues that “violence prevents men from being” and that “the dominant class and above all the means of communication inculcate the idea that the popular classes, called marginal are violent, without noticing that the dominant classes themselves instigate this violence through the exploitation of labor” (p. 93). In fact, Freire’s argument about the connection of oppression with the causation of oppression are not only relevant, but consistent with his initial theorization about oppression. Moreover, Freire later presented his theoretical arguments in a more plural manner, which allowed for other scholars to incorporate his arguments and made them more relevant to diverse contexts. Later Freire became an educational administrator and promoted change from within the system, which allowed him to cause change from an empowered stance. Freire didn’t last long as a public servant, perhaps because he learned that his role in life should be directly linked to the struggles of the oppressed.

Critical pedagogy offers a platform for not only deconstructing knowledge, but also promotes the emergence and existence of constructive transformative frameworks. Student's poor academic performance in school can often be traced back to their perceptions and optimistic attitudes. Furthermore, students tend to not see or visualize schooling as something that will help them in the short or long term, which impacts their perception of schooling and tends to affect their optimism. Moreover, it's argued that living the moment, tends to hurt the student's perception of the future. In a similar manner teachers and educators in general tend to not see themselves as agents of change, instead they tend to become passive observants of history due to the situationality that they adopt inside and outside the classrooms. Moreover, arguments presented in regards to repressing situationalities are relevant to constructs often related to fatalism. Perceptions play an important and critical role in people's desire and engagement in pursuing something in life. Students who belong to minority and marginalized groups often struggle in the field of education in part due to the perceptions they have about academic achievement. Moreover, minority and marginalized student's perception on their individual and collective identity plays a critical role in regards to schooling and education. Everything starts at home and at school, sadly, sometimes those spaces that are supposed to nurture students into becoming successful, tend to do the opposite and indoctrinates them with an ideology that often benefits the elite groups. As illustrated above, critical pedagogy is multifunctional and has the potential of alerting, informing, conscientizing, and transforming people's realities; therefore, the reason why it was included in this dissertation study.

Theoretical Framework

Social Psychology, Critical Social Psychology and Critical Theory were the theoretical perspectives used in this dissertation study due to their theoretical relevance to the inquiries

presented in this study and to the nature of it. The theoretical perspectives contribute with historical and relevant theoretical arguments that fit the inquiries presented in this study. Social psychology presents historical theoretical arguments about the importance of perceptions, attitudes, feelings, thoughts, human behavior, impact of the surroundings, self-concepts, group dynamics, social relationships, and decision making among other relevant theoretical arguments that are a fit to the inquiries presented in this study. Critical Social Psychology allowed the inquiries and findings of this study to be examined from a perspective of social justice and inequality, Critical Social Psychology in multiple manners empowers those studied since its primary purpose is to uncover and address issues of oppression. Social Psychology and Critical Social Psychology complement each other by fulfilling the gaps that both theoretical perspectives enclose. Critical Theory in this study served the purpose of facilitating the development of honest explanations, constructive and liberating criticism, practical and achievable objectives for social transformation and of illustrating how the oppressed can transition to a fair reality, and deliver. Critical Theory enables the processes of individuals and groups becoming the “producers of their own historical form of life” (Horkheimer, 1993, p. 21). Critical Theory in this study allowed for the integration of cultural, sociological, psychological dimensions with the aim of linking them to the dominant institutional forms of domination. Lastly, Social Psychology, Critical Social Psychology and Critical Theory relate adequately to the methodology used in this study.

Social Psychology

Social psychology is concerned with studying how people’s feelings, thoughts and behaviors are impacted, influenced and determined by the presence and influential role of others (Allport, 1985). Social Psychology is a field of knowledge and often uses an empirical method of

research and investigation with measurable psychological variables in human beings. In addition, Social -Psychology is concerned with the influence of cultural norms, human behavior that derive from the interaction of diverse mental states and social situations (Allport, 1985). The Social Psychology framework searches for the linkages that may or may not exist between behavior and the presence of others, including the impact of the surroundings. Furthermore, Social Psychology defines attitudes as learned constructs which occur in environments where an individual or group forms its identity (Sison, 2008). Attitudes are essentially fundamental expressions of approval or disapproval, of likes and dislikes, of favorability or unfavorability (Bem, 1970). Furthermore, Social Psychology is concerned with social cognition, which in part is concerned with people's perception and memories about others, especially those who became significantly important to those individuals and groups (Moslowitz, 2005). Social Psychology is in addition highly concerned with the self-concept of individuals and groups. Social Psychology describes self-concept as the collectiveness of beliefs that individuals and groups have about themselves (Markus, 1977). Social Psychology is in addition concerned with group dynamics and how two or more individuals establish a connection with one another by social relationships, and how those relationships influence their decision making and perception (Forsyth, 2006). Lastly, the three most significant areas that determine social influence are conformity, obedience and compliance. Furthermore, social influence defines conformity as the rationale that individuals and groups use to behave and conduct themselves in manners like the majority of that community or society (Aronson, 2008).

Critical Social Psychology

Critical Social Psychology is concerned with issues of social justice and inequality. Although Critical Social Psychology has been often used in the political context to end oppression

of minority and marginalized groups, it has potential applicability to any field where issues of social justice and inequality exist and need to be examined. In addition, Critical Social Psychology is concerned with understanding how psychology contributes to unfair and unwanted social order. Furthermore, Critical Social Psychology places an emphasis on social factors that are often not address in depth by other theoretical frameworks. Critical Social Psychology places a special emphasis on how the context influences behavior. Understanding the influence and nature of power is essential to Critical Social Psychology since it is believed to be a major force that affects directly and indirectly those studies under a Critical Social Psychology theoretical framework. (Fox, 1997; Tuffin, 2005).

Critical Social Psychology research identifies and targets discriminating practices in regards to ethnic background, age, gender, sexuality, disability, religion, educational background, beliefs, etc. An important reason why Critical Social Psychology is unique and relevant to inquiries of social phenomena is that it acknowledges that a researcher cannot ever be neutral since complete control of subjectivity is inevitable. In contrast with this mainstream psychology argues that a researcher can be completely objective. Critical Social Psychology argues that the researcher will always be influenced by values and social beliefs due to the arguments that it cannot be separated from the context and sociological context where they function. Mainstream Social Psychology claims that individuals are processors of information and that beliefs and ideological formations are naturally formed through information processed by the mind through lived experiences (Fox, 1997; Tuffin, 2005).

Critical Theory

Critical Theory offers a unique philosophical approach as it establishes a strong connection between life, knowledge and history. Furthermore, Critical Theory presents itself in philosophically practical manners. Critical Theory strongly links philosophy to the human and social sciences and through this process links empirical and interpretative social science to normative claims of morality, truth and justice (Bohman, 2013). Critical Theory is emancipatory in nature as it seeks genuine and full emancipation of human beings as its primary goal is “to liberate human beings from the circumstances that enslave them” (Horkheimer 1982, p. 244). When applied to a contemporary theoretical framework, Critical Theory analyzes the dimensions of human domination in modern societies, and it achieves this goal by providing practical and functional descriptive and normative platforms for social inquiry with the main objective of reducing or eliminating domination; therefore, intensifying freedom to oppressed and marginalized populations. An important aspect of Critical Theory is that it is practical in a moral sense, rather than instrumental, which in diverse manners humanizes the researcher to the research, a fundamentally needed characteristic for promoting and facilitating liberation. As Horkheimer (1993) illustrated, Critical Theory seeks human emancipation where conditions of oppression and domination exist. Furthermore, Horkheimer argues that in order to achieve this liberating task, Critical Theory must be practical, normative and explanatory at once. Of most importance, Horkheimer explains that the outcome of the application of Critical Theory must be a clear explanation of what is improper in society, clearly identifying the oppressors and the oppressed. Moreover, Critical Theory aims at: illustrating how the oppressed can transition to a fair reality, providing honest explanations, providing constructive and liberating criticism and delivering practical and achievable objectives for social transformation. Ultimately, Critical Theory

facilitates the processes of human beings becoming the “producers of their own historical form of life” (Horkheimer, 1993, p. 21). Critical Theory allows for the integration of psychological, cultural and sociological dimensions with the aim of relating them to the dominant institutional forms of domination. Critical Theory has historically embraced the challenge of transforming capitalism into an agreed form of life, that in the process freedoms the oppressed and concienticizes the oppressors. Critical Theory offers an achievable political and social philosophy in contemporary settings. In addition, in Critical Theory democratic ideals and democracy are the primary mechanisms used to achieve freedom and social justice. As illustrated above Critical Theory is not only relevant to the inquiries presented in this study, but is fundamentally necessary to achieve the objectives of the study. A Sequential Transformative Methodology depends on a liberating theoretical framework, and Critical Theory not only satisfies that criteria, but also complements and intensifies the strength of the methodology used. To be a critical theorist is to be a liberating agent of change which is at the core of this study.

Summary

The literature review examined in chapter two examined the role and the theoretical historical context of fatalism, conformism, determinism and decision-making and how those constructs can potentially become repressing situationalities to individuals and groups. Also an examination of critical pedagogy and how it relates to study is presented. In addition, the foundational theoretical foundations and argumentations of Social Psychology, Critical Social Psychology and Critical Theory were examined. Moreover, it is explained how the theoretical perspectives are a suitable to the phenomena researched in this study. Chapter Three outlines in detail the methods and methodology used to collect, analyze and interpret the data collected.

CHAPTER 3

OVERVIEW OF METHODS, METHODOLOGY AND PROCEDURES

Chapter three of this dissertation study builds upon chapters one and two, which lay out the foundation of the study for the methodology. Furthermore, chapter three of the study is concerned with the methodology and methodological procedures. The methodology in this study draws from three worldviews or philosophical foundations. Based on the reasoning of the study a sequential transformative mixed methods methodology was implemented. Sequential transformative mixed methodology is concerned with injustices related to minority and marginalized groups and with the empowerment of those groups through the research protocol. The study used a sequential transformative mixed methods research design consisted of two phases, a quantitative and a qualitative phase. Moreover, a pragmatic worldview guided the methodology. The pragmatic worldview facilitated the implementation of the mixed methods in this specific study. Advantages and disadvantages in using a sequential transformative mixed methods research design are established in this chapter with the goal of illustrating the limitations, strengths and weaknesses of the study. In addition, a constructivist worldview was implemented to justify and guide the qualitative strand. Moreover, a post positivist worldview was used to justify and guide the quantitative strand used in the study. Both strands have the same priority as stated in the notation (QUAN → QUAL), the only remarkable difference is that the quantitative phase occurs first, followed by the qualitative phase. The integration of both strands occurred during the findings and recommendations chapter of the study. Reliability, validity, credibility and legitimization were established to make the study robust and protected from biases and from academic technicalities.

Sequential Transformative Mixed Methods Design

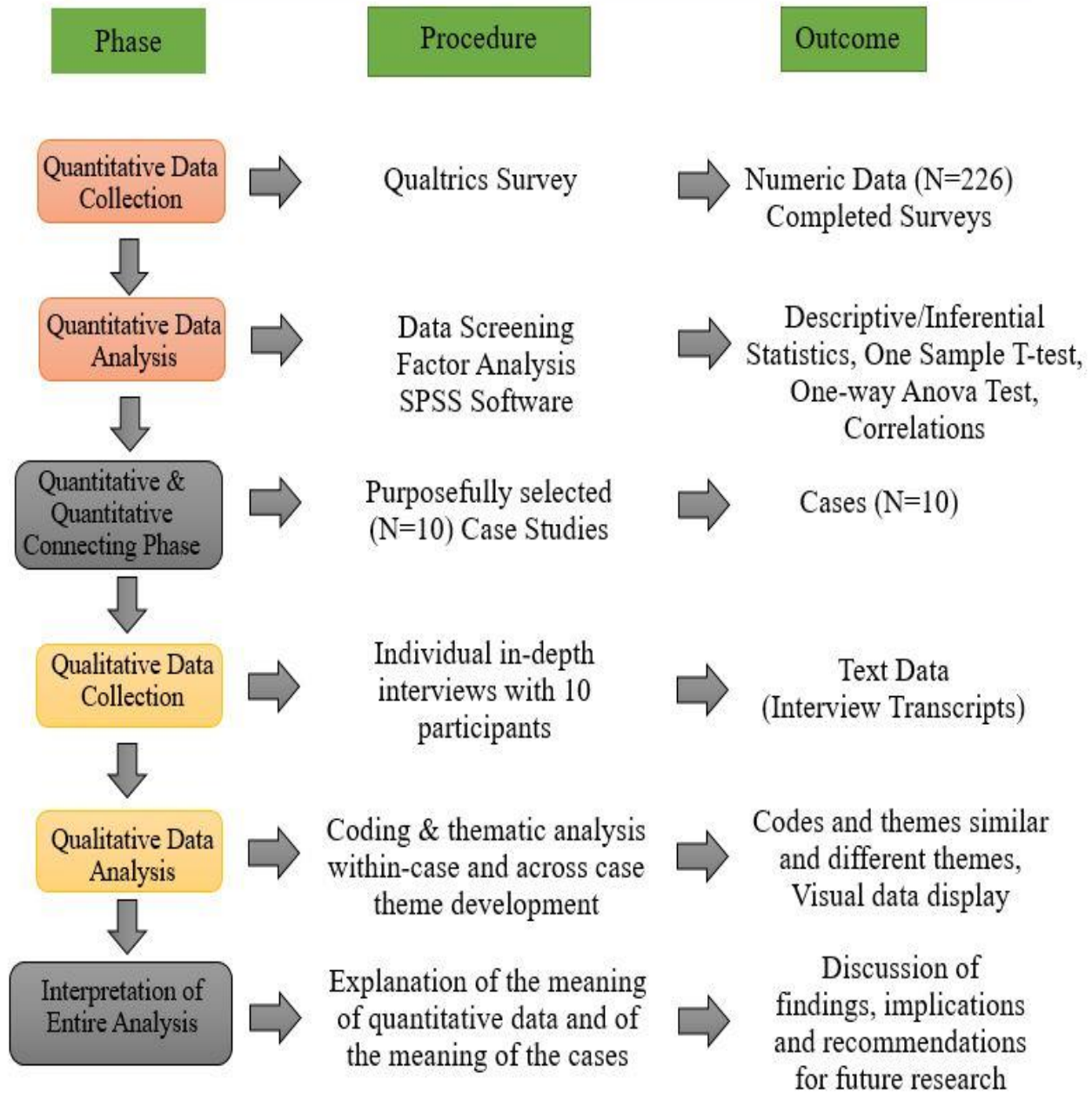


Figure 3.1 Visual Representation of the Applied Sequential Transformative Mixed Methods Design

Context of the Study

The struggling college and university graduation rates among minority and marginalized groups are not only alarming, but in need of prompt attention and intervention. Very often, the low college and university graduation rates among Mexican immigrants are attributed to socio-economics, language barriers and to the context where schooling occurs. Determinism, Fatalism and Conformism have been widely theorized and researched from several academic fields such as philosophy, anthropology, sociology, psychology and education, among others, however, the origins of factors that contribute to their continuing existence and the methods and mechanisms in how these factors need to be further explored, researched and understood.

The implications of adopting Deterministic, Fatalistic and Conformist situationalities are overwhelmingly negative and critical, however, minimal understanding of the dimensions of how those situationalities influence education and the process of schooling aren't explored as consistently as they should. If people are or become aware of the presence of Deterministic, Fatalistic and or Conformist constructs in themselves, does it make a difference in their situationality or do they develop apathy and or resistance towards transitioning from a repressing situationality to an optimist situationality? Is awareness or conscientization of the presence of repressing situationalities enough to motivate people to transition from a repressing situationality to a liberating and optimistic situationality? Further research is need it to understand if those constructs and or mechanisms can facilitate the transitioning from Deterministic, Fatalistic or Conformist situationality to a more optimistic and liberating situationality.

The low academic achievements attributed to Mexican immigrants have been extensively researched from a socio-economic perspective. In addition, the role of learning a second language when migrating to the United States and its impacts towards achieving academic success has been

broadly researched from scholars in the field of literacy and bi-literacy. Also, the role of not culturally sensitive settings and curriculum has been widely researched from several fields, such as critical pedagogy and multiculturalism among others. Identity constructs of Mexican immigrants and their relationship towards academic education and schooling have been previously researched, but they haven't been analyzed from a Critical Socio-Psychological perspective which in part guided this study.

The study took place in the city of El Paso, Texas. The city of El Paso, Texas is composed of mostly Latinos or Hispanics. According to the United States Census Bureau, the majority of the population that resides in El Paso, Texas are of Mexican descent. In addition, most of the immigrants who reside in the city of El Paso, migrated from Mexico. The participants who participated in the study were current or former college and university students. Lastly, the main significance of this dissertation study lies in the fact that minimal to no existing studies have explored how much do repressing situationalities may influence Mexican immigrant's desire to pursuit and successfully complete a college or university education, therefore, the rationale to challenge it through a mixed methods transformative research design.

Research Questions

1. How are social reproduction stratifications influenced by contextual hegemonic paradigms?
2. What stages of awareness are present in the social order when repressing situationalities are adopted or rejected?
3. How are deterministic, fatalistic, and conformist situationalities taught and learned through social engineering in society and why?
4. How can a critical examination of oppressive contextual ideologies and its impact on schooling be deconstructed and transformed into liberating situationalities?

Research Hypotheses

Hypothesis 1:

Repressing contextual situationalities such as *fatalism, determinism and educational conformism* are existent in most research participants.

Hypothesis 2:

Research participants with minimal to no socio-economic support from relatives manifest higher levels of *fatalism, determinism and educational conformism*.

Hypothesis 3:

Research participants unemployed or in stressed socio-economic conditions manifest higher levels of *fatalism, determinism and educational conformism*.

Hypothesis 4:

Research participants' responses in regards to *personal engagement, fatalism, social perception, educational perception, determinism and educational conformism* differ by their culture/ethnicity self-identification.

Hypothesis 5:

Research participant's responses in regards to *personal engagement, fatalism, social perception, educational perception, determinism and educational conformism* are related to their parents' level of education.

Hypothesis 6:

Fatalism, determinism and educational conformism will be negatively correlated with *personal engagement, educational perception and social perception*.

Research hypotheses were tested with the assistance of SPSS software. Hypothesis 1 was tested with a One-Sample T-Test. Hypothesis 2, 3 and 4 were tested using a One-Way ANOVA test. Hypothesis 5 was tested using a spearman correlation test. Hypothesis 6 was tested using a spearman correlation test. Results for the tested hypothesis can be found on chapter 4 quantitative results.

Transformative Mixed Methodology Approach Justification

This study used a mixed methods design, where procedures of collecting, analyzing and “mixing” both quantitative and qualitative data occurs at some or several stages of the research process within a single study with the goal of exploring and understanding this research problem more thoroughly and completely (Creswell and Plano Clark 2011, Tashakkori & Teddlie 1998). Furthermore, the rationale for mixing is that neither quantitative nor qualitative methods are sufficient enough by themselves to capture and understand the trends and details of the phenomenon studied, such as the complex phenomenon of the possible influence of repressing situationalities in regards to schooling and educational success (Creswell, 2011). Moreover, when quantitative and qualitative methods are mixed, they complement each other and allow for a more inclusive analysis (Tashakkori & Teddlie, 1998; Creswell, 2011).

The need for both qualitative and quantitative research to determine the extent to which repressing situationalities impact college completion in part motivated this study in obtaining new and critical explanations to this phenomenon. This research study made a step forward by combining both quantitative and qualitative approaches within one study with the goal of empowering minority and marginalized groups (Creswell, 2011; Tashakkori & Teddlie, 1998). The integration and mixing of the methods provided a deeper insight into the problem of the possible impacts of repressing situationalities on individuals and groups. Furthermore, it provided additional insights into how repressing situationalities may impact schooling the successful education completion. The study used a sequential transformative research design where a quantitative phase was followed by a qualitative phase. Some reasons for mixing the methods in this study were: triangulation, complementarity, development and initiation and expansion since

“combining mixed methods is challenging and should only be undertaken when there is a specific reason to do so” and is critical for “researchers to design mixed methods studies with at least one clear reason as to why they are planning to combine methods” (Creswell, 2011, p. 61). As illustrated above, the phenomena of repressing situationalities and its possible impacts on individuals, groups, the process of schooling and education justified the use of a sequential transformative mixed methods research design.

Transformative Mixed Methodology Research Design

The study used a sequential transformative mixed methods design which consisted of two distinct phases (Creswell, 2011). Based on the nature and rationale of the study, a transformative design was believed to be a suitable fit to address the purpose and needs of the study. As Creswell (2011) illustrated, the transformative design allows the researcher to “address issues of social justice and call for change” it also allows the researcher to “see the needs of underrepresented or marginalized populations”, and allows the researcher to “conduct the study without further marginalizing the population under study” (p. 97). The transformative framework starts with a quantitative data collection and analysis followed by qualitative data collection and analysis which lead to the mixing of the strands and to the interpretation of the findings. In addition, this sequential transformative research design had five phases. During the first phase I defined the problem and incorporated relevant literature. Moreover, during the first phase the research questions and hypothesis were developed. In the second phase I identified the research design to address the complexity of the problem with taking into account ethical considerations and most importantly prioritizing the needs of the population studied in this research. In the third phase I identified data sources and selected research participants. Through the research process I used research strategies

to minimize research challenges such as stereotypical labels and to improve the recognition of diversity. Moreover, during this phase I used strategies that allowed me to improve inclusiveness, adequate representation, ensure credibility, develop effective communication strategies, develop sensitiveness to the community of the population studied. In the fourth phase I identified the construct data collection methods and instrumentation. During this phase I guided the data collected to develop findings that benefit the community and aim for social change. In the fifth stage, I analyzed, interpreted, reported and used the results to possibly develop new hypothesis and theoretical frameworks. Furthermore, in this phase I analyzed the possible impacts on diverse groups and used the results to understand power relationships with the aim at social change. The rationale and nature of a transformative worldview aims to promote social change, to give a voice to oppressed and marginalized populations and to transform oppression to liberation. Moreover, the purpose of a transformative mixed methods design is aligned with the purpose of this study.

The primary reason for this study wasn't only illustrating the nature and reasons of the phenomenon studied but the use of the findings to advance the conditions of oppressed minority and marginalized groups. As Creswell (2010) points out "a transformative based framework is a framework for advancing the needs of underrepresented and marginalized populations" (p. 96). The importance of matching the design to the research problem, purpose and inquiries is highly strengthened by Creswell (2011) since a well-defined and matched mixed methods design "emphasizes the overall problem, purpose and research questions that are guiding the study" (p. 60). The research study followed prescribed guidelines that established strong relationships between the design, the problem, the purpose and the methods. Moreover, mixed methods research designs argue for researchers to use "what works". Lastly, priority, implementation and integration were highly considered dynamics while using this sequential transformative mixed

methods design. In mixed methods, priority refers to which strand, either qualitative or quantitative, is given more emphasis in the study. Moreover, implementation refers to whether the quantitative and qualitative data collection and analysis comes in sequence or in chronological stages, one following another, in parallel or concurrently. Furthermore, integration refers to the phase in the research process where the mixing or connecting of quantitative and qualitative data occurs (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2011).

Advantages in Using a Sequential Transformative Design

A critical strength in using a transformative design is that the researcher positions the study within a transformative framework and an advocacy or emancipator worldview. Also, the researcher helps empower individuals and groups with the objective of empowering oppressed minority and marginalized groups. In addition, in a transformative research design, participants play an active and critical role in the research. Lastly, the researcher is able to use a collection of methods that produces results that are both useful to community members and viewed as credible to stakeholders and policy makers (Creswell, 2011).

Challenges in Using a Sequential Transformative Design

Challenges in using a transformative design are that “there is still little guidance in the literature to assist researchers with implementing mixed methods in a transformative way” and what I did to overcome this challenge is to “review published mixed methods studies that employ a transformative lens” (Creswell, 2011, p. 99). Another challenge often encountered is “to justify the use of the transformative approach” which is to be approached by “explicitly discussing the philosophical and theoretical foundations as part of the study proposal and report” (Creswell, 2011,

p. 99). Lastly, another challenge is to “develop trust with participants and be able to conduct the research in a culturally sensitive way” (Creswell, 2011, p. 99). To overcome this challenge ample time was devoted to develop solid and sustainable trust from the participants and in the process implemented critical multiculturalism as part of the theoretical framework to be as culturally sensitive as possible

Notation of Research Design

(QUAN → QUAL) = The priority in this research design is equal to both, the qualitative and quantitative method. An important factor in this research design is that the quantitative phase takes place first. Moreover, once the quantitative phase has been completed, obtained data from the quantitative phase is used to start the qualitative phase. The research design is sequential and that’s why the quantitative phase is followed by a qualitative phase.

Integration of the strands

The quantitative and qualitative methods were integrated at the beginning of the qualitative phase while selecting the participants for the case study analysis. Furthermore, the strands were integrated when the interview protocol was selected for the qualitative phase based on the statistical results obtained during the quantitative phase. In addition, during the analyzation process of the data, the results of the two phases were also integrated which lead to the interpretation of the findings, discussion and recommendations chapter.

Quantitative Methodology

In quantitative research, the investigator relies on numerical data (Gravetter, 2012).

Furthermore, a post-positivist paradigm is used for developing knowledge, such as: cause and effect thinking, reduction to specific variables, hypotheses and questions, use of measurement and observation and the test of theories. In addition, in quantitative research, the “researcher isolates variables and causally relates them to determine the magnitude and frequency of relationships. Furthermore, the researcher determines which variables to investigate and chooses instruments, which will yield highly reliable and valid scores (Gravetter, 2012).

Target Population and Sample

Sampling was determined by the guidelines of the strand, and very often participants are unique to each strand’s needs, but when it comes to Mixed Methods, is common to have participants being part of the quantitative and qualitative phase, depending on the design such as in this Sequential Transformative Design (Creswell, 2011). Overall, the Mixed Methods design guides the researcher in determining how to sample and if participants can engage in the collection of data of one or multiple strands. The targeted population in this study were current, former and dropout higher education students. Recruitment of participants occurred through the UTEP’s CIERP database. Sampling was dictated by the Mixed Methods design and it used the same participants in both of the strands. In this sequential transformative mixed methods research design, participants were first engaged in the quantitative phase where a convenience sample was used. Moreover, from the quantitative phase participants, 10 were selected to participate in the qualitative phase.

Quantitative Sampling

For the quantitative phase of the study a convenience sample was used, which were recruited from the UTEP’s CIERP database, N=268. Of the original sample size of 268

respondents, 42 were removed due to missing data in at least half of the responses in the core survey questions, leaving a valid sample of n=226 for data analysis. Within this sample, all respondents had valid responses for all questions within the core survey questions.

Quantitative Instrumentation

The instruments used for the quantitative phase of the study were: demographic questionnaires, open-ended questionnaires, rating scales questionnaires, and rating scale surveys which were made available to the participants via email. Participants received an email invitation with a web link to participate in the research.

Quantitative Data Analysis

Screening of the data on univariate and multivariate levels was conducted. Moreover, all statistical analysis of the quantitative results was conducted with the assistance of Statistical Package for Social Sciences software (SPSS). Through data screening potential multicollinearity in the data was identified due to multivariate tests' sensitiveness to extremely high correlations among predictor variables. Outlying cases were excluded from the analysis. Data screening included the descriptive and inferential statistics for all selected variables. One Sample T-test, One-Way ANOVA and matrix correlation tests were conducted to assist determining relationships and correlations. Results of the descriptive and inferential statistics were summarized in text and reported in tabular form

Determining Variables in the Quantitative Analysis

In this study, qualitative research represents the aspect of data collection and analysis in the study, focusing on in-depth explanations of quantitative results by exploring 10 maximal variation cases.

Establishing Reliability and Validity

In the quantitative phase of the study, validity was achieved through the research design, data collection, data analysis, and data interpretation since all of those components play a critical role in increasing and validating the results obtained in the study. In addition, the way, time, reasons and rationale where those components met, guided the development and establishment of validity in the study.

Qualitative Methodology

Furthermore, in qualitative research, data is collected from informants immersed in everyday life of the naturalistic setting in which the study is framed and studied. Data analysis is based on the values that these participants perceive for their world. The ultimate goal for qualitative inquiry is to produce an understanding of the problem based on multiple and diversely rich contextual factors (Marshall, 2011; Denzin, 2009;Madison, 2012; Creswell 2010).

