A Call for Afro & Indigenous Latinx Liberation! A Guidebook Re-Envisioning Critical Latinx Leadership Principles

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University of San Francisco

A Call for Afro & Indigenous Latinx Liberation!

A Guidebook Re-Envisioning Critical Latinx Leadership Principles

A Field Project Presented to

The Faculty of the School of Education

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By Gaby Guzman

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Abstract

Latinx youth are critical leaders who need a framework that reflects the needs of the Latinx community and for all. Leadership development and capacity-building frameworks and programs for Latinx youth are limited in research and contain Latinidad problematics that have yet to be explored in leadership frameworks. Typically, these frameworks focus on building Latinx leaders' numbers in political spaces, achieving leadership positions in academic and non-academic spaces, and oriented toward promoting equitable opportunities for Latinx youth. It is vital that Latinx leadership frameworks begin to utilize a critical lens that supports the development of Latinx youth to be critical youth leaders and global leaders in order to align with the fight and struggle for liberatory futures for all Afro, Indigenous, Asian Latinx, and non-Latinx people. In this thesis, the project offers a guidebook on four guiding principles of Critical Latinx Leadership, a new critical leadership framework for Latinx youth, and a shared language toolkit, which provides the foundation to build critical youth leaders through micro and macro lenses. This guidebook is intended for adult allies working with Latinx youth leaders ages 16-24 and will be a live tool that continues to develop.

Key words: Latinx youth leaders, Critical Leadership development, Latinidad, Liberation Struggle
Chapter 1: Introduction

Statement of the Problem

Currently, Latinx youth make up the largest demographic population of students in the U.S. education system. Although they make up the most significant percentage of students in many schools, they historically and still now experience inequitable and discriminatory educational practices stemming from white supremacy, capitalism, neo-liberalism, and other oppressive systems/structures, leading to negative life outcomes and circumstances. These outcomes are more prevalent for Afro/Black, Indigenous, multiply marginalized (LGBTQIAA+, disabled, low-income, non-US citizen) Latinx youth. Many studies starting from the early 2000s have repeatedly documented the prevalence of Intra-Latinx racism in schools, discrimination, erasure, and lack of representation in Latinx educational and leadership spaces and scholarship (Barillas-Chón, 2010; Casanova, 2012; Casanova, 2022; Kovats, 2010; Haywood, 2017). Striving for K-12 and higher educational equity for Latinx students has been increasingly in the forefront of current educational scholarship. The scholarship extensively focuses on themes of addressing and "solving" the "achievement gap" and low educational attainment and implementing adult educational leadership development to increase equity efforts for Latinx youth (Felix, 2020; Galindo, 2021; Huber et al., 2014; Rodela & Bertrand, 2018; Sampson, 2018).

Recently, Indigenous and Afro Latinx scholars in the field of education have addressed and challenged Latinx educational equity frameworks, citing the limited conceptualization of who classifies as Latinx and problematic Latinidad curriculum, rhetoric, and ideologies that erase Indigenous and Black Latinx voices and experiences, ultimately perpetuating inequities and
causing harm/trauma rather than reducing them (Calderon & Urrieta, 2019; Dinzey-Flores et al, 2019; Garcia, 2022). The field of education is not the only field challenging Latinidad. Scholarship in the Latinx Psychology field has recently developed models that address the need to center Afro-Latinx in healing/therapy models, such as the Centering Racial and Ethnic identity for Latinxs Framework, and challenge anti-blackness and anti-indigeneity within Latinidad (Adames et al, 2021). It is essential that in the field of Latinx education and equity, we begin to redefine the Latinx educational equity agenda and in addition, move forward as a community to push for social change and justice for all. Urrieta and Calderon (2019) did offer critical recommendations for expanding the educational equity agenda such as 1) addressing and recognizing settler-colonial history in Latin America 2) disrupting the “nation of immigrants” myth 3) problematizing Latinidad (e.g. Mestizaje, indigenismo) 4) disrupting settler-colonial grammars and 5) uplifting Indigenous Latinx youth to imagine equitable futurity.

**Background and Need for the Project**

Increasing Latinx youth leadership development and capacity building also has the potential to build transformative change in Latinx educational spaces. Previous research for Asian American educational equity examined the way student leadership development and capacity building can promote equity for all Asian American students, particularly through a critical leadership lens conceptualized as transformative, rooted in the goals of equity, social change and justice, and a continual lifelong praxis (Canlas, 2016). Latinx Leadership development/capacity building frameworks have been primarily focused on 1) professional and academic growth (Garcia, 2019; Onorato, 2010) and 2) equity and social change and justice (Banales & Rivas-Drake, 2022; Bordas, 2013; Lozano, 2015, Haber-Curran, 2020). In this
scholarship, participants are primarily Latinx college students and administrators/staff of k-12/higher education. Within seven frameworks and models examined for this study, none except one include in-depth discussions on the history and experiences of Afro-Latinx and Indigenous Latinx youth and their leadership contributions as well. All except one, used a critical theoretical framework lens yet none incorporated expansive rhetoric on the need to address settler-colonial history within the Latinx community. This lack of representation, history and voices, even in critical frameworks and models, establishes the need to project leadership development that examines the particular educational and leadership experiences of Indigenous and Afro-Latinx youth. Overall, current Latinx youth leadership development/capacity building frameworks/models are ill prepared to foster the next generation of Latinx student leaders that promote wellness and liberation for all Latinx community members and other oppressed groups.

In order to build on the limited literature of Latinx youth leadership development/capacity building models/frameworks rooted towards equity and social justice/change for all, research is needed on the voices and experiences of Indigenous, Afro Latinx youth in relation to their leadership development/capacity building as well as how they might challenge Latinidad in their leadership spaces. Understanding this is crucial because it would provide data that could identify what elements or processes of Latinx Youth leadership/capacity building are crucial factors for developing critical Latinx leaders pushing for equity, social justice/change, and liberation.

**Purpose of the Project**

This project aims to build a guidebook for educators/social workers/adult allies, and others working with high school and college-aged youth (ages 15-26) who teach and support Latinx leadership spaces. The guidebook will contain two key sections. The first section will
identify and explain key principles to support youth, particularly high school and college
students, in building their capacity-building leadership development towards social justice and
change. This will be informed by utilizing a Critical Latinx Indigeneities and Critical Leadership
Praxis framework. The second section of the guidebook will contain a terminology toolkit that
defines key terms in each principle and a resource list to support curriculum development, such
as videos, articles, books, and organizational websites.

Overall, this guidebook's primary goal is to 1) challenge traditional Latinx Educational
equity agendas and Latinx Leadership development models/frameworks, 2) center Afro and
Indigenous Latinx and other marginalized communities who have been historically excluded
within the Latinx community and finally, to 3) invoke humility and solidarity amongst Latinx
youth in or entering leadership spaces.

**Theoretical framework**

This project draws on two theoretical frameworks: Critical Latinx Indigeneities
Framework and Critical Leadership Framework. Each is described in more detail in the
subsections that follow.

**Critical Latinx Indigeneities Framework**

The project will utilize the framework of Critical Latinx Indigeneities (CLI) and Critical
Leadership. CLI was developed by Blackwell, Boj Lopez, & Urrieta (2017) as an analytical lens
into the experiences and epistemologies of Indigenous Latinx communities living in the U.S.
attending the public education system. The CLI framework is a relatively new framework that
challenges dominant narratives about Latinidad (e.g., Spanish-speaking, "brown-ness"
phenotype, etc.) and interrogates Latinx educational fields like Latinx/Chicanx studies and Latin
American studies, which often erase or invisibilize Indigenous and Afro Latinx communities in curriculum, or assume indigeneity. Instead, CLI calls for Interdisciplinarity in these fields to foster "local, hemispheric, as well as global scales of analysis," some examples of which include the examination of more than one ethnoracial structure, migrations stories, and multilingual diversity of these ethnoracial communities (Urrieta & Calderon, 2019, p. 167). Finally, CLI calls for decolonizing Latinidad to advance a more inclusive Latinx educational equity agenda and recommends challenging the *settle colonial curricular project of replacement* and the *settler grammars* to accomplish this goal. These concepts will be defined further in the paper.

I argue that using the CLI framework will help ground this project in a few ways. It will allow the project to uncover dominant logics shaping Indigenous Latinx student experiences and identities and bring light to the inequities that they face in the education system. CLI will then expose the need for more critical Latinx leadership models and critical Latinx educational equity models, as less critical models have perpetuated violence at the micro and macro levels in education.

CLI will also highlight the importance of Indigenous and Afro Latinx leadership development as an avenue for achieving an equitable future for Latinx students in education as well as a process of resistance against multiple colonial forces of power. Urrieta and Calderon (2019) emphasize that Indigenous Latinx youth have the capacity to create social change and just futures and this process should be a focus in the Latinx educational equity agenda. In order to explore this, my research aims to examine the ways that Latinx youth, particularly Indigenous and Afro Latinx youth, practice critical leadership that works towards social justice and equity for the Latinx communities and other marginalized groups.

**Critical Leadership Framework**
This project also utilizes a critical leadership praxis framework. I define critical leadership here as transformative (Shields, 2010; Weiner, 2003), shared horizontal (Omatsu, 2006), and involving critical praxis (Daus-Magbual, 2011; Daus-Magbual & Tintiangco-Cubales, 2015). Critical leadership redefines, expands, and broadens the concept of leadership, specifically in a way that moves it towards “social change, equity, dignity, justice, and democracy” (Canlas, 2016, p.14). The core tenets of critical leadership include: a) an ongoing praxis of critical self-reflection and continual examination and intersection of power, oppressions, privilege, b) leadership that is shared and promotes alliance building, and finally c) an explicit purpose for social change at all levels, individual, community and institutional.

Furthermore, a critical leadership framework is also grounded in development of critical consciousness using Freire's work. Critical consciousness is conceptualized by Freire, who describes critical consciousness to be a process of “critical self-reflection… coupled with resultant action” (p. 29). Canlas (2016) argues that as critical leaders practice their skills, they ultimately shift and disrupt the inequitable institutions and systems they are in.

Using a critical leadership praxis framework allows us to 1) challenge the “hierarchical, traditional models of leadership” and Latinx leadership development models that often lack critical analysis of racism and other oppressive systems, use Eurocentric, and colorblind ideologies, and problematic Latindad rhetoric, and 2) acknowledge and address issues of power, oppression, and privilege, which are issues in Latinx spaces according to Latinx Indigenous and Afro-Latinx scholars (Canlas, 2016, p. 13; Blackwell, et. al., 2017; Urrieta & Calderon, 2019).

Critical Latinx Indigenities and a critical leadership framework as theoretical frameworks for this project will support the urgency in Latinx youth leadership development to be critical of Latinidad, invoke critical analysis of power, privilege, oppression, particularly to understand the
complexity of Latin American and U.S settler-colonial structures, challenging and expanding what it means to be Latinx and the experiences, demanding critical action that is anti-racist, and pro-indigenous and working to build equitable educational environments for all.

**Significance of the project**

This project aims to inform a new Latinx Leadership development model (CLLD) that allows Latinx youth to develop a critical understanding of power, particularly regarding white supremacy and settler colonial logics, a critical self-reflection, and understanding that critical leadership is a process and meant towards transformative futures. The project will center Afro and Indigenous Latinx youth within the discourses of Latinx Youth Leadership Development (in this paper, youth will be defined as people ages 15-26), which has previously primarily focused on solely college students, community leaders, and educational admin/staff (Garcia, 2019; Onorato, 2010; Banales & Rivas-Drake, 2022; Bordas, 2013; Lozano, 2015; Haber-Curran, 2020).

This project expands on the literature of Latinx educational equity (Felix, 2020; Galindo, 2021; Huber et al, 2014; Rodela & Bertrand, 2018; Sampson, 2018) and addresses the need for empirically based models of how critical Latinx leadership development can create equitable, inclusive educational environments that support the wellbeing of all Latinx youth and other BIPOC communities. This project also addresses the need for critical and critical leadership frameworks in Latinx leadership development that will promote a critical analysis of Latinidad, which currently is very limited in current Latinx leadership development/capacity building frameworks (Banales & Drake-Rivas, 2022). This project offers contributions to the literature of Latinx Youth Leadership development, and Leadership Development for other marginalized
groups. My hope with this project is that it supports educators in building Latinx youth’s capacity for leadership and builds Latinx youth’s collective power to demand transformative institutional change.