Qualitative Sampling

For the purpose of the second, qualitative phase of the study, the purposeful sample, which implies intentionally selecting individuals to learn to understand the central phenomenon. The idea is to purposefully select informants, who will best answer the research questions and who are information rich. Due to the nature of the transformative sequential design of this study, the selection of the participants for the second, qualitative phase in part depended on the results from

the quantitative phase. Based on these results, maximal variation sampling, in which a 50 researcher samples cases or individuals differing on some characteristic, were used. For this study, the participants were selected based on the statistically significant difference results from the discriminant function analysis: participants varied on how they responded to the survey making up the variable yielding a statistically significant discriminant function. In some cases where none of the discriminant functions were statistically significant, the participants were selected based on their different responses to the variable/s making up the factor with the highest eigenvalue in factor analysis. In the second phase, a qualitative multiple case study approach was used to collect text data through individual semi-structured interviews “to help explain why certain external and internal factors, tested in the first phase, may be significant predictors for achieving college success. The rationale for this approach is that the quantitative data and results provide a general picture of the research problem, i. e., what internal and external factors contribute to college student’s persistence and success in higher education while the qualitative data and its analysis refined and explained those statistical results by exploring participants’ views in more depth.

Qualitative Instrumentation

The instruments to be used for the qualitative phase of the study are: demographic questionnaires, open-ended questionnaires, in depth interviews and reflective journals. Furthermore, those instruments will be developed after collecting and analyzing the quantitative data. The rationale for the usage of case studies is that a case study is a type of ethnographic design (Creswell, 2002; LeCompte & Schensul, 1999) and is an exploration of a “bounded system” or a case over time, through detailed, in-depth data collection involving multiple sources of information and rich in context (Merriam, 1988; Creswell 2011). In this study, the instrumental multiple cases

(Stake, 1995) will serve the purpose of illuminating a particular issue (Creswell, 2011), such as Socio-Psychological factors and their relationship towards higher education. The primary technique will be conducting in-depth semi-structured interviews with 10 students. With equal importance triangulation of different data sources is important in case study analysis (Creswell, 2011).

Qualitative Data Analysis

The steps in qualitative analysis included: (1) preliminary exploration of the data by reading through the transcripts and writing memos; (2) coding the data by segmenting and labeling the text; (3) using codes to develop themes by aggregating similar codes together; (4) connecting and interrelating themes; and (5) constructing a narrative. To augment the further discussion, the visual data display was created to show the evolving conceptual framework of the factors and relationships in the data. In the quantitative analysis, data collection and analysis proceed simultaneously. In the second, qualitative phase of the study, the text data obtained through the interviews was coded and analyzed for themes for the qualitative data analysis.

Data obtained from the interviews was analyzed in a systematic and through manner. Transcripts from the interviews were read several times to ensure all relevant information was included in the coding, development of patterns and themes. Interviewees participated in semi-structured interviews. A combination of structured and open-ended questions were presented to the research participants which allowed for an open discussion with the interviewees. Interviewees were presented the questions of the survey they answered in the quantitative phase of the study and were asked to explain openly why they answered the way they did. Additionally, the interviewees elaborated openly on additional factors that contributed to their responses. The narratives provided by the interviewees provided rich contextual information related to the

inquiries presented to them. The theoretical framework served as the lens to analyze and interpret the interviews data. This study used a theoretical framework composed of Social Psychology, Critical Social Psychology and Critical Theory. A thematic analysis was used to analyze the qualitative data. Relevant themes and patterns were identified in the analyzed data. The thematic analysis served as a framework to interpret and make sense of the data. Across case themes were established to not only interpret the data but to answer the guiding research questions of the study.

The researcher met the research participants in a location selected by the research participants to ensure the environment where the interview was conducted was within the comfort zone of the interviewees. Interviewees were informed that interviews were going to be audio recorded. Once the interviews were recorded, using protected equipment, the audio recorded interviews were transcribed into Microsoft Word. Researcher took notes of first impressions. Every interviewee was assigned an identification code and a pseudonym to protect the identity of the research participants. Once the audio interviews were transcribed into Microsoft word, they were transferred to Microsoft Excel where there were grouped. Transcribed data with similar meaning was moved to labeled categories, allowing for coding and indexing. The labeling, coding and indexing was built with a combination of words, sentences, phrases, actions and attitudes from the research participant's transcribed data. Labeled categories were created based on information that derived from the literature review and from the theoretical framework. Once all transcribed data was placed into one or more labeled sections, a process of data reduction and overlapping took place. During this phase of the analysis, a selection of the most relevant codes from the labeling phase took place leading to the creation of categories, group codes and group themes. Once labels were created, how categories connect to each other

was decided. Also, a description of the connections between the categories took place. During the next step, a hierarchy among the categories was established. In the last phase of the analysis results were written, interpreted and categories were described to establish how they connected to each other.

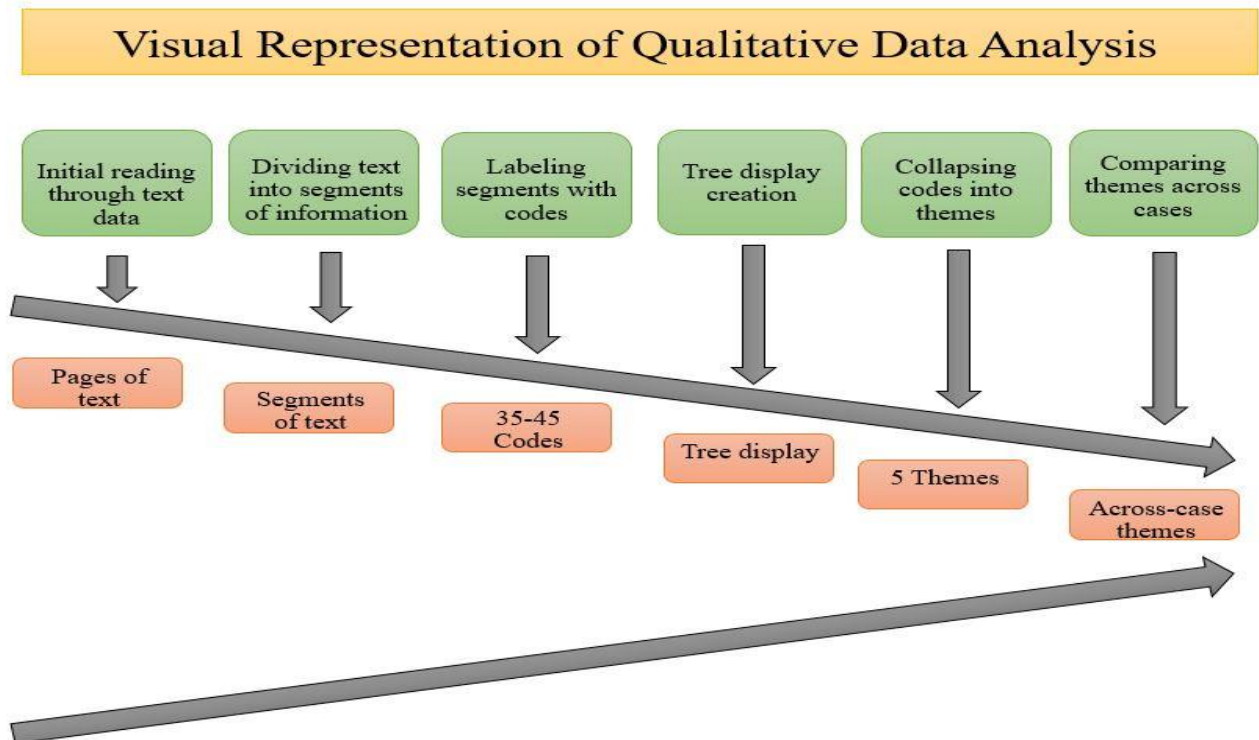


Figure 3.2 Visual Representation of the applied Qualitative Data Analysis Procedure

Establishing Credibility

In the qualitative phase of the study, credibility was achieved through the researcher, on the unbiased instrumentation used, on how the data collected, under what circumstances and conditions the data was obtained. In addition, the research design guides the development of the credibility since its dependent of the theoretical framework. Bias in general was highly and carefully monitored to achieve the highest level of credibility in the study. After all, it's the nature

of qualitative research to come in without assumptions and to seek understanding in a neutral manner.

Establishing Legitimization

Legitimization is relevant and linked to credibility and validity. However, legitimization in quantitative research is obtained through validity, a term linked to a post-positivism paradigm. In regards to qualitative research, legitimization can be obtained through credibility, which is more concerned with the actual research process, than with the results. Credibility in qualitative research can be achieved through a constructivist paradigm, which in essence is what guides qualitative research. All types of legitimization in mixed methods are critical however, I addressed more heavily in my study “the weakness minimization legitimization” because I am touching on a very critical phenomenon that hasn’t been touched using the theoretical framework that I used as my lens.

Summary

Chapter three of this dissertation study illustrated the methodology and methodological procedures to be used in the study. The worldviews or philosophical foundations implemented in the study are addressed in the chapter. Equally important, the research design is illustrated and the advantages and disadvantages in using the design are pointed out. The sequence, incorporation and integration of the strands are illustrated and explained in the chapter. Also the processes in how validity, credibility and legitimization were established in the study were illustrated and rationalized. The following section, chapter four builds illustrates the execution and findings of the quantitative phase.

CHAPTER 4

RESULTS OF QUANTITATIVE DATA ANALYSIS

Phase One Quantitative Methods and Procedures

During phase one of the methods and procedures, discussion of surveys, surveys administration, demographic information, data screening, reliability, data analysis, factor analysis, validity, among other phase one procedures are discussed. Phase one of the methodology was based on survey data. The survey was composed of six sub scales, demographic information, personal engagement, fatalism, social perception, educational perception, determinism and educational conformism. Survey data was obtained through the following steps:

1. A list of participants that qualified to participate in the research study was obtained through the University of Texas at El Paso's CIERP database.
2. An email invitation with a qualtrics web-link to participate in the research study was sent to the qualified participants.
3. Participants used the web link to access and complete the survey.
4. Collected survey responses were stored in the qualtrics database.
5. Qualtrics survey results were exported to SPSS for analysis.

IRB approval documents, survey participation, informed consent and interview protocol materials can be found in Appendix 7.1, 7.2 7.3, 7.4 and 7.5

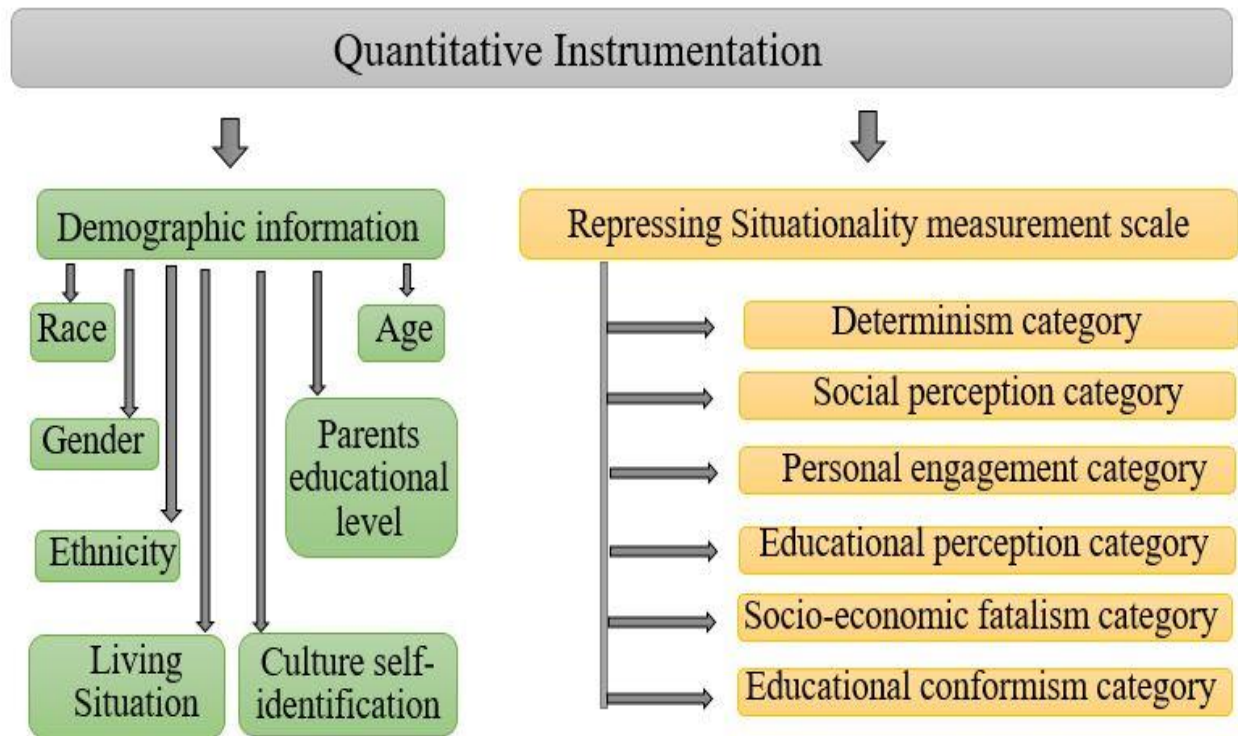


Figure 4.1 Visual Representation of Quantitative Research Instrumentation Themes

Demographic Information

Diverse demographic information was obtained from the participants through the survey. Several demographic information was used to run statistical analysis with the goal of understanding if demographical information differences influence student’s responses. Some of the more relevant demographic information such as gender, age, race/ethnicity, culture identification, level of education completed by father and mother, marital status, employment status and living conditions are listed below.

Table 4.1-Gender



#	Answer		Response	%
1	Male		72	32%
2	Female		153	68%
	Total		225	100%

Table4.2-Age





#	Answer		Response	%
1	19 or younger		77	34%
2	20-29		110	49%
3	30-39		23	10%
4	Over 40		15	7%
5	Prefer not to answer		0	0%
	Total		225	100%

Table4.3-Race/Ethnicity










#	Answer		Response	%
1	White		22	10%
2	White, Non-Hispanic/Latino		4	2%
3	African-American		5	2%
4	Hispanic		146	65%
5	Latino		23	10%
6	Asian-Pacific Islander		3	1%
7	Native American		4	2%
8	Other		12	5%
9	Prefer not to answer		6	3%
	Total		225	100%

Table 4.4-Culture Identification




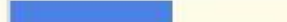

#	Answer		Response	%
1	American		87	39%
2	African-American		6	3%
3	Mexican		80	36%
4	Mexican-American		138	61%
5	Other		19	8%
6	Prefer not to answer		1	0%

Table 4.5-Level of Education Completed by Mother

#	Answer	Response	%
1	High School High School/GED or less	85	38%
2	Some College 2-Year College (Associates Degree)	48	21%
3	4-Year College Degree (BA, BS)	60	27%
4	Master's Degree	16	7%
5	Doctoral Degree	2	1%
6	Professional Degree (MD, JD)	1	0%
7	Prefer not to answer	5	2%
8	Non-applicable	8	4%
	Total	225	100%






Table 4.6-Level of Education Completed by Father

#	Answer	Response	%
1	High School High School/GED or less	76	34%
2	Some College 2-Year College/(Associates Degree)	50	22%
3	4-Year College Degree (BA, BS)	48	21%
4	Master's Degree	22	10%
5	Doctoral Degree	3	1%
6	Professional Degree (MD, JD)	4	2%
7	Prefer not to answer	1	0%
8	Non-applicable	21	9%
	Total	225	100%







Table 4.7-Marital Status

#	Answer	Response	%
1	Single	175	78%
2	Married	36	16%
3	Other	9	4%
4	Prefer not to answer	5	2%
	Total	225	100%

Table 4.8-Employment Status

#	Answer		Response	%
1	Employed full time		28	12%
2	Employed part time		62	28%
3	Working Student		49	22%
4	Self employed		3	1%
5	Not employed and looking for work		41	18%
6	Not employed but not currently looking for work		33	15%
7	Retired		1	0%
8	Prefer not to answer		4	2%
9	Non-applicable		4	2%
	Total		225	100%

4.9-Living Conditions

#	Answer		Response	%
1	With my parents / family		145	64%
2	With my spouse or partner		45	20%
3	With roommates		13	6%
4	Alone		10	4%
5	Other		8	4%
6	Prefer not to answer		3	1%
7	Non-applicable		1	0%
	Total		225	100%

Factor Analysis of Questions in the Survey

First, a factor analysis was conducted using the eigenvalue analysis. The eigenvalue analysis 10 components that showed significant eigenvalue. The SPSS eigenvalue analysis determined which questions correlated with each other and what seemed to be the common thread. Furthermore, it informed us where situations agreed with each other. The component matrix created showed us which questions fit with each other. Coefficients exceeding 0.5 were ideally chosen as they showed a stronger relationship to other questions. Out of the 10 components created by SPSS factor analysis, 6 were chosen. Grouping of the factor analysis can be found on appendix 4.11.

Data Screening and Descriptive Statistics

Of the original sample size of 268 respondents, 42 were removed due to missing data in at least half of the responses in the core survey questions, leaving a valid sample of n=226 for data analysis. Within this sample, all respondents had valid responses for all questions within the core survey questions. The following illustration, Table 4.10 illustrates that 226 valid cases were used to run the descriptive statistical analysis in SPSS.

Six categories were analyzed in the descriptive statistics. The categories are: *Personal Engagement*, *Fatalism*, *Social Perception*, *Educational Perception*, *Determinism* and *Educational Conformism*. The category of *Personal Engagement* gave a mean statistical value of 5.2710 with which is significant and a standard deviation of 1.06900. The category of *Fatalism* gave a mean statistical value of 2.8717 which is significant and a standard deviation of 1.37876. The category of *Social Perception* gave a mean statistical value of 5.2500 which is significant and a standard deviation of 0.96184. The category of *Educational Perception* gave a mean statistical value of

5.5874 which is significant and a standard deviation of 1.15703. The category of *Determinism* gave a mean statistical value of 3.1032 which is significant and a standard deviation of 0.93224. The category *Educational Conformism* gave a mean statistical value of 2.2370 which is significant and a standard deviation of 0.97826. The descriptive statistics showed that in all of the six categories, the mean values were either above or below the number value of 4 which is the number value that was used to run the one sample t-test since the number value of 4 was a neutral value as it represented in the survey neither agree or disagree. The following graphic, Table 4.10 illustrates the mean statistics and standard deviation statistics.

Table 4.10 Descriptive Statistics

	N Statistic	Minimum Statistic	Maximum Statistic	Mean Statistic	Std. Deviation Statistic	Skewness		Kurtosis	
						Statistic	Std. Error	Statistic	Std. Error
Personal Engagement	226	1.63	7.00	5.2710	1.06900	-.492	.162	-.113	.322
Fatalism	226	1.00	6.67	2.8717	1.37876	.408	.162	-.496	.322
Social Perception	226	2.75	7.00	5.2500	.96184	-.295	.162	-.560	.322
Educational Perception	226	2.00	7.00	5.5874	1.15703	-.696	.162	-.114	.322
Determinism	226	1.00	5.89	3.1032	.93224	.137	.162	-.480	.322
Educational Conformism	226	1.00	5.57	2.2370	.97826	.828	.162	.289	.322
Valid N (list wise)	226								

Inferential Statistics

Inferential statistics were used to statistically test the hypotheses presented in this study. Inferential statistics assisted the overall understanding of the phenomena under study by drawing judgements and conclusions based on the statistical findings obtained. A small sample drawn from the population under study was used to illustrate how the findings may apply to the general population from where the small sample of participants came from.

Research Hypotheses

Hypothesis 1: Reprising contextual situationalities such as *fatalism, determinism and educational conformism* are existent in most research participants.

Hypothesis 2: Research participants with minimal to no socio-economic support from relatives manifest higher levels of *fatalism, determinism and educational conformism*.

Hypothesis 3: Research participants unemployed or in stressed socio-economic conditions manifest higher levels of *fatalism, determinism and educational conformism*.

Hypothesis 4: Research participants' responses in regards to *personal engagement, fatalism, social perception, educational perception, determinism and educational conformism* differ by their culture/ethnicity self-identification.

Hypothesis 5: Research participant's responses in regards to *personal engagement, fatalism, social perception, educational perception, determinism and educational conformism* are related to their parents' level of education.

Hypothesis 6: *Fatalism, determinism and educational conformism* will be negatively correlated with *personal engagement, educational perception and social perception*.

One Sample T –test

A test value of 4 was used to run the one sample t-test statistical analysis. The test value of 4 was used since the survey used a 7 scale value where the test value of 1 represented Strongly Agree, test value of 2 represented Agree, test value of 3 represented Somewhat Agree, test value of 4 represented Neutral, test value of 5 represented Somewhat Disagree, test value of 6 represented Disagree and the test value of 7 represented Strongly Disagree. Results less than 4 and

more than 4 on the categories statistically analyzed illustrated if there was significance in the six categories. The categories statistically analyzed in the one sample t-test are: *Personal Engagement*, *Fatalism*, *Social Perception*, *Educational Perception*, *Determinism* and *Educational Conformism*. The t-test was used to compare a single sample of 226 cases. A hypothesized value of 4 was used for the one sample t-test. *P* values below 0.05 are statistically significant. The *p* values for the *Personal Engagement*, *Fatalism*, *Social Perception*, *Educational Perception*, *Determinism* and *Educational Conformism* categories are below 0.000 which are statistically significant.

Hypothesis 1

Repressing contextual situationalities such as *fatalism*, *determinism* and *educational conformism* are existent in most research participants. Hypothesis were that the categories of *fatalism*, *determinism* and *educational conformism* would have a mean value higher than the neutral score. All hypotheses were tested two tail in order to capture results that differ from the prediction. In all cases, significance was found opposite from the direction that was predicted.

Table 4.11 One Sample T-test

Test Value = 4

	Mean	Std. Deviation		t	p
Personal Engagement	5.2710	1.06900		17.874	*.000
Fatalism	2.8717	1.37876		-12.303	*.000
Social Perception	5.2500	.96184		19.537	*.000
Educational Perception	5.5874	1.15703		20.625	*.000
Determinism	3.1032	.93224		-14.461	*.000
Educational Conformism	2.2370	.97826		-27.092	*.000
Valid N (listwise)	226				

* significant at .05 level of significance

** significant at .01 level of significance

Hypothesis 2:

Research participants with minimal to no socio-economic support from relatives manifest higher levels of *fatalism, determinism and educational conformism*. The null hypothesis is that economic assistance from relatives towards obtaining a higher education does not influence research participant optimism. The ANOVA one-way test showed that the participants' responses did not differ by the economic support they do or do not receive from relatives while working in their higher education. Therefore, we do not reject the null hypothesis.

Table. 4.12 ANOVA Ona-way Test

	F	p
Personal Engagement	0.625	0.645
Fatalism	0.741	0.565
Social Perception	0.26	0.903
Educational Perception	0.772	0.545
Determinism	0.742	0.564
Educational Conformism	2.598	0.037

Hypothesis 3:

Research participants unemployed or in stressed socio-economic conditions manifest higher levels of *fatalism, determinism and educational conformism*. The null hypothesis is that the research participant's perceptions of fatalism, determinism and educational conformism equal across levels of employment or socio-economic condition. The ANOVA one-way test showed that the participants' responses did not differ by their employment status or socio-economic condition, therefore, we do not reject the null hypothesis.

Table. 4.13 ANOVA One-way Test

	F	p
Personal Engagement	0.683	0.604
Fatalism	1.476	0.211
Social Perception	0.313	0.869
Educational Perception	0.553	0.697
Determinism	0.386	0.818
Educational Conformism	0.836	0.503

Hypothesis 4:

Research participants' responses in regards to *personal engagement, fatalism, social perception, educational perception, determinism and educational conformism* differ by their culture/ethnicity self-identification. The null hypothesis is that the research participant's perceptions of *personal engagement, fatalism, social perception, educational perception, determinism and educational conformism* do not differ by their culture/ethnicity self-identification. The ANOVA one-way test showed that the participants' responses did not differ by their culture/ethnicity self-identification, therefore, we do not reject the null hypothesis.

Table. 4.14 ANOVA One-way Test

	F	p
Personal Engagement	0.009	0.991
Fatalism	0.626	0.536
Social Perception	0.217	0.805
Educational Perception	0.6	0.55
Determinism	0.106	0.9
Educational Conformism	0.035	0.965

Hypothesis 5:

Research participant’s responses in regards to *personal engagement, fatalism, social perception, educational perception, determinism and educational conformism* are related to their parents’ level of education. The null hypothesis is that there is no correlation between the research participants’ responses in regards to *personal engagement, fatalism, social perception, educational perception, determinism and educational conformism* and their parent’s level of education. The spearman correlation test showed that there is no correlation between the research participant’s responses and their parent’s level of education. Therefore, we do not reject the null hypothesis.

Table. 4.15 Spearman Correlation Coefficient (2-tail)

	Father's Education	Personal Engagement	Fatalism	Social Perception	Educational Perception	Determinism	Educational Conformism
Mother's Education	.477 (.000)	.045 (.518)	-.022 (.745)	.064 (.355)	.019 (.780)	.106 (.124)	-.068 (.323)
Father's Education		.061 (.389)	-.025 (.722)	.113 (.110)	-.072 (.307)	-.033 (.644)	.011 (.880)
Personal Engagement			-.487 (.000)	.787 (.000)	.381 (.000)	-.670 (.000)	-.467 (.000)
Fatalism				-.440 (.000)	-.220 (.001)	.428 (.000)	.281 (.000)
Social Perception					.507 (.000)	-.583 (.000)	-.530 (.000)
Educational Perception						-.357 (.000)	-.614 (.000)
Determinism							.428 (.000)
Educational Conformism							

Hypothesis 6:

Fatalism, determinism and educational conformism will be negatively correlated with personal engagement, educational perception and social perception. The null hypothesis is that there is no correlation between fatalism, determinism and educational conformism and personal engagement, educational perception and social perception. The correlation matrix showed that there is a correlation between fatalism, determinism and educational conformism personal engagement, educational perception and social perception. Therefore, we reject the null hypothesis and accept the alternative hypothesis that there is a correlation between fatalism, determinism and educational conformism and personal engagement, educational perception and social perception. Also, there is a correlation between personal engagement, educational perception and social perception and of fatalism, determinism and educational conformism.

Table 4.16 Spearman Correlation Coefficient (2-tail)

	Father's Education	Personal Engagement	Fatalism	Social Perception	Educational Perception	Determinism	Educational Conformism
Mother's Education	.477 (.000)	.045 (.518)	-.022 (.745)	.064 (.355)	.019 (.780)	.106 (.124)	-.068 (.323)
Father's Education		.061 (.389)	-.025 (.722)	.113 (.110)	-.072 (.307)	-.033 (.644)	.011 (.880)
Personal Engagement			-.487 (.000)	.787 (.000)	.381 (.000)	-.670 (.000)	-.467 (.000)
Fatalism				-.440 (.000)	-.220 (.001)	.428 (.000)	.281 (.000)
Social Perception					.507 (.000)	-.583 (.000)	-.530 (.000)
Educational Perception						-.357 (.000)	-.614 (.000)
Determinism							.428 (.000)
Educational Conformism							

Summary of Quantitative Findings

The quantitative findings showed that most research participants had low levels of fatalism, determinism and educational conformism and high levels of personal engagement, educational perception and social perception. Research participants through the survey expressed optimism towards the categories of personal engagement, educational perception and social perception. Moreover, they expressed disagreement towards the categories of fatalism, determinism and educational conformism. In addition, the one way-ANOVA tests conducted showed that to most, the culture with what the research participants self-identified themselves did not influence their responses and perceptions. Moreover, the ANOVA one-way tests showed that to most, their employment and socio-economic status didn't not influence their responses and perceptions. Furthermore, the one-way ANOVA tests showed that to most, either receiving or not receiving economical assistance from their relatives while obtaining their higher education didn't influence their responses or perceptions. A correlation test showed that to most, the research participants parent's level of education didn't influence their responses and perceptions. Lastly, a correlation matrix test showed that most of the research participants who manifested high levels of *fatalism, determinism and educational conformism*, manifested low levels of *personal engagement, educational perception and social perception*. Furthermore, most of the research participants who manifested high levels of *personal engagement, educational perception and social perception*, manifested low levels of *fatalism, determinism and educational conformism*.

CHAPTER 5

RESULTS OF QUALITATIVE DATA ANALYSIS

Phase Two Qualitative Methodology

Participants were interviewed with an interview protocol that derived from the quantitative data from *phase one* of the quantitative methods and from the review of literature. The collection of the qualitative data was obtained from current and former students from the University of Texas at El Paso. The data was coded utilizing the *personal engagement, educational perception and social perception* will manifest low levels of *fatalism, determinism and educational conformism* scale items (factors) and open coding of both participants debriefing and researcher memos (notes). The interviews were combined into case themes and cross case themes. Through the triangulation of data from multiple methods and sources, the use of member's checks, audit trail, and a comprehensive description of the individual cases trustworthiness was determined.

Connecting Phase One and Phase Two

This study used a sequential transformative mixed methods research design which focused on understanding the possible presence and nature of repressing situationalities on individuals and groups. The study utilized the framework of Social Psychology, Critical Social Psychology and Critical Theory. At the intermediate stage of the study, the quantitative *phase one* was integrated with the qualitative *phase two* data. The development of the interview protocol in part was guided by the application of the *phase one* factor analysis. Moreover, the review of literature provided critical information that aided the construction of the interview protocol. The explored factors illustrated the relationship between high measurable levels of *personal engagement, educational perception, social perception* and low levels of *fatalism, determinism and educational conformism*.

Development of Interview Protocol and Piloting

Based upon the *Overview of Methods, Methodology & Procedure* illustrated in Chapter 3 the initial interview protocol was built. (See Appendix E for interview protocol.) Three sections comprised the interview protocol: (a) prior to the interview, a demographic section was completed, (b) a pre-interview of participant's thoughts/ideas section where participants expressed their understanding of the interview questions as additional data for triangulation and to help the participants stay on the topic, and (c) an interview transcript result of the interview questions. The interview protocol contained 17 questions that aimed at understanding the participant's perceptions in aspects of: the self, collectiveness, socio-economics, socio-political, pessimism, activism, individualism, collectiveness, sociological, educational and self-control. A pilot of the interview protocol to polish the questions was conducted by the researcher. Several potential participants were interviewed by the researcher prior to the application of the interview protocol. Feedback obtained from the pilot interviews aided the interview protocol with the wording of the interview questions, course of the interview and transcription procedure. The implemented interview protocol can be found in Appendix 4.3.

Trustworthiness

Credibility, confirmability, dependability and transferability of the findings were the focus of trustworthiness in this study. Through member checks *Credibility* was determined. Researcher and interview participant revised statements made during the interview to verify and reaffirm participant's opinions expressed during the interview. *Confirmability* was determined through the triangulation of different theoretical perspectives and interview transcript was conducted. Every interview conducted included interview transcript and researcher notes. An audit trail that

documented pilot information, researcher notes, and research protocols were stored to support *dependability*. Through the construction of comprehensive descriptions of each case study including personal demographic data, *phase one* quantitative data, interview transcript, *transferability* was established. Collectively, member checks, triangulation, audit trail, and comprehensive descriptions of each case study established the overall thoroughness and trustworthiness of *phase two* of the study.

Phase Two Qualitative Data Collection and Analysis

Phase two was the qualitative data collection of the study, interview protocols were administered to research participants. A data analysis consisting of data coding, organization of cases into themes and cross-case themes followed the application of the interview protocol.

Phase Two Qualitative Findings

Phase two of qualitative findings were detailed in a case study format where each research participant's responses and attitudes were described comprehensively. Coding and the development of emerging themes were part of each case data analysis. Moreover, following each of the ten cases, an analysis of cross-case themes was conducted.

Interviews

Each research participant was contacted initially by email with an invitation to participate in the study. Research participants first completed an informed consent and on-line survey where they provided demographic information and where they expressed their attitude towards statements interrelated to *personal engagement, educational perception, social perception, fatalism, determinism and educational conformism*. Based on the responses obtained through the survey from research participants, ten participants were selected and invited by phone to participate in an in-person interview. Location of interviews varied depending on the availability of research participants. Pseudonyms were given to the research participants to ensure anonymity. The research participant's interviews were audio recorded and then transcribed.

Case 1 Anna

Anna identified herself as a Latina woman. She is a single woman and she is in her 20s. Anna has and continues to live in Ciudad Juarez, Chihuahua Mexico. She is employed full-time and is a regular commuter that comes to the United States to study and work. Anna indicated that her mother and father, both obtained a bachelor's degree and that influenced her to get a college education. She provided clear answers. When asked to express her opinion towards the following statement: *I know the distribution of wealth is unequal and unfair, however things have always been that way and that will not change*. Anna stated:

“I do believe it will change eventually not immediately, just because you were born poor it doesn't have to be that way, I believe it's a personal matter, people might stay how they are, conformist don't like to make an extra effort because they are afraid of failure”

When asked to express her opinion towards the following statement: *Why challenge the system, since change is not likely to occur.* Anna stated:

“Probably the system is outdated, right now society has changed, it needs to be renewed, the changes aren’t going to be right away”

When asked to express her opinion towards the following statement: *The rich will always be rich and the poor will always be poor.* Anna stated:

“rich can always be rich, but the poor not always has to be the poor”

When asked to express her opinion towards the following statement: *There are things in life that are not worth changing.* Anna stated:

“sometimes is worthless to try to change their opinion because is something they believe on and probably nothing will make them change”

When asked to express her opinion towards the following statement: *There are things in life that are not worth challenging.* Anna stated:

“probably there are something’s in life that aren’t going to be changing or even if you challenge them there’s isn’t going to be anything that would makes them change”

When asked to express her opinion towards the following statement: *Life is to enjoy, not to struggle fighting helpless causes,* Anna stated:

Unfortunately, we can’t change the world from one day to another, it’s good to help people but unfortunately you don’t have to worry about it every time about it.

When asked to express her opinion towards the following statement: *Fighting for causes that are not related to me is not worth it, if I decide to challenge something in life, it must be relevant to me, so that is worth it.* Anna stated:

“Yes I agree”

When asked to express her opinion towards the following statement: *Why spend time and energy fighting for causes that are not part of my culture or ethnicity, each ethnicity should fight for their own causes.* Anna stated:

“its good to help people, it makes one feel better”

When asked to express her opinion towards the following statement: *Life is too short and beautiful to spend it fighting for causes of oppression that really do not impact me much.* Anna stated:

“you feel empathy for some people, probably if you are not really affected by that oppression you are not going to take part of it”

When asked to express her opinion towards the following statement: *I mind my own business therefore its ok to not get involved in other people’s business or struggles.* Anna stated:

“it depends on how is the response from the other person”

When asked to express her opinion towards the following statement: *Why fighting for the problems of people I don’t know and of people that probably don’t care about my problems.* Anna stated:

”probably something that it doesn’t concern me, but yes it worries me but I am not enough concern to make a change for it”

When asked to express her opinion towards the following statement: *I know society has problems that need attention, however, it’s not my duty to fix those, after all, I didn’t create those problems.*

Anna stated:

“If we don’t fix it the next generation will carry the problem, you first need to change the perception of the people to make a change”

When asked to express her opinion towards the following statement: *Fighting social injustices is way too risky, therefore, better to mind my own business and to be safe, than to be an activist and to put myself in a risky position.* Anna stated:

“Myself I will not be an activist, I will fully support with signatures or by donating resources”

Anna completed the *phase one* quantitative survey when Barack Obama was president of the United States and participated in phase two the qualitative interview when Donald Trump was president. When asked to express if the change in administration has affected her in any way. Anna stated:

“Woman are in a better position, I feel equally empowered even though woman have been more oppressed, it has affected me in some ways, instead of moving forward is moving backwards, with this new administration instead of causing a new hope is causing a new fear, my hope has stayed the same, but I still believe that there’s someone who can make a change”

When asked to express her opinion towards society at large: Anna stated:

“in some we are heading in a good direction in others is staying the same”

When asked to express her opinion towards education at large: Anna stated:

“College is probably not for everyone, education system is getting a little bit stuck”

When asked to express her opinion towards her sense of control in her life: Anna stated:

“I believe I am fully in control probably 95% by my actions and there are always going to be external factors, we can always hope for something better but at the same time we can realistically think that probably it’s not the time for those changes, there are external factors that realistically affect those changes, hope is the last thing that dies”

Lastly Anna added:

“I am neutral in that, depending on the situation, I believe that in my circle there are more people who aren’t conformist”

Case 2 Ariel

Ariel identified herself as a Native American woman. She is a single woman and she is in her 20s. Ariel has always resided in the United States. Ariel is employed full-time She indicated

that her mother obtained a master's degree and her father a professional degree. When asked to express her opinion towards the following statement: *I know the distribution of wealth is unequal and unfair, however things have always been that way and that will not change.* Ariel stated:

“there's always been inequality...people work together...I like to be hopeful that's an eventuality...people change depending on how things are going in their life”

When asked to express her opinion towards the following statement: *Why challenge the system, since change is not likely to occur.* Ariel stated:

“I think change always occurs...change is good or bad...the best we can do is hope that we can help change it towards maybe more positive more equal way...I am a semi-lazy activist”

When asked to express her opinion towards the following statement: *The rich will always be rich and the poor will always be poor.* Ariel stated:

“I know people would think that poor people can work their way out of that situation.”

When asked to express her opinion towards the following statement: *There are things in life that are not worth changing.* Ariel stated:

“there's times when I fell hopeless...we are hopping but a lot have lost hope, I guess sometimes you do feel powerless...eventually you do feel i can't change anything”

When asked to express her opinion towards the following statement: *There are things in life that are not worth challenging.* Ariel stated:

“it's depending on the individual...there are things worth challenging, there's things in my personal life that I chose not be involved in because I can see the fact that is a difficult area...it's not so much that is not worth challenging it's that there's never going to be a satisfactory decision and people hate compromise...compromise it's not easy for people...people once they do have something they want to keep on getting more of it...I guess sometimes you do feel powerless...eventually you do feel i can't change anything...either you become hopeless or it doesn't matter as much that's personal preferences or social pressures...there's times when I fell hopeless...we are hopping but a lot have lost hope”

When asked to express her opinion towards the following statement: *Life is to enjoy, not to struggle fighting helpless causes.* Ariel stated:

“a balance”

When asked to express her opinion towards the following statement: *Fighting for causes that are not related to me is not worth it, if I decide to challenge something in life, it must be relevant to me, so that is worth it.* Ariel stated:

“I guess that’s what some people think...for some causes depending on what they are”

When asked to express her opinion towards the following statement: *Why spend time and energy fighting for causes that aren’t part of my culture or ethnicity, each ethnicity should fight for their own causes.* Ariel stated:

“for some causes depending on what they are if they are important”

When asked to express her opinion towards the following statement: *Life is too short and beautiful to spend it fighting for causes of oppression that really don’t impact me much.* Ariel stated:

“I think life is beautiful even when you are fighting...there’s some things you can learn from those moments”

When asked to express her opinion towards the following statement: *I mind my own business, therefore, it is ok not to get involved into other people’s business or struggles.* Ariel stated:

“just showing support, being an ally means a lot to them, I think everyone can make that difference, just being more aware”

When asked to express her opinion towards the following statement: *Why fighting for the problems of people I don’t know and of people that probably don’t care about my problems.* Ariel stated:

“I think they are worth fighting for”

When asked to express her opinion towards the following statement: *I know society has problems that need attention, however, it's not my duty to fix those, after all, I didn't create those problems.*

Ariel stated:

“even if you didn't create them they are yours...acknowledging them and trying to do your best to fix someone's else's problems is probably the best you can do for issues that need to be fixed...we should think about how it affects people later on...it's all connected...the few things you can control are day-today changes”

When asked to express her opinion towards the following statement: *Fighting social injustices is way too risky, therefore, better to mind my own business and to be safe, than to be an activist and to put myself in a risky position.* Ariel stated:

“I don't feel threaten yet...I wouldn't blame if a married man or woman would be more careful”

Ariel completed the *phase one* quantitative survey when Barack Obama was president of the United States and participated in phase two the qualitative interview when Donald Trump was president. When asked to express if the change in administration has affected her in any way. Ariel stated:

“I feel threaten as a Native American...in a weird way I want to stay optimistic...I would say I feel more anxious or worried about things...in this administration a little bit of me died inside”

When asked to express her opinion towards society at large: Ariel stated:

“when things are good for people they focus on themselves but when there's problems and issues it makes them a little bit more community based...its time based...it's an eventuality”

When asked to express her opinion towards education at large: Ariel stated:

“i think we are going in an ok direction...doesn't always help you think for yourself...you don't learn to question even though you are learning you don't learn to question...you are

just there to learn...I think it's just an old system...the more I think about it sounds like a scheme”

When asked to express her opinion towards her sense of control in her life: Ariel stated:

“I have no control over my future whatever happens happens...I don't know you just try your best day to day...day to day I am in control of my body but not of what the world does”

Case 3 Elizabeth

Elizabeth identified herself as a Hispanic woman. She is married with children, who she takes care of. She is in her 30s. Elizabeth has always resided in the United States. Elizabeth is employed full-time. She indicated that her mother obtained an associate's degree and her father a doctorate. When asked to express her opinion towards the following statement: *I know the distribution of wealth is unequal and unfair, however things have always been that way and that will not change.* Elizabeth stated:

“wealth is very unequal. everybody is in charge of their own destiny, its hard to get out of that cycle...society is already in that path and you cannot change it..i don't think it can be changed...people are comfortable the way they are...they are not willing to challenge”

When asked to express her opinion towards the following statement: *Why challenge the system, since change is not likely to occur.* Elizabeth stated:

“you can't really challenge the system because it takes a village...you could die trying to challenge it and you are never going to get anywhere cause it's the mentality engrained in our brains”

When asked to express her opinion towards the following statement: *The rich will always be rich and the poor will always be poor.* Elizabeth stated:

“I strongly disagree...everyone is in charge of their path...it's the way your mind is set...I don't think our destiny is set...the rich are never going to fight that stage of oppression because they love it like because they are comfortable like that...they are not going to be willing to share...the poor are not educated to understand how oppression is affecting them

they are in a state cycle of oppression and they are comfortable living like that because it's hard to fight every day to live better and live better and a lot of people are not willing to put that effort either"

When asked to express her opinion towards the following statement: *There are things in life that are not worth changing.* Elizabeth stated:

"there are things that are not worth challenging...I think every single person in every situation is worth changing"

When asked to express her opinion towards the following statement: *There are things in life that are not worth challenging.* Elizabeth stated:

"people are comfortable the way they are...they are not willing to challenge...yes I somewhat agree...just because the way society accept it...we all learned to accept it...we all feel hopeless"

When asked to express her opinion towards the following statement: *Life is to enjoy, not to struggle fighting helpless causes.* Elizabeth stated:

"I disagree, if you want something you need to work for it, you cannot enjoy life if you don't work for it"

When asked to express her opinion towards the following statement: *Fighting for causes that are not related to me is not worth it, if I decide to challenge something in life, it must be relevant to me, so that is worth it.* Elizabeth stated:

"I disagree somewhat...I think it's all related, we are intertwined in society...one person's actions are going to affect me one way or another"

When asked to express her opinion towards the following statement: *Why spend time and energy fighting for causes that aren't part of my culture or ethnicity, each ethnicity should fight for their own causes.* Elizabeth stated:

"we have to change that culture...it's up to us to do our own little part"

When asked to express her opinion towards the following statement: *Life is too short and beautiful to spend it fighting for causes of oppression that really don't impact me much.* Elizabeth stated:

“all of us in one way or another are in a stage of oppression that you can't really break from that cycle because you are part of society...I am not changing it I am not doing anything about it...I wish I could do more but you really can't...everything is connected it will affect you eventually”

When asked to express her opinion towards the following statement: *I mind my own business therefore its ok to not get involved in other people's business or struggles.* Elizabeth stated:

“we are all connected...i don't get involved in other people's business or struggles unless they ask me for help or advice”

When asked to express her opinion towards the following statement: *Why fighting for the problems of people I don't know and of people that probably don't care about my own problems.* Elizabeth stated:

“what's the point... I am not going to really fight and go above and beyond...my life is my priority before anybody else”

When asked to express her opinion towards the following statement: *I know society has problems that need attention, however, it's not my duty to fix those, after all, I didn't create those problems.* Elizabeth stated:

“I want to make sure my children are ok before I can go out and change the world”

When asked to express her opinion towards the following statement: *Fighting social injustices is way too risky, therefore, better to mind my own business and to be safe, than to be an activist and to put myself in a risky position.* Elizabeth stated:

“I don't think it's risky”

Elizabeth completed the *phase one* quantitative survey when Barack Obama was president of the United States and participated in phase two the qualitative interview when Donald Trump was

president. When asked to express if the change in administration has affected her in any way.

Elizabeth stated:

“we all feel hopeless... a lot of us might feel like why challenge things, they are never going to change...I think it has a lot to do with the way society is at this point in time...i think it disempowered me...there’s inequality”

When asked to express her opinion towards society at large: Elizabeth stated:

“society is heading in negative direction...society isn’t nice anymore...is mean...i don’t think there a possibility of change because it requires work...people are not willing to put in that work...people are comfortable”

When asked to express her opinion towards education at large: Elizabeth stated:

“education is heading in a negative direction...now that I am in the educational system I feel more disempowered...you don’t have a voice...it’s their way or the high way...even in education whatever decisions are made in law are not for the kids they are for their own benefit...I thought the government supported the education system that they wanted the best for students now I see they don’t”

When asked to express her opinion towards her sense of control in her life: Elizabeth stated:

“part control because I decide whether I participate in society or not”

Elizabeth also added:

“What’s the point. You can’t really change anything”

Case 4 Hannah

Hannah identified herself as a Hispanic woman. She is married and in her 20s. Hannah has always resided in the United States. Hannah is employed full-time. She indicated that her mother obtained a high school degree and her father a bachelor’s degree. When asked to express her opinion towards the following statement: *I know the distribution of wealth is unequal and unfair, however things have always been that way and that will not change.* Hannah stated:

“I think that in the us the way our system is set up there’s always going to be an elite class, and they hold like the most wealth...when you say that’s never going to change that’s partially truth...a cycle that repeats itself...the same people who are wealthy stay wealthy and the same people who are not wealthy stay poor...and it’s going to take a lot for that to change...it would take a lot of policy changes a lot of grassroots work...it’s happening slowly...people are starting to wake up”

When asked to express her opinion towards the following statement: *Why challenge the system, since change is not likely to occur.* Hannah stated:

“I think that you have to challenge the system or challenge those norms of society”

When asked to express her opinion towards the following statement: *The rich will always be rich and the poor will always be poor.* Hannah stated:

“I think that for a very long time that’s the way society has worked, how do people define rich and how do people define poor...I think that the way our system has been set up for a very very long time and it’s going to be very hard to close that gap especially with our president who favors the elite group...and not so much helping those people who need more help in creating income”

When asked to express her opinion towards the following statement: *There are things in life that are not worth changing.* Hannah stated:

“its partially truth”

When asked to express her opinion towards the following statement: *There are things in life that are not worth challenging.* Hannah stated:

“you have to challenge the system...people are starting to wake up and challenge ideas”

When asked to express her opinion towards the following statement: *Life is to enjoy, not to struggle fighting helpless causes.* Hannah stated:

“I don’t think that there are helpless causes...there are some people who are selfish and would take life as it is”

When asked to express her opinion towards the following statement: *Fighting for causes that are not related to me is not worth it, if I decide to challenge something in life, it must be relevant to me, so that is worth it.* Hannah stated:

“I think that you have to fight causes that aren’t relevant to you”

When asked to express her opinion towards the following statement: *Why spend time and energy fighting for causes that aren’t part of my culture or ethnicity, each ethnicity should fight for their own causes.* Hannah stated:

“we have to help each other out and sometimes we have to step outside our comfort zone”

When asked to express her opinion towards the following statement: *Life is too short and beautiful to spend it fighting for causes of oppression that really don’t impact me much.* Hannah stated:

“that’s the thing...everybody has their own different oppression so you have to fight oppression...you have to challenge them”

When asked to express her opinion towards the following statement: *I mind my own business, therefore, it is ok not to get involved into other people’s business or struggles.* Hannah stated:

“you have to...if you want change and you want equality for all you have to challenge and be involved”

When asked to express her opinion towards the following statement: *Why fighting for the problems of people I don’t know and of people that probably don’t care about my problems.* Hannah stated:

“everyone has different oppressions right so I think you have to challenge them whether or not they affect you...you should be part of activism and social justice”

When asked to express her opinion towards the following statement: *I know society has problems that need attention, however, it’s not my duty to fix those, after all, I didn’t create those problems.*

Hannah stated:

“you have to fix them you have to get involved...later down the road it may affect you”

When asked to express her opinion towards the following statement: *Fighting social injustices is way too risky, therefore, better to mind my own business and to be safe, than to be an activist and to put myself in a risky position.* Hannah stated:

“I don’t think it’s risky...Fighting social justices should be a priority as a whole because you never know when something is going to affect you...it might affect you down the road...the main framework for social justice is peaceful”

When asked to express her opinion towards the following statement: *I mind my own business therefore its ok to not get involved in other people’s business or struggles.* Hannah stated:

“you have to...if you want change and you want equally for all you have to challenge and be involved”

Hannah completed the *phase one* quantitative survey when Barack Obama was president of the United States and participated in phase two the qualitative interview when Donald Trump was president. When asked to express if the change in administration has affected her in any way.

Hannah stated:

“I am now more informed...for me my personal experience I want to be more involved so that the hate he is spreading...I see it in two different ways, I am optimistic that its waking up all these millennials and voting...I am not optimistic the way he is acting, people just let it go, talking about woman the way trump did, because this white autorative men figure...I think that the elite...white older male... the way our society is set up...honestly, when I look at woman voting rates I am disgusted that so many woman voted for him and they are accepting it, as a woman that makes me feel bad...they are still blaming the victim...as a woman actually I don’t know, I want say more empowered because I know more but just in that way but not talking about equal pay...the gender as woman I want to say less empowered...if I would have to choose I would chose less empowered”

When asked to express her opinion towards society at large: Hannah stated:

“society is divided”

When asked to express her opinion towards her sense of control in her life: Hannah stated:

“I think I am in full control of my life...in economic stuff its different...when it comes to education I am in control...what I can’t control are bigger issues life equal pay, etc...I think at the local level, mass shooting in bars breaks your hope a little bit...daily things that happens in the world try to break your hope...I can see how there is a difference between what we hope it would happen and realistically would happen...you have to be optimistic that’s my individual perception...there has to be struggle for change to occur”

Case 5 Daniel

Daniel identified himself as a Hispanic man. He is in his 50s. He is married and currently resides in El Paso, Texas. Daniel indicated that his mother obtained an associate degree. He is employed full-time. When asked to express his opinion towards the following statement: *I know the distribution of wealth is unequal and unfair, however things have always been that way and that will not change.* Daniel stated:

“the richer get richer and the poor stay poor, but the only reason that the poor stay poor is because they don’t do something in their own to get out of poverty...because people are lazy and they don’t want to do anything...the government is forcing me to help the poor, that’s not my job...but spiritually it is my job”

When asked to express his opinion towards the following statement: *Why challenge the system, since change is not likely to occur.* Daniel stated:

“we should challenge the system”

When asked to express his opinion towards the following statement: *The rich will always be rich and the poor will always be poor.* Daniel stated:

“there’s certain people that would stay rich”

When asked to express his opinion towards the following statement: *There are things in life that are not worth challenging.* Daniel stated:

“nothing comes to mind”

When asked to express his opinion towards the following statement: *There are things in life that are not worth challenging*. Daniel stated:

“small stuff is not worth challenging”

When asked to express his opinion towards the following statement: *Life is to enjoy, not to struggle fighting helpless causes*. Daniel stated:

“we are supposed to enjoy life and help our fellow men...it shouldn't be just about us...helpless causes I would believe at some point that there is”

When asked to express his opinion towards the following statement: *Fighting for causes that are not related to me is not worth it, if I decide to challenge something in life, it must be relevant to me, so that is worth it*. Daniel stated:

“that's being selfish...we are supposed to help them”

When asked to express his opinion towards the following statement: *Why fighting for the problems of people I don't know and of people that probably don't care about my own problems*. Daniel stated:

“that would be wrong because it does impact us one way or another”

When asked to express his opinion towards the following statement: *I know society has problems that need attention, however, it's not my duty to fix those, after all, I didn't create those problems*. Daniel stated:

“they are our problems”

When asked to express his opinion towards the following statement: *Fighting social injustices is way too risky, therefore, better to mind my own business and to be safe, than to be an activist and to put myself in a risky position*. Daniel stated:

“we all have to take risk because if we don't take risk we won't get anything done”

When asked to express his opinion towards the following statement: *I mind my own business therefore its ok to not get involved in other people's business or struggles*. Daniel stated:

“no you have to get involved in other peoples struggles...it's a double edge sword”

Daniel completed the *phase one* quantitative survey when Barack Obama was president of the United States and participated in phase two the qualitative interview when Donald Trump was president. When asked to express if the change in administration has affected him in any way.