**Positionality**

My commitment and intention behind creating a project that focuses on uplifting, centering, and liberating all Latinx people, particularly in leadership spaces, is rooted in my
experience as a Brown queer, bisexual, Latinx Asian cis-womxn and daughter of immigrant parents with ancestry from Mexico and Japan. My commitment also comes from my work primarily in Latinx youth-serving organizations, preparing youth leaders for the past seven years. As a young person and even now as an adult, my relationship with Latinidad, what it means to be Latinx, who counts as Latinx, and the Latinx community has been challenging and complicated, experiencing privilege along with marginalization, discrimination, and erasure within the Latinx community. Growing up in a predominantly Latinx community in the Central Valley of California as a young person, I at times felt a lack of connection, lack of validation, and being seen as my whole self, and that impacted me in ways that made it more difficult for me to get to the place I am today. However, understanding my positionality means understanding the privileges I was afforded as well for being Mexican and Japanese, which are part of colonialist nations in North America and East Asia, the user of Spanish (a colonial language), and a lighter-skinned Brown person of color. It is essential and my responsibility to understand my privileges and how I can support the liberation, joy, and love of all our people.
CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

Introduction

This study will attempt to bridge two bodies of literature: 1) how Latinidad erases diversity and is reproduced in Latinx spaces and 2) social-justice-oriented Latinx leadership/capacity-building models. This review will highlight how the current Latinx/e youth leadership development models (LDM) are failing in fostering the development of Latinx youth to be transformative agents of change that are rooted in dismantling anti-blackness and anti-indigeneity within and outside of Latinidad and Leadership spaces. This literature review makes evident that there is a need to explore more critical approaches to Latinx leadership and push forward equity and social change.

This chapter begins with defining Latinidad, briefly examining the complex colonial history of Latin America and how Latinidad has been historically and politically constructed in the U.S. and Latin America, leading to the homogenization, erasure, and violence of Black/Afro-Latinx and Indigenous Latinx communities in the U.S. Then I will explore six different social justice oriented Capacity Building/Leadership development (CBLD) models that have been used to build youth capacity towards transformative change. The review of the models will highlight important themes, concepts, benefits, and limitations of the models as a way to spotlight key elements needed for the development of a critical Latinx Leadership development module.

How Latinidad Erases Diversity

What is Latinidad?
The term *Latinidad* was first used by a U.S. sociologist, Alex Padilla, in 1985 in their book *Latino Ethnic Consciousness* to discuss the shared experiences of Mexican and Puerto Ricans in Chicago, specifically with their social, cultural, and linguistic practices. Since then, Latinidad has been a topic that has been studied in many fields, particularly in the fields of Latinx psychology, language, education, and the media. The definition of Latindad has evolved and adjusted to become widely complex and challenging, and critical discussions around its purpose and use have opened up. Currently, academia has numerous and broad definitions of Latinidad, such as being a shared experience, a pan-ethnic/cultural marker/identity, a racial (brown) identity, and a social concept and construct that groups together people from the 33 different Latin American countries and the Caribbean (Garcia & Rua, 2007; Meneses, 2021; Miguel, 2011; Nieves-Pizarro, 2018; Rodriguez, 2003). It has also been defined as a “geopolitical experience…[with] complexities and contradictions of immigration, (post) (neo) colonialism, race, color, legal status, class, nation, language and the politics of location” (Rodriguez, 2003, pp. 9-10).

Latinidad's use of shared and sameness reinforces the idea of ethnically homogenized cultural and religious practices (Catholic and indigenous hybrid practices), traditions, and rituals (Coronel-Molina, 2017). Latinidad also assumes Spanish as a primary language, and Spanish and Indigenous mixed ancestry (in other words, mestizos) are associated with being a brown phenotypical homogenous group. Much scholarly research highlights the racialization of Latinx people as Brown and mixed race. Latinx-shared experiences are often racialized with the assumption that Latinx is its own racial category (Beserra, 2005; Molina-Guzman, 2013; Moreno, 2021). Latinidad attempts to invoke a sense of "pan-Latinx solidarity…that spotlight a shared understanding of identity, place, and belonging" invoked by Latinidad (Meneses, 2021, p.
1). Common sayings within Latinx communities and hubs, and among Latinx artists, activists, politicians, and community leaders like Somos Latinos (we are Latinos), “viva nuestra Latinidad” (Long Live our Latinidad) "Latino gang" and even things like viva la raza (long live the race) give a portrayal that there is a sense of pride and solidarity within the Latinx community, or so it is said in dominant Latinx/e discourses (Meneses, 2021, p. 1). Furthermore, the implied pan-Latinx solidarity seems to justify a collective identity that is seen within many Latinx/e spaces.¹

In order to understand how the concept of Latinidad has direct and indirect effects in the lives of Latinx youth leaders, it is important to look at 1) the colonial histories and legacies of Latin America and 2) the social and political constructions of Latinidad and how both of these have influenced what we know of Latinidad today and what might be missing.

**Critiques of Latinidad**

As many scholars have argued, Latinidad since its conception has been constructed to be a tool of national-identity projects in Latin America that are rooted in mestizaje racial ideologies, anti-blackness, and anti-indigeneity (Alberto, 2016, Adames et al., 2021; Sanchez, 2021; Nieves-Pizarro, 2018; Roman et al, 2022; Busey & Silva, 2021; Blackwell et al, 2017; Calderon & Urrieta, 2019). More specifically Calderon & Urrieta (2019) expand on this and argue that the construction of Latinidad as a collective identity, not only is built off of the foundations of Mestizaje but normalizes and “invisibilizes the racial, ethnic, cultural, class, gender, sexuality, and religious diversity of Latin America and of those within this category in the United States”

¹ Although scholars have differed in opinions on what counts and what does not count as a Latin American country and region, in this study, I will refer to these regions as the thirty-three nations throughout North, Central, and South America, as well as the Caribbean.
This study aligns with these arguments. Although many Latinx communities push for uniting and being in solidarity with each other, whether that is a national identity in Latin America or against discrimination and oppression in the U.S. (1960-70s Chicano movement), Latinidad has historically upheld white, Eurocentric ideologies and practices that exclude, harm, and erase Afro-Latinx and Indigenous Latinx communities from Latinidad. These critical scholars also argue that without challenging and critiquing Latinidad directly and explicitly, it continues to perpetuate harmful and violent colonial, European ideologies. Indigenous Zapotec scholar and activist, Alan Pelaez Lopez, argues that Latinidad should call for a political identity rather than a cultural, racial, ethnicity identity, specifically one that calls for “Indigenous sovereignty and Black Liberation” (Salazar, 2019).

Scholars have also critiqued how Latinx as an identity and Latinidad as a shared Latino-ness experience need to be defined outside of solely thinking of it as a pan-ethnic term, as well as be viewed as more than just brown racialization, but rather consider that the experience of Latinx communities needs to be viewed as ethnoracial (Calderon & Urrieta, 2019).

**Brief Introduction to Colonial Roots of Latin America**

The colonial history of Latin America is often watered down, erased, and/or assumed to be in the past. Before being called Latin America, the region had many names. The indigenous community of the Nahua people (sometimes known as Aztec, a name given to them by Spanish colonizers) called the region *Anáhuacis*, which is a Nahuatl term that signifies “the great Earth encircled and surrounded by water” (Chang, 2021, p. 1). The land and the people of these regions, as well as those brought over and migrated, have been historically displaced,
dispossessed, and dehumanized by Spanish colonialists (French and Portuguese as well) since they arrived in 1492.

From 1492 to the 1830s, a Spanish caste system existed throughout what is now Latin America. Within this caste system, the closer one was to pure Spanish blood or phenotypically white, the more privileges, access, and resources one received, while the darker an individual was, the worse the treatment, dehumanization, and exploitation they would receive (Adames et al., 2021; Montalvo & Codina, 2001).

In addition, Afro-Latinx history and visibility have been and continue to be erased. Before Spanish colonizers arrived in the Latin American regions, also known as pre-Columbian regions, people from Africa during 3112 BC had already arrived and lived there. They were then later brought over as explorers with Spaniard, French, and Portuguese colonizers throughout all of North, Central, and South America; and once again later but as enslaved people due to the mass genocide of and spreading of diseases to Indigenous people in pre-columbian areas (Barton, 2001; Garofalo, 2012; Wood, 2010).

**Historical and Political Construction of Latinidad and Latinx identity**

Social constructs like Latinidad, Latinx, and even the term “Latin America” have been constructed and influenced by colonial nation-building forces in Latin America as well as the U.S. It is essential to understand and differentiate the historical and political contexts of Latin America and the United States that gave rise to what we now know as Latinidad and Latinx identity in order to understand how, ultimately at the end, both still maintained the overall goal of white supremacy (Costa Vargas, 2018; Haslip-Viera, 2018).
Using “Mestizo” Identity as a Nation Building Effort

After the fall of Spanish colonial rule in Latin America during the 1800s-1850s, newly independent nations and governments maintained power hierarchies and privileged those closest to whiteness, even after the institutionalized dismantling of the Spanish caste system (Pharao & Tlapoyawa, 2020). The terms "Latin America" and "Latino" originally had colonial ties to a French scholar, Michal Chevalier, who coined the term in the 1860s to "unite colonial subjects under a generic "Latin" identity" (Pharao & Tlapoyawa, 2020, p. ##). These terms were also used to convince France to colonize Latin America rather than England to continue to have power over the people. In addition to the fall of Spanish institutional rule, many of the region's newly established governments, consisting primarily of white Spaniards, desired a sense of unified nationalism, uniform citizenry, and the need to resolidify once again white superiority (Busey & Silva, 2021).

During the mid-1920s-1930s, many Latin American countries that were in their beginning stages of independence from Spain, France, and Portugal were trying to "make sense of their past, present, and future" and mainly focused on the racial aspect part of that past, present, and future (Rivera-Rideau et al., 2016, p. 4). Jose Vasconcelos, who wrote "La Raza Cosmica" (The Cosmic Race), made a significant and long-standing impact on Latin American nations and justified to them - particularly to white Latin Americans - the push towards nation-building efforts that centered on producing a cosmic/superior race for the entire nation (Busey & Silva, 2021). Vasconcelos (1925) called for the racial mixing of Spanish and Indigenous people of Latin America, in other words, Mestizaje, in order to "produce a stronger, hybrid race," turning "Indians into Latino-Mestizos" and creating a "uniform citizenry" (Pharao & Tlapoyawa, 2020; Busey & Silva, 2021, p. 180). Vasconcelos (1925) also mentions how
Africans were a "problem" to be solved and that many of the challenges the nations were facing were caused by these communities (p. 26). Overall, Vasconcelos' book reproduced and popularized anti-Black, anti-Indigenous, mestizo superiority rhetoric that would eventually be taken up by many Latin American governments (Pharao & Tlapoyawa, 2020).

Many Latin American governments, like Mexico and Brazil, began pushing for this sense of nationalism through the influences of the mestizo national identity conception that Vasconcelos (1925) wrote. These nation governments wanted to utilize the identity of Mestizo as a way to strategize nation-building and unify the people under a brown hybrid race, ultimately serving as the primary factor in shaping racial identity and race relations in these regions (Calderon & Urrieta, 2019; Martínez-Echazábal, 1998). To promote the Mestizo national identity, countries like Mexico implemented Mestizaje policies that pushed Indigenous peoples to adopt the Spanish language and culture of the rest of the nation (Calderon & Urrieta, 2019). Other policies included laws that privileged Blanco (white) Latinx communities such as being given more access to economic opportunities and land resources (Alves, 2018; Knight, 1990; Paschel, 2016; Perry, 2013; Smith, 2016). Finally, the people within these nations were pushed and forced into interracial mixing to "mejorar la Raza" (improve the race) through the process of blanqueamiento (whitening). As discussed by Busey & Silva (2021), la Raza Cosmica played a crucial role in integrating Mestizaje as a national ideology and, even if unintentional, promoted the idea of assimilation for Indigenous communities and the desire for proximity to whiteness.

Other scholars have influenced different Latin American countries with similar ideas in national identity such as Gilberto Freyre, a Brazilian (White Latinx) scholar, who wrote the book Casa-Grande e Senzala or The Big House (1933/1943), which similar to Vasconcelos contributed to the idea of the power and superiority of racial mixing, which in Brazil, like a few
other countries, emphasized the ancestry of African descent within this racial mixing while other countries like Mexico did not (Safa, 2005). Like most countries, Mexico emphasizes and claims Indigenous ancestry as part of this Mestizo national identity and European ancestry, but we will see varying degrees of claiming roots in African and Asian ancestry (Lopez, 2016; Safa, 2005).