Daniel stated:

“a little bit more optimistic, I believe that government doesn't listen, politicians don't communicate with the people”

When asked to express his opinion towards society at large: Daniel stated:

“society forgets where we come from...we get complacent about our history and where we come from”

When asked to express his opinion towards education at large: Daniel stated:

“it's getting weaker, I do blame the education system...we aren't teaching kids how to comprehend...someone is making money...it has to do with the government”

When asked to express his opinion towards his sense of control in his life: Daniel stated:

“partial control because there's always external factors, there's always something you aren't in control of it”

Case 6 Adam

Adam identified himself as a white man. He is single and in his 30s. He indicated that he has always lived in the United States and currently resides in El Paso, Texas. Adam indicated that his mother obtained a professional degree and his father an associate degree. He is employed full-time. When asked to express his opinion towards the following statement: *I know the distribution of wealth is unequal and unfair, however things have always been that way and that will not change*

Adam stated:

“wealth is not something that preexisted... if we change the way we structure civilization the way we interact with each other our approach to wealth may change it may be very difficult it may not happen in our life time”

When asked to express his opinion towards the following statement: *Why challenge the system, since change is not likely to occur.* Adam stated:

“there’s a feeling that we are all in this together...individually we don’t count for much...the system is so complex”

When asked to express his opinion towards the following statement: *The rich will always be rich and the poor will always be poor.* Adam stated:

“in general that’s true, these things don’t change a lot I a course of a lifetime...it’s unlikely for a large group of people to move from one side of the coin to the other”

When asked to express his opinion towards the following statement: *There are things in life that are not worth changing.* Adam stated:

“I think it might be true...some things the way they are for a reason we would never understand them”

When asked to express his opinion towards the following statement: *There are things in life that are not worth challenging.* Adam stated:

“maybe even something is wrong...if you challenge it...maybe you can find out for sure”

When asked to express his opinion towards the following statement: *Life is to enjoy, not to struggle fighting helpless causes.* Adam stated:

“I see a lot of unhappy people, they chose to be unhappy...you have to choose happiness sometimes”

When asked to express his opinion towards the following statement: *Fighting for causes that are not related to me is not worth it, if I decide to challenge something in life, it must be relevant to me, so that is worth it.* Adam stated:

“it’s a very attractive position, it’s a selfish position., it feels like a warm blanket that I want to wrap myself in to hide from all the problems”

When asked to express his opinion towards the following statement: *Why spend time and energy fighting for causes that aren’t part of my culture or ethnicity, each ethnicity should fight for their own causes.* Adam stated:

“it’s wrong, it’s a clear cut problem, everyone should work the good of everyone else”

When asked to express his opinion towards the following statement: *Life is too short and beautiful to spend it fighting for causes of oppression that really don’t impact me much.* Adam stated:

“there are two side to that, yes life is beautiful, we should enjoy it and other people should notice that we are enjoying it...the other side is that we are all part of everyone else”

When asked to express his opinion towards the following statement: *I know society has problems that need attention, however, it’s not my duty to fix those, after all, I didn’t create those problems.*

Adam stated:

“be careful and don’t expect too much”

When asked to express his opinion towards the following statement: *Fighting social injustices is way too risky, therefore, better to mind my own business and to be safe, than to be an activist and to put myself in a risky position.* Adam stated:

“when it’s appropriate to do that, you needed to be able to demonstrate your intentions, you needed to follow a set of rules and not necessarily societies’ set rules”

When asked to express his opinion towards the following statement: *I mind my own business therefore its ok to not get involved in other people’s business or struggles.* Adam stated:

“minding one’s business is important...if people hadn’t done that throughout history we wouldn’t progress”

Adam completed the *phase one* quantitative survey when Barack Obama was president of the United States and participated in phase two the qualitative interview when Donald Trump was

president. When asked to express if the change in administration has affected him in any way

Adam stated:

“I feel less empowered because voting participation has dropped...complacency stands in the way of progress...it feels like things came to a halt”

When asked to express his opinion towards education at large: Adam stated:

“I think is headed in the right direction”

Case 7 Emmanuel

Emmanuel identified himself as a Latino man. He is single and in his 20s. Emmanuel indicated that his mother obtained a bachelor’s degree and his father an associate’s degree. He indicated that he has always lived in the United States and currently resides in El Paso, Texas. He is employed part-time. When asked to express his opinion towards the following statement: *I know the distribution of wealth is unequal and unfair, however things have always been that way and that will not change.* Emmanuel stated:

“It’s been like that for many years and it’s going to continue to stay that way, it’s not going to change, the rich have taken control and its going to be very hard for the poor to take over, it’s just not going to happen, at least not in our life time”

When asked to express his opinion towards the following statement: *Why challenge the system, since change is not likely to occur.* Emmanuel stated:

“You could challenge it in other ways, I mean if we are not talking about money I think it’s easier to create change social change, than it is to bring the rich to change the status of the poor and the rich, but if it’s in social justices I think its easier to change that”

When asked to express his opinion towards the following statement: *The rich will always be rich and the poor will always be poor.* Emmanuel stated:

“It’s true”

When asked to express his opinion towards the following statement: *There are things in life that are not worth changing*. Emmanuel stated:

“Like the norms, there’s some norms that should just not be changed. No, I feel that things are just the way they are sometimes”

When asked to express his opinion towards the following statement: *There are things in life that are not worth challenging*. Emmanuel stated:

“There are things that are worth challenging, like rights to your own body rights to woman’s choices, there are things worth challenging, social justices and things like that”

When asked to express his opinion towards the following statement: *Life is to enjoy, not to struggle fighting helpless causes*. Emmanuel stated:

“I mean if you don’t fight there’s never going to be a change. I think history is pretty much of just fighting and creating change and I think all the changes and the rights that we have today is because of people that did things in the past and if we don’t do anything today, I mean what’s the future going to look like? The same, its not going to look the same I think fights are good. Life is to enjoy, there are helpless causes like the rich and the poor, political, I don’t know, the elite the 1% they are too empowered to even, I mean you could try but I don’t think nothing is going to change”

When asked to express his opinion towards the following statement: *Fighting for causes that are not related to me is not worth it, if I decide to challenge something in life, it must be relevant to me, so that is worth it*. Emmanuel stated:

“I agree, that’s why there are different kind of groups fighting because of something that they believe, and if I don’t believe in it I am not going to fight for it unless I feel empowered because it affects me”

When asked to express his opinion towards the following statement: *Why spend time and energy fighting for causes that aren’t part of my culture or ethnicity, each ethnicity should fight for their own causes*. Emmanuel stated:

“Everybody should protect one another and if you fight for another racial groups that would unite us as a society... if you just fight for your own that’s kind of racist”

When asked to express his opinion towards the following statement: *Life is too short and beautiful to spend it fighting for causes of oppression that really don't impact me much.* Emmanuel stated:

“If it’s not going to impact me I don’t think I am going to be influenced to do anything about it... I support it, I am not going to be part of it”

When asked to express his opinion towards the following statement: *Why fighting for the problems of people I don't know and of people that probably don't care about my own problems.* Emmanuel stated:

“if its somethings that’s positive and good for society ill support it, I am not going to be involved but ill support it”

When asked to express his opinion towards the following statement: *I know society has problems that need attention, however, it's not my duty to fix those, after all, I didn't create those problems.*

Emmanuel stated:

“and that’s true...most of those problems I didn’t create and I am just not going to do anything about it, or involvement to create change”

When asked to express his opinion towards the following statement: *Fighting social injustices is way too risky, therefore, better to mind my own business and to be safe, than to be an activist and to put myself in a risky position.* Emmanuel stated:

“Sometimes is true, you just have to realize what are the risk, the dangers that you are putting yourself in to defend a cause that maybe it’s not worth fighting for, ill rather protect myself first physically, financially than to put myself in that risk”

Emmanuel completed the *phase one* quantitative survey when Barack Obama was president of the United States and participated in phase two the qualitative interview when Donald Trump was president. When asked to express if the change in administration has affected him in any way Emmanuel stated:

“Less empowered, there’s so much corruption, moving the country in a negative way, I feel defeated, the country is heading in the wrong direction, I was so disappointed”

When asked to express his opinion towards society at large: Emmanuel stated:

“Society is heading in the right direction”

When asked to express his opinion towards his sense of education in his life: Emmanuel stated:

“Education is not heading in the right direction, the government has different priorities, so they are going to fund other agencies instead of education...I guess they just want to keep us under control by not giving us an education, so if we don't have an education, so we are just going to listen and not actually think for ourselves, for control, so we can remain bored, keep the rich rich, keep the middle class poor, and the poor poor, just so we won't fight the government”

Case 8 Gabriel

Gabriel identified himself as a Hispanic man. He is single and in his 20s. Gabriel indicated that his mother obtained a high school degree and his father an associate degree. He indicated that he has always lived in the United States and currently resides in El Paso, Texas. He is employed part-time. When asked to express his opinion towards the following statement: *I know the distribution of wealth is unequal and unfair, however things have always been that way and that will not change.* Gabriel stated:

“My perception is the rich stay rich and the poor stay poor, there are those who work really hard to make a better living and there are those who instead complain, wealthy people I feel don't help out as much, for the poor is really hard to overcome that barrier of being poor they have less resources, education is bad because of being poor, your eating habits are bad because of your financial status, it's really hard to prosper, being poor there's a better chance of you not feeling as confident or as sociable, for the rich they continue to be rich, is easier to have more time, you make better connections”

When asked to express his opinion towards the following statement: *Why challenge the system, since change is not likely to occur.* Gabriel stated:

“I feel that is all a scrip is already written how society is supposed to be how life is supposed be, so really there's some force or people who are writing everything, writing the rules, they wanted in a certain way, everything is rigged, everything is corrupt, the people in power wants

to stay in power, and control things and made things an illusion to make seem that people have choices and freedom”

When asked to express his opinion towards the following statement: *The rich will always be rich and the poor will always be poor.* Gabriel stated:

“My perception is the rich stay rich and the poor stay poor”

When asked to express his opinion towards the following statement: *There are things in life that are not worth changing.* Gabriel stated:

“you can’t really worry about the outside world too much you got to worry about yourself first, enjoy your life, , it can be all deception, you can’t really trust everything you hear most of it can be scare tactics to keep you close minded, I guess people in power don’t want others to challenge them, they don’t want other great minds to come about, they want to control people”

When asked to express his opinion towards the following statement: *Life is to enjoy, not to struggle fighting helpless causes.* Gabriel stated:

“I guess it all depends on the individual, you first have to worry about yourself, helpless causes it’s helpless, its rigged, its corrupt”

When asked to express his opinion towards the following statement: *Fighting for causes that are not related to me is not worth it, if I decide to challenge something in life, it must be relevant to me, so that is worth it.* Gabriel stated:

“to me fighting for something doesn’t have to relate to me, it just has to be something worth fighting for, something that benefits a lot of people, or if it’s a cause that’s hurting a lot of people that’s when I care, if the issue is really bad it doesn’t really matter how many people are being affected, you can’t trust what you are eating”

When asked to express his opinion towards the following statement: *Life is too short and beautiful to spend it fighting for causes of oppression that really don’t impact me much.* Gabriel stated:

“life is not utopia, it’s not sunshine’s and rainbows, I do believe in fighting oppression”

When asked to express his opinion towards the following statement: *I know society has problems that need attention, however, it's not my duty to fix those, after all, I didn't create those problems.*

Gabriel stated:

“we all live together in this planet, I do believe in helping out in issues that weren't created by me”

When asked to express his opinion towards the following statement: *Fighting social injustices is way too risky, therefore, better to mind my own business and to be safe, than to be an activist and to put myself in a risky position.* Gabriel stated:

“it is risky but if it's something you care about then social injustices should be engaged in”

When asked to express his opinion towards the following statement: *I mind my own business therefore its ok to not get involved in other people's business or struggles.* Gabriel stated:

“I mind my own business, I also believe you should be self-aware, we all should support each other, I always wanted to make difference in the world”

Gabriel completed the *phase one* quantitative survey when Barack Obama was president of the United States and participated in phase two the qualitative interview when Donald Trump was president. When asked to express if the change in administration has affected him in any way.

Gabriel stated:

“I am still the same, this election was the first time I ever voted, politics is a helpless cause, everything is written, scripted, people go out to vote thinking they are going change, make a difference, but if you really look at how the system works it's not up to the people, it's up to the state representatives, I don't pay too much attention, only if anything bad is happening, I mostly worry about how bad things get”

When asked to express his opinion towards society at large: Gabriel stated:

“the systems really kind of raises you, it's only about yourself, don't worry about others because nobody is going to be there for you”

When asked to express his opinion towards education at large: Gabriel stated:

“education is bad because of being poor, it’s a stupid decision, why hasn’t education improved, it seems that the government ignores education, with better education we would have a better life, it hasn’t improved because it has to do with the system, an improvement in education people actually enjoying going to school, feeling motivated to go to school, really what’s been taught, how’s been taught, to me education has failed me”

When asked to express his opinion towards his sense of control in his life: Gabriel stated:

“I would like to believe I am in full control of mu decisions and actions but if I really think about it money is a big factor on what I do, but really the system, money and I guess other things do affect those decisions, it’s not really that you do have full control of your decisions and actions because things do alter your decisions making you think that you have full control of your decisions”

Case 9 Elijah

Elijah identified himself as a Hispanic man. He is married and in his 20s. Elijah indicated that his mother and father obtained a high school degree. He indicated that he has always lived in the United States and currently resides in El Paso, Texas. He is employed full-time. When asked to express his opinion towards the following statement: *I know the distribution of wealth is unequal and unfair, however things have always been that way and that will not change.* Elijah stated:

“is like that because we allow it, people look out for themselves not for somebody else and I think because of that you don’t aim for that change for society, I think the big majority of them are scared of the repercussions that they might fall into, money equals power, people think they have too much to lose and the risk is not going to be worth, it’s more like a selfish mentality”

When asked to express his opinion towards the following statement: *Why challenge the system, since change is not likely to occur.* Elijah stated:

“People I think the vast majority are selfish, it’s easier to point fingers than to actually accept your own faults, in education my wife is a teacher, she tells me there is only so much you can do, you don’t want to invest the extra time, we hardly ever talk, systems have always been changed, because things aren’t going to stay the same forever”

When asked to express his opinion towards the following statement: *The rich will always be rich and the poor will always be poor.* Elijah stated:

“I think either the person is not fully educated or they don’t want to put up the fight, money equals power, a lot of people fear being mislabeled”

When asked to express his opinion towards the following statement: *There are things in life that are not worth changing.* Elijah stated:

“I think is true, it goes back to your values, there are things that are worth changing, I think the things that are not worth changing”

When asked to express his opinion towards the following statement: *Life is to enjoy, not to struggle fighting helpless causes.* Elijah stated:

“people have different views in immigration, politicians don’t do anything about our immigration laws there’s nothing you can do, even if you stand there and protest...so i think at that point is a lost cause because it’s not up to me”

When asked to express his opinion towards the following statement: *Fighting for causes that are not related to me is not worth it, if I decide to challenge something in life, it must be relevant to me, so that is worth it.* Elijah stated:

“whether you think is not going to affect you, you are wrong”

When asked to express his opinion on the following statement: *Why spend time and energy fighting for causes that aren’t part of my culture or ethnicity, each ethnicity should fight for their own causes.* Elijah stated:

“everything is correlated, you have to be open about it”

When asked to express his opinion towards the following statement: *Life is too short and beautiful to spend it fighting for causes of oppression that really don’t impact me much.* Elijah stated:

“people don’t know the whole truth, because I can’t see it, I cannot witness it, I think that is always easier to point fingers, than to actually think, it’s easier for you to tell me that’s

the answer, than me actually going out of my way and find the actual true, because nobody wants to take the blame, there is always somebody to blame, it goes back to your values, people are not concerned about the actual truth, it doesn't matter if it's true or not, people are not really concerned because they don't look for the truth, if you really think then everything is fake, there a lot of fake things, people aren't honest, its washed on us that whatever is juicier that's it, we want everything fast, it's the way society is pushing us to be, why wait if you can have it now, it goes back to how you were raised, we don't really have it in us to wait, if we would have the same values it would be easier to make a change, if you think about it"

When asked to express his opinion towards the following statement: *I know society has problems that need attention, however, it's not my duty to fix those, after all, I didn't create those problems.*

Elijah stated:

"you have to worry about everything, people see that's just the way it is, nothing is going to change, because of the fear to do that change, maybe it's not affecting you right now but it doesn't mean it's going to affect you down the line"

When asked to express his opinion towards the following statement: *I mind my own business therefore its ok to not get involved in other people's business or struggles.* Elijah stated:

"people mind their own business because they are afraid, fear is something of the unknown, people are scared of the repercussions, life is going to work out regardless, we are so concerned on material things, nobody is going to say anything, I think you fail when you don't get up"

Elijah completed the *phase one* quantitative survey when Barack Obama was president of the United States and participated in phase two the qualitative interview when Donald Trump was president. When asked to express if the change in administration has affected him in any way.

Elijah stated:

"overall more empowered, power translates to getting away with things, doing bad things"

When asked to express his opinion towards society at large: Elijah stated:

"I don't think is going in the right direction, I don't think we are going in the right direction, our believes are no longer there, we are so scared, there's no values to guide us, the government has no values, we have no values, because you are scared, because you worry about the repercussions"

When asked to express his opinion towards education at large: Elijah stated:

“Education honesty I don’t think it is, you are setting up society to failure, Education focuses on a test, life is not a test, you can’t measure one’s ability and one’s knowledge on a test, I think is the system that fails me, I think that is based on money”

Case 10 Benjamin

Benjamin identified himself as a Hispanic man. He is single and in his 20s. Benjamin indicated that his father obtained a bachelor’s degree. He indicated that he has always lived in the United States and currently resides in El Paso, Texas. He is employed full-time. When asked to express his opinion towards the following statement: *I know the distribution of wealth is unequal and unfair, however things have always been that way and that will not change.* Benjamin stated:

“I think change is always going to happen...I kind of see that it’s unfair”

When asked to express his opinion towards the following statement: *Why challenge the system, since change is not likely to occur.* Benjamin stated:

“I think that’s you are just there for the ride...going along with the flow...I don’t like going along with the ride...I am defiant...if I see something I don’t like I speak about it...because sometimes that’s the norm sometimes it’s not appropriate or it should be the norm...most of the time it’s just brought in to the picture but it doesn’t really change after some period of time”

When asked to express his opinion towards the following statement: *The rich will always be rich and the poor will always be poor.* Benjamin stated:

“I kind of agree with that...everything got reaffirmed and I didn’t like that...the rich would be rich and the poor would be poor of course, but when it comes to the you do have the power to change your life... you don’t have to be poor you can become normal class...the way it is the way I see it the rich would be rich and the poor would poor”

When asked to express his opinion towards the following statement: *There are things in life that are not worth changing.* Benjamin stated:

“sometimes there are things in my life that aren’t worth changing”

When asked to express his opinion towards the following statement: *There are things in life that are not worth challenging.* Benjamin stated:

“on a personal level I there isn’t anything I wouldn’t want to challenge on a wider scale. I do think there are situation where some things cannot be challenged and that’s just because of the norm”

When asked to express his opinion towards the following statement: *Life is to enjoy, not to struggle fighting helpless causes.* Benjamin stated:

“I do find myself guilty about that a lot...I used to think about other people and other causes... I am not really enjoying life...I am doing more for other people than I a m doing for me...I put other people’s problems and issues in my back regardless if get anything out of it...what more important me or the other people...I became very selfish...maybe I should live a good life and not worry about anyone else...I have to balance it...life is meant to be enjoy but can’t be selfish...have to balance it”

When asked to express his opinion towards the following statement: *Fighting for causes that are not related to me is not worth it, if I decide to challenge something in life, it must be relevant to me, so that is worth it.* Benjamin stated:

“I would support an issue even if it doesn’t relate to me or affect me...personally in the back of my mind I have a bias or tendency if it does relate to me or not...I hope for change”

When asked to express his opinion towards the following statement: *Life is too short and beautiful to spend it fighting for causes of oppression that really don’t impact me much.* Benjamin stated:

“I tend not to think stuff about that...sometimes these stuff happening in the world...I should do something about it but it’s not worth the effort if it doesn’t relate to me at all...sometimes I support it...that’s a selfish aspect about it”

When asked to express his opinion towards the following statement: *Fighting social injustices is way too risky, therefore, better to mind my own business and to be safe, than to be an activist and to put myself in a risky position.* Benjamin stated:

“if I feel there’s a situation good enough because I would get involved even if it’s risky...I think it’s always risky”

When asked to express his opinion towards the following statement: *I know society has problems that need attention, however, it’s not my duty to fix those, after all, I didn’t create those problems.*

Benjamin stated:

“it’s really not my problem but I do want a change to happen even though I don’t see myself getting involved in it...the way I see it I don’t want to get involved but I found myself wanting to get involved”

When asked to express his opinion towards the following statement: *I mind my own business therefore its ok to not get involved in other people’s business or struggles.* Benjamin stated:

“I feel guilty for not helping people...it depends on the person and the amount of guilt you have...how come no one came out to my help...no one came to me”

Benjamin completed the *phase one* quantitative survey when Barack Obama was president of the United States and participated in phase two the qualitative interview when Donald Trump was president. When asked to express if the change in administration has affected him in any way. Benjamin stated:

“I feel less empowered...I under this administration I want to say I want to believe there’s no change in power but for some reason I want to say less empowered...I still maintain the same stance...more proactive...I felt we were in a god place but now what has changed for me I saw everyone around me changed...more arguing...from the Obama to the trump administration in my opinion I want to believe it’s for the better but for the majority it was for the worst...I am more optimistic but don’t want to get my hopes high, the majority of what I do really hope happen it’s not going happen ...realistically I don’t see a lot of change happening...keep my hopes grounded”

When asked to express his opinion towards education at large: Benjamin stated:

“I think there’s aspects that are getting better and aspects that are getting worst...the teaching methods is not necessarily gone better”

When asked to express his opinion towards his sense of control in his life: Benjamin stated:

“I hope this would happen...if I see something that is going to happen like in a certain way I believe it’s going to happen that way but always keep a minor hope...I think I believe more less what realistically is going to happen would happen and what I hope would

happen like I hope it would happen but usually I don't see that change occur... I would want to say that I am in full control...the choices I make affect my life...I am in control of my decisions...personally in my life I have full control”

Themes Emergent from Perspectives on the Distribution of Wealth in Society

The research participants expressed their opinions and perspectives in the distribution of economic wealth in society. They expressed optimism in the following themes: the outcome of working hard, the possibility of socio-economic change for the poor, people in general becoming aware of social injustices, destiny and the result of collaboration. In addition, research participants expressed pessimism in the following themes: socio-economic conditions of the present and future, people taking responsibility for their living conditions, socio-economic opportunities for the economically poor communities, nutrition education for the economically poor communities, on the elite and wealthy having so much control over general matters, on the socio-economically poor communities gaining control over general things, achieving visible change during a lifetime, people prioritizing their self-interests, engagement of society in general matters, activism, repercussions of being an activist, people conforming, society's fear of failure and on the influence of the comfort zone.

Themes Emergent from Perspectives on Challenging the Socio-Economic System

Research participants expressed optimism in the following themes: challenging non-economic life matters, challenging social injustices, achieving socio-economic change for the economically disadvantaged, challenging and changing the system, the outcome of collaboration and on the power of hope. In addition, research participants expressed pessimism in the following themes: socio-economic change of the present and future for the economically disadvantaged

communities, people prioritizing their self-interests, the mainstream ideology, people taking responsibility for their living conditions, achieving visible change during a lifetime, what an individual can achieve, the autonomy and validity of matters in life and on the relevance and adequacy of the governmental system.

Themes Emergent from Perspectives on the Economically Poor and Wealthy

Research participants expressed optimism in the following themes: achieving socio-economic change for the economically disadvantaged, individual change and on challenging non-economic life matters. In addition, research participants expressed pessimism in the following themes: socio-economic change of the present and future for the economically disadvantaged communities, people prioritizing their self-interests, the relevancy and adequacy of the governmental and educational system and on achieving visible change during a lifetime.

Themes Emergent from Perspectives on Changing Aspects of Life

Research participants expressed optimism in the following themes: achieving change on personal life matters and on helping others achieve personal change. In addition, research participants expressed pessimism in the following themes: changing general life matters, people prioritizing their self-interests, the relevance and adequacy of the governmental system, sociological control, the mainstream ideology, control over targeted communities and on understanding important aspects of life.

Themes Emergent from Perspectives on Challenging Aspects of Life

Research participants expressed optimism in the following themes: challenging social injustices, the rewards of challenging important matters, challenging personal life matters and on the potential of individuality when challenging important matters. In addition, research participants expressed pessimism in the following themes: challenging certain life matters, the possibility of change, challenging the norm, challenging bigger aspects of life, people willingness to change, people prioritizing their self-interests, outcome of challenging complex matters, people challenging learned life matters, people willingness to compromise, feeling hopeless and powerless and on the influence of social pressures.

Themes Emergent from Perspectives on Fighting Helpless Causes

Research participants expressed optimism in the following themes: the importance of fighting what's perceived as wrong, fighting oppression, helping others, the outcome of collaboration, the outcome of working hard and balancing aspects of life to fight oppression. In addition, research participants expressed pessimism in the following themes: fighting helpless causes, changing complex aspects of life, socio-economic conditions of the present and future for the disadvantaged communities, the national political context, on achieving visible change during a lifetime, people prioritizing their self-interests and on people not prioritizing happiness.

Themes Emergent from Perspectives on Fighting the Causes of Others

Research participants expressed optimism in the following themes: fighting for the struggles of your own and other people, the importance of hope, fighting oppression and on feeling empathy towards other people. In addition, research participants expressed pessimism in the

following themes: fighting for struggles and oppressions that don't have a direct impact, assuming that other people's struggles will not have an impact eventually, nutritional decisions made by the economically disadvantaged, the national political context, people being honest with themselves and others in regards to oppression, the mainstream ideology and on people prioritizing their self-interest.

Themes Emergent from Perspectives on Assuming Responsibility over Society's Problems

Research participants expressed optimism towards fighting causes of oppression that might affect diverse populations. In addition, research participants expressed pessimism in the following themes: fighting sociological problems, assuming that other people's struggles and oppression won't have an eventual impact on the general context, acting on aspects of life that impact the general population, the repercussions of activism, people prioritizing their self-interest and on achieving control over complex personal aspects of life.

Themes Emergent from Perspectives on Activism and Sociological Engagement

Research participants expressed optimism in the following themes: fighting oppression, fighting for causes of oppression that affect others and on the importance of activism. In addition, research participants expressed pessimism in the following themes: the repercussions of activism and of being an activist, fighting complex sociological problems, people prioritizing their self-interests, the apathy of some people towards social justice causes and on assuming that other people's struggles and oppression won't have an eventual impact on the general context.

Themes Emergent from Perspectives on the National Political Context

Research participants expressed optimism towards being proactive and on the importance of being optimistic. In addition, research participants expressed pessimism in the following themes: feeling less empowered, corruption on the national political context, perception of the governmental entities heading in the wrong direction, feeling disappointed, governants getting away with improper actions, the general national political context, people conforming, gender oppression, feeling hopeless, feeling fear, hate spreading between diverse populations, lack of optimism, assuming that other people's struggles or oppression wont have an eventual impact on the general context, inequalities in society, feeling ethnically threaten, experiencing more anxiety, feeling constantly worried and feeling defeated.

Themes Emergent from Perspectives on Society's Pathway

Research participants expressed optimism towards some aspects of society. In addition, research participants expressed pessimism in the following themes: society heading in the wrong direction in the general context, society's general values and beliefs, people prioritizing their personal interests, societies fear towards fighting social justices, repercussions of activism in society, the general political and governmental context and people conforming to life matters they might not agree with.

Themes Emergent from Perspectives on the Education

Research participants expressed optimism towards the impact of education and where is heading in certain aspects. In addition, research participants expressed pessimism in the following themes: education heading in the wrong direction in the general context, distrust in the political

context, the general governmental context, society's fear towards fighting social injustices, lack of sociological control, socio-economic conditions of the present and future for economically disadvantaged communities and a general sense of sociological disempowerment.

Themes Emergent from Perspectives on Control

Research participants expressed optimism towards the importance of having optimism in life and on having control over personal aspects of life. In addition, research participants expressed pessimism in the following themes: achieving control over broader aspects of life, socio-economic conditions of the present and future for economically disadvantaged communities, people overcoming conformist lifestyles to gain control over broader aspects of life.

Emergent Across Case Themes

Emergent across case themes were divided into two categories. The first category encompasses perspectives aligned with optimistic frameworks such as: the impact of sociological collaboration, challenging non socio-economic life matters, fighting oppression and social injustices, activism, personal change, the importance and rewards of fighting what's perceives as wrong, the outcome and rewards of working hard, balancing important life matters, hope for positive change and feeling empathy for people. The second category encompasses perspectives aligned with distrustful, deterministic, conformist and fatalistic frameworks such as: achieving visible change during a lifetime, feeling hopeless and powerless in broader aspects of life, assuming that other people's problem won't have an eventual impact in the general context, society heading generally in the wrong direction, people prioritizing their personal interest over the general interests, the political context, socio-economic conditions of the present and future for the

economically challenged communities, the relevance and adequacy of the governmental and educational system, a general feeling of disempowerment, feeling constantly worried, people generally conforming, implications of remaining in the comfort zone, the complicitness of many in the general problems of society, the willingness of fighting sociological problems, repercussions of engaging in activism, the mainstream ideology, feeling more anxious, gender oppression, feeling hopeless and defeated in certain aspects of life.