**The United States Context: Latinidad and Latinx identity as a tool for solidarity, political power and community mobilization**

Definitions of terms like Latinx, Latino, Hispanic, and Chicanx have shifted based on the social contexts of the time. Before the 1960s, people from Latin America and the Caribbean did not group themselves and used their nationalities to identify themselves (Mora, 2014). Individuals within these communities were either referenced as having "Spanish-speaking origins" or being labeled as "white" by the U.S. Census Bureau (Mora, 2014; Simon, 2020). Mora (2014) highlights in their book *Making Hispanics*, that Mexican Americans, Puerto Ricans, and Cubans differed drastically on "geography, political agendas, and cultural understanding of race" (p. 4). However, during the 1960s and 70s, a shift in the political, social, and economic climate eventually pushed for a collective identity, even within the U.S. context.

The country was seeing an increase in the Latinx population, and a rise of exploitation and dehumanization of these communities. These shared experiences led to the rise of the Chicanx rights movement and the Farm Worker movement in the U.S., where many people with Latin American backgrounds and ancestry began utilizing and reaffirming some of these collective identities (hence the Chicanx term in the name of the movement). Many activists and leaders in these communities emphasized their brownness as a collective experience and disagreed with the idea of being seen as White, which previously created a challenge for them in
addressing issues Latin American people were experiencing in the U.S. Latinx people being counted only as White in federal and government spaces in the U.S., did a disservice in showcasing the needs, access, opportunities of the various Latinx communities (Mora, 2014).

More specifically, during the Chicano movement, which came between 1965 and 1975, efforts were primarily focused on educational access and opportunity and centered on Mexican Americans and their claimed indigeneity. Many scholars (Busey & Silva, 2021; Hooker, 2017) have examined how the Chicano movement was influenced by the nation-building ideologies and ideas of Latin America, such as Mestizaje, Mestizo, and racial hybridity as a way to create a sense of solidarity to fight against racist structures and systems in the U.S. This gave rise to various scholars like Anzaldua, who referenced collective experiences like "the new mestiza" and "mestiza consciousness," which acknowledge but also confine Latinx people as being part of all races, all cultures and having Indigenous roots. Anzaldua also discussed that the Latinx community must disrupt and dismantle the oppressive systems that keep us confined and solidify a collective identity (Alberto, 2016; Mora, 2014). However, Anzaldua's work, as argued by Hooker (2014), makes direct references to Vasconcelos's (1925) work on mestizaje and the concept of the cosmic race, which have anti-indigenous and anti-blackness undertones.

In addition, when Latinx people were engaging in the Chicanx movement and the Farm Worker movement, to name a few, these activists were lobbying the U.S. Census Bureau under the Nixon Administration to group individuals from Latin America under one pan-ethnic term. The first iteration of this was "Hispanic," which by 1970 was then added as an ethnic identity category in the U.S. Census and eventually led to what is now "Hispanic/Latino/Spanish-origin" (Bishop & Vargas, 2014; Mora, 2014; Simon, 2020). This push for Hispanic being a pan-ethnic
category serves multiple purposes for different groups and has been significantly influenced by mestizaje ideologies of Latin America that migrated with the people.

For activists and civil advocacy organizations led by Latin Americans, this creation of a collective identity would support their efforts in unifying Latin Americans (although these efforts did not mention much of the Caribbean) and bring solidarity in order to fight against U.S. oppression that they were experiencing (Mora, 2014). One of the first Hispanic organizations, the National Council of La Raza, now called UnidosUS, received their original organization name through the work of Vasconcelos and even included it in their philosophy page, which has now been removed.

Media and television, specifically Telemundo and Univision, have also promoted these terms to their audience, primarily Spanish-speaking communities living in the U.S. These organizations utilized their platforms to broadcast heavily the newly institutionalized Hispanic pan-ethnic term (Mora, 2014). Even game shows on these platforms, like Sabado Gigante, which were also oriented toward Latin American group audiences and participants, often emphasized a shared sense of identity and experience (Mora, 2014). These media and television spaces were also bringing in government officials during these times, who would often discuss and highlight the importance of the "Latino vote" and their political power. Political and social events during the 1960s to the 2000s influenced the idea of the shared Latinx experience, including shared cultural practices, traditions, Spanish language, racialization experiences as "brown," and shared a common "hybrid" "mestizo" ancestry of European and Indigenous backgrounds.

**Summary**
Overall, Latinidad blurs the line between race, nationality, and ethnicity. Latinx people historically have been described in a homogenous way, where communities are all grouped as Brown mixed Mestizos, as Spanish speakers, when this is not always the case. Exclusion and invisibilizing of Black, Indigenous, and Asian populations in Latin America is also prevalent and continuous. The ways Latinidad and how Latinx people are described and seen have historical colonial foundations coming from Latin America and the U.S. through the use of Mestizaje racial ideologies and white supremacist ideologies.

**Social Justice Oriented Approaches to Building Latinx Youth Capacity & Leadership development for Critical Social Change**

In order to work towards social change and equity in education for the Latinx community and for other marginalized and oppressed groups, there needs to be a pathway for leadership development and capacity building for Latinx youth. This section of the literature review will focus on 1) briefly reviewing seven different social justice oriented approaches to youth capacity building/ leadership development (CBLD) -Images of models will be provided in the appendix-(Watts & Flannagan, 2007; Banales & Rivas-Drake, 2022; Christens & Dolan, 2010; Clonan-Ray, et al., 2016; Bordas, 2023; Canlas, 2016; Gonzales et al. 2020) and 2) identifying trends and patterns within the CBLD models.

These trends spotlight the importance of building critical consciousness and sociopolitical development (Banales & Rivas-Drake, 2022; Canlas, 2016; Christens & Dolan, 2010; Clonan-Ray, et al., 2016; Gonzalez et al., 2020; Watts & Flannagan, 2007), an expansive and positive ethnoracial identity individually and collectively (Banales & Rivas-Drake, 2022; Canlas, 2016; Clonan-Ray et al., 2016), transformative agency and empowerment (Banales &
relationship/partnership building and shared leadership (Canlas 2016, Christens and Dolan, 2010, Bordas, 2023; Watts & Flannagan, 2007), supportive/open environments/structures (Banales & Rivas-Drake, 2022; Canlas, 2016; Clonan-Ray et al 2016; Gonzales et al. 2020; Watts and Flannagan, 2007), and cultural humility (Bordas, 2023; Canlas, 2016). Overall, reviewing these trends and patterns in social justice oriented approaches to CBLD will provide evidence of crucial factors needed for leadership development towards social equity, justice, and change.

Overview of the Social justice oriented CBLD models

Anti-Racist Identity & Action (ARIA) model for Latinx Youth

Banales and Rivas-Drake (2022) developed an Anti-Racist Identity & Action (ARIA) theoretical model particularly for Latinx youth, in efforts to build on scholarship that supports the development of Latinx youth’s capacity building/leadership development. More specifically, the (ARIA) model supports the leadership process and efforts to disrupt and challenge oppressive systems, specifically white supremacy and racism. The theoretical framework used for this CBLD model was liberation psychology, sociopolitical development and intersectionality. This model has four key interconnected concepts and processes (1. politicized ethnoracial identity 2. critical analysis of racism 3. comprehensive understanding of the Latinx identity, and 4. emancipatory agency and commitment to disrupting racism for their community and for other communities) that play an important role in leading to anti-racist action, which Banales & Rivas-Drake (2022) define as critical action that is aimed to advance social change and “disrupt and challenge white supremacy and promote the liberation of POC” (p. 999). Although their
work is not empirical, they do spotlight the important role all Latinx youth have in disrupting white supremacy and anti-blackness in the U.S. through self reflection and analysis of their own privileges/disadvantages they may have based on their skin color and how Latinx youth are not exempt or excluded from causing and perpetuating harm (Banales & Rivas-Drake, 2022).

**Latinx Leadership Model for Latinx Youth**

Bordas’s (2014; 2023) Latinx Leadership (LL) model is another approach for social justice oriented CBLD and one of the first to propose a Latinx centered leadership development model and framework. The model is based on 10 core principles and corresponding application practices with the aim of preparing Latinx individuals for leadership that protects and cares for all people, increasing political power, and the multiculturalism and “flavor” of the U.S. These 10 core principles include 1) *Personalismo* (the character of the individual/leader), 2) *Consciencia* (knowing oneself and developing social and personal awareness), 3) *Destino* (individual/leader’s personal and collective goals), 4) *De Colores* (Culturally centered leadership), 5) *Fe y Esperanza* (Leadership sustained by faith and hope), 6) *Juntos* (Leadership by the many), 7) *Adelante* (having an immigrant spirit and multicultural identity, 8) *Si Se Puede* (Leadership focused on social activism and coalition leadership), 9) *El Circulo* (intergenerational leadership), and 10) *Goza la Vida* (leadership that celebrates life).

Although Bordas’ (2023) paper did not draw on empirical evidence for their leadership development model, they highlight the importance of Latinx people in general, including youth, giving back to the community and making positive changes to the community. According to Bordas’s (2023) LL model, the first three core principles are vital for Latinx leadership development. Bordas’s LL model also highlights the need for coalition building,
intergenerational leadership, identity in leadership development, and celebration of life.

However, the LL model still has limitations. The model includes capitalistic/neoliberal aligned language, particularly the support for capitalist and corporate leadership development, as well as erasing and assuming indigeneity, and a limited definition of Latinx people, and Latinx history. Bordas’s (2023) model also suggests that in order to succeed in Latino leadership, one must know their past and the histories of their people. However, her explanation of which traditions and histories that are important to understand is limited, and aligns with traditional colonial centric understandings of race and culture.

Positive Youth Development for Girls of color Model

Clonan-Ray, et al. (2016) created the Positive Youth Development (PYD) for girls of color model, which serves as another approach for CBLD for Latinx youth. In this paper, an empirical study was conducted to capture the experiences, specifically educational and socialization experiences of girls of color, particularly for Black and Latina adolescent girls, and those data were used to construct their model. The model consists of seven critical elements that are interconnected and rooted in the development of critical consciousness including 1) character 2) contribution (defined as socially conscious action towards societal change), 3) confidence 4) competence 5) connection and caring, 6) resistance, and 7) resilience. Resistance and resilience were adapted competencies integrated into the PYD girls of color model. Clonan-Ray et al (2016) emphasized the need for these additional competencies in order to fully understand the experiences such as leadership development for girls of color, specifically Latina and Black girls.

Clonan-Ray, et al. (2016) utilize the following theoretical frameworks: Critical Race Feminism (CRF) and PYD. They define CRF based on the foundations of Critical Race theory
and Critical Legal Studies (CLS) and highlight its importance to people of color, specifically girls of color experiences. CRF is defined as the idea that girls and women of color experience multiple oppressions based on multiple intersecting identities, and therefore multiple experiences need to be considered. CRF is grounded in critical race praxis which aims to build up girls of color’s “quest for and participation in societal change” (p.15). This CBLD model calls for the development of “resistance for liberation,” which is described as disrupting, challenging, demanding change of the oppressive systems, particularly for Black girls (Robinson & Wards, 1991). Clonan-Ray, et al (2016) highlight the need for girls to “confront conditions of injustice” against women and girls of color by not only reflecting on one's individual experience through a critical lens, but also through knowledge and community resource sharing although this is not expanded on much in the study (p.15).

**Critical Positive Youth Development Model**

Gonzalez, et al.’s (2020) Critical Positive Youth Development (CPYD) model serves as another CBLD approach for Latinx youth. The CPYD model consists of eight competencies including 1) character 2) confidence 3) competence 4) connection and caring 5) critical reflection 6) political efficacy 7) strength-based supportive environment and 8) contribution (critical action). The CPYD model centralizes critical consciousness and critical theory and claims that it is essential to “cultivating leadership” by supporting youth in “understanding the role and impact of power, privilege and oppression” in effort to encourage critical action (p. 24). This model offered storytelling, or more specifically counter-storytelling grounded in Solorzano and Yosso’s (2002) conceptualization, as a tool to foster critical consciousness. Gonzalez, et al. (2020) highlighted a pilot CPYD oriented program called #PassTheMicYouth, a youth-led
podcast focused on social activism and amplifying youth voices. They argue that #PassTheMicYouth serves as an example of how the CPYD model can be used to develop youths' leadership capacity. Overall, the CPYD model calls for critical frameworks within youth development and capacity building.

**Critical Asian American Leadership Praxis Model**

Canlas (2016) empirical study proposes a Critical Asian American Leadership Praxis (CAALP) model using a critical leadership praxis, cultural humility, and critical pedagogy as theoretical framework. The goal for the leadership model was to support Asian American students', particularly community college students’, leadership development to address the issues of institutional oppression and social injustices in the field of education. The key principles of Canlas’s (2016) CAALP model highlight the importance of leadership as 1) praxis towards social equity, 2) critiquing and addressing systems of oppression, with particular focus on racism, 3) grounded in counter-narratives of Asian American history and community cultural wealth, and 4) alliance building. Canlas (2016) also highlights the importance of utilizing ethnic studies and humanizing pedagogies and curriculum, mentorship, and creating caring classroom spaces for supporting leadership development of Asian American students that works towards community and social change. Although Canlas’s (2016) CAALP model focused primarily on Asian American students leadership development, it is still particularly relevant for this literature review as it provides a comprehensive and in-depth example of a pan-ethnically oriented leadership development that is also challenging and critiquing racism within the Asian community, which is a particular issue and need in Latinx educational spaces. It is also important
to consider that Latinx youth may also have intersecting identities that may overlap with the Asian American experience.

**Cycle of Organizing & Leadership Development model**

Christens and Dolan’s (2010) Cycle of Organizing and Leadership Development is another approach for CBLD, which I will refer to in this paper as COLD. Their study overall explores the leadership development of primarily Latinx youth organizers working on campaigns within a youth organizing initiative called Inland Congregations United for Change (ICUC). The COLD model is grounded on the belief that creating social change comes through with people taking ownership of their power, coalition building, and building youth-adult partnerships. Leadership in this model is considered a praxis and has a particular focus on working alongside the community for community-level advocacy and political change through four cyclic steps. These four steps include 1) developing research and organizing skills, 2) practicing leadership, 3) evaluating the need for further training and development and 4) (re)designing training programs and then continuing the cycle. Christens and Dolan (2010) claim that utilizing the COLD model promotes not only the leadership development of youth, but psychological empowerment, and sociopolitical development. Overall, the model emphasizes the necessity for collective action and exploration of social issues affecting young people currently.

**Sociopolitical Development Model**

Watts and Flannagan’s (2007) Sociopolitical Development theoretical (SPD) model is the final CBLD model that will be reviewed in this literature review. The model aims for the development of youth towards societal involvement, with a commitment to be civically engaged
and the follow through with civic behaviors. The model emphasizes three critical factors that contribute to societal involvement: 1) world view and social analysis, which Watts and Flanagan clump together with critical consciousness, as well as 2) sense of agency, and 3) opportunity structures. This model is grounded with the theoretical frameworks of liberation psychology and development psychology. Although this study does not offer empirical evidence, it shines light on the importance of civic engagement discourse to include a focus on social justice and activism as well as the importance of authentic partnerships and shared leadership in community-level social change.

**Patterns & Trends Across Leadership Development Models**

In the following sections below, I examine the common trends found across the literature within the CBLD models such as a) ethno-racial identity and collective identity, b) critical consciousness and sociopolitical development, c) agency and empowerment, d) relationship/partnership building and shared leadership, and e) humility.

**Ethno-racial Identity & Collective Identity**

Ethno-racial identity has been a key element in many of the social-justice oriented CBLD models (Banales & Rivas-Drake, 2022; Canlas, 2016; Clonan-Ray, et al., 2016). Banales & Rivas-Drake’s (2022) *Anti-Racist Identity & Action (ARIA)* theoretical model for Latinx youth highlights the importance of having a (politicized) positive Ethnic/Racial Identity (ERI) to influence actions and behaviors that disrupts and challenge systemic inequities. More specifically, the ARIA model targets the ERI resolution (youth’s sense of clarity of their ERI) and ERI centrality (how they define their ethnic and racial identity) as key aspects of ERI which are heavily influenced in the adolescence stage. ERI within this model is influenced by two other
factors 1) critical analysis of racism and 2) emancipatory agency and commitment to disrupting racism, which all form Latinx youths’ anti-racist identity which can then influence anti-racist action for their communities and outside their communities. Banales & Rivas-Drake (2022) go further to claim that ERI resolution and youths’ Latinx identity are influenced by intersectional identities and experiences. The ARIA model could shed light on how Latinx youth’s clarity, understanding and how they define being Latinx, influences their involvement in anti-racist action or critical action for social change.

Banales & Rivas-Drake (2022) also emphasize the importance of collective identity for social change. Collective identity in this paper is defined as when someone identifies themselves as a BIPOC person or POC and also understands and acknowledges racial differences, experiences, oppressions among different communities and how they are all rooted in white supremacy. Latinx youth, particularly White Latinx and light-skinned Latinx youth, according to Banales & Rivas-Drake (2022), need to learn to be critical of how “certain Latinx youth are excluded from membership” and how their racial experiences are different than Black, Indigenous, brown, or darker-skinned Latinx youth. (p. 1006). The model addresses how Latinx identity could uphold Mestizaje racial ideologies. Therefore, scholars argue that young people who claim a broad and “inclusive” Latinx identity are more likely to hold collective identities and therefore also more likely to engage and commit to “challenge the source of shared racial oppression: white domination” (p. 1006). Finally, Banales & Rivas-Drake (2022) claim that depending on Latinx youths’ intersectional experiences with privilege and oppression, this will dictate how they show up in their anti-racist actions.

Bordas’ (2023) Latinx Leadership Development (LLD) model also places cultural identity as a pivotal factor in Conciencia, one of the three core principles of leadership
Based on this model, cultural identity is tied to knowing one's history, and family roots. According to Bordas (2023), Latinx roots and history are connected to proud mestizo ancestry, indigenous past and roots, and immigrant melting pot sentiments. The LLD model attempts to invoke a sense of Latinidad that unifies Latinx leaders for collective power. This model however does not invite critical analysis of ethnoracial differences and experiences, or acknowledge the prevalence of anti-indigeneity, and anti-blackness rhetoric and Mestizaje racial ideologies in the Latinx community.

Canlas’s (2016) Critical Asian American Leadership development model draws attention to the vitality of leadership development to develop a positive self-identity, a key component to working towards educational equity. Throughout the study, Asian American leaders in the community college consistently emphasized their racial, ethnic identity, as well as other marginalized intersectional identities, although the study did not take a deep dive into these identities. These findings could be valuable for informing Latinx youth CBLD by shining light on the need to address different ethnoracial and other marginalized identities, experiences and voices.

Clonan-Ray et al (2016) Positive Youth Development girls of color model suggests that when girls of color identity development is positive, particularly with positive ethnic and racial identity, they are “well positioned” and motivated to join the collective fight against “the continued oppression and marginalization of girls of color (p. 13). More specifically, the scholars of the paper identify that in order to build positive ethnic and racial identity one must have positive experiences and images of one's ethnic group, as well as critical analysis of how an ethnic group is displayed in society.
Identity, particularly racial and ethnic identity, evidently plays a key factor in BIPOC marginalized youth’s CBLD (including Latinx youth). Overall, pan-ethnoracial identities like Latinx can be potentially harmful or beneficial in the CBLD of the youth, however, if aligned as a collective identity, can lead to positive social change. In a Critical Latinx Leadership development model, it is vital that Latinx youth have a sense of clarity of their ethnoracial identity and be able to define their identity. In addition, it is important to amplify and uplift positive, joyful, images and experiences of BIPOC communities, all to support with building positive collective identities and inclusive and expansive pan-ethnoracial identities like Latinx.

**Critical Consciousness & Sociopolitical Development**

Critical consciousness (CC) and sociopolitical development (SPD) as forms of critical thinking are prevalent in all except one social justice oriented CBLD model and have been defined in similar ways, with some going more in depth while others barely scratch the surface and vaguely define the concepts (Banales & Rivas-Drake, 2022; Canlas, 2016; Christens & Dolan, 2010; Clonan-Ray, 2016; Gonzalez et al., 2020; Watts & Flannagan, 2007). Banales & Riva-Drake’s (2022) Anti-Racist Identity and Action (ARIA) model for Latinx youth argue that youths' critical analysis of racism is the “key ingredient” in developing Latinx youth’s anti-racist action development, hence developing their CBLD. In the Anti-Racist Identity and Action (ARIA) model, critical analysis of racism is grounded in critical consciousness (Freire, 1974), sociopolitical development (Watts et al, 2003), and liberation psychology. In this model, they define critical consciousness and sociopolitical development jointly as the “ability to critique systems of oppression (critical analysis or reflection), their sense of motivation, commitment and beliefs in one’s capacity or social responsibility to address social injustice (critical/political
agency or efficacy) and involvement in behaviors that challenge these forces (critical action, activism)” (p. 1006).

Using this framework, Banales & Rivas-Drake (2022) argue that Latinx youth who have a critical analysis of racism must understand and acknowledge the following: 1) recognize racial issues, experiences, dynamics, and disparities that are blatant and subtle 2) recognize and understand the different levels of racism like structural, institutional, and interpersonal, 3) understand that white people and light-skinned people benefit from everyday privileges and 4) understand social, economic, and political power and how it is influenced by historical and contemporary policy, policies and ideologies. Developing Latinx youths Critical analysis of racism means developing a critical understanding of the “nature and functioning of whiteness as a sociopolitical tool” that affects and dictates the experiences of people who do not fit into whiteness (Banales & Rivas-Drake, 2002, p. 1007). Banales & Rivas-Drake (2022) also emphasize how Mestizaje racial ideologies, which they conceptualize as the “practices and attitudes rooted in beliefs that Latinx people do not have races because they are a mixture of races and thus racial differences ostensibly do not matter” are rooted in white supremacy and therefore also need to be examined and challenged (p. 1003). Banales and Rivas-Drake (2022) further suggest that the critical analysis also involves Latinx youth’s ability to link their experiences with the experiences of other POC people, which can support them in recognizing that anti-blackness and anti-indigenous rhetoric and practices are manifestations of white supremacy that need to be challenged.

Watts and Flannagan’s (2007) Sociopolitical Development CBLD model utilizes sociopolitical development as the grounding framework and within the *Worldview and Social Analysis* core component of the model, critical consciousness is centralized. Sociopolitical
development is conceptualized as the “evolving, critical understanding of the political, economic, cultural, and other systemic forces that shape society and one’s status in it, and the associated process of growth in relevant knowledge, analytical skills, and emotional faculties” (p. 784). According to Watts & Flannagan, Sociopolitical Development is unique in that it specifically calls for liberation unlike other fields studying civic engagement and youth organizing (Positive Youth Development, Community Youth Development). Critical consciousness in the paper is defined as solely an “awareness of oppression” and grounded in the work of Freire (1974). They argued that the incorporation of critical analysis in youth civic engagement (through critical consciousness and sociopolitical development), can redefine and expand CBLD to be more social justice oriented and promote social change.

Clonan-Ray, et al. (2016) place developing critical consciousness at the center of their CBLD model towards social justice. They define critical consciousness operationally in this study as the “reflective awareness and analysis of the differences in power present in social relationships and institutions” (p. 7). Scholars argue that critical consciousness leads to positive outcomes like increased human connections, active discussions, and increased resistance to oppressive systems and increased work towards social change. Clonan-Ray et al (2016) make the claim that developing critical consciousness is more “concrete” in early adolescence (typically 10-13), and “abstract and oriented towards future action” in later adolescence. Although age range was not specified for the participants of the study, the grades were 9th-12th, which typically is ages 14-18. In this model, this action looks like girls of color learning strategically the actions and processes of resistance so they can use them within their work to disrupt oppressive systemic systems and institutions in education. Clonan-Ray, et al.’s (2016) model also highlights that developing critical consciousness in girls of color can also support the
development of another core component of their CBLD model, *resilience competency*, which can ultimately prevent youth from internalizing “adversity” and “attributing it to oneself” (p.20).

Gonzalez, et al. (2020) Critical Positive Youth Development model centers critical consciousness as a way to effectively “challenge oppressive social conditions” and create a more equitable and just society (p. 31). Critical consciousness is conceptualized here as the “ability for individuals to identify and reflect upon oppressive social conditions…and subsequently take action to change said conditions” and consists of three interconnected components 1) critical reflection, 2) political efficacy and 3) critical action. These three interconnected components make up core factors in their CBLD model. Gonzalez, et al. (2020) claim critical consciousness can only be developed through the development of the other core elements first in their Critical Positive Youth Development model (caring and connection, character, competence, and confidence). With the focus on critical consciousness, Gonzalez, et al. (2020) argue that using this framework fundamentally changes the way youth can contribute to their communities and society (contribution being a core component in the Critical Positive Youth Development model), by supporting the development of a critical and transformative contribution to society.

Canlas’s (2016) Critical Asian American Leadership development model incorporates and underscores elements of critical consciousness throughout the framework of the model. Critical consciousness is conceptualized as the process an individual experiences when their critical self reflection helps them to understand their own “assumptions, biases, and values,” and shifts their focus to address community issues and unjust conditions of the world (p. 29). It is suggested that in order for critical consciousness development to happen effectively, there is a need for Praxis, the cyclical process of Critical consciousness, and retelling and rebuilding “historical narratives” of Asian American students and community in general (p. 153). Canlas
(2016) also makes the argument that building critical consciousness is essential for building alliances with other communities that are experiencing oppressive and unjust conditions (study examines specifically Asian and Black solidarity and alliance building).