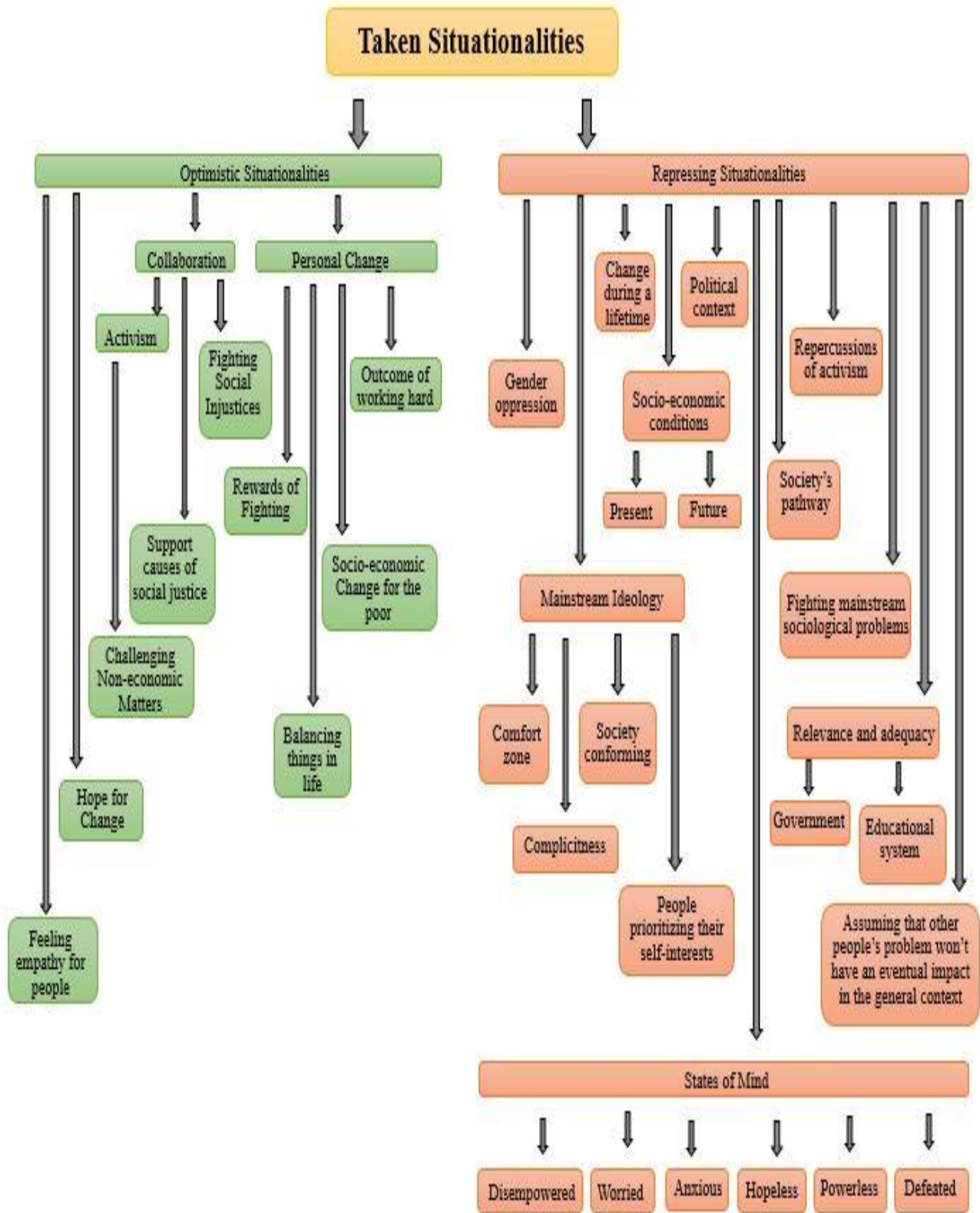


Figure 5.1 Visual Representation of the Across Case Themes

Summary of Phase Two

Research participants were interviewed utilizing an interview protocol built from *phase one* quantitative data and from the review of research. Ten case studies took place in the qualitative phase. Research participants through the qualitative phase expressed diverse perspectives. Some of the perspectives provided by the research participants showed optimism, pessimism, determinism, conformism and fatalism. In *Phase one*, quantitative data showed in its majority optimistic perspectives from the research participants. In contrast with *phase one*, *phase two* qualitative data showed a combination of optimistic, pessimistic, deterministic and fatalistic perspectives. Moreover, phase two qualitative findings provided in its majority contradictory pessimistic, deterministic, conformist and fatalistic perspectives. Furthermore, it's the contradictory responses provided by research participants in phase one and phase two that brought new light to the important role of social desirability bias and political correctness in people's responses and how those responses might relate to hegemonic paradigms. The following chapter, incorporates and integrates phase one and phase two of this study through discussions, implications and recommendations.

CHAPTER 6

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS, IMPLICATIONS AND RECCOMENDATIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

The purpose of this study was to examine the nature and emergence of repressing situationalities through Social Psychology, Critical Social Psychology and Critical Theory theoretical perspectives. Furthermore, the study examined if those who manifested the presence of repressing situationalities in their decision-making were aware of the presence of repressing situationalities in them and the influence on them. In addition, the study examined how a repressing situationality could be transformed into a liberating one. A sequential transformative mixed-methods research design was utilized in this research study. Within the findings of this study, the researcher intended to contribute a new perspective on the emergence of repressing situationalities and the influence they might have on individuals and groups.

The understandings obtained through this research study have implications for schooling, the field of education and individuals and groups concerned with issues of social control, social justice and the empowerment of minority and marginalized groups. This chapter is divided into four sections: (a) discussion, (b) summary, (c) implications, and (d) recommendations. To generate findings for the four research questions, a two-phase sequential transformative mixed methods design was applied. The data collected from the *personal engagement, educational perception, social perception, fatalism, determinism and educational conformism* scale and interview protocol administered to the research participants were used to answer the four research questions that guided this study.

Synopsis of the Quantitative Findings

This dissertation study used a mixed methodology. *Phase one* was the quantitative strand. *Phase one* of the methodology was based on survey data. The survey was composed of six subscales: demographic information, personal engagement, fatalism, social perception, educational perception, determinism and educational conformism. Diverse demographic information was obtained from the participants through the survey. Several demographic information were used to run statistical analysis with the goal of understanding if demographic information was statistically significant in the obtained participant's responses. This demographic information included: gender, age, race/ethnicity, culture identification, level of education completed by father and mother, marital status, employment status and living conditions. Six categories were analyzed in the descriptive statistics. The categories are: *Personal Engagement, Fatalism, Social Perception, Educational Perception, Determinism and Educational Conformism*. Descriptive statistics were run to determine where the participants positioned themselves in regards to *Personal Engagement, Fatalism, Social Perception, Educational Perception, Determinism and Educational Conformism*. The research participants showed high levels of optimism in regards to *Personal Engagement, Social Perception and Educational Perception*. In addition, the responses of the research participants showed low levels of pessimism in regards to *Fatalism, Determinism and Educational Conformism*.

The quantitative phase of the study tested six hypotheses. Hypothesis 1 tested if repressing contextual situationalities such as *fatalism and determinism* were existent in most research participants. A one sample t-test used to test hypothesis 1 showed that the research participants showed high levels of optimism and low levels of pessimism. Hypothesis 2 tested if research participants with minimal to no socio-economic support from relatives were more susceptible to

manifest higher levels of *fatalism, determinism and educational conformism*. An ANOVA one-way test showed that the participant's responses weren't influenced by the economic support they did or did not receive from relatives while working on their higher education. Hypothesis 3 tested if unemployed research participants or in socio-economically stressed conditions were more susceptible to manifest higher levels of *fatalism, determinism and educational conformism*. An ANOVA one-way test showed that the research participant's perceptions of fatalism, determinism and educational conformism weren't influenced by their employment or socio-economic conditions. Hypothesis 4 tested if research participant's responses in regards to personal engagement, fatalism, social perception, educational perception, determinism and educational conformism were influenced by their culture/ethnicity self-identification. A one-way ANOVA showed that the participant's responses weren't influenced by their culture/ethnicity self-identification. Hypothesis 5 tested if the research participant's responses in regards to personal engagement, fatalism, social perception, educational perception, determinism and educational conformism were influenced by their parent's level of education. A spearman's correlation test showed that the participant's responses weren't influenced by their parent's level of education, therefore. Hypothesis 6 tested if research participants who manifested high levels of *fatalism, determinism and educational conformism* would manifest low levels of *personal engagement, educational perception and social perception*. In addition, hypothesis 6 tested if research participants who manifested low levels of *fatalism, determinism and educational conformism* would manifest high levels of *personal engagement, educational perception and social perception*. A spearman correlation test showed that there was a correlation between high levels of *fatalism, determinism and educational conformism* and low levels of *personal engagement, educational perception and social perception*. Moreover, the correlation matrix test showed that there was a

correlation between low levels of *fatalism*, *determinism* and *educational conformism* and high levels of *personal engagement*, *educational perception* and *social perception*.

During the quantitative phase of this research study, the majority of the research participants indicated high levels of optimism. In regards to the survey questions related to education perception, the majority of the research participants expressed a high level of optimism in regards to: earning the highest possible grades in their courses during their higher education journey, working hard to obtain an A grade in their classes, their social life not being affected by their high commitment towards their educational goals, constantly participating in class with the goal of improving their educational success, not go with the flow of the class but to standup educationally speaking, answering as rapidly as possible any education questions or problems presented by the teachers with the goal of constructively proving their knowledge, be highly prepared for their classes to succeed and achieve the desired outcome the education they received while in college, being part of a change for good in the education they receive, not only concentrating in succeeding in their educational journey but also contribute to the educational system with the goal of improving it, the importance of becoming agents of change in the educational system, not conforming with getting a B grade when they have the potential of earning an A grade, not only passing their college course but using all of their potential to get the highest possible outcome, not being excluded from recreational activities during their higher education journey for working extra hard to achieve the best possible grades, being themselves without worrying what others think about them and in not conforming with what's just available to them but fighting for the best possible educational opportunities.

In regards to the survey questions related to personal engagement, the research participants indicated through the survey answers that: almost any aspect of life that is perceived as wrong is

worth changing, the need and willingness to fight for causes of oppression that affects people from other cultures and ethnicities, fighting social injustices should be a priority regardless of the perception of the risk involved, social injustices and matters that are perceived as wrong in society, are everyone's responsibility and all should be engaged and that fighting social injustices shouldn't interfere with their state of happiness.

In regards to the survey questions related to socio-economic fatalism, the majority of the research participants indicated a high level of optimism in regards to: equalizing the distribution of wealth in society, hope towards changing the socio-economic mechanisms that distribute the economical wealth in society with the goal of decreasing poverty, the possibility of challenging the socio-economic system with the main intention of achieving a more equal distribution of wealth in society, the economically wealthy people not necessarily increasing disproportionately their economical wealth, the economically disadvantaged people not remaining economically disadvantaged during their lifetime and on the possibility for the economically disadvantaged to move up economically to achieve a better quality of life.

In regards to the survey questions related to social perception, the majority of the research participants indicated a high level of optimism in regards to: the importance of challenging things in life, the value of fighting causes of oppression, fighting for social injustices that affect others, being attentive to other people's needs, not assuming that other people don't care about their problems and to prioritizing addressing the problems and challenges that society has.

In regards to the survey questions related to determinism, the majority of the research participants indicated a high level of optimism in regards to: enjoying life and fighting for important causes, the importance of enjoying life through fighting for causes that are of importance

to them and others, not feeling overwhelmed by fighting social injustices and to acknowledging the importance of hope when matters in life are difficult.

Synopsis of the Qualitative Findings

In the qualitative phase of the study, research participants expressed their opinions and perspectives through in-depth interviews on diverse themes. In regards to the themes related to the distribution of economic wealth in society, the economically wealthy/poor and challenging the socio-economic system the research participants expressed optimism towards: the outcome of working hard, the possibility of socio-economic change for the poor, people in general becoming aware of social injustices, destiny, the result of collaboration, challenging social injustices, challenging and changing the system, the outcome of collaboration, the power of hope, achieving socio-economic change for the economically disadvantaged, individual change and on challenging non-economic life matters.

In contrast with the optimism expressed towards the themes related to the economically wealthy/poor, distribution of economic wealth in society, and challenging the socio-economic system the research participants expressed pessimism towards: socio-economic conditions of the present and future, people taking responsibility for their living conditions, socio-economic opportunities for the economically poor communities, nutrition education for the economically poor communities, on the elite and wealthy having so much control over general matters, on the socio-economically poor communities gaining control over general things, engagement of society in general matters, activism, repercussions of being an activist, people conforming, society's fear of failure, the influence of the comfort zone, socio-economic change of the present and future for the economically disadvantaged communities, the mainstream ideology, what an individual can

achieve, the autonomy and validity of matters in life, on the relevance and adequacy of the governmental system, people prioritizing their self-interests, the relevancy and adequacy of the governmental and educational system and on achieving visible change during a lifetime.

In regards to the themes related to changing and challenging aspects of life the research participants expressed optimism towards: achieving change on personal life matters, helping others achieve personal change, challenging social injustices, the rewards of challenging important matters and on the potential of individuality when challenging important matters. In contrast with the optimism expressed towards the themes related to changing and challenging aspects of life research participants expressed pessimism towards: changing general life matters, the relevance and adequacy of the governmental system, sociological control, the mainstream ideology, control over targeted communities, understanding important aspects of life, challenging certain life matters, the possibility of change, challenging the norm, challenging bigger aspects of life, people willingness to change, people prioritizing their self-interests, outcome of challenging complex matters, people challenging learned life matters, people's willingness to compromise, feeling hopeless and powerless and on the influence of social pressures.

In regards to the themes related to repressing situationalities the research participants expressed optimism towards: the importance of fighting what's perceived as wrong, fighting oppression, helping others, the outcome of collaboration, the outcome of working hard and balancing aspects of life to fight oppression. In contrast with the optimism expressed towards the themes related to changing and challenging aspects of life research participants expressed pessimism towards: fighting helpless causes, changing complex aspects of life, socio-economic conditions of the present and future for the disadvantaged communities, the national political

context, on achieving visible change during a lifetime, people prioritizing their self-interests and on people not prioritizing happiness.

In regards to the themes related to sociological engagement and activism, the research participants expressed optimism towards: fighting for the struggles of your own and other people, the importance of hope, on feeling empathy towards other people, fighting causes of oppression that might affect diverse populations, fighting oppression and on the importance of activism. In contrast with the optimism expressed towards the themes related to sociological engagement and activism, research participants expressed pessimism towards: fighting for struggles and oppressions that don't have a direct impact, assuming that other people's struggles will not have an impact eventually, nutritional decisions made by the economically disadvantaged, the national political context, people being honest with themselves and others in regards to oppression, the mainstream ideology, on people prioritizing their self-interest, fighting sociological problems, acting on aspects of life that impact the general population, the repercussions of activism, on achieving control over complex personal aspects of life, on being an activist, fighting complex sociological problems, the apathy of some people towards social justice causes and on assuming that other people's struggles and oppression won't have an eventual impact on the general context.

In regards to the themes related to perceptions of the national political context, the research participants expressed optimism towards being proactive and on the importance of being optimistic. In contrast with the optimism expressed towards the themes related to sociological engagement and activism, research participants expressed pessimism towards: feeling less empowered, corruption on the national political context, perception of the governmental entities heading in the wrong direction, feeling disappointed, governants getting away with improper actions, the general national political context, people conforming, gender oppression, feeling

hopeless, feeling fear, hate spreading between diverse populations, lack of optimism, assuming that other people's struggles or oppression won't have an eventual impact on the general context, inequalities in society, feeling ethnically threaten, experiencing more anxiety, feeling constantly worried and feeling defeated.

In regards to the themes related to perspectives on society's pathway, the research participants expressed minor optimism towards society's future. In contrast with the optimism expressed towards the themes related to perspectives on society's pathway, the research participants expressed pessimism towards: society heading in the wrong direction in the general context, society's general values and beliefs, people prioritizing their personal interests, societies fear towards fighting social justices, repercussions of activism in society, the general political/governmental context and people conforming to life matters they might not agree with.

In regards to the themes related to perspectives on education, the research participants expressed moderate optimism towards the impact of education and where is heading in certain aspects. In contrast with the optimism expressed towards the themes related to perspectives on education, the research participants expressed pessimism towards: education heading in the wrong direction in the general context, distrust in the political context, the general governmental context, society's fear towards fighting social injustices, lack of sociological control, socio-economic conditions of the present and future for economically disadvantaged communities and a general sense of sociological disempowerment.

In regards to the themes related to perspectives on having control, the research participants expressed optimism towards the importance of having optimism in life and on having control over personal aspects of life. In contrast with the optimism expressed towards the themes related to perspectives on having control, the research participants expressed pessimism towards:

achieving control over broader aspects of life, socio-economic conditions of the present and future for economically disadvantaged communities, people overcoming conformist lifestyles to gain control over broader aspects of life.

Overall, the emergent across case themes indicated optimism towards: the impact of social collaboration, challenging non socio-economic life matters, fighting oppression and social injustices, activism, personal change, the importance and rewards of fighting what's perceives as wrong, the outcome and rewards of working hard, balancing important life matters, hope for positive change and feeling empathy for people. In addition, the overall emergent across case themes indicated pessimism towards: achieving visible change during a lifetime, feeling hopeless and powerless in broader aspects of life, assuming that other people's problem won't have an eventual impact in the general context, society heading generally in the wrong direction, people prioritizing their personal interest over the general interests, the political context, socio-economic conditions of the present and future for the economically challenged communities, the relevance and adequacy of the governmental and educational system, a general feeling of disempowerment, feeling constantly worried, people generally conforming, implications of remaining in the comfort zone, the complicitness of many in the general problems of society, the willingness of fighting sociological problems, repercussions of engaging in activism, the mainstream ideology, feeling more anxious, gender oppression, feeling hopeless and defeated in certain aspects of life.

Integration of the Qualitative and Quantitative Findings

Topics Researched

1.- Topic under inquiry: *I know the distribution of wealth is unequal and unfair, however things have always been that way and that will not change.*

Research Participant	Response from Survey	Response from Interview
Anna	Disagree	“conformist don’t like to make an extra effort because they are afraid of failure”
Ariel	Disagree	I know the distribution of wealth is unequal and unfair, however things have always been that way and that will not change, there’s always been inequality
Elizabeth	Strongly Agree	“wealth is very unequal...society is already in that path and you cannot change it...i don’t think it can be changed...people are comfortable the way they are...they are not willing to challenge”
Hannah	Agree	“I think that in the us the way our system is set up there’s always going to be an elite class, the same people who are wealthy stay wealthy and the same people who are not wealthy stay poor...and it’s going to take a lot for that to change”
Daniel	Somewhat Disagree	“the richer get richer and the poor stay poor, but the only reason that the poor stay poor is because they don’t do something in their own to get out of poverty...because people are lazy and they don’t want to do anything...the government is forcing me to help the poor, that’s not my job...but spiritually it is my job”
Adam	Disagree	“wealth is not something that preexisted... if we change the way we structure civilization the way we interact with each other our approach to wealth may change it may be very difficult it may not happen in our life time”
Emmanuel	Strongly Agree	“It’s been like that for many years and it’s going to continue to stay that way, it’s not going to change, the rich have taken control and its going to be very hard for the poor to take over, it’s just not going to happen, at least not in our life time”
Gabriel	Agree	“My perception is the rich stay rich and the poor stay poor, there are those who work really hard to make a better living and there are those who instead complain, wealthy people I feel don’t help out as much, for the poor is really hard to overcome that barrier of being poor they have less resources, education is bad because of being poor, your eating habits are bad because of your financial status, it’s really hard to prosper, being poor there’s a better chance of you not feeling as confident or as

		sociable, for the rich they continue to be rich, is easier to have more time, you make better connections”
Elijah	Disagree	“is like that because we allow it, people look out for themselves not for somebody else and I think because of that you don’t aim for that change for society, I think the big majority of them are scared of the repercussions that they might fall into, money equals power, people think they have too much to lose and the risk is not going to be worth, it’s more like a selfish mentality”
Benjamin	Disagree	“I think change is always going to happen... I kind of see that it’s unfair”

2.- Topic under study: *Why challenge the system, since change is not likely to occur.*

Research Participant	Response from Survey	Response from Interview
Anna	Strongly Disagree	“Probably the system is outdated, right now society has changed, it needs to be renewed, the changes aren’t going to be right away”
Ariel	Disagree	“I think change always occurs...change is good or bad...the best we can do is hope that we can help change it towards maybe more positive more equal way, I am a semi-lazy activist”
Elizabeth	Somewhat Disagree	“you can’t really challenge the system because it takes a village...you could die trying to challenge it and you are never going to get anywhere cause it’s the mentality engrained in our brains”
Hannah	Disagree	“I think that you have to challenge the system or challenge those norms of society”
Daniel	Somewhat Agree	“we should challenge the system”
Adam	Disagree	“there’s a feeling that we are all in this together...individually we don’t count for much...the system is so complex”
Emmanuel	Somewhat Disagree	“You could challenge it in other ways, I mean if we are not talking about money I think it’s easier to create change social change, than it is to bring the rich to change the status of the poor and the rich, but if it’s in social justices I think its easier to change that”
Gabriel	Somewhat Agree	“I feel that is all a scrip is already written how society is supposed to be how life is supposed be, so really there’s some force or people who are writing everything, writing the rules, they wanted in a certain way, everything is rigged, everything is corrupt, the people in power wants to stay in power, and control things and made things an illusion to make seem that people have choices and freedom”

Elijah	Disagree	“People I think the vast majority are selfish, it’s easier to point fingers than to actually accept your own faults, in education my wife is a teacher, she tells me there is only so much you can do, you don’t want to invest the extra time, we hardly ever talk, systems have always been changed, because things aren’t going to stay the same forever”
Benjamin	Strongly Disagree	“I think that’s you are just there for the ride...going along with the flow...I don’t like going along with the ride...I am defiant...if I see something I don’t like I speak about it...because sometimes that’s the norm sometimes it’s not appropriate or it should be the norm...most of the time it’s just brought in to the picture but it doesn’t really change after some period of time”

3.- Topic under study: *The rich will always be rich and the poor will always be poor.*

Research Participant	Response from Survey	Response from Interview
Anna	Disagree	“rich can always be rich, but the poor not always has to be the poor”
Ariel	Disagree	“I know people would think that poor people can work their way out of that situation”
Elizabeth	Strongly Disagree	“the poor are not educated to understand how oppression is affecting them they are in a state cycle of oppression and they are comfortable living like that because it’s hard to fight every day to live better and live better and a lot of people are not willing to put that effort either”
Hannah	Strongly Agree	“I think that for a very long time that’s the way society has worked, how do people define rich and how do people define poor...I think that the way our system has been set up for a very very long time and it’s going to be very hard to close that gap”
Daniel	Disagree	“there’s certain people that would stay rich”
Adam	Neutral	“in general that’s true, these things don’t change a lot I a course of a lifetime...it’s unlikely for a large group of people to move from one side of the coin to the other”
Emmanuel	Agree	“It’s true”
Gabriel	Neutral	“My perception is the rich stay rich and the poor stay poor”
Elijah	Strongly Disagree	“I think either the person is not fully educated or they don’t want to put up the fight, money equals power, a lot of people fear being mislabeled”
Benjamin	Somewhat Agree	“I kind of agree with that...everything got reaffirmed and I didn’t like that...the rich would be rich and the poor would be poor of course, but when it comes to the you do have the power to change your life... you don’t have to be poor you can

		become normal class...the way it is the way I see it the rich would be rich and the poor would poor”
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4.- Topic under study: *There are things in life that are not worth changing.*

Research Participant	Response from Survey	Response from Interview
Anna	Somewhat Agree	“sometimes is worthless to try to change their opinion because is something they believe on and probably nothing will make them change”
Ariel	Strongly Disagree	“there’s times when I fell hopeless...we are hopping but a lot have lost hope, I guess sometimes you do feel powerless...eventually you do feel i can’t change anything”
Elizabeth	Strongly Disagree	“there are things that are not worth challenging...I think every single person in every situation is worth changing”
Hannah	Disagree	“its partially truth”
Daniel	Strongly Disagree	“nothing comes to mind”
Adam	Strongly Agree	“I think it might be true...some things the way they are for a reason we would never understand them”
Emmanuel	Neutral	“Like the norms, there’s some norms that should just not be changed. No, I feel that things are just the way they are sometimes”
Gabriel	Disagree	“you can’t really worry about the outside world too much you got to worry about yourself first, enjoy your life, , it can be all deception, you can’t really trust everything you hear most of it can be scare tactics to keep you close minded, I guess people in power don’t want others to challenge them, they don’t want other great minds to come about, they want to control people”
Elijah	Agree	“I think is true, it goes back to your values, there are things that are worth changing, I think the things that are not worth changing”
Benjamin	Disagree	“sometimes there are things in my life that aren’t worth changing”

5.- Topic under study: *There are things in life that are not worth challenging.*

Research Participant	Response from Survey	Response from Interview
Anna	Somewhat Agree	“probably there are something’s in life that aren’t going to be changing or even if you challenge them there’s isn’t going to be anything that would makes them change”
Ariel	Disagree	”there’s things in my personal life that I chose not be involved in because I can see the fact that is a difficult area...it’s not so

		much that is not worth challenging it's that there's never going to be a satisfactory decision and people hate compromise"
Elizabeth	Agree	"people are comfortable the way they are...they are not willing to challenge...yes I somewhat agree...just because the way society accept it...we all learned to accept it...we all feel hopeless"
Hannah	Disagree	"you have to challenge the system...people are starting to wake up and challenge ideas"
Daniel	Strongly Disagree	"small stuff is not worth challenging"
Adam	Somewhat Agree	"maybe even something is wrong...if you challenge it...maybe you can find out for sure"
Emmanuel	Strongly Disagree	"There are things that are worth challenging, like rights to your own body rights to woman's choices, there are things challenging, social justices and things like that"
Gabriel	Neutral	"politics is a helpless cause, everything is written, everything is already scripted, if you really look at how the system works its not really up to the people"
Elijah	Disagree	"I think you need to pick and choose, there's things that are worth it"
Benjamin	Somewhat Disagree	"on a personal level I there isn't anything I wouldn't want to challenge on a wider scale. I do think there are situation where some things cannot be challenged and that's just because of the norm"

6.- Topic under study: *Life is to enjoy, not to struggle fighting helpless causes.*

Research Participant	Response from Survey	Response from Interview
Anna	Somewhat Disagree	"Unfortunately we can't change the world from one day to another, it's good to help people but unfortunately you don't have to worry about it every time about it"
Ariel	Strongly Disagree	"a balance"
Elizabeth	Strongly Disagree	"I disagree, if you want something you need to work for it, you cannot enjoy life if you don't work for it"
Hannah	Disagree	"I don't think that there are helpless causes...there are some people who are selfish and would take life as it is"
Daniel	Strongly Disagree	"we are supposed to enjoy life and help our fellow men...it shouldn't be just about us...helpless causes I would believe at some point that there is"
Adam	Somewhat Disagree	"I see a lot of unhappy people, they chose to be unhappy...you have to choose happiness sometimes"

Emmanuel	Disagree	Life is to enjoy, there are helpless causes like the rich and the poor, political, I don't know, the elite the 1% they are too empowered to even, I mean you could try but I don't think nothing is going to change"
Gabriel	Agree	"I guess it all depends on the individual, you first have to worry about yourself, helpless causes it's helpless, its rigged, its corrupt"
Elijah	Disagree	"people have different views in immigration, politicians don't do anything about our immigration laws there's nothing you can do, even if you stand there and protest...so i think at that point is a lost cause because it's not up to me"
Benjamin	Neutral	"I do find myself guilty about that a lot...I used to think about other people and other causes... I am not really enjoying life...I am doing more for other people than I a m doing for me...I put other people's problems and issues in my back regardless if get anything out of it...what more important me or the other people...I became very selfish...maybe I should live a good life and not worry about anyone else...I have to balance it...life is meant to be enjoy but can't be selfish...have to balance it"

7.- Topic under study: *Fighting for causes that are not related to me is not worth it, if I decide to challenge something in life, it must be relevant to me, so that is worth it.*

Research Participant	Response from Survey	Response from Interview
Anna	Somewhat Disagree	"Yes I agree"
Ariel	Strongly Disagree	"I guess that's what some people think...for some causes depending on what they are"
Elizabeth	Somewhat Disagree	"I disagree somewhat...I think it's all related, we are intertwined in society...one person's actions are going to affect me one way or another"
Hannah	Disagree	"I think that you have to fight causes that aren't relevant to you"
Daniel	Strongly Disagree	"that's being selfish...we are supposed to help them"
Adam	Neutral	"it's a very attractive position, it feels like a warm blanket that I want to wrap myself in to hide from all the problems"
Emmanuel	Agree	"I agree, that's why there are different kind of groups fighting because of something that they believe, and if I don't believe in it I am not going to fight for it unless I feel empowered because it affects me"

Gabriel	Somewhat Agree	“to me fighting for something doesn’t have to relate to me, it just has to be something worth fighting for, something that benefits a lot of people, or if it’s a cause that’s hurting a lot of people that’s when I care, if the issue is really bad it doesn’t really matter how many people are being affected, you can’t trust what you are eating”
Elijah	Disagree	“whether you think is not going to affect you, you are wrong”
Benjamin	Disagree	“I would support an issue even if it doesn’t relate to me or affect me...personally in the back of my mind I have a bias or tendency if it does relate to me or not...I hope for change”

8.- Topic under study: *Why spend time and energy fighting for causes that aren’t part of my culture or ethnicity, each ethnicity should fight for their own causes.*

Research Participant	Response from Survey	Response from Interview
Anna	Strongly Disagree	“its good to help people, it makes one feel better”
Ariel	Strongly Disagree	“for some causes depending on what they are if they are important”
Elizabeth	Disagree	“we have to change that culture...it’s up to us to do our own little part”
Hannah	Strongly Disagree	“we have to help each other out and sometimes we have to step outside our comfort zone”
Daniel	Strongly Disagree	“we are supposed to help them”
Adam	Strongly Disagree	“it’s wrong, it’s a clear cut problem, everyone should work the good of everyone else”
Emmanuel	Strongly Disagree	“Everybody should protect one another and if you fight for another racial groups that would unite us as a society”
Gabriel	Somewhat Disagree	“something that benefits a lot of people or if its a cause that’s hurting a lot of people that’s when I care, the only things that matters is how many is affecting, if it’s bad or if its good, if the issue its bad then it doesn’t matter how many people are being affected, eventually its going to affect all of us”
Elijah	Disagree	“everything is correlated, you have to be open about it”
Benjamin	Disagree	“I used to always think about other people, other causes not related to me, I do advocate”