Within the majority of these models, critical analysis has been informed through the development of sociopolitical development and critical consciousness. Ethnoracial experiences have been primarily the focus of critical analysis, as well as the topic of white supremacy, and settler-colonialism (although this topic is still fairly new in terms of CBLD models). The way critical consciousness is conceptualized overall reflects key concepts like critical reflection, political efficacy, and critical action. Sociopolitical development is typically utilized within youth organizing and civic engagement literature. Both sociopolitical development and critical consciousness overall seem to focus on identifying, analyzing, understanding, and ultimately challenging systemic oppression, like white supremacy, for social change. Praxis and cyclical reflection processes are also emphasized as necessary elements of critical analysis in CBLD models. The Critical Latinx CBLD model will address and work towards developing Latinx youth’s critical analysis on different systems of oppression, particularly white supremacy and settler-colonialism, and emphasize continuous reflection process to continue to build CBLD. The Critical Latinx CBLD model will also invoke critical analysis in Latinx youth by uplifting the ethno-racial experiences of Afro, Indigenous Multiply marginalized Latinx youth in Latinx leadership spaces.

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**Agency and Empowerment**

Four of the seven models point to the significance in developing agency in youth and empowering youth in order to support their CBLD among other things. In Watts and Flannagan’s (2007) SPD model, a sense of agency is argued to be an essential component that guides
leadership behaviors and societal involvement behaviors. Sense of agency is conceptualized as empowerment and self, collective, and political efficacy. Watts and Flannagan (2007) expand on the concept of collective efficacy and define it as the “belief in the capacity of the group to pull together and realize shared aspirations and address shared problems” (p. 786). Research on collective efficacy showed evidence of its connection to collective action (Brewer & Gardner, 1996). Although this study was conducted years ago, there is more empirical evidence that supports these claims (Adler, 2012; Kann et al, 2023). Watts & Flannagan’s (2007) study finds that developing a sense of agency comes as a result of being civically engaged and key is “generating young people's interest and maintaining commitment” (p. 788).

Banales & Rivas-Drake (2022) ARIA model attempts to offer insight into the key question “How do Latinx youth develop a sense of agency to disrupt racial injustices that directly impact their own ethnic/racial communities and other communities of color?” (p. 999). In their CBLD model, developing a strong sense of agency, particularly emancipatory agency, is necessary in order to foster leadership. Banales & Rivas-Drake (2022) define emancipatory agency as when someone is “not only invested in freedom for themselves but also for all those who are oppressed, and that seek to achieve freedom through methods that do not perpetuate or replicate oppressive structures” (p. 1010). Banales & Rivas-Drake (2022) found that fostering Latinx youth’s agency can be accomplished through “drawing on the strengths of their ancestors and other community members” and how they come from a lineage of people who have the “ability to survive and thrive in inhuman social conditions” (p. 1012). Another way is by rejecting and challenging the marginalization of Latinx people and other ethnoracial marginalized groups.
Canlas’s (2016) Critical Asian American Leadership development model also emphasizes the importance of agency for leadership development. More specifically, Canlas (2016) refers to research participatory practice as a process that strengthens “students agency and their belief in their ability as critical leaders” (p.129). The model claims that students’ agency is supported through the utilization of ethnic studies, specifically rooted in their identities and histories. Canlas (2016) also often aligns student agency with self-determination and argues that it is not just an individual task for the student but an institutional one also.

Clonan-Ray et al.’s (2016) Positive Youth Development girls of color model emphasizes the importance of empowerment in youth throughout the study. Conceptually, it implies building or having control or power over an individual's life; however, it does not operationalize what empowerment is. The study also suggests that one way to foster girls of color youth empowerment is through critical consciousness, which builds on one the key components in Clonan-Ray et al (2016) Positive Youth Development Girls of color CBLD model, *Resilience competency*. For example, critically analyzing the “roots of the adversity they face, rather than internalizing such adversity and attributing it to oneself” (p.20). The model also claims that girls of color should “resist and reject [harmful/negative] definitions of [girls of color’s] character.”. Resisting and rejecting these definitions could shift and affect the power girls of color feel they may or may not have (hence affect feelings of empowerment). Finally, Clonan-Ray et al.’s (2016) model highlights that girls can also build up each other's power as well as be uplifted and nurtured through adult allies' support (e.g. mentors, teachers, counselors, particularly women of color that reflects the youths' identities, experiences). The Positive Youth Development Girls of Color model therefore implies the importance of both self and collective empowerment.
Overall, these CBLD models emphasize that in order to make social change, it is essential that individuals foster feelings of agency and empowerment. The literature also highlights that building people’s sense of agency should not be the only priority and should only be focused on building up the power of the collective (Banales & Rivas-Drake, 2022; Canlas, 2016). The literature also points out that agency can be built up by 1) critical analysis frameworks, pedagogies and practices such as critical consciousness, and ethnic studies (Canlas, 2016; Clonan-Ray et al, 2016), 2) learning and harnessing ancestral wisdom and practices (Banales & Rivas-Drake, 2022), and 3) civic engagement efforts (Watts & Flannagan, 2007). Some models combine agency and empowerment like Watts and Flanngan’s (2007) Sociopolitical Development CBLD model, while others separate them completely. The proposed Critical Latinx Leadership Development model finds significance in developing a sense of both individual and collective agency through the different avenues discussed in the previous section.

**Relationship/Partnership Building and Shared leadership**

Another conceptual trend within capacity building Leadership development models that was often highlighted was the importance of building relationships, partnerships, and shared leadership. Christens and Dolans (2010) Youth Organizing Leadership Development model is built on the idea (among others) of building and sustaining coalitions that are working towards social change in education. They argue that “building relationships across races, cultures, generations, and faiths” represents social change in itself and a way to guide youth organizing leadership development (p. 538). In their study, youth developed and fostered relationships with their peers through conducting research that involves discussing with their peers the issues related to violence in their communities. This model highlights building relationships with caring
adult allies. This model emphasizes how building relationships across “racial and ethnic boundaries” and “social divides through multicultural ... collaboration” could build shared understandings of people's different backgrounds and histories and overall support youths’ CBLD (p. 10).

Banales & Rivas-Drake (2016) argue that building relationships with adult allies who hold or express intersectional identities could support youth in expressing theirs as well, and in building up how they define their identities, specifically regarding race, and in turn how they might develop anti-racist actions. Another important aspect that Banales & Rivas-Drake (2022) emphasizes is building not only relationships with adults but building solidarity among other marginalized groups. Furthermore, Banales & Rivas-Drake (2022) claim that linked fate, which they define as “the belief that the sociopolitical conditions that affect members of a broader social group, are relevant to one’s own life chances, including among those who do not necessarily share the same intersectional oppressions or privilege” (p. 1008). Banales & Rivas-Drake (2022) argue that cross-racial solidarity (which they refer to also as allyship) can be developed through critical analysis of racism and developing critical racial consciousness skills. Latinx youth first need to have a “clear understanding of one’s positionality...in the system of racism” (p. 1010).

Canlas’s (2016) Critical Asian American Leadership praxis CBLD model consistently centers the importance of building solidarity and working in critical alliance with different groups and communities, and for it to also be made public. In this model, it is premised that understanding that “societal transformation requires working within one’s own communities and in solidarity with diverse communities” (p. 142). Moreover, Canlas (2016) argues that building alliances rather than coalitions is intentional to emphasize the long-term relationships that are
built rather than short term. Canlas (2016) defined ally as “the act of standing in the way of oppression for others” which is to be understood as critical action; therefore building solidarity and alliances is one way students can practice CBLD (p. 89). Lastly, Canlas (2016) also highlights the importance of “relationship to self” as a process of decolonization that leads to connecting with one's ethnic and racial identity and history and learning to love themselves.

Bordas’s (2023) Latinx leadership development model emphasizes the importance of relationship building in two of the 10 core principles (1. Personalismo 2. Si Se Puede: social activism and coalition). Personalismo, also defined as the “leaders character, reputation, and contribution” fosters the development of caring relationships that are validating and supporting and creating a “cultural bond” (p. 57, 65). Bordas (2023) claims these are qualities needed to support in building equitable and community driven leaders.

Watts and Flannagan (2007) discuss the importance of authentic youth-adult partnerships and relationships in their capacity building model, as a way to address adultism, an oppressive system that places power to the adults over young people. They claim that adults should not hold power in these spaces, but rather share that power with the youth and provide mentorship, connections, and meditation/facilitation in critical dialogues.

Overall, these models highlight the importance of connecting with others that are within and outside an individual's community of all age generations, connecting with oneself, and more specifically, nurturing caring and critical relationship building that is focused on creating community spaces where power and decision making is shared among everyone. The literature suggests that supporting youths relationship building can be done through a few approaches, such as creating spaces where youth can see and be surrounded by adults who embody authenticity, and understanding and compassion for others experiences, struggles and stories.
Importantly, literature on relationship building suggests it is vital for creating alliances and building up social collective movements for change.

**Humility**

Humility is also a concept that is highly emphasized within two Capacity Building Leadership Development models, Canlas’s (2016) Critical Asian American Leadership Praxis model and Bordas’s (2023) Latinx Leadership Development model. Both models emphasize the vitality of learning and most importantly practicing humility particularly with students of different racial/ethnic backgrounds, identities, and experiences.

Canlas’s (2016) Critical Asian American Leadership praxis model utilizes a cultural humility framework and argues it is an approach for students to build CBLD. Canlas (2016) defines cultural humility as “ongoing process of self-reflection and self-critique as life-long learners,” and an ongoing process of power analysis. Humility seeks to “assist individuals and communities to work respectfully across differences…” and is invested in social justice, equity and transformative efforts (p. 58). Cultural humility is an alternative framework that was originally developed for the field of medicine as an alternative to cultural competency. Canlas (2016) spotlights that culturally competent leadership practices and teaching typically lack “critical analysis of whiteness and risk dehumanizing communities of color by perceiving them as other” (p.9). They also claim that cultural competency can be problematic as typically different cultural groups are viewed as “static” instead of “dynamic and immeasurably complex” (p. 28). Canlas’s (2016) CBLD model recognizes cultural humility's role in supporting students in understanding how power imbalances can “influence interpersonal relationships and interaction” such as “levels of trust, silences, conflict, perceptions of authority, and value” (p. 29)
and moving beyond concepts like tolerance and competence. Finally, Canlas (2016) highlights that cultural humility is a critical element in building solidarity and alliances towards social justice and change.

Bordas’s (2023) Latinx Leadership Development model highlights the importance of humility within the *Fe y Esperanza* core principle. According to Bordas (2023), one way Latinx people can practice humility is by “acknowledging [their] gifts’ ' and talents and using them for “collective and shared leadership” (p. 94). A conceptual framework or definition for what constitutes *gifts/talents* is limited with only concepts like “innate skills and talents” and “latino strong work ethic” being emphasized (p. 93, 4). Developing and practicing humility within the Latinx Leadership Development model allows students to “connect with people and to be seen as one of them” (p. 132). The Latinx Leadership Development model proposes that humility also entails understanding that “the people's needs come first” (p. 132). Bordas (2023) also argues that humility is one of the three “spiritual virtues” of Latino leadership (amongst courage and forgiveness).

In short, the concept of humility within Leadership scholarship has primarily focused on the practice of being prideful of one self and showcasing one’s various abilities and gifts as a way to support and uplift one’s communities. However as implied by Canlas (2016), humility should also be critical, involving an ongoing reflective process, and be aligned with social change, justice, and liberation efforts of everyone.

**Latinx Leadership & Latinidad Problematics**

Scholars have pointed to the problematics within Latinidad and have challenged Latinx educational spaces, Latinx equity agendas, and Latinx/Chicanx centered courses (Adames et al., 2021; Urrieta & Calderon, 2019). Latinx-centered social justice oriented CBLD models, although
aiming to uplift the community, are also limiting and can potentially perpetuate harmful stereotypes and ideologies. For example, Bordas’s (2013) Latino Leadership Development model explains how “Latino culture is bound together by a common history, heritage, spiritual tradition, and language” and how Latinx “multifaceted identity is a testament to Latino inclusiveness” and even how “people can become Latino by corazon or affinity” (p. 2, 5). Furthermore, Bordas (2023) claims that in order to create inclusive and diverse Latino leadership spaces, there must be a “forging [of] a collective identity from diversity” which should be a priority for Latinx identifying leaders. Bordas also references La Raza Cosmica (cosmic race) and uses this concept to argue that Latinx people are “this fusion of God’s people” (2001, p. 114). Furthermore she suggests that “while diversity is one of the Latino community’s greatest gifts, it is also one of the greatest challenges. According to the model, Latino leaders must forge a common identity, vision, and purpose from a conglomerate of people who are joined together like picadillo or pico de gallo” (p. 114) These arguments further solidify how Mestizaje racial ideologies and colonial projects are still embedded within the work of Latinx schools in the fields of Latinx leadership.

Banales & Rivas-Drake (2022) point out that historically and politically, Latinx people do not “view race and racism in the [U.S] through a shared lens, much less one of solidarity with Black and Indigenous people, or other people of color” (p. 999). Banales & Rivas-Drake’s (2022) ARIA model highlights the need to challenge the boundaries of Latinidad and its roots in Mestizaje racial ideologies that creates a belief system that Latinx people are exempt from being anti-black and anti-indigenous. In this model, it is argued that Latinx people with “white phenotypic characteristics” who have sociopolitical and racial power dictate these boundaries and uphold whiteness, which I argue can apply to any environment. Furthermore, the model also
pushes for challenging a settler colonial perspective and acknowledging the interconnectedness of anti-blackness and anti-indigeneity as a project of white supremacy.

**Summary**

The literature analysis of the seven social justice oriented CBLD models point out the importance of critical consciousness, sociopolitical development, transformative agency, relationship building and shared leadership, and humility. Within each of these, there was also always a focus on supportive and open environments/structures in order to foster each of these within youth leaders. The literature also shined light on the colonial logics and problematic Latinidad rhetoric embedded within Latinx-centered social justice capacity building leadership development models (Bordas, 2023). The literature on social justice oriented leadership development also urges an intersectional analytical lens and critical curriculum development (Banales & Rivas-Drake, 2022; Canlas, 2016; Gonzalez et al., 2020). Overall, these seven approaches can provide us with a guide on what elements might be important for critical Latinx leadership development. In the upcoming chapter 3, the project will review what a critical latinx leadership development model could look like based on these key elements.
Chapter 3

Introduction to Critical Latinx Leadership Guidebook

Welcome to the Critical Latinx Leadership (CLL) Principles Guidebook for adult allies working to build leadership development and capacity building (LDCB) with Latinx youth (particularly college and high school youth) based in the U.S. and California. Previous Latinx leadership development capacity-building (LDCB) models (Banales and Rivas, 2021; Bordas, 2023) have moved us forward as a community in vital and needed ways toward social change. This Guidebook, however, offers a different critical approach to leadership development and capacity building (LDCB).

The CLL principles guidebook utilizes a critical approach that prioritizes not only uplifting the community but also challenging the societal norms, expectations, structures, and institutions that perpetuate anti-Blackness, anti-Indigeneity, anti-Asian bias, and homophobia, among other forms of oppression, in Latinx leadership spaces. Finally, the guidebook approaches leadership with a focus on working toward Black and Indigenous Liberation. More specifically, four principles will be offered to provide a lens and compass on how adult allies can critically engage and critically activate the Latinx youth they support, work, and build with daily, in and outside of traditional educational settings. In addition, adult allies will be provided a lens on how they and their Latinx youth can practice leading with radical love and joy in any space. Although not typically discussed within leadership spaces and scholarship, love, and joy can be radical and critical approaches needed in Latinx leadership.

The four principles are outlined in the sections below. This Guidebook's goal is to be accessible, easy to understand, and to the point. Below is the outline used to share each principle.
with the reader.

1. Description/Overview of the principle
2. Why the principle is needed for Liberation?
3. Guided intentions & objectives for critical Latinx youth (and adult allies)
4. Interconnected concepts/theories in the 4 Critical Latinx Leadership principles
5. How can we nurture/promote/practice each principle?

A toolkit of definitions of theories and concepts, as well as citations to access where to gain more knowledge and information on that particular term, can be found in this hyperlink here (https://tinyurl.com/CritLatinxLeadershipToolkit). This toolkit will be online and live as new information is updated and challenged through my continued learning process, even after this Guidebook is made and published. This is important to keep the cycle of reflection going.

**Key Principles for Critical Latinx Leadership**
Who can use the Critical Latinx Leadership Principles guidebook?

The Guidebook is ideal for Latinx-serving educational, leadership, community organizations, programs, and courses (e.g., ethnic studies, Chicanx/Latinx/Central American studies, leadership, civic engagement, and social justice, to name a few) looking to develop and uplift Latinx youth critical leaders going into in all areas, fields, and spaces of society. Any Latinx-serving space or field has been and is capable of upholding anti-Black, anti-Indigenous, and white supremacist ideologies.

The Critical Latinx Leadership (CLL) Principles Guidebook promotes the idea that everyone has their own skill sets, interests, and hobbies that they bring with them and can build on to take critical action and build a better world for themselves and their communities, which should be encouraged for all Latinx youth. All change, small or large, can progressively move us towards liberation.

Language Clarity on Heavy-Use Terms: Critical, Praxis, Liberation, Latinidad, and Latinx

One intention behind this Guidebook is to be accessible and easy to use; it is essential to begin by defining and clarifying frequently used key terms. Key terms heavily focused on throughout this Guidebook are Critical, Praxis, Liberation, Latinidad, and Latinx.

**Critical** - process of examining, reflecting on, and challenging socio-political history, contemporary context, dominant narratives, ideologies, structures/systems/forces, and international/national/global affairs. In other words, being critical means examining and analyzing power and privilege dynamics and different systems of oppression.
**Praxis** is the ongoing process of building theory into action, reflecting, and then repeating the process. The reflection process is critical as it allows people to rethink, reevaluate, and re-envision theory and action, and then the cycle repeats again.

**Latinx & Latinidad** - The Latinx community is a pan-ethnic, pan-racial group of people from Latin America and the Caribbean with a wide range of phenotypic traits, ethnicity, migration patterns, citizenship, and more. Latinidad is typically used to describe the shared experiences, shared sense of identity, and shared language of people, primarily Spanish, with ancestry in Latin America. *This guidebook intentionally uses Latinx with the "X." The usage of x is a direct challenge to the enforced Spanish colonial language put on native Indigenous people in and outside of Latin America. The x not only exposes colonial logics even within language but allows for flexibility and inclusion of the gender-expansive Latinx community.*

**Liberation** - means working towards the goal of freedom from oppressive systems of the world, from dehumanization, exploitation, and violence. Liberation aims to uplift Afro, Black, and Indigenous community joy. To transform the word means to humanize it.

**Leadership** - an ongoing praxis that addresses and challenges power imbalances and promotes social change, justice, and liberation for all people. Leadership actions can be critical actions, transformative actions, actions that promote community, love, healing, as all these lead to critical change as well.

**Critical Liberatory behaviors** - a range of activities, actions, and behaviors that can promote liberatory futures. Critical liberatory behaviors can be expansive and fluid and can present themselves differently to different people. Some examples of these actions can be Latinx youth leaders engaging in community events, school events, student organizing, and student leadership,
as well as small group meetings and family dinner conversations, that reject Latinidad problematics (anti-blackness in the Latinx community, erasure of Indigenous and Afro-Latinx youth).

Although I hope these terms and their definitions are beneficial, it's also important to remember that language and word definitions change constantly as socio-cultural, political, and economic contexts change. Therefore, terms used in this guidebook may need to be adopted in the future, and this is invited, welcomed, and needed.

**Importance of Guidebook**

Latinx people are becoming the largest majority group in the U.S. population and have the collective capacity to make social change. We are currently in a global emergency state where systemic forces like capitalism, patriarchy, and white supremacy, among so many other oppressive systems, are destroying the planet, killing and dehumanizing people, particularly Black, Indigenous, and people of color around the world. It's important that Latinx communities stand together in solidarity and lead with Afro, Indigenous Latinx, and non-Latinx people of the world.

**Principle #1: Critical Global & Leadership Praxis**

**Description/Overview**

The first principle of the proposed Guidebook is the **Critical Global & Leadership Praxis Principle**. Critical Global & Leadership Praxis represents:

the ongoing critical analysis, action, and reflective process of an individual's socio-ecological, political, and historical context. It centers on understanding and exposing power dynamics within community/educational leadership spaces, challenging Eurocentric, colonialist notions of leadership, and exploring critical, liberatory forms of leadership.
The Critical Global & Leadership Praxis (CGLP) principle addresses the importance of analysis, action and reflection in a global context, with a focus on leadership and with a lens of analysis that examines power imbalances, such as adultism, sexism, anti-blackness etc. More specifically, this critical analysis happens progressively at every level of an individual's environment, whether at the micro level, like the dynamics with self and within a family or friends, or at a macro level, such as within institutions and larger systems that are not inherently visual and obvious. When fostering the growth of Latinx's youth leadership development capacity building, directly analyzing leadership/power dynamics and hierarchies is needed within schools, districts, organizations, and companies. With addressing these power imbalances, it is crucial that these powers are redistributed, shared and collective. Various Latinx communities typically view and practice leadership in a collective already, however, taking a step further where we add a critical lens.

Leadership in the CGLP principle is overall grounded in a critical lens that is actively oriented towards challenging oppressive systems and imagining transformative and radical futures for their communities and the world. It is a way of practicing community care, in other words a way that community looks out for/supports one another, whether that's at their school/college/university, work place, in the neighborhood, community. Everyone has their own roles, skills, interests, hobbies they can utilize to create social change that we desperately need. It's important that in leadership spaces, Latinx youth are encouraged to build on their different skills and interests they would like to utilize to move towards social change.

In addition, an important leadership development component is the reflection process Latinx youth could experience as they redefine what leadership actions entail means for them. In this guidebook, we define leadership actions as critical actions, behaviors, and efforts (CABE)
or in other words behaviors, actions, or engagements that contribute to transformative futures. These behaviors and actions can range from activities including but not limited to: politics, advocacy, organizing, community based education efforts, educational projects, and cultural arts activities, and each can have equally important functions.

Overall, the CGLP principle is grounded and informed by Critical Leadership Praxis, sociopolitical development theory, and critical consciousness. Overall, these theories and frameworks address the need for 1) critical thinking, awareness, and reflection on power dynamics, and societal issues, 2) one's capacity, commitment, and will for making social change, and 3) putting theory into action through praxis. The main goal is focusing on the process of shifting power dynamics to the people, and making change by supporting and uplifting our Latinx youth. These frameworks offer a tool of analysis to promote equity, social change, and, ultimately, liberation efforts in different educational spaces supporting BIPOC youth communities.

**Why Is It Needed for Liberation?**

The power of critical thinking, action, reflection, and imagination that comes out of the CGLP principle is needed to promote liberatory leadership and liberatory futures. To have the urgency and commitment to push towards transformative futures, it's critical to understand why we need the change and why the current system(s) and ideologies are not working, sustainable, or humane for living organisms and for the earth. Comprehending the interconnectedness of systems, structures, and institutions and their impacts on communities, the environment, and people will urge youth to disrupt and transform systems and forces that promote exploitation, violence, genocide, and dehumanization through various critical frameworks.
In addition, praxis is especially vital for liberation for both the adult allies and Latinx youth. The process of reflection and reexamining to further a youth's analysis is critical in order to keep moving towards a just future. It's important that Latinx youth reflect, adjust, and adapt their thought process, actions, and analysis to the new information they are gaining every day. Various fields working towards social change and justice efforts have adapted and changed through the years and included more critical lenses and use of praxis as they have reflected on their theories, frameworks, and ideologies. It's important that in the field of Latinx leadership, this critical praxis process is also used to improve the likelihood of liberation for Afro, Indigenous, and other marginalized Latinx and non-Latinx people.

In the current political climate of the U.S., violence against BIPOC, immigrants and refugees, and LGBTQIA+ members, among other marginalized groups, has skyrocketed. It's important that in Latinx leadership spaces, these social issues are being brought to the forefront rather than additional topics, discussions, electives, courses, or programs.

Guided Intentions, Objectives, & Questions

This section is intended to support building curriculum and programming that fosters the growth of critical global and leadership praxis for youth and, therefore, liberatory efforts. The overall objectives and intentions behind the CGL praxis principle is to support youth in critically learning to:

- Recognize and understand different systems of oppression (capitalism, patriarchy, white supremacy, ableism, heterosexuality, among others) and the different levels within them (structural, institutional, interpersonal, personal/internalized)
• Analyze, understand, and reflect on the types of power, how it is shaped by political, economic, cultural, social, and other systemic forces, and who has the power
• Redefine leadership that is collective, shared, and social justice, and liberation-oriented
• Identify, acknowledge, and reflect on our own biases, prejudices, assumptions
• Learning about self, familial/ancestral lineage and community stories, struggles

**Interconnected Concepts/Theories**

Key concepts and theories for critical Latinx youth and young adults and adult allies to analyze and learn about in order to build up their knowledge to practice Critical Global & Leadership Praxis.