9.- Topic under study: *Life is too short and beautiful to spend it fighting for causes of oppression that really don't impact me much.*

Research Participant	Response from Survey	Response from Interview
Anna	Disagree	“you feel empathy for some people, probably if you are not really affected by that oppression you are not going to take part of it”
Ariel	Disagree	“I think life is beautiful even when you are fighting...there's some things you can learn from those moments”
Elizabeth	Strongly Disagree	“all of us in one way or another are in a stage of oppression that you can't really break from that cycle because you are part of society...I am not changing it I am not doing anything about it”
Hannah	Strongly Disagree	“that's the thing...everybody has their own different oppression so you have to fight oppression...you have to challenge them”
Daniel	Strongly Disagree	“that would be wrong because it impacts us in one way or another”
Adam	Neutral	“there are two sides to that, yes life is beautiful, we should enjoy it and other people should notice that we are enjoying it...the other side is that we are all part of everyone else”
Emmanuel	Disagree	“If it's not going to impact me I don't think I am going to be influenced to do anything about it... I support it, I am not going to be part of it”
Gabriel	Somewhat Disagree	“life is not utopia, it's not sunshine's and rainbows, I do believe in fighting oppression”
Elijah	Disagree	“people don't know the whole truth, because I can't see it, I cannot witness it, I think that is always easier to point fingers, than to actually think, it's easier for you to tell me that's the answer, than me actually going out of my way and find the actual true, because nobody wants to take the blame, there is always somebody to blame, it goes back to your values, people are not concerned about the actual truth, it doesn't matter if it's true or not, people are not really concerned because they don't look for the truth, if you really think then everything is fake, there a lot of fake things, people aren't honest, its washed on us that whatever is juicier that's it, we want everything fast, it's the way society is pushing us to be, why wait if you can have it now, it goes back to how you were raised, we don't really have it in us to wait, if we would have the same values it would be easier to make a change, if you think about it”
Benjamin	Disagree	“I tend not to think stuff about that...sometimes these stuff happening in the world...I should do something about it but it's not worth the effort if it doesn't relate to me at all...sometimes I support it...that's a selfish aspect about it”

10.- Topic under study: *I mind my own business, therefore, it is ok not to get involved into other people's business or struggles.*

Research Participant	Response from Survey	Response from Interview
Anna	Somewhat Agree	"it depends on how is the response from the other person"
Ariel	Disagree	"just showing support, being an ally means a lot to them, I think everyone can make that difference, just being more aware"
Elizabeth	Disagree	"I wish I could do more but you really can't...everything is connected it will affect you eventually"
Hannah	Strongly Disagree	"you have to...if you want change and you want equality for all you have to challenge and be involved"
Daniel	Disagree	"no you have to get involved in other peoples struggles...it's a double edge sword"
Adam	Somewhat Disagree	"minding one's business is important...if people hadn't done that throughout history we wouldn't progress"
Emmanuel	Somewhat Disagree	"if you just fight for your own that's kind of racist"
Gabriel	Somewhat Disagree	"I mind my own business, I also believe you should be self-aware, we all should support each other, I always wanted to make difference in the world"
Elijah	Neutral	"people mind their own business because they are afraid, fear is something of the unknown, people are scared of the repercussions, life is going to work out regardless, we are so concerned on material things, nobody is going to say anything, I think you fail when you don't get up"
Benjamin	Neutral	"I feel guilty for not helping people...it depends on the person and the amount of guilt you have...how come no one came out to my help...no one came to me"

11.- Topic under study: *Why fighting for the problems of people I don't know and of people that probably don't care about my problems.*

Research Participant	Response from Survey	Response from Interview
Anna	Somewhat Disagree	"probably something that it doesn't concern me, but yes it worries me but I am not enough concern to make a change for it"
Ariel	Disagree	"I think they are worth fighting for"
Elizabeth	Somewhat Agree	"what's the point... I am not going to really fight and go above and beyond...my life is my priority before anybody else"

Hannah	Disagree	“everyone has different oppressions right so I think you have to challenge them whether or not they affect you...you should be part of activism and social justice”
Daniel	Strongly Disagree	“that would be wrong because it does impact us one way or another”
Adam	Strongly Disagree	“it’s a selfish position”
Emmanuel	Somewhat Agree	“if its somethings that’s positive and good for society ill support it, I am not going to be involved but ill support it”
Gabriel	Neutral	“I do believe in getting involved with others, I do believe in fighting oppressions that are not relevant or related to me”
Elijah	Disagree	“I think its kind of the same, because every cause has an effect”
Benjamin	Neutral	“whats more important, me or the other people cause I always find enjoyment helping people with their struggles, I have to balance it, it has to be an equal balance”

12.- Topic under study: *I know society has problems that need attention, however, it’s not my duty to fix those, after all, I didn’t create those problems.*

Research Participant	Response from Survey	Response from Interview
Anna	Somewhat Agree	“If we don’t fix it the next generation will carry the problem, you first need to change the perception of the people to make a change”
Ariel	Somewhat Disagree	“the few things you can control are day-today changes”
Elizabeth	Somewhat Disagree	“I want to make sure my children are ok before I can go out and change the world”
Hannah	Strongly Disagree	“you have to fix them you have to get involved...later down the road it may affect you”
Daniel	Strongly Disagree	“they are our problems”
Adam	Strongly Disagree	“be careful and don’t expect too much”
Emmanuel	Somewhat Agree	“and that’s true...most of those problems I didn’t create and I am just not going to do anything about it, or involvement to create change”
Gabriel	Somewhat Disagree	“we all live together in this planet, I do believe in helping pout in issues that weren’t created by me”
Elijah	Disagree	“you have to worry about everything, people see that’s just the way it is, nothing is going to change, because of the fear to do that change, maybe it’s not affecting you right now but it doesn’t mean it’s going to affect you down the line”

Benjamin	Somewhat Agree	“it’s really not my problem but I do want a change to happen even though I don’t see myself getting involved in it...the way I see it I don’t want to get involved but I found myself wanting to get involved”
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13.- Topic under study: *Fighting social injustices is way too risky, therefore, better to mind my own business and to be safe, than to be an activist and to put myself in a risky position.*

Research Participant	Response from Survey	Response from Interview
Anna	Neutral	“Myself I will not be an activist, I will fully support with signatures or by donating resources”
Ariel	Disagree	”I wouldn’t blame if a married man or woman would be more careful”
Elizabeth	Somewhat Disagree	“I don’t think it’s risky”
Hannah	Disagree	“I don’t think it’s risky...Fighting social justices should be a priority as a whole because you never know when something is going to affect you...it might affect you down the road...the main framework for social justice is peaceful”
Daniel	Strongly Disagree	“we all have to take risk because if we don’t take risk we won’t get anything done”
Adam	Somewhat Disagree	“when it’s appropriate to do that, you needed to be able to demonstrate your intentions, you needed to follow a set of rules and not necessarily societies’ set rules”
Emmanuel	Somewhat Agree	“Sometimes is true, you just have to realize what are the risk, the dangers that you are putting yourself in to defend a cause that maybe it’s not worth fighting for, ill rather protect myself first physically, financially than to put myself in that risk”
Gabriel	Somewhat Disagree	“it is risky but if it’s something you care about then social injustices should be engaged in”
Elijah	Strongly Disagree	“I had an incident, I said the truth, I am on the blacklist, I am going to continue to be in the blacklist, I believe in doing the right thing and I think that’s why people mind their own businesses, because they are afraid of that, I am not afraid”
Benjamin	Somewhat Disagree	“if I feel there’s a situation good enough because I would get involved even if it’s risky...I think it’s always risky”

Guiding/Research Questions

Research Question 1: How are social reproduction stratifications influenced by contextual hegemonic paradigms?

Contextual hegemonic paradigms have the ultimate goal of controlling society. There are several and diverse structural and ideological mechanisms that are developed, incorporated and monitored to achieve social control. Research participant, Emmanuel expressed that “it’s been like that for many years and it’s going to continue to stay that way, it’s not going to change, the rich have taken control and it’s going to be very hard for the poor to take over, it’s just not going to happen, at least not in our life time”. Social engineering executes diverse socio-economic, educational, political and ideological control mechanisms that seek full control of the social order. Cultural capital is a well-established and highly efficient socio-economic mechanism that reproduces societies at large with the goal of perpetuating hegemonic paradigms. Research participant, Gabriel expressed “I feel that is all a script is already written how society is supposed to be how life is supposed be, so really there’s some force or people who are writing everything, writing the rules they wanted in a certain way. Everything is rigged, everything is corrupt, the people in power wants to stay in power, and control things and made things an illusion to make seem that people have choices and freedom.” Some social control mechanisms are more visible, present and directly exposed such as work environments. Others like social desirability bias and political correctness require a voluntary engagement and compliance from people. Research participant Anna expressed that “conformists don’t like to make an extra effort because they are afraid of failure.” Social control mechanisms such as social desirability bias and political correctness have a more direct and visible linkage to the social contract. Ultimately a

codependency exists between social engineering, social desirability bias, political correctness, cultural capital, social order hegemonic paradigms and the social contract.

Research Question 2: What stages of awareness are present in the social order when repressing situationalities are adopted or rejected?

There are several stages of awareness of the existence of a repressing situationality and they might be ideologically conflictive. Once an individual self realizes and acknowledges the existence of a repressing situationality in them self, it might lead that particular individual to question how much of its true inner beliefs and opinions are applied or neglected when making decisions. The stage of awareness of a repressing situationality within self might be proportional to the level of discomfort experienced. Research participant Elizabeth expressed that “the poor are not educated to understand how oppression is affecting them. They are in a state cycle of oppression and they are comfortable living like that because it’s hard to fight every day to live better and a lot of people are not willing to put that effort either.” The more awareness of the presence of a repressing situationality and of its role on decision making, the more an individual might question its identity and ideology. Stages of awareness are not at all times detectable, much less self-detectable because of the critical role of the surrounding context. Stages of awareness might emerge and be perceived at times when something is out of the ordinary; therefore, it might bring the attention and curiosity of some. Repressing situationalities are often in compliance with the social order; therefore, they may be harder to detect as they may be the well accepted and validated sociological norm. Research participant Benjamin expressed “on a personal level I there isn’t anything I wouldn’t want to challenge on a wider scale. I do think there are situations where some things cannot be challenged and that’s just because of the norm.” Bringing out awareness in

the social order is not common as the social order is concerned with perpetuating obedience and at times submissiveness in individuals and groups. Self-awareness of a repressing situationality and of its impact on decision making is not only uncommon but may present unfamiliar and uncomfortable feelings and opinions on diverse matters. Research participant Elizabeth expressed that “people are comfortable the way they are, they are not willing to challenge.” Most importantly, once the presence of a repressing situationality is detected, individuals and groups face the challenging analysis of deciding on either conforming or confronting the presence of repressing situationality and on the implications they may have on their lives.

Research Question 3: How are deterministic, fatalistic, and conformist situationality taught and learned through social engineering in society and why?

Determinism, conformism and fatalism might become influentially repressing in the stance a person takes on diverse matters; therefore, they can become repressing situationality as they limit individuals and groups from reaching their full potential on aspects of life that truly matter to them. Research participant Elizabeth expressed that “you can’t really challenge the system because it takes a village...you could die trying to challenge it and you are never going to get anywhere cause it’s the mentality ingrained in our brains.” Social engineering is a social order structural framework utilized by hegemonic paradigms to achieve social control and cultural capital through a social contract. Research participant Gabriel expressed that “people in power don’t want others to challenge them, they don’t want other great minds to come about, they want to control people.” The social contract is comprehensive and is introduced at an early stage in life. The educational and schooling process are the first official platform that introduces the basic guidelines of the social contract. Throughout the schooling process more stages of the social

contract are introduced until people become part of the workforce. It is when people are in the last stage of their educational journey and when they enter the work force that political correctness becomes the ultimate commitment to the social contract. The social contract has diverse governing mechanisms that ultimately seek individuals and groups to comply with accepted and validated behavior in society. Fulfilling the social contract involves sacrificing personal beliefs, opinions, traditions and freedoms to achieve desired personal or professional goals. Ultimately, repressing situationalities such as fatalism, determinism, conformism and political correctness are ideological frameworks introduced and maintained in society to achieve social control. Research participant Emmanuel expressed that “It’s been like that for many years and it’s going to continue to stay that way, it’s not going to change, the rich have taken control and its going to be very hard for the poor to take over, it’s just not going to happen, at least not in our life time.”

Research Question 4: How can a critical examination of oppressive contextual ideologies and its impact on schooling be deconstructed and transformed into liberating situationalities?

Ideologies are to be examined and evaluated on a regular basis to determine if they promote equity and equality, to learn if they cause social injustice and oppression and most importantly to determine if they are aligned with people’s true inner perceptions and opinions on all aspects of life. Research participant Benjamin expressed “I would support an issue even if it doesn’t relate to me or affect me...personally in the back of my mind I have a bias or tendency if it does relate to me or not...I hope for change.” Individuals as well as groups and society in general tend to routinely examine important aspects of their life such as health, family dynamics and personal identity among other important aspects of life; therefore, examining and evaluating ideologies should not cause distress or hesitation in people. Examining and evaluating ideologies should

occur under a critical lens as it encourages a comprehensive examination and evaluation of not only the ideological framework, but of the implications it may have directly or indirectly on individuals, groups and society. Research participant Elizabeth expressed that “we have to change that culture...it’s up to us to do our own little part.” A critical examination of a contextual ideology provides the necessary tools and instrumentation to uncover issues of social justice. Additionally, a critical examination uses an advocacy stance that seeks liberation of oppressional frameworks. Research participant Gabriel expressed that “life is not utopia, it’s not sunshine and rainbows, I do believe in fighting oppression.” Moreover, a critical examination seeks the empowerment of individuals, groups and society with the ultimate goal of causing social change. Most importantly, a critical examination of an oppressive ideology offers the tremendous potential of turning those who are examining an oppressive ideology into agents of change. Research participant Hannah expressed that “if you want change and you want equality for all you have to challenge and be involved.” It is at the point when agents of change start emerging, that the potential for social change becomes visible and reachable.

Interpretation of the Integration of the Strands and the Emergence of Social Desirability Bias

The research findings obtained in the quantitative and qualitative strands showed relevant commonalities, but most importantly, they exposed critically opposing perspectives on the same topics under study. In *Phase one*, quantitative data showed in its majority optimistic perspectives from the research participants. In contrast with *phase one*, *phase two* qualitative data showed a combination of optimistic, pessimistic, deterministic and fatalistic perspectives. Moreover, *phase two* qualitative findings provided in its majority contradictory perspectives theoretically aligned

with frameworks associated to *Repressing Situationalities* such as fatalism, conformism and determinism. Furthermore, it's the contradictory responses provided by research participants in *phase one* and *phase two* that brought new light to the important role of social desirability bias and political correctness in people's responses and how those responses might relate to optimism and hegemonic paradigms.

Social desirability bias is a bias response to questions. It has been argued by researchers that it is common for participants to respond to survey questions in favorable manners. Researchers and academics from diverse fields have argued that social desirability bias is influential in how people express their perspectives and opinions in the following topics: inflating personal earnings and income, the denial of feeling powerless, denial of feeling low –self-worth, avoiding the topic of personal excretory functions, inflating medical compliance reports, either inflate or deny the role of patriotism, the denial of bigotry and intolerant feelings, the inflation of intellectual achievements, the inflation of deflation of physical appearance, the denial of imaginary or real acts of physical violence, the inflation of acts of charity and the often denial of illegal acts among other things. An example of the influence of social desirability bias is the strong correlation between social desirability bias and self-reported personality traits (Allen, 1953). Moreover, social desirability bias is argued to be influential when expressing opinions towards the use of contraceptives, abortion and family planning (Stuart, 2009). In addition, social desirability bias has been linked to religion being uncomfortably approached or even avoided (Presser, 1998). In addition, social desirability bias has been argued to play an important role in voter turnout (Brian, 2007; Hanmer, 2013; Morin-Chassé, 2017; Morin-Chassé 2018).

Individuals and groups often seek acceptance by others and social desirability bias is believed to be a well-established pathway to achieve desired respect and validation in society.

Often people learn from an early age to do what is right or correct. Moreover, what we learn that is right or correct is often based on cultural, sociological and family beliefs; therefore, there is variation on what we interpret and practice as right or correct in our actions. Social desirability bias seeks that others see us as good people and as good representatives of society. The findings of this study found that social desirability bias and political correctness might be resulting mechanisms of an *Era of Properness* since they use rationalization based on: contextual projection, sociological empowerment/disempowerment, agency and its relationship to time perception and on the political context and its influence on agency.

Contextual Projection

The perception of time and space plays a critical role on individuals and groups. Often when people make decisions they consider how those decisions are going to affect them in the short and long term. The same rationale may apply to when individuals and groups decide to engage in matters of social justice. Matters of social justice often require much individual and collective effort to address it. Moreover, the processes of resolving general issues of social justice are lengthy and exhaustive. Community engagement, politics, public relations are often the principal pathways taken when attempting to address issues of social justice and people are often aware of the complexity and commitment that it requires. Quite often, individuals and groups like to see the matters they are trying to resolve solved in the fastest way possible. We live in a society ruled by technology where things happen fast and where information is promptly distributed and easily accessible. The new generations have realized, utilized and become accustomed to the fast speeds that technology can achieve in regard to information distribution and accessibility. Moreover, individuals and groups, especially the new generations, have developed a need to

distribute and access information as fast as possible. Furthermore, they want things to occur easily and promptly. In contrast with this, the bureaucratic processes that are required in our society to address issues of social justice are quite often slow and frustrating. Individuals and groups deal with the dilemma of whether to engage in matters of social justice knowing that such matters would involve lengthy processes, and most importantly, knowing that there is the possibility that the matters of social justice they may want to be addressed may not get resolved after all. The media plays a critical role in formation, inception and monitoring of the *Era of Properness* and in how individuals and groups react to matters of social justice. However, the media also emphasizes the complexity of addressing issues of social justice. An important conflict in regard to time and space exists between how the media informs on issues of social justice and in how fast individuals and groups want processes to be just like their access to information through technology. Moreover, the media highly emphasized the risks associated in engaging with issues of social justice. The media tends to mainly focus on the political factors related to the processes addressed when attempting to correct issues of social justice. It is clear that in a society like ours, addressing issues of social justice not only require a lengthy commitment, but a political bureaucratic process that is often frustrating. Whether the media intends directly or indirectly to illustrate that change issues of social justice is extremely complex in the short term, the general perception tends to be that processes related to addressing issues of social justice may not show significant results within a lifetime. Moreover, there is no guarantee in the outcome of the political process related to issues of social justice. Individuals and groups are aware of that and have accepted those socio-political dynamics. Quite often, individuals and groups know that change to matters that affect them directly or indirectly may not occur during their lifetime. This is important because the realization that change may not occur during their lifetime may play a role in them deciding whether they should

engage in addressing issues of social justice or not. Why would individuals and groups expend their time, energy, resources and even potentially their physical integrity to address issues of social justice that may not be resolved during their lifetime? How can individuals be motivated to overcome their perception that change may not occur during their lifetime so as to engage in issues that affect them or affect society directly or indirectly? How much motivation and what kind of motivation may influence individuals and groups to make the decisive decision of making an issue of social justice theirs, even when those issues of social justice do not affect them directly? How can individuals and groups be motivated to engage in matters of social justice without them expecting to see the results during their lifetime? How can we foster an unbreakable and sustainable mentality and ideology on individuals and groups that will overcome barriers of engagement on issues of social justice? These questions emerged as a result of this research study. The following sections provide a perspective and recommendation on how to address them.

Sociological Empowerment/Disempowerment

The perception of sociological empowerment or disempowerment is determinant on individuals and groups in regards to engagement in sociological problems and social justice causes. When it comes to sociological problems or social justice causes, people in general tend to feel empathy towards those issues and even perceive them as their issues in one way or another. People experience diverse feeling and emotions when they see sociological problems and social injustices. Some may experience sadness, anger, happiness and excitement, but is experiencing those feelings enough to engage individuals and groups? We must explore in-depth why people often may perceive those problems as theirs. We live in times when people in general are taught to feel empathy towards other people's struggles; however, that doesn't necessarily mean engaging

directly in the solution to resolve them. Quite often, people in general express that sociological problems and social injustices of cultures, ethnicities, and races diverse from theirs are to be addressed. Moreover, people often argue that being of the same race, ethnicity or culture should not be a determinant in deciding engagement in those sociological problems and social injustices. In addition, people often perceive those sociological problems and social injustices as theirs since they tend to believe that sooner or later those sociological problems and social injustices will affect them directly or indirectly. Furthermore, people tend to believe that even when sociological problems and social injustices occur far from them and where they don't impact them directly, they often believe that if those aren't addressed and resolved, they will affect them eventually. Expressing empathy towards the struggles that other races, ethnicities and cultures are suffering does not mean direct engagement in resolving them. Sociological problems or social justice causes can range from ideological, political, cultural, racial, ethnic, religious and socio-economic among others. The media plays an important role in covering and exposing those sociological issues and social justice causes. Moreover, the accessibility for individuals and groups to access information related to sociological problems and social justice causes is not only practical but often immediate. On a regular basis, people are exposed to frameworks aligned with the Era of Properness. More importantly, individuals and groups develop perceptions, feelings, and attitudes towards those type of contents that may result in them developing apathy or empathy towards those sociological issues and social justice causes. What is critical to understand and outline in these sociological matters is if whether empathy is enough to have people engage in becoming part of the solution they may perceive as a problem. How much empathy can an individual or group feel to make them take direct or indirect action on resolving those sociological problems and social justice causes? How much direct or indirect engagement in resolving those sociological problems or social justice is

enough to satisfy or tranquilize one's empathy towards sociological problems or social justice causes that do not affect them directly? Is proximity to those sociological problems or social justice causes the main true determinant in determining engagement in resolving those sociological problems and social justice causes? These questions emerged as a result of this research study. The following sections provide a perspective and recommendation on how to address them.

Agency and its relationship to time perception

The perception of self-control is not only a decisive factor in people's decisions but also critical in the overall lifestyle. Many are the problems and challenges people encounter on a regular basis; however, what's critical is the level and type of empowerment they perceive to have to resolve those problems and challenges. It appears to be clear for most that daily decisions are almost entirely in their control. Decisions, such as daily nutrition, personal hygiene, clothing, places to visit, gatherings with other people among others are believed by people to be matters where they can see clear control over them. In contrast, sociological, economic, cultural, political, ethnical and religious problems and challenges among others are often perceived by individuals and groups as matters where they have little to no control over them. It is commonly known that addressing and resolving more complex problems that require the engagement of multiple individuals and groups involve longer processes of time and effort; however, they still can be addressed and resolved. Individuals and groups often engage in a state of little to no empowerment over more complex and bigger problems and challenges that require the engagement of multiple individuals and groups to address them and resolve them. Not very often individuals and groups get involved all the way through in addressing and resolving problems that don't affect them directly. Many individuals and groups manifest and indirectly and even directly engage in voicing

out and expressing their support of causes that either affect them directly or indirectly. However, it appears that the engagement by individuals and groups is often short and temporary and only those who are affected directly or who feel very passionate about addressing and resolving those problem and challenges stay engaged until the end of the processes they engaged in to address and resolve them. In essence it may be true that the bigger the sociological problem or challenge, the smaller the control an individual or group may have over it; however, that doesn't guarantee the failure of successfully addressing and resolving those problems and challenges. In an *Era of Properness*, people tend to exercise their control over matters that can be addressed and resolved in short periods of time. Society nowadays is very fast-paced. Technology has shaped new generations in critical manners. The speeds that technology rely on are not only almost immediate but determinant. New generations have developed a need to address and resolve matters in a fast manner because it is how technology functions and perhaps that framework may influence individuals and groups to engage in sociological problems or challenges that may require lengthy times and processes for resolutions. How can individuals and groups be prevented from getting disempowered and discouraged in sociological problems and challenges that require lengthy amounts of time and effort to be addressed and resolved? How can individuals and groups develop a higher perception of empowerment in matters that require lengthy commitments of time and effort? The following sections provide a perspective and recommendation of how to address them.

The Political Context and its Influence on Agency

The factors that potentially influence individuals and groups directly or indirectly and the political context remain very powerful and persuasive. The political context has emerged and become more visible with technology. From mobile devices to entertainment, technology has

become the main source of information and the context of politics has become one of the main protagonists of information. Through the media, individuals and groups get informed on local, regional and international political matters. Exposure to the political context can affect individuals and groups in diverse and noticeable manners, especially when it comes to political leaders. Usually, the more powerful the political figure, the more media coverage it obtains. In mainstream developing and developed nations, presidents, prime ministers, monarchy, among other primary political and governing figures play a very important role in how individuals and groups perceive themselves in their local, regional and international context. In a democracy, where the vote of the majority decides key political and government leaders, many are left behind without a leader that represents their interests and that may lead them to feel little to no empowerment in regards to the sociological problems or challenges that are of importance to them. Having a political or government leader that does not represent the interest of the citizens that governs not only leads people to feeling disempowered but also defeated. As individuals and groups learn and realize that addressing or resolving bigger sociological problems and challenges require longer periods of time and effort, the stance of political and government leaders in those matters may play a critical role in the level of engagement and participation of individuals and groups. It appears that when political and government leaders support a social justice cause, many individuals and groups engage directly or indirectly in seeking such change. In addition, it seems that when political and government leaders dismiss the importance of addressing or resolving social justice cause, this leads some individuals and groups to disengage and lose their sense of empowerment. Most importantly, it seems that when a political or government leader's actions or behavior are ideologically aligned with social injustices, it may disempower individuals and groups in diverse and critical manners. In an *Era of Properness*, people in mainstream developing and developed

countries wish to see their political or government leaders as role models concerned with the improvement of the communities they govern. When political or government leaders model a behavior or stance that is admired by the people, they can potentially become role models and may have a critical role in the overall perception individuals and groups acquire. However, when people see their political or government leaders as bias, unfair, unethical and supporting social injustices, individuals and groups may get disempowered, diminishing and damaging their optimism. Furthermore, once individuals and groups' optimism are weakened, this will inevitably lead them to limit their social control perception to daily routine matters. Lastly, as the political context and its influence on agency might influence people's perspectives and decisions, exploring the possible relationship between social desirability bias and political correctness and their potential influence on decision-making is explored in the following sections.

Achieving an *Era of Properness* through Social Desirability Bias & Political Correctness

Social desirability bias and political correctness share important commonalities and at times they both appear to serve the same purpose. Social desirability bias and political correctness aim at projecting a good image in the workplace, in the family context and in society. They both often serve as a mechanism for projecting the best possible image of our character to others and to society in general. Social desirability bias could also be argued to be aligned or related to frameworks of hope and optimism. In frameworks of hope and optimism, responses and perspectives are based on what is wished as the best possible outcome in diverse matters even when deep inside the opposite is truly believed to be the realistic outcome. This study found that many of the responses obtained though the data analysis were contradicting and conflictive with each other. In *phase one* the quantitative strand participants expressed a high level of optimism in

most of the topics under study. In contrast with *phase one*, in *phase two* of the qualitative strand, responses and perspectives showed aspects of pessimism in the same topics explored in *phase one* of the study. When the research participants of *phase one* of the study were asked to elaborate more openly on why they answered in certain manners the *phase one* survey, they expressed at times directly and indirectly that what they answered in the surveys was what they hope happens, but that those answers did not necessarily reflect what they thought would realistically occur. Answering the survey questions in favorable manners appeared to have provided a level of comfort and personal satisfaction to the research participants. They manifested that it was very important to do what is right. Perhaps answering surveys in the most favorable manner could be interpreted as doing the right thing since answering surveys in a favorable manner projects a great version of ourselves and being a great version of ourselves is what is directly and indirectly expected from us. Moreover, projecting a good version of ourselves would not only often please others but would facilitate achieving success in the personal and professional aspects of our lives. It is at this point where social desirability bias and political correctness share an important commonality. Social desirability bias and political correctness present a version of ourselves that will favor social acceptance and professional success. What becomes critical to understand is if social desirability bias and political correctness are merely mechanisms to comply with mainstream behavioral expectations to move on successfully in personal matters and in the professional field or if they also implicate engaging in a repressing situationality since one must self-regulate behavior and expressions. In an *Era of Properness*, self-regulating behavior in mainstream manners is crucial.