• Systems, forms, and examples of oppression- (e.g. white supremacy, capitalism, imperialism, colonialism, patriarchy, ableism, heterosexuality, classism to name a few)
• Critical Praxis - Reference Canlas (2016)
• Power & Privilege - Reference Crenshaw (2013) and Collins and Bilge (2020)
• Critical Leadership - Reference
• Critical actions, behaviors, and efforts

**How to Nurture/Promote Critical Global & Leadership Praxis principle?**

In this section, Adult allies working with Latinx youth leaders may need support nurturing the growth of the Critical Global & Leadership Praxis principle. This guidebook lists some ways Critical Global & Leadership Praxis principle can be nurtured in different Latinx leadership spaces.

1. Nurturing curiosity
a. Fostering youths' curiosity and encouraging them to wonder and seek new knowledge and information is a crucial way to develop their critical thinking and reflection skills.

b. Invoking youths' curiosities about their schools, neighborhoods, hometowns, home state, etc., can help build their motivation to create change in their community.

2. Practicing self-awareness & vulnerability

a. Latinx youth need to build awareness of their bodies' emotional, cognitive, physical, and spiritual state and recognize the need to rest when they have reached their capacity. It's important that youth challenge themselves to think critically not only about our world but also about how we take care of ourselves, find balance, and prioritize joy and love above all.

b. Willing to share and be exposed to various community voices, stories and histories

3. Commitment to critical praxis

4. Utilizing practices that encourages Latinx youth to practice leadership in collective, transformative, liberatory ways (the two approaches below were created for organizing and social movement work but can be utilized by anyone working towards social change and liberation and utilizing transformative leadership)

a. Emergent strategy - Adrienne Maree Brown

b. Social Change Ecosystem Framework by Deepa Iyer (2019?)

**Principle #2: Critical Latinidad**

*Description/Overview*
The second principle of Critical Latinx Leadership is *Critical Latinidad*. It is defined as the:

the ongoing process of unlearning and critically challenging Latinidad and dominant ideologies, policies, narratives, stereotypes, power dynamics, structures and systems within Latinx spaces, culture, and community

This guidebook addresses two intentions behind the second principle. The first is the need within Latinx leadership spaces to examine, acknowledge, and understand Latinidad and how it was and continues to be shaped by Mestizaje Racial ideologies, anti-indigeneity, anti-black, among other anti-hate policies in Latin America, and nation-building projects (creating and pushing for Mestizo identity). The second is in direct response to the lack of acknowledgment, silencing, and violence that non-white Latinx communities, particularly Afro, Indigenous, Asian, LGBTQIAA+, and other marginalized communities in the Latinx community, experience in leadership/capacity-building spaces.

The Critical Latinidad principle specifically aims to highlight Afro-Latinx, Indigenous Latinx, Asian Latinx, Queer Latinx, and other marginalized Latinx communities, stories, and histories. Another goal of Critical Latinidad is critically challenging how we might define ourselves as individuals and as a group and understanding the historical violence against Black, Indigenous, and other marginalized groups within the Latinx community. This principle highlights the importance of Latinx youth understanding intra-Latinx racism, colorism, and biases, assumptions, and prejudices that exist within the Latinx community. Latinx leaders, particularly in the fields of academia, education, ethnic studies, and Latinx psychology, as well as popularized Latinx leaders like Cesar Chavez, have in some ways supported incredible strides in social justice efforts (farm workers' rights), however also lacked in areas that did not push the
community towards liberatory efforts (anti-immigration rhetoric for example). It is vital that youth analyze and reflect on these social issues, dynamics, and systems and how they are pervasive in the Latinx community in the U.S. and across Latin America.

Practicing Critical Latinidad means understanding and advocating for a Latinidad that calls for Indigenous and Black Liberation not just in Latinx communities but globally. It means developing the ability to reflect, critique, challenge, transform, and even reimagine Latinidad.

**Why Is It Needed for Liberation?**

Challenging and reimaging Latinidad, a central goal of the Critical Latinidad principle, is needed for the liberation of Afro, Indigenous, and other marginalized people of the world as currently, it continues to uphold anti-Black and anti-Indigenous ideologies rooted in white supremacist ideologies like Mestizaje racial ideologies. These notions have heavily influenced the policies, institutions, and structures of what is now Latin America, the Caribbean, and many Latinx spaces in the U.S. It's vital that non-Indigenous Latinx, non-Afro Latinx, particularly white Latinx take part in the analysis and reflection of Latinidad and see how they may be perpetuating harm, and overall understand that any person, including any Latinx people, can experience both oppression and privilege based on their different social and cultural identities. Lastly, the Critical Latinidad principle is a vital way to acknowledge the struggle for Indigenous and Afro-Latinx freedom and commitment to the collective struggle and freedom of all.

**Guided Intentions/Objectives**

The overall objectives and intentions behind the Critical Latinidad principle is to support youth in learning to:
• Understand that the Latinx diaspora are multiracial, multiethnic, and multilingual and hold various other intersectional identities (sexuality and ability for example) and experiences.
  • Understand the stories, histories, migrations of the Latinx diaspora (Indigenous Latinx, Afro Latinx, Asian Latinx)
  • Challenge Latinx stereotypes, biases, assumptions (Spanish-speakers, Brownness etc)
  • Resist and reject generalizations of Latinidad and its associated beauty standards, harmful stereotypes and assumptions, biases of Afro, Indigenous Latinx youth
• Examine and understand the sociopolitical, sociocultural, and socioeconomic forces that influence Latinidad
  • Understanding settler-colonialism and nation-building projects in Latin America, their historical impact on Afro, Indigenous, Asian and other marginalized Latinx people
    ■ Past romanticization of Indigenous Latinx people, and the erasure of Afro, Asian and other marginalized groups
• Examine and understand one's own privileges and disadvantages based on their positionality in the world
  • Can experience harm as well as cause harm
• Develop and practice a racially and ethnically conscious state of mind and framework
### Interconnected Concepts/Theories

Below are key concepts and theories that Critical Latinx youth can learn to foster Critical Latinidad.

  - Indigenous Latinx
  - Colonial Unknowing
  - Transnational influences, experiences
  - Overlapping of multiple colonialities and hegemonies from the U.S and Latin American countries
- Afro-Latinidades - Reference Adames, et al. (2021)
  - Black & Latinx are not mutually exclusive
  - Anti-Blackness, Erasure, dehumanization
  - Triple consciousness
- Asian-Latinx Diaspora
- Settler-Colonialism & Nation/state-building projects in Latin America - Reference scholar
  - Mestizaje racial ideologies, policies and practices
- Intersectionality

### How to Nurture/Promote/Practice Critical Latinidad?

To foster the development of Critical Latinidad in Latinx youth leaders, it's imperative to:

- Create brave, welcoming, inclusive spaces where youth can:
  - Openly share questions, struggles, stories, curiosities, worries, etc
○ Openly acknowledge and work through discomfort and difficult conversations
  ■ Learn to acknowledge racial privileges, disadvantages

~Brave spaces are the goal. Safe spaces where feelings and discomfort won't arise are not guaranteed and can cause more harm than good.~

- Utilize media, social media, and films to demonstrate the unbalance of power in systems institutions, structures, and lack of representation of Afro, Indigenous, Asian, and other marginalized Latinx people in Latinidad and Latinx spaces
- Utilizing practices that encourage Latinx youth to reimagine a Latinidad that calls for Afro and Indigenous Liberation, Latinx youth leaders have the chance to create new realities and worlds, including a new world that sees and wants liberation for all people, particularly for Afro, Indigenous, and other marginalized people of color.
  - Radical Imagination/Freedom Dreaming
    - Radical Imagination is the practice of imagining the endless joyful, healthy, and loving futures of the world, one without violence and oppressive systemic forces.
  - For more in-depth exploration and analysis, read Kelley (2002)

**Principle #3: Collective Identities & Transformative Agency**

*Description/Overview*

The third principle, *Collective Identities & Liberatory Agency*, can be defined here as:
the ongoing critical process and rooting of an individual's sense of identity(ies) and sense of agency in the collective and in transformative and liberatory futures for all people. Collective Latinx identity should be expansive, fluid, and complex, and their liberatory sense of agency should aim to build autonomy and freedom for the Latinx community and themselves.

Building liberatory agency is focused on supporting Latinx youth leaders' capacity and will to fight for their power, right to make decisions for themselves and their bodies, and all these rights for everyone else. Agency is a complex process within people and should be viewed and nurtured by adult allies through a multidimensional lens. This means that youths' sense of agency can feel and present itself differently depending on the sociopolitical, economic, and cultural context. It's important to support the process of critically sustaining and solidifying a strong liberatory sense of agency in Latinx youth leaders through different times and spaces. However, it is also critically vital for adult allies to understand that youth agency may also be limited if basic human rights are not being met and/or abuse and violence are happening, and how to ensure that there are consistent opportunities to learn, heal, grow, thrive and combat these same issues they are experiencing.

In addition, developing a collective Latinx identity means being able to see themselves as part of an expansive, diverse group of people, particularly those coming from various ethnic and racial differences, among other differences such as sexuality, ability, etc. One vital goal of this principle is that individual sense of identity becomes aligned with the larger community. Collective Latinx identity, therefore, means being able to see ourselves as a part of everyone. This perspective is shared with many Indigenous people's philosophies of life around the world, such as the Mayan people who have resided in various geographical areas throughout Latin America (primarily Guatemala, Honduras, and Mexico). The saying "In Lak'ech Ala K'in,"
which translates to "I am you, and you are me," has often been used by and in many Latinx/Chicanx leadership and community spaces however, in this guidebook, it is with the intention of honoring Indigenous peoples of Latin America, uplifting and centering Indigenous, Afro, and other oppressed people around the world and making a commitment towards social justice and change in the world.

Overall, the Collective Identities & Liberatory Agency principle is informed by Monisha Bajaj's notion of Transformative agency and Banales and Rivas's (2023) concept of Emancipatory agency, which both address vital aspects needed for liberation-focused agency process. They also address commitments to end oppressive systemic forces and institutions (such as white supremacist ideologies, institutions, and policies) by challenging, disrupting, and transforming them within and outside of the Latinx community. The principle is also informed by Banales and Rivas's (2023) definition of collective identity, which is when Latinx youth leaders begin to identify themselves as Latinx and BIPOC as a way to recognize and acknowledge. Nurturing these two elements in Latinx youth leaders is intricately connected to how they reflect on, engage with, and challenge the world.

**Why Is It Needed for Liberation?**

Building Latinx's youth sense of identity and agency as transformative and collective is essential for liberation efforts. It's vital for Latinx youth leaders to be able to see, examine, and understand how they themselves are deeply a part of and interconnected with the larger struggle for social change.

**Guided Intentions/Objectives/Questions**
In order to build *Collective Identities & Liberatory Agency* principle within Latinx Critical leaders, it's essential that youth:

- Understand that we are all bound, interconnected, and influenced by one another
- Make an ongoing commitment to self and to our communities (and outside of them), for personal growth and resist oppressive forces
- Understand that the fight and struggle for freedom of others is also connected to the freedom for themselves
- Expand and self redefine the Latinx identity as a collective, broad and inclusive identity
  - Self-identifying as BIPOC, if applicable, and understanding and recognizing racial, ethnic, and linguistic differences
- Think beyond the present moment and have the capacity to make thought-out reflective choices for long-term change (Important to note that this is not always possible, accessible, or safe option for Latinx youth leaders and as adult allies, we must think about and consider their social context and circumstances)

**Interconnected Concepts/Theories**

Below are key concepts and theories that Critical Latinx youth can learn to foster the *Collective Identities & Liberatory Agency* principle:

- Collective Latinx Identity
- Liberatory Agency
- Youth Self-determination & Resistance

*How to Nurture and Promote Collective Identities & Liberatory Agency?*
To nurture the development of *Collective Identities & Liberatory Agency* within Latinx youth leaders, adult allies need to be able to support youth in building consciousness that is in consideration of others, that has empathy for others, and understands the importance of community and people power. To do this, it's important to:

- Develop Latinx leadership programs, courses, and mentorship opportunities that aim to develop not only youths' capacity for making decisions and doing action for themselves but also for their communities
- Making and supporting ongoing opportunities for connections and relationship-building with the community through different avenues
  - Next principle discusses relationship building in more depth
- Critically Reflecting on questions such as
  - Who am I?
  - What/who makes a community?

**Principle #4: Critical Dialogues, Connections, & Actions**

**Description/Overview**

The final principle in the leadership guidebook is *Critical Dialogues, Connections, & Actions*, which can be defined here as:

the ongoing critical and active process of (re)connecting (re)creating with ourselves, loved ones, strangers, and communities to promote authentic and genuine dialogue, caring relationships, and liberatory futures.