Political correctness and social desirability bias are not mechanisms introduced to people only in the professional fields and at an adult age. Political correctness and social desirability bias are frameworks introduced at a very early age to children under a different label and with a diverse

rationale. Political correctness emerges at an adult age as it derives from three previously taught and enforced stages. The first layer of political correctness and social desirability bias comes in the form of children's discipline and behavior orientation where children are first introduced to the diverse methods of discipline and social behavioral expectations. Most importantly, children learn and experience the consequences of violating social expectations and disciplinary regulations. Furthermore, some children may develop a distress towards the disciplinary actions they may face if they violate the established social expectations and disciplinary regulations. Moreover, at an early stage in their lifetime, some children may regulate their actions and their behavior based on fear instead of critically thinking why they should regulate their actions and behavior.

The second layer of political correctness and social desirability bias comes during adolescent developmental stages. During the biological growth and development stage, puberty takes a primary role. During this stage, young adolescents are instructed on what type of physical, sexual, intellectual and emotional behavior is accepted by society and expected from them. Adolescents may face an undefined status where social expectations are not well defined. Some adolescents may be treated as adults, others as children, some may acquire more responsibilities, others may not, some may experience fitting into new social groups, others may experience exclusion among other situations they may experience as part of being adolescent; however, what they may have in common are the constant reminders on how to behave correctly or be correct when approaching certain circumstances. During the adolescent stage, teenagers will experience an increase in decision-making. This comes with a tremendous amount of pressure from friends, teachers, parents, relatives and peers who often remind them of the importance of being correct when making decisions. Lastly, during this stage, adolescents experience the search of self where they start establishing priorities and personal norms. They start discovering what might become

their future roles and start the preparation process to achieve those goals. Teens additionally learn the obligations and expected behavior of those roles. Most importantly, they learn that behaving sociologically and economically correct will facilitate their pathway towards achieving those desired future roles. Ultimately, this is the stage when adolescents start seeing a glimpse of the relationship between social desirability bias and political correctness and how they might be decisive in the success in their future professional endeavors.

The third and final layer of political correctness and social desirability bias occurs when young adults enter the workforce. Once new adults start functioning in the workforce and seek mainstream career advancement, they will learn the critical role of political correctness in their pathway to professional success and advancement. In most mainstream professional and entry-level occupations, being correct in the supervisor's eyes is crucial. Functioning properly in the workplace and doing things by the book may not be enough to move up. New adults often join the workplace highly energized and with a broad variety of fresh and new ideas; however, new employees might be instructed to only follow orders and to keep their true ideas and opinions to themselves. The domino effect caused on people is diverse and with long-term effects. Most importantly, new adults and new employees in mainstream occupations might interpret submissiveness and keeping a low profile as proper pathways to increase their opportunities of moving up socioeconomically and advance their careers. It is in this stage when political correctness is well defined and highly visible. Those who are not politically correct in the workplace even when their politically incorrect expressions may not conflict with their job duties might face reprimand from their superiors and quite often their possibilities of moving up diminish or extinguish. Political correctness in this stage becomes not only essential to move up in mainstream occupations, but most importantly becomes highly behaviorally influential and

complies with the *Era of Properness* Framework. The following sections present theoretical arguments of social desirability bias and political correctness as repressing situationalities and as proper mechanisms to merely advance personal and professional objectives.

Political Correctness and Social Desirability Bias as Repressing Situationalities

Social desirability bias and political correctness predominates in an *Era of Properness* and are most visible in politics and education. Very often, correctness is initially learned at home. We learn in our homes under those who we trust the most that being correct is not only fundamental but often mandatory. From there, correctness rapidly turns into discipline. Discipline is argued by role models and external influential figures such as family relatives, friends and teachers to be very important in life and something that we must follow. Prescribed pathways are aligned with correctness and discipline to be successful in life. Career goals and life ambitions might at times conflict with discipline and correctness, especially political correctness which could potentially overshadow true ambitions. We are almost always under the watch of correctness and political correctness and those near us often surveil us and reinforce the importance of being correct. Furthermore, those around us often tend to emphasize the penalties that may derive from being not correct, especially politically incorrect. Moreover, those who are not correct or politically correct seem to lose the respect and admiration of those who are devoted politically correct individuals and groups. Some close to us take it upon themselves to become enforcers of correctness and political correctness. At times, it appears that political correctness is the safest pathway to achieve personal, educational and professional success. We are taught at an early age that discipline, correctness and political correctness are almost a guarantee of a successful journey in life. As individuals and as a community we go to great lengths for being politically correct. We must fully

explore who benefits the most from individuals and groups' political correctness. We must further question and deconstruct why politics and education emphasize political correctness.

Political correctness has a tremendous linkage to politics, education and the process of schooling. Mainstream educational settings might enforce political correctness directly and indirectly as it allows people to be regulated and controlled more easily. Inside educational settings, teachers, educational administrators and students, are often rewarded for being politically correct. In contrast, students, teacher and educational administrators who are politically incorrect might be disciplined or reprimanded directly or indirectly. For as long as education has a critical dependency on mainstream politics, political correctness will rule the educational setting and those involved in education. Many often express themselves in politically correct etiquettes even though they might feel politically incorrect on the inside. It appears that the fear of retributions for being politically incorrect might control people's decisions and opinions. Our economic and political context has the potential of becoming predatory, and it seems that framework of *modus operandi* has found its way into political correctness. It can be argued that when someone regulates their opinions based on political correctness, he or she has been controlled directly or indirectly. Moreover, whenever someone expresses a politically correct opinion even if they truly feel the opposite, social control might be appearing at that very moment.

Political correctness in some means is a contemporary form of social control. Political correctness not only contributes to the control of individuals and groups but to the overall control of the settings and context where it manifests itself. Many academic scholars from the fields of sociology, psychology, philosophy, education, linguistics among others have theorized about social control. Furthermore, many scholars have illustrated and argued that social control is in place to control specifically targeted sectors of the community. Moreover, many scholars have

illustrated that socio-economic mechanisms are often developed, monitored and implemented to control people directly or indirectly. Some of the mechanisms illustrated and argued by scholars rely on socio-economic pressure and economical oppression to persuade people to manage themselves in certain ways with the ultimate goal of achieving control over them. Others use religion to achieve control over targeted populations. Moreover, in mainstream developing and developed societies control is achieved through entertainment and the media. Furthermore, in small communities control is achieved through traditions, cultural or ethnic factors. In addition, some scholars have argued that the educational system is one of the primary tools used to achieve social control over minority, marginalized and targeted groups since the vast majority of the members of society go through schooling, especially in developing and developed countries. What this study has found critical is the tremendous role of social desirability bias and political correctness in contemporary sociological and educational settings and the relationship that might exist between them.

In the educational context and especially in higher education, social desirability bias and political correctness might be the safest way to achieve professional success. Those who openly become politically incorrect might be reprimanded in their professional journey; therefore, many follow a politically correct pathway to advance their career. Exposure to educational settings can potentially come with great informational rewards, often allowing people to expand their way of rationalizing things and the way they approach life. Exposure to new and critical informational through schooling may allow for rationalizing matters more comprehensively and may possibly result in challenging some things in life which can result in being less controlled by social control mechanisms. When individuals and groups challenge traditions, norms, rules and social control mechanisms, cultural capital, social order and hegemonic paradigms the status quo is threatened.

A politically correct ideology is learned, validated, and adopted through emphasizing the importance of being politically correct to those who invest in getting educated. Moreover, it is through political correctness that those who labor in professional fields and seek professional advancement might be directly or indirectly controlled.

Advancing one's career in contemporary mainstream settings comes with economic rewards, sociological status, and admiration by relatives and members of the community. Socio-economic status, prestige and admiration by others are highly desired by most mainstream populations. Some may argue that being politically correct is a choice that is consciously made to improve themselves and to achieve one's personal goals. The argue that it is a choice as they are not being controlled. Moreover, some see being politically correct as a sacrifice one must make to succeed in their personal and professional journey. In contrast with this perception, the findings of this study argue that whenever a decision is made that goes against true inner opinions or feelings on that topic, this may indeed be a result of external or social control. Expressing opinions and behaving in manners that are conflictive internally might be an expression of social control. Social control is engineered and adapted to target specific people and political correctness targets those in professional fields. It is at the point when political correctness becomes behaviorally influential that it becomes part of a social control mechanism. Under a social control framework, political correctness serves as a controlling mechanism for the highly educated who seek professional advancement in mainstream professional jobs. Political correctness becomes the highest level of compliance to the *social contract* that mainstream members of society obey. Political correctness is the ultimate commitment of those who have been highly educated and have become aware and conscious of the imperfections and injustices of society. Political correctness is the ultimate sacrifice of the ones who possess the most academic knowledge. Those who get highly

academically educated face a critical decision once they realize the many social injustices that exist in society. Either they voice them out openly as they might truly perceive them or follow the political correctness pathway. It is at this point, where the social contract and social order mechanisms have a notable influence in the chosen pathway. Ultimately, there is a codependency between political correctness and the social contract. This codependency empowers and allows the social order to become sustainable. Political correctness can be argued to be one of the most influential behavioral controlling mechanisms in highly educated people. Noam Chomsky argues that “the respected intellectuals are those who conform and serve power interests”, perhaps this rationale relates to the self-exercise of political correctness in personal and mostly in professional matters.

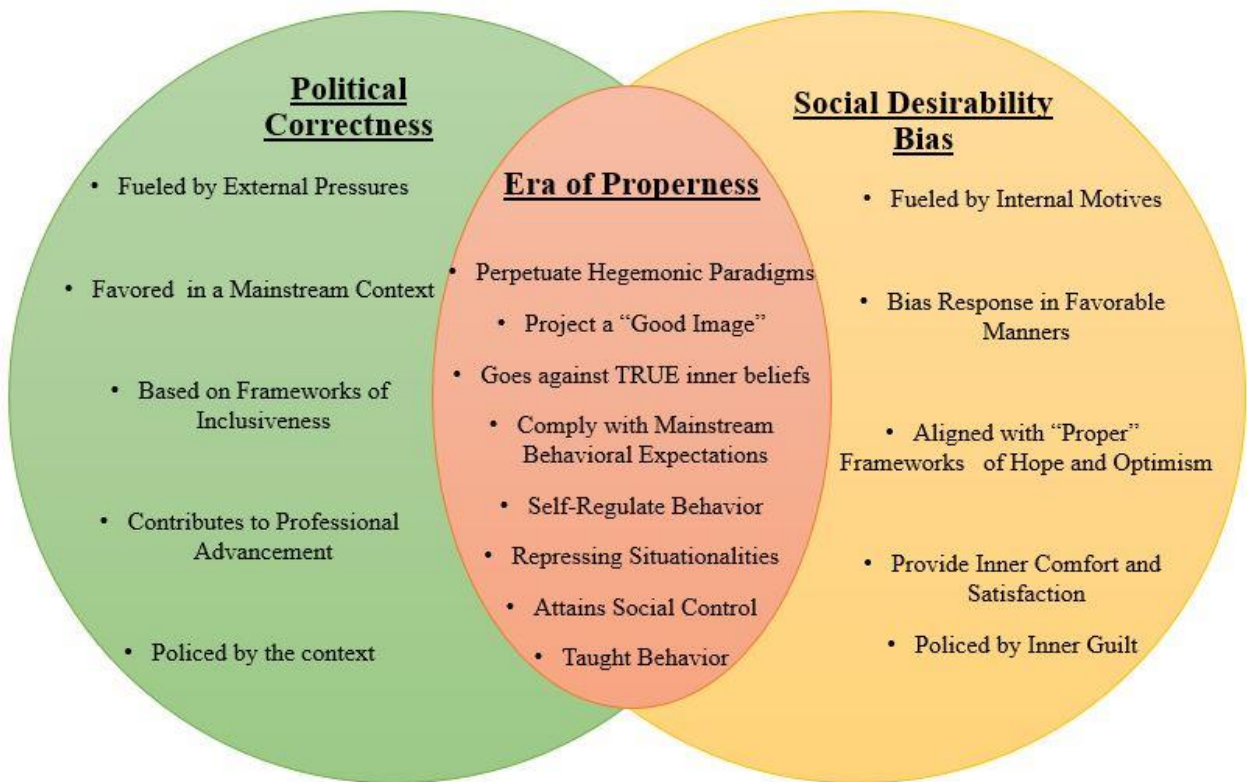


Figure 6.1 Political Correctness and Social Desirability Bias as *Repressing Situationalities*

Critical Political Correctness

The findings of this study present the need and opportunity to further explore the critical implications of a politically correct framework in an *Era of Properness*. Political correctness can become repressing and situate individuals and groups in stances that voluntarily or involuntarily control and regulate their behavior; therefore, political correctness needs to be analyzed and evaluated from a critical perspective. Critical Political Correctness provides a framework where an exploration of the relationships between power structures and political correctness occurs. The goal of a Critical Political Correctness is to understand if political correctness is influenced or manipulated by power structures leading to social control. Critical Political Correctness takes into account the power structures that turn political correctness into a mechanism of social control. Critical Political Correctness framework is concerned with politically correct societies' need for control over individuals and groups. Critical Political Correctness seeks to understand how control is managed and achieved within society through political correctness. In addition, Critical Political Correctness seeks to understand how political correctness empowers and disempowers those impacted directly and indirectly by a politically correct context. Furthermore, Critical Political Correctness seeks to establish who benefits/profits and who is affected from the enforcement of political correctness. Critical Political Correctness can be used as a theoretical lens to explore and understand how political correctness contributes to the perpetuity of hegemonic paradigms. Also Critical Political Correctness can be used as a framework to deconstruct an oppressive politically correct context and reconstruct it based on impartiality, fairness, equity, and equality. Moreover, Critical Political Correctness main purpose is the empowerment of those disempowered and oppressed by a politically correct context. Critical Political Correctness explores political correctness and a politically correct context from an advocacy stance.

Political Correctness and Social Desirability Bias as Instruments for Advancing Efficiency, Dialogue and Education

In contrast with political correctness being a repressing mechanism, it could also be argued to be a well-established instrument to advance dialogue and education among other aspects of life. Just like political correctness might involve self-behavioral regulation, it might also involve a more comprehensive process of rationalization where an individual balances priorities in life and exercises the most properly contextual approach. Political correctness validity is most visible in the fields of politics and education; therefore, the rationale of individuals and groups conducting themselves in that validated framework. It is well known and assumed on individuals and groups that in mainstream family, sociological, educational and professional setting one might have to sacrifice something to obtain something desired in exchange. We sacrifice things on a daily basis to gain other desired things. Basic examples of this involve nutritional decisions such as: eating less to not gain weight, eating healthy food to better our health and eating organic products to not consume possible harmful chemicals among other nutritional decisions that are made on a regular basis. Making the previously mentioned nutritional decisions might involve sacrifices or compromises such as: not eating foods we really enjoy, spending more money, regulate our behavior towards our nutritional craves, educate ourselves with new nutritional information and visiting new food markets to obtain healthier food among other things. Perhaps one must sacrifice something we enjoy to obtain something we desire. Political correctness follows the same rationale and this is especially true in an *Era of Properness*.

Political correctness in the professional space is not only welcomed but highly desired by employers as it offers multiple benefits. Political correctness teaches individuals and groups to self-regulate their behavior, emotions and expressions in critical circumstances. We all tend to at

times feel concerned and distressed about certain aspects of life and work and it is at those moments when we face the challenge of presenting an objective and constructive reaction to find a reachable solution. Political correctness in critical moments can assist the balancing of our emotions and reactions to present the best response. Presenting the most objective and constructive response to critical matters and circumstances will project a favorable image of ourselves, which consequently might attract personal and professional success. Most in the workforce and professional fields seek success and advancement; therefore, the rationale and justification of exercising a methodology such as political correctness to achieve their desired objectives.

Political correctness in the workforce and professional fields offer a well-established and validated methodology of communication which is vital to get objectives done. The workplace and professional fields bring in people from all ethnic, cultural and socio-economic background. Having individuals and groups from very diverse backgrounds and with opposing ideologies can be very conflictive and possible unproductive to achieve work success and completion. Political correctness limits individuals and groups to an ethically correct framework where all can communicate with each other without disrespect and in a cordial manner. Without well-established margins and frameworks of communication, work commitments and objectives could be tremendously compromised; therefore, the need to have a well-accepted and validated behavioral mechanism such as political correctness. Political correctness establishes a civil method of communication with the ultimate goal of achieving stability and success in the personal and workplace matters. In regards to the educational context, political correctness teaches administrators, teachers and students a useful and validated framework of communication with the ultimate goal of facilitating their educational journey. In higher education especially, is critical for young adults to adopt a method of communication that will help them thrive in a multicultural

setting, and political correctness offers them that needed mechanism. Higher education not only serves the purpose of preparing students academically, but also serves the purpose of behaviorally preparing directly and indirectly young adults so that they can succeed not only in their educational but life journey.

Recommendations for Educational Policy and Implementation

Educational policies not only dictate the educational framework but also have a tremendous impact on the pedagogical practices that are used in the classroom. Some educational policies are minimally modified and others change constantly. Some educational policies are updated regularly, others are modified based on what those in charge of the field of education see as needs of the student population they serve. What becomes critical in educational policy are the recommendations made by those in charge of the educational system. Most importantly, what is fundamental to understand when it comes to educational policy is determining whose interest are represented in the educational policy recommendations. The influence and role of politics in the development and enforcement of educational policy has become clear and evident in recent years. Politics appear to not only be the primary force guiding and enforcing educational policy, but also appears to dictate its validity through economic and political funding. It appears that educational policy is often used as a political tool to influence potential voters to learn in determined pathways. Quite often, people who are affected by policymaking and policy implementation are not consulted or involved in the process. One would think that educational policy should emerge from concerns illustrated by the community and community members. Instead, educational policy mostly derives from political interactions between politicians and rarely education administrators are integrated in the policy making process. However, it is unclear at times how to determine who benefits the

most economically and politically from educational policy. It seems that communities and community members are not trained or educated to understand educational policy and the processes that facilitate its development and implementation. Most importantly, it appears that communities and community members are excluded from taking a primary role in educational policy, even though they are the ones experiencing directly the implementation, efficacy or failure of educational policy. Educational policy must be grassroots in essence to command support by the masses, be validated and relied upon by those who experience it directly. Education policy needs to emerge from dialogue established with those who are to experience educational policy.

We must ask ourselves if the current processes for educational policy and implementation are objective about the true needs of the community with its strong dependency on politics. We must understand how educational policy can achieve a needed distance from politics without sacrificing the fundamental economic funding needed for its implementation and monitoring. The very process of educational policy development and implementation appears to be based and framed on political correctness and on social desirability bias, which might limit it and could potentially become a mechanism of control. Political correctness regulates most political mainstream processes with educational policy falling under this umbrella. The development and implementation of educational policy not only needs to be grassroots based but also must not be concerned with political correctness or social desirability bias since the process of creating it tends to revolve around conflictive ideas and arguments. Communities need to take a primary role in educational policy development and implementation, not only through community political representatives, but through the direct consultation of all community members. Communities and its members must be informed and involved in the educational policy and implementation process. Moreover, communities and its members need to be vigilant and regulate the role and strength of

politics in the formation and implementation of educational policy, especially when communities thrive in frameworks aligned with an Era of Properness.

Recommendations for Pedagogical Practices

The development and application of pedagogical practices is not only critical but fundamental in the development of a healthy and sustainable society. How teachers teach content not only impacts students in learning but in appropriating the content learned. Structure in pedagogical practices can be very beneficial but also limiting. Traditional mainstream pedagogical practices not only might reproduce societies at large but presents content as foreign knowledge which often causes a disengagement between student, teacher and content. Mainstream educational practices and pedagogy appear to be based directly or indirectly on social desirability bias and political correctness, which has caused a hierarchy in the educational paradigm. Political correctness inside the mainstream classroom is often based on the dominating role of discipline. In mainstream educational settings, students fear teachers, teachers fear administrators, administrators fear education policy makers and policy makers fear politicians. The chain of command in mainstream educational settings is not only visible but predominant. It's clear and obvious that respect between all parties involved in the field of education and in the process of education implementation is fundamental. However, we must comprehend what happens when respect turns into fear. It is when respect turns into fear that political correctness finds its way into the settings of education. Pedagogical practices inside and outside the classroom should not follow political correctness and social desirability bias frameworks as the full potential of teaching and learning might be limited. Students in classrooms should be allowed to make honest statements at all times. Students inside the classroom should not be concerned about making unbiased or

politically incorrect statement and teachers should welcome them as teaching and learning opportunities. By the same token, teachers should not reprimand students for their politically incorrect statements, but guide them to deconstruct the nature and origin of those politically incorrect statements. Teachers should welcome both political incorrectness and political correctness as representations of the diverse opinions that exist in society. Most importantly, political correctness and political incorrectness complement each other since each fills the gap the other one leaves. Mainstream educational settings inside the classroom might fail to provide a comprehensive picture of content learned due to the restrictions and limitations that political correctness might impose on teachers and students. Noam Chomsky argues that “independence of mind, enthusiasm, dedication to the field, and willingness to challenge and question and to explore new direction. There are plenty of people like that, but schools tend to discourage those characteristics”. Political incorrectness inside the classroom creates conflict, and conflict is often a tremendously unused tool by teachers. In an *Era of Propriety*, conflict inside the classroom is often perceived as a disciplinary issue when in fact it can facilitate a more comprehensive teaching and learning of content. Teachers should not only welcome political incorrectness and use it to their advantage, but also students should learn not to fear being politically incorrect. Teachers and students need to learn and teach others that being politically incorrect is not bad, but presents an opportunity for further expansion of knowledge and understanding.

From a Repressing Politically Correct and Social Desirability Bias Stance to a Liberating One Through Critical Rationalization

As this study assimilated a transformative research design, a need to propose a transformative framework emerged. A repressing situationality is not only physical but

ideological. It is in the context of a politically correct framework where political correctness may become a mechanism of social control. Most importantly, Political Correctness thrives as a mechanism of social control in an *Era of Properness*. Ultimately, if political correctness becomes a source of social control, breaking away from it may lead to a liberating situationality. Individuals and groups may engage in constant contextual situationality where a position or stance an individual take is influenced by the surrounding context. Contextual situationality is concerned with the perception and influence of time and space, and those perceptions may become influential in the decision-making process; therefore, the perception of time and space must not be controlled by the overall umbrella of hegemonic paradigms. In order to break away from a repressing situationality, an individual must switch to a transitional situationality. A transitional situationality is an intermediate and temporary situationality where much questioning occurs of internal and external influential factors. It is during this process of questioning that an individual either reaffirms or rejects perceptions with the goal of making decisions aligned with true inner beliefs and opinions. It is critical that a transitional situationality is influenced by confidence and liberating ideological frameworks. In this stage, a liberating ideological framework must be mainly concerned with a comprehensive validation of true inner beliefs and perceptions and its alignment to the execution of decisions. A well-developed and approached transitional situationality framework allows individuals and groups to move from a repressing situationality to a liberating one. A liberating situationality empowers individuals and groups by recognizing and validating the power an individual has that it may be consciously or unconsciously ignored or neglected. It is in this phase where critical thinking provides fundamental guidance and a framework to move from a repressing situationality to a liberating one. Critical rationalization is not only concerned with the empowerment of the mind, but of the body as well as the decisions of the mind often

impact the body itself. Moreover, critical rationalization validates and incorporates hope at the core of the perception of time and space. Critical rationalization is driven by an advocacy stance and seeks social change through fighting social injustices. The potential of critical rationalization is not limited to certain aspects of society as it is also concerned with internal and external struggles of individuals and groups. Ultimately, critical rationalization provides a pathway to liberation with the goal of achieving a better quality of life. The diagram below illustrates a proposed critical rationalization from a repressing situationality through a liberating one through critical rationalization.

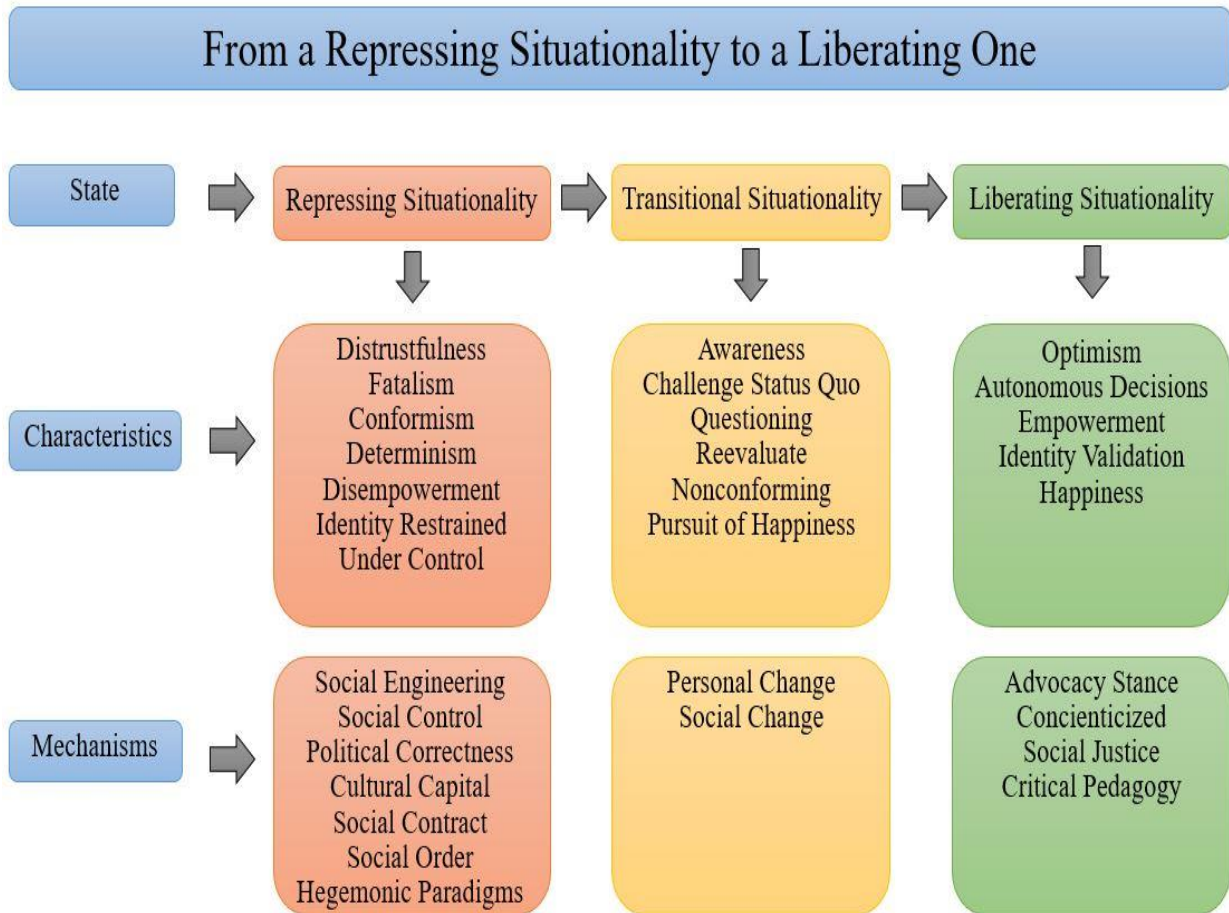


Figure 6.2 Visual Representation of Situationality Reevaluation

Future Research

As the findings of this study showed the potential influence of social desirability bias and political correctness in an *Era of Properness* on people's perceptions, new relevant and critical inquiries emerge. The following inquiries plan to build upon the findings of this study. Are high measurable levels of social desirability bias and political correctness indicators of the likelihood of college success and completion? What relationships might exist between social desirability bias and hope? Does the existence of hope on people's ideology influence the presence of social desirability bias? Do social desirability bias and political correctness conflict under diverse context or circumstances? Can social desirability bias and political correctness be deconstructed in the classroom to increase student's retention and student academic success? I hope the findings of this study are used as a platform for further research related to the possible influence of social desirability bias, political correctness and an *Era of Properness* inside and outside the classroom.

Summary

This sequential transformative mixed methods study in summary produced contrasting quantitative and qualitative findings that brought light to the potential role and influence of social desirability bias and political correctness in education and society. Quantitative descriptive and inferential statistics were indicative of a relationship between high levels of *personal engagement*, *educational perception*, *social perception* and low levels of *fatalism*, *determinism* and *educational conformism*. Qualitative results analysis enlightened the critical role of social desirability bias and possibly political correctness in people's answers and opinions. Moreover, critical relationships between political correctness and social desirability bias in an *Era of Properness* context emerged through the data analysis and interpretation of the findings.

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APPENDIX 7.1
Research Participant Demographic Questionnaire

Demographics and General Questions

1. Are you male or female?

- a) Male b) Female

2. What is your age?

- a) 19 or younger
- b) 20 - 29
- c) 30 - 39
- d) Over 40
- e) Prefer not to answer

3. What is your race/ethnicity?

- a) White
- b) White, non-Hispanic
- c) African-American
- d) Hispanic
- e) Latino
- f) Asian-Pacific Islander
- g) Native American
- h) Other. Please specify _____
- i) Prefer not to answer

4. Marital Status

- a) Single
- b) Married
- c) Other. Please specify _____
- d) Prefer not to answer

5. Which of the following best describes your living situation during the academic year?

If you split your time between 2 or more of the choices, select the one where you spend most of your time.

- a) With my parents / family
- b) With my spouse or partner
- c) With roommates
- d) Alone
- e) Other. Please specify: _____
- f) Prefer not to answer

Children under 18, in your care: _____

6. What financial contributions do your parents/relatives make to your education?

Select all that apply.

- a) Help pay for tuition
- b) Help pay for books

- c) Provide spending money
- d) Other. Please specify: _____
- e) Prefer not to answer

7. What is the highest level of education your parents have completed?

Mother

- a) High School High School/GED or less
- b) Some College 2-Year College Degree (Associates)
- c) 4-Year College Degree (BA, BS)
- e) Master's Degree
- f) Doctoral Degree
- g) Professional Degree (MD, JD)
- h) Prefer not to answer

Father

- a) High School High School/GED or less
- b) Some College 2-Year College Degree (Associates)
- c) 4-Year College Degree (BA, BS)
- e) Master's Degree
- f) Doctoral Degree
- g) Professional Degree (MD, JD)
- h) Prefer not to answer

8. What is your employment status? Check all that apply.

- a) Employed full time
- b) Employed part time
- c) Working Student
- d) On Campus
- e) Off Campus
- f) Self employed
- g) Not employed and looking for work
- h) Not employed but not currently looking for work
- i) Prefer not to answer

If applicable, how many hours are you working? _____

9. How many credit hours are you taking this semester?

- a) I am taking _____ credit hours this semester.
- b) I am unsure of how many credit hours I will be taking this semester.
- c) Prefer not to answer

10. Where did you last study before coming to UTEP?

- a) United States
- b) Mexico
- c) Other. Please specify: _____
- h) Prefer not to answer

11. Where do you currently reside?

- a) El Paso, Texas
- b) Las Cruces, New Mexico
- c) Juarez City, Chihuahua
- d) Other. Please specify: _____
- e) Prefer not to answer

12. With what culture do you identify the most? Check all that apply.

- a) American
- b) African American
- c) Mexican
- d) Mexican American
- e) Other. Please specify: _____
- f) Prefer not to answer

13. What language(s) do you speak with friends and relatives? Select all that apply.

- a) English
- b) Spanish
- c) Other. Please specify: _____
- d) Other. Please specify: _____
- e) Other. Please specify: _____
- f) Prefer not to answer

14. How would you rate your English language skills?

	Excellent	Very Good	Good	Fair	Poor
Speaking					
Understand spoken English					
Understand written English					
Writing					

14. How would you rate your Spanish language skills?

	Excellent	Very Good	Good	Fair	Poor
Speaking					
Understand spoken English					
Understand written English					
Writing					

15. When did you decide to attend college?

- a) Elementary
- b) Middle School
- c) High School
- d) Just recently
- e) Other. Please specify: _____
- f) Prefer not to answer

Who or what motivated/influenced you to attend college?

16. How supported were you in your decision to attend college:

	To a large extent	To a moderate extent	To some extent	To little extent	Not at all
Immediate family					
Relatives					
Friends					
Former teachers					
Former colleagues					

APPENDIX 7.2

Survey Composition

Statements answered in a 1-7 rating scale:

1-Strongly Agree

2.-Agree

3-Somewhat Agree

4.-Neutral

5.-Somewhat Disagree

6.-Disagree

7.-Strongly Disagree

Personal Engagement Category

- There are things in life that are not worth changing.
- Fighting for causes that are not related to me is not worth it, if I decide to challenge something in life, it must be relevant to me, so that is worth it.
- Why spend time and energy fighting for causes that aren't part of my culture or ethnicity, each ethnicity should fight for their own causes.
- Fighting social injustices is way to risky, therefore, better to mind my own business and to be safe, than to be an activist and to put myself in a risky position.
- Those who constantly challenge things don't enjoy life because they spend their time and energy fighting instead of enjoying life.
- If I don't like something I move on, I leave the extra work to those who have free time.
- Why worrying about changing things in life, life is too short and too precious to be spend in challenging things.

Socio-economic Fatalism Category

- I know the distribution of wealth is unequal and unfair, however things have always been that way and that will not change.
- Why challenge the system, since change is not likely to occur.
- The rich will always be rich and the poor will always be poor.

Educational Perception Category

- I come to college to have fun and to pass my classes, not to be overwork myself and become obsessed with earning the highest possible grades.
- Students who only or mostly get A's in their classes are probably boring and not so social people.
- Constantly participating in class will lead people to believe that I want attention and that I am better than them, that's why I participate as much as others do.

- Sometimes I know the answer to a question but I don't say it loud because I don't want others to think that I just want to show off.
- Students who mostly or only get A's and are always participating think that they are superior than others.
- Is much better to go with the flow of the class than to be different and becoming a target of negative comments.
- Being an over-achiever results in being excluded from the fun things that college offers.
- Conforming with passing a class with a B grade even if I can achieve an A grade with extra work and additional time is a good thing because there are far more important things in life than to be a nerd or an over achiever.
- I sometimes conform with earning a B grade because honestly who cares about just getting A's, that's for nerds and they probably don't have enough fun in life.
- Who cares about passing all or most of the classes with A's, what really matters is passing the classes and graduating.
- Being different in the classroom than the rest will probably lead to exclusion.
- Is cool to be like the others in the class because that would mean that we have a lot of things in common and most probably will result in having a lot of friends which is one of the most important things about college.
- If I don't fit well in the class, it will probably result in a not cool or pleasant experience, that's why is important to be like the rest in some ways.
- To meet people in college, you got to be very social and have many friends, that's why is important to be like the rest in some ways.
- I am satisfied with the education I receive.
- If you feel that the education you receive needs to be changed, will you be actively engaged in being part of the change.
- When noticing something wrong in the education I receive, it's better to just concentrate in my studies than to try to change it.
- Devoting time and energy to change something with the education I receive is a waste of time since I will only be a student for a short amount of time and once I finish my studies I will be long gone.
- Why try to change imperfections in the education I receive, nothing in life is perfect; therefore, imperfections in the education I receive is not a big vital.
- Conforming to the education I receive is a good thing, I should be happy that I am getting educated, regardless of the type of education I receive.
- We all conform with our job salaries or daily duties; therefore, accepting the education I get shouldn't be an inconvenience at all, that's what life is about.

Social Perception Category

- There are things in life that are not worth challenging.
- Life is too short and beautiful to spend it fighting for causes of oppression that really don't impact me much.
- I mind my own business, therefore, its ok not tot get involved into other people's business or struggles.

- Why fighting for the problems of people I don't know and of people that probably don't care about my own problems.
- I know society has problems that need attention, however, its not my duty to fix those, after all, I didn't created those problems.

Determinism Category

- Life is to enjoy, not to struggle fighting helpless causes.
- I know things are not perfect, but I am not superman or superwoman to fix those.

APPENDIX 7.3

Interview Protocol

1. I know the distribution of wealth is unequal and unfair, however things have always been that way and that will not change.
2. The rich will always be rich and the poor will always be poor.
3. Why challenge the system, since change is not likely to occur.
4. There are things in life that are not worth changing.
5. There are things in life that are not worth challenging.
6. Life is to enjoy, not to struggle fighting helpless causes.
7. Life is too short and beautiful to spend it fighting for causes of oppression that really don't impact me much.
8. Fighting for causes that are not related to me is not worth it, if I decide to challenge something in life, it must be relevant to me, so that is worth it.
9. Why spend time and energy fighting for causes that aren't part of my culture or ethnicity, each ethnicity should fight for their own causes.
10. Why fighting for the problems of people I don't know and of people that probably don't care about my own problems.
11. I mind my own business therefore its ok to not get involved in other people's business or struggles.
12. I know society has problems that need attention, however, it's not my duty to fix those, after all, I didn't create those problems.
13. Fighting social injustices is way to risky, therefore, better to mind my own business and to be safe, than to be an activist and to put myself in a risky position.
14. What feelings have you experienced under the current administration as compared to the previous administration?
15. What are your feelings towards society?
16. What are your feelings towards education?
17. Do you feel in control of your life?

APPENDIX 7.4

Topics to Address in the Research Proposal

Title

In the Search of Understanding Social and Academic Perceptions and Their Relationship to
Schooling

I. Principal Investigator

Isaac Martinez, Doctoral Candidate, PhD Research Associate

Co-PI

Cesar Rossatto, PhD

II. Hypothesis, Research Questions, or Goals of the Project

- 1. How are social reproduction stratifications influenced by temporal hegemonic paradigms?
- 2. What stages of awareness are present in the social order when temporal positionalities are adopted or rejected?
- 3. How are determinism, fatalism and conformism positionalities taught and learned through social engineering in society and why?
- 4. How can a critical examination of temporal ideologies and its impact on schooling be deconstructed and transformed into liberating positionalities?

III. Background and Significance:

Restraining time temporal ideologies such as Determinism, Fatalism and Conformism have been researched by scholars from mostly the fields of philosophy, psychology and sociology, as those fields have a strong emphasis on understanding individualistic and collective behavior. Kuhr (1975) describes fatalism as a dominating and ruling doctrine which dictates that everything is predetermined and preordained by fate, where often people have minimal to no control of the present and of the future based on the critical role of faith in those individuals and groups. Futa, Hsu, and Hansen (2001) describe fatalism as the unchallenging acceptance of one's reality and current situation where the individual doesn't feel capable to challenge his/her reality and the acceptance of that reality doesn't conflict with that individual's vision of the present and future. Parker and Kleiner (1966) describe fatalism as the accepted assimilation process of one's reality and current situation which is highly pronounced in minority and marginalized groups, especially those who reside in developing countries. Wheaton (1983) describes fatalism as the process where the individual places more blame on the surrounding environment than on the personal factors in determining why success or failure is achieved throughout life. Scheier and Bridges (1995) describe fatalism as a pessimist belief and ideology where the individual on a regular basis have negative expectations of present and future outcomes. Comas-Diaz (1989) describe fatalism as the

phenomenon where an individual feel that he/she has no control whatsoever of their destiny where the individual blames his/ her reality on luck, fate and on powers and factors that are fully independent from that individual's behavior and attitude. Elder (1966) describes fatalism as "the belief that God or some moral order such as karma control's man's destiny and the outcome of his actions" (p. 229), where the individual shouldn't challenge his/her reality based on the fact that his/her reality is guided and dictated by supreme forces such as God; therefore, its meant to be that way and that individual should gracefully accept it. Merriam-Webster's dictionary (1989) describes fatalism as the "doctrine that all events are subject to fate or inevitable predetermination; the acceptance of all things and events as inevitable; submission to fate" (p. 517). Fatalism is a construct that has several definitions and descriptions, but what they all have in common is that they all limit the individual's perception of time and space. From a philosophical perspective determinism has historically been defined as the view "that the will is not free but determined by psychical or physical conditions" (Runes, 1962, p. 78). Conformism is a theoretical framework and or construct that has been widely researched and theorized from the field of psychology and sociology. Although, there isn't a widely accepted definition of conformism, the major relationship that derives from most of the interpretations and definitions of conformism is the critical role of obedience in conformist positionalities. In psychology, conformity is divided into two categories, irrational conformity (herd behavior) and rational conformity (abidance, compliance and obedience). Herd behavior occurs when the subject accepts the behaviors or attitudes of the object according to his or her intuition and genetic instinct. The subject is influenced by the herd behavior of objects such as individuals, groups, organizations, policies, rules, regulations, and the internal experience or natural instinct of the subject (Song, 2012, p. 1365). Also, rational conformity is behavior guided by thinking, judgment, or reasoning. It occurs as a result of the influences exerted by the object's behavior or attitude and includes abidance, compliance, and obedience (Song, 2012, p. 1365). With the ultimate goal of understanding how perceptions influence people, this research study will attempt to address the existing research lacuna that exists in this topic. Furthermore, this study will research if constructs of determinism, fatalism and conformism are influential factors when pursuing, persisting and successfully completing an academic education. Lastly, the understanding and results obtained through this research study will be framed through a constructivist worldview with the ultimate goal of promoting progressive and transformative change.

*Pseudonyms will be used to identify places and names in the research study

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IV. Research Method, Design, and Proposed Statistical Analysis:

This study will use a sequential transformative mixed methods design which consists of two distinct phases (Creswell, 2011). Based on the rationale for this study, a transformative design is the best fit to address the objectives of the study. As Creswell (2010) illustrated, the transformative design allows the researcher to “address issues of social justice and call for change” it also allows the researcher to “see the needs of underrepresented or marginalized populations”, and allows the researcher to “conduct the study without further marginalizing the population under study” (p. 97). The transformative framework starts with a quantitative data collection and analysis followed by qualitative data collection and analysis which lead to the interpretation of the findings. In quantitative research, the investigator relies on numerical data (Gravetter, 2012). Before the statistical analysis of the quantitative survey results, the screening of the data will be conducted on the univariate and multivariate levels. Furthermore, all statistical analysis of the quantitative results will be conducted with the help of Statistical Package for Social Sciences software (SPSS). Data screening will help identify potential multicollinearity in the data, because multivariate tests are sensitive to extremely high correlations among predictor variables. Outlying cases will be excluded from the analysis, as a case that actually is in one category of outcome may show a high probability for being in another category. Data screening will include the descriptive statistics for all the variables, information about the missing data, linearity and homoscedasticity, normality, multivariate outliers, multicollinearity and singularity. Descriptive statistics for the survey items will be summarized in the text and reported in tabular form. Frequencies analysis will be conducted to identify valid percent for responses to all the questions in the survey. During the first phase of the study, the quantitative phase, the numeric data obtained through surveys will be analyzed with the help of Qualtrics and SPSS software. The second phase of the study will be the qualitative phase. Qualitative research takes place in the natural world, it uses multiple methods that are interactive and humanistic, it focuses on context, is emergent rather than tightly prefigured and is fundamentally interpretative (Marshall, 2011; Denzin, 1994; Madison, 2012; Creswell 2010). In addition, critical qualitative research is highly linked to issues of social justice, guided by a transformative paradigm that challenges social injustices. In this

sense, paradigms are much more than nested assumptions about ontology, epistemology, methodology, and ethics, they are the result products of conflicts and tension that stretch outside the educational context to local, state and federal bureaucracies, pressure groups, big corporations, community groups and other who are significantly influential in society (Denzin, 1994). Paradigms are nothing more than human constructions and tend to define the always shifting worldview of the researcher (Denzin, 1994). In qualitative research, “an inquiry process of understanding” where the goal of the researcher is to develop a complex, holistic picture, which emphasizes the analyzing of words, reporting detailed views of the informants, and aims at conducting the study in a natural setting (Marshall, 2011; Denzin, 1994; Madison, 2012; Creswell 2011). Furthermore, the researcher makes knowledge claims based on a constructivist paradigms and or advocacy/participatory perspectives. Furthermore, in qualitative research, data is collected from informants immersed in everyday life of the naturalistic setting in which the study is framed and studied. Data analysis is based on the values that these participants perceive for their world. The ultimate goal for qualitative inquiry is to produce an understanding of the problem based on multiple and diversely rich contextual factors (Marshall, 2011; Denzin, 1994; Madison, 2012; Creswell 2010). The steps in qualitative analysis will include: (1) preliminary exploration of the data by reading through the transcripts and writing memos; (2) coding the data by segmenting and labeling the text; (3) using codes to develop themes by aggregating similar codes together; (4) connecting and interrelating themes; and (5) constructing a narrative. To augment the further discussion, the visual data display will be created to show the evolving conceptual framework of the factors and relationships in the data. In the quantitative analysis, data collection and analysis proceed simultaneously. In the second, qualitative phase of the study, the text data obtained through the interviews and reflective journals will be coded and analyzed for themes with the help of the NVIVO software for qualitative data analysis.

V. Human Subject Interactions

A. Identify the sources **of potential participants.**

The target population for this study will be college students pursuing a higher education at UTEP and EPCC, and drop out students. In addition, adult members of the El Paso community from diverse socio-economic backgrounds will be contacted to participate in this research. Upon IRB approval, the researcher will identify potential participants and will contact the selected participants though email, phone, *classroom observations*, by visiting diverse local areas and through social networks such as “Facebook”. *Participants recruited by email and social networks will receive a message stating: “Hello, hope this finds you well. My name is Isaac Martinez, a doctoral candidate in the Teaching, Learning and Culture PhD program at the University of Texas at El Paso and at the moment I am conducting academic research as part of the PhD Program that I am working on. My research study is about developing an understanding of social and academic perceptions. You are being contacted today, because I believe you are an ideal candidate to participate in the academic research that I am conducting at the moment. I strongly believe that your responses to my questions and that your views and perspectives can help me understand the inquiries behind this research study. I hope you can share some of your time and participate in this important research study. If interested in participating in this research*

study please take a few minutes to go to the below link to complete the consent form and then the survey. Your name will not be attached to your survey responses. I highly appreciate your participation!" All selected participants will be asked to complete surveys. In addition, based on the numeric data collected from the surveys, a group of participants who show high levels of statistical significance will be contacted and asked to participate in audio recorded interviews and focus group sessions. Once the audio recorded interviews and focus groups are transcript, they will be deleted. *A computer log will be created in a password protected computer where the information of the participants will be stored for follow up visits.*

B. Describe the procedures for the recruitment of the participants.

Recruiting of student participants will occur through the UTEP's CIERP database and through the EPCC database. Recruiting of non-college adult participants will occur by visiting several diverse socio-economic areas and communities of the El Paso County. The researcher will discuss and provide an explanation (orally), and through email about the project to potential participants. The interested participants will be ask to complete a hard copy or online survey and based on data gathered from the surveys, participants who meet the criteria will be again contacted to meet with the researcher to conduct an audio recorded interview and or focus group session. The audio recorded interview and or focus group sessions will last approximately 30 minutes.

C. Describe the procedure for obtaining informed consent.

A written and or electronic informed consent form will be provided and explained to the participants.

D. Research Protocol.

The proposed study will consist of two phases. The first phase will be composed of a comprehensive survey to develop a demographic framework and an overview of the participant's social and academic perceptions. *The second phase will be composed of an approximately 30 minutes audio recorded interview and or focus group session and will only apply to participants who meet the criteria.* Participants who meet the criteria will be those who on the completed survey show high levels of statistical significance; therefore, information rich participants. *Participants who are contacted to participate in the second phase of the study will be asked to openly explain why they responded the survey questions in the way they did in order to further understand their perspectives and worldview/s of the phenomena under study. The collection of data will last less than 6 months.*

E. How will you protect the privacy and confidentiality of participants?

Participants will be made aware of the confidentiality of the records by reading and signing the informed consent form. In addition, pseudonyms will be used to identify places and names in the research study.

F. Discuss the procedures that will be used to maintain the **confidentiality of the research data.**

Confidentiality will be maintained by coding and password protection and by locking all records in a locked cabinet at UTEP. There will be no divulgence of the records identifying the participants by name or institution. The investigator will protect the data by running the statistical reports using password protected computers. In addition, paper generated reports will be also kept in a locked cabinet.

VII. There are no potential physical or psychological risks associated with this study.

VIII. As a result of their participation on this project, the participants will gain a deeper understanding of how to overcome restraining temporal positionalities and the diverse factors and aspects that can contribute to dropping out of college. In addition, the participants will receive key readings and instructional materials to reinforce and improve their academic persistence.

APPENDIX 7.5

University of Texas at El Paso (UTEP) Institutional Review Board Informed Consent Form for Research Involving Human Subjects

Protocol Title: In the Search of Understanding Social and Academic Perceptions and Their
Relationship to Schooling

Principal Investigator: Isaac Martinez, Doctoral Candidate, PhD Research Associate

Co-PI: Cesar Rossatto, PhD

UTEP: College of Education-Teacher Education-Teaching, Learning and Culture PhD Program

In this consent form, “you” always means the study subject. If you are a legally authorized representative (such as a parent or guardian), please remember that “you” refers to the study subject.

1. Introduction

You are being asked to take part voluntarily in the research project described below. Before you decide to participate in this study, it is important that you understand why the research is being done and what will it involve. Please take your time to read the following information carefully and in making a decision feel free to discuss it with your friends and family before agreeing to take part in this research study. Please ask the study researcher if you have any questions that pertain to this study and/or to explain any words or information that you do not clearly understand. If you need further clarification, you may also contact the principal investigator, Isaac Martinez at (915) 443-3164 or at his email address imartinez2@utep.edu

2. Why is this study being done?

You have been asked to take part in a research study that aims at developing a deeper and contemporary understanding of how fatalism, conformism and determinism are formed. Your voluntary participation is requested so I may learn more about attitudes and behaviors and their relationship to schooling. In addition, I may learn about how determinism, fatalism and conformism are present in society, how they are manifested and how they can potentially influence

individuals and groups in regards to decision making. Furthermore, this study aims at understanding how restraining temporal ideologies may influence the desire of pursuing and completing a higher education. *For the purposes of this research study, fatalism means the assumption that what happens in life is mostly out of the control of people. In addition, conformism refers to voluntarily or involuntarily accepting the way life is due to the fact that it may more convenient to function as most people do. Lastly, determinism in this study means that what we go through in life is mean to be, in other words, going through what we go through is cannot be avoided.*

You are being asked to be part of this study because (1) you have a unique and diverse ethnic, cultural, linguistic, educational, socio-economical background (2) you have recently enrolled at UTEP or EPCC, (3) you are currently a student at UTEP or EPCC, (4) you have step-out or dropped out completely from UTEP or EPCC.

If you decide to enroll in this study, your involvement may consist of providing information through surveys, interviews, focus groups, and classroom observations.

3. What is involved in the study?

If you agree to take part in this study, a researcher will contact you to conduct an initial questionnaire/interview composed of multiple choice and closed and open-ended questions that will take approximately 20 to 30 minutes. After that, if you meet the criteria, the researcher will be contacting you through email, phone, and/or in person to schedule a face-to-face audio-recorded interview and or focus group to expand on your perspectives and experiences.

4. What are the risks and discomforts of the study?

There are no known risks associated with this research. Regarding your privacy, at any time during the process, you may decide to withdraw from participating and at that point you will not be contacted anymore by the researcher.

5. What will happen if I am injured in this study?

The University of Texas at El Paso and its affiliates do not offer to pay for or cover the cost of medical treatment for research related illness or injury. No funds have been set aside to pay or reimburse you in the event of such injury or illness. You will not give up any of your legal rights by signing this consent form. You should report any injury to the principal investigator, Isaac Martinez at (915) 443-3164 or at his email address imartinez2@utep.edu or and to the UTEP Institutional Review Board (IRB) at (915) 747-8841 or at irb.orsp@utep.edu.

6. Are there benefits to taking part in this study?

There will be no direct benefits to you for taking part in this study. However, I hope that the information obtained in this study may help me to understand contemporary unexplored reasons of how ideologies are formed and their relationship to education. As a result of this research study, I expect to contribute with literature that will attempt to explain contemporary ideology formation and their relationship to schooling. I also hope that your participation in this project will contribute to the development of awareness of the challenges students may encounter and that you learn more about participatory action research as a result of your involvement in this study.

7. What other options are there?

You have the option not to take part in this study. There will be no penalties involved if you choose not to take part in this study.

8. Who is paying for this study?

Internal Funding:

There is no internal funding.

External funding:

There is no external funding for this study.

9. What are my costs?

There are no direct costs. You will be responsible for travel to and from the interview and or focus group research site and any other incidental expenses.

10. Will I be paid to participate in this study?

You will not be paid for taking part in this research study.

11. What if I want to withdraw or am asked to withdraw from this study?

Taking part in this study is voluntary. You have the right to choose not to take part in this study. If you do not take part in the study, there will be no penalty.

If you choose to take part, you have the right to stop at any time. However, I encourage you to contact, the principal investigator, Isaac Martinez at (915) 443-3164 or at imartinez2@utep.edu so that the principal investigator knows why you are leaving the study. If there are any new findings during the study that may affect whether you want to continue to take part, you will be told about them. The researcher may decide to stop your participation without your permission, if the researcher thinks that being in the study may cause you harm.

12. Who do I call if I have questions or problems?

You may ask any questions you have now. If you have questions later, you may call the principal investigator, Isaac Martinez at (915) 443-3164 or at his email address imartinez2@utep.edu. If you have questions or concerns about your participation as a research subject, please contact the UTEP Institutional Review Board (IRB) at (915-747-8841) or irb.orsp@utep.edu

13. What about confidentiality?

Precautions have been taken care of to assure the confidentiality and security of your information and observations. Your part in this study is confidential and every effort will be made by the researcher to preserve your confidentiality including the following:

- None of the information will identify you by name. Code names/numbers will be assigned to participants on all notes and documents.
- I will use only the information you are willing to share from your observations for statistical and qualitative purposes and it will solely be used for the purpose of this study and any publications that may result from this study.
- Any final publication will not identify any of the participants and their anonymity will be maintained.
- No personal information, other than gender, ethnicity, race, socio-economic background and whether or not you are a first generation college student, will be used or disclosed during the study.
- During the study, only the researcher will have access to the information and to the recorded conversations.
- All records will be kept in a locked file cabinet in the personal possession of the principal investigator, Isaac Martinez.
- Recordings will be stored electronically and password protected in the researchers' computer equipment.
- The recorded conversations will be transcribed in order to analyze their content.
- Once the study is completed, all materials and collected information will be destroyed.
- Your personal information may be disclosed if required by law. Organizations that may inspect and/or copy your research records for quality assurance and data analysis include, but are not necessarily limited to:
 - Department of Health and Human Services
 - UTEP Institutional Review Board

Because of the need to release information to these parties, absolute confidentiality cannot be guaranteed. The results of this research study may be presented at meetings or in publications; however, your identity will not be disclosed in those presentations.

14. Mandatory reporting

If information is revealed about child abuse or neglect, or potentially dangerous future behavior to others, the law requires that this information be reported to the proper authorities.

15. Authorization Statement

Your participation is voluntary and you may choose to stop at any moment during the different phases of the study. If you are willing to participate, please sign in this form.

I have read each page of this document about the study (or it was read to me). I know that being in this study is voluntary and I choose to be in this study. I know I can stop being in this study without penalty. I will get a copy of this consent form now and can get information on results of the study later if I wish.

Participant Name: _____ Date: _____

Participant Signature: _____ Time: _____

Participant or Parent/Guardian Signature: _____

Consent form explained/witnessed by: _____

Signature

Printed name: _____

Date: _____

Time: _____

VITA

Isaac Tapia Martinez is a multidisciplinary scholar. During his high school years, he was a construction and demolition worker, which inspired him to obtain a bachelor's degree in architecture. He was curious about how those structures he was demolishing were thought out and build and once done with his training in architecture, his academic curiosity expanded to how structures are build, especially in complex circumstances; therefore, he obtained a master's degree from the engineering field. Once he had obtained a master's degree, he was still hungry for knowledge; therefore, he entered the field of education with the goal of understanding how the system works and how he could contribute to revolutionize it. He believes that:

There are three answers for every question that is asked: what you want to hear, what I want to hear and the truth, and the answer is subjective to the context where it emerges.

Are you proud of who you look at in the mirror every day, do you remain loyal to that person's true inner beliefs or did sell out who you are for money, power or vanity?

The "Wolf" as some call Isaac, is a man who is loyal to who he is and to his always-evolving ideology. He stands up for what he believes in, even if that comes with penalties or punishments. More than identifying himself with a nationality, race or culture, he identifies himself with those who don't prostitute their ideology and remain loyal to what they believe in. If anyone who reads this or his work regardless of their academic or educational background and has an interest in collaborating or establish a dialogue to further understand what the purpose of life is and how we can get there, you can reach him at isaactapiamartinez@gmail.com