*Critical Dialogues, Connections, & Actions* principle aims to build connections between and outside of the Latinx community as a way to create bridges for social change. The more
Latinx youth are open to discussions with others in and outside of the Latinx community, particularly anti-indigeneity and anti-blackness, the more it can promote frequent and consistent critical liberatory behaviors and solidify their commitment to social change for all communities. But what does this dialogue look like, feel like, sound like, and with whom?

Dialogue with the community should be ongoing, reflective, and critical. It should also invoke accountability as a way to be better community members and human beings. Dialogue should be handled and discussed with care, love, and respect. Critical Dialogue should feel insightful, wondrous, joyous, and at times, feel uneasy and uncomfortable, and may bring on feelings of shame and confusion. It is important that Latinx youth leaders sit with discomfortability as a way to reflect on themselves and how they can be better leaders. As Latinx youth leaders learn how to be in conversation with the community, they will further develop as critical Latinx leaders further.

**Why Is It Needed for Liberation?**

The final principle is pivotal towards the liberation efforts of Afro, Indigenous Latinx, and non-Latinx people. Creating change towards this goal can only happen when communities show up for one another, care for one another, work together, listen and dialogue with each other, and have goals for liberation. The *Critical Dialogues, Connections, & Actions* principle encourages Latinx youth leaders to critically reflect, discuss, and engage in critical liberatory behaviors in collaboration with and outside of the Latinx community. This principle is where engagement in Afro, Indigenous Latinx liberation Movement building can be nurtured and sustained.

**Guided Intentions/Objectives/Questions**
In order to build Latinx youths capacity for *Critical dialogues, Connections, & Actions*, Latinx Critical leaders should:

- Engage with and outside of the Latinx community in various spaces and capacities
- Foster a sense of connection with others in and outside their communities
- Practice compassion, empathy, love for others
- Be open to critical reflection and discussion with others when feelings of discomfort arise
- Be open to accountability when mistakes are made and continue moving forward and recommitting to the liberation efforts of Afro and Indigenous peoples!

**Interconnected Concepts/Theories**

Critical Latinx youth can foster the growth of *Critical Dialogues, Connections, & Actions* principle by understanding the following concepts and theories below.

- Community
- Collective imagining
- Solidarity & Allyship
- Critical Liberatory Behaviors
- Liberatory humility
- Afro & Indigenous Latinx liberation Movement building

**How do you Nurture Critical dialogues, Connections, and actions in Critical Latinx leaders?**

For this final principle, it’s important that adult allies working with Latinx youth leaders:
Encourage, practice, and model accountability and self-reflection in community dialogue spaces

Encourage, practice, and model empathy and cultural humility in community dialogue spaces

Encourage alliance-building with the native nations in the U.S., Latin America, and abroad

Engaging in various forms of community engagement, such as utilizing social justice arts and crafts

Continue to promote youth's sense of self, agency, and identity through the previous three principles

Leading with Critical & Liberatory Love

Critical Latinx leadership should ultimately be embraced with radical and revolutionary notions of love, which the guidebook refers to as liberatory forms of love. Radical love, conceptualized by bell hooks (2000), can be an emotion and/or behavior that promotes justice for self and others, as well as nurturing, respecting, and caring for human life and all life and nature on earth. Radical love also means practicing and encouraging compassion, honesty, trust, and forgiveness among people and communities (Hooks, 2000, p. 139). Revolutionary love has a few similarities and offers new frameworks of love. Valerie Kaur defines revolutionary love as "the choice to labor for others, our opponents, and ourselves" (Kaur, 2020). This form of love involves the active process of wondering, grieving, raging, fighting, listening, and reimagining with and for the community (in and outside of the Latinx community) and self as a way towards healing and towards liberatory futures. Revolutionary love also centers joy as the product of love
and the key to sustaining people in the long work towards liberation. Practicing joy and letting joy in by giving "our senses over to what is beautiful, delightful, pleasurable, and wondrous in the present moment" can "return us to everything good and beautiful and worth fighting for " (Kaur, 2020).

Overall, liberatory forms of love, in conjunction with Critical Latinx Leadership, ensure that all people's well-being, needs, and rights are being pursued, met, and sustained. They serve as ways to disrupt and challenge traditional ways and practices of love and care in the community. Critical forms of love will ultimately re-solidify Latinx youth leaders' commitment to social change and liberation for Afro, Indigenous, and other oppressed and marginalized communities.
Critical Latinx Leadership

Shared Language Toolkit

(Live Doc)

By Gaby Guzman

This document provides a knowledge base for Critical Latinx youth leaders to build on. However, it is also important to point out that language and the definitions of specific terms change depending on sociocultural context. Below are terms highlighted in the "interconnected themes and concepts" in each of the principles.

Principle 1 Key Terms

❖ Leadership
This guidebook defines leadership in a transformative and collectivist-oriented way. This definition of leadership challenges the norms of leadership entirely. Leadership is non-hierarchical and directly challenges and pushes for social change that leads to the liberation of all people away from oppressive systems like capitalism, patriarchy, imperialism, environmental violence, compulsory heterosexuality, and white supremacy. What this means is that leadership actions are not just about holding formal positions, titles, speaking, or attending protests, but about the leadership actions being aligned with critical liberatory behaviors (defined below).

For more in-depth exploration and analysis, read Leadership Canlas (2016)

Leadership Development /capacity Building

It is defined as developing an individual's capacity, ability, or power to do, experience, or understand something and/or potential for meaningful participation and authentic engagement, specifically for collective leadership towards liberatory futures. Developing leadership capacity and what exactly that means varies from field to field; however, this definition includes critical reflection and collective processing that is oriented towards analyzing and exposing power imbalances and disrupting, challenging, and transforming oppressive practices, rhetoric, spaces, forces, institutions, etc. in any/all spaces.

Youth

For this guidebook, youth are defined as people in the age range of 15-26. Youth
experience critical life transitions and changes, prime and pivotal opportunities for growth, and also experience systemic oppression as a group through adultism, along with other oppressive forces like white supremacy, among all others.

❖ Systems of oppression

➢ They are defined as systems or forces that have led to historical inequities and violence against a particular group(s) of people. These systems of oppression can happen at the individual, interpersonal, institutional, and structural levels. Systems of oppression by design can only function with power and privilege dynamics at play. Some examples of these systems of oppression are below:

■ Ableism, Heterosexism, Patriarchy and sexism, Human supremacy, Capitalism, White supremacy, Classism, Ageism

■ For more in-depth exploration and analysis, read National Equity Project (2024)

❖ Power

➢ In this guidebook, power is defined as the ability to make decisions that impact people, communities, and the world.

➢ An abuse and unbalance of power is having a set of privileges and advantages in an oppressive system(s).

➢ Every individual has a different experience and power level related to the different identities people hold and the varying degrees of power within each.

➢ Power should be balanced and shared among everyone.
Social change Ecosystem Framework

➢ The social change ecosystem provides a critical leadership framework that aligns individuals, networks, and organizations' values and connects everyone to a broader ecosystem with shared goals for social change. This framework also suggests that people can create change together in different approaches, especially in 10 different roles that people can hold. This framework also centers on the collective as a pivotal factor for pushing forward change.

➢ The social change ecosystem framework can be used to align Latinx youths' social change values with Afro and Indigenous Liberation efforts and provide expansive and broad definitions of leadership.

➢ For more in-depth exploration and analysis, read Deepa Iyer (2022)

Emergent Strategy

➢ Emergent strategy(ies), inspired by the work of Octavia Butler, are "ways for humans to….grow the future through relatively simple interactions" (p. 22). It is essentially a leadership, social movement building, social change framework that considers the following factors for making change:

■ What is practiced at the "small scale sets the patterns for the whole system" (Brown, 2017, p. 53).

■ Importance of creating critical relationships, connections, and trusting people

■ Change is constantly happening around us.

■ Everything can be a lesson to learn from and grow.

■ There is always enough time for exemplary work
➢ For more in-depth exploration and analysis, read Adrienne Maree Brown (2017)

### Principle 2 Key Terms

#### Critical Latinx Indigenities Framework

➢ The critical Latinx Indigenities framework is an analytical tool and lens for exploring the experiences, histories, and knowledge of Indigenous Latinx communities living in the U.S. and attending the public education system. This framework challenges the settler colonial logic and Mestizaje racial ideologies that are within Hispanic, Latina/o/x, and Chicana/o/x spaces and Latinidad in general. CLI addresses the erasure, silencing, and violence against Indigenous Latinx youth in the U.S. educational system. It also demands that the Latinx community as a whole recognize the painful and complicated history of Latin America and how we need to resist and challenge the automatic claims of indigeneity.

➢ For more in-depth exploration and analysis, read Urrieta, et al. (2019)

#### Mestizaje & Mestizaje racial Ideologies

➢ Mestizaje, put simply is the process of racial mixing between

➢ Mestizaje is a racial, political, white supremacist, settler colonialist ideology that has become the way many Latin American countries have built their identities as nations, explicitly building a nation of Mestizos.

- This has been done through a set of practices, policies, and discourses in Latin American countries (Mexico is a prime example) that encourages
racial mixing, mejorando la raza improving the race), and has historically silenced, erased into the past, and dispossessed Indigenous Latinx people.

➢ For more in-depth exploration and analysis, read Calderon and Urrieta (2019)

❖ **Indigenous Latinx**

➢ Indigenous, Native people within the Latinx diaspora with various experiences, practices, and identities. Indigenous Latinx people have resisted western colonization since the late 15th century from Spanish settlers and continue to resist and live today. Some Indigenous Latinx groups are Nahua, Maya, Mixteco, Purépecha, Taino, Zapoteco and more.

➢ For more in-depth exploration and analysis, read Calderon and Urrieta (2019)

❖ **Latinidad**

➢ Typically used to describe the experiences of a racially and linguistically homologous group and used as a way to build a sense of community and solidarity within the Latinx community. These experiences make assumptions about who is considered Latinx, what their character is and is not, and their place in this social context. Latinidad is rooted and influenced by Mestizaje racial ideologies, and settler colonial logics, and colorblind paradigms, that are all rooted in white supremacy. With these ideologies, anti-blackness and anti-indigeneity in Latin America and the U.S. is pervasive.

➢ Although Latinx people do share some experiences, identities and ancestry from Latin America, we differ phenotypic traits (skin color, eye color, hair type),
ethnicity (cultural groups and practices), nationalities, migration histories, citizenship and more.

➢ For more in-depth exploration and analysis, read Calderon and Urrieta (2019) and Adames, et al. (2019)

❖ **Multiple Marginalized Latinx**

➢ Latinx identifying people who experience marginalization from multiple identities
  ▪ For example, Afro Latinx and Queer girls who may face oppression on various levels such as racism (both from and outside the Latinx community), and homophobia, sexism/misogyny.

❖ **Queer**

➢ Umbrella term for those who identify and are a part of the Lesbian Bisexual Trans Queer Intersex Asexual Agender Gender expansive community. Queer used to be a derogatory term used towards the gay community, however was redefined and taken up by the community to resist this harmful rhetoric.

➢ For more in-depth exploration and analysis, read Meyer (2007)

❖ **Colonial Unknowing**

➢ The “vast ignorance of the enduring legacy of colonialism” which maintains the nation building colonial projects in many Latin American countries (Calderon & Urrieta, 2019, p. 3)

➢ For more in-depth exploration and analysis, read Calderon and Urrieta (2019)
† **Indigenous Latinx Hybrid Hegemonies, Transnational influences & experiences**

➢ Hybrid hegemonies are experienced by Indigenous Latinx people during their migration to the U.S. and formed when there is “two systems of indigeneity and racial/class hierarchy hybridize” (Blackwell et al, 2017, p. 128). Inter-group inequities and oppression like intra-Latinx group racism, discrimination have been one of the defining factors of hybrid hegemony.

➢ For more in-depth exploration and analysis, read Blackwell, et al. (2017)

† **Afro-Latinx & Afro-Latinidades**

➢ As defined by Hordge-Freeman and Veras (2020), Afro-latinx people are people of “visible or self-identified African Heritage [or descent]” who also trace their heritage to Spanish or Portuguese-speaking Latin America” (p. 146). ** It is also important to consider that Afro Latinx people who may not identity as Latinx due to silencing and erasure within Latinx spaces and Latinidad **

➢ Afro-Latinidades is a framework of Latindad that centers and uplifts Afro-Latinx stories, histories, and struggles

➢ For more in-depth exploration and analysis, read Adames, et al. (2021)

Hordge-Freeman and Veras (2020)

† **Ethnoracial Dissonance**

➢ Ethnoracial dissonance is a shared experience of Afro-Latinx people who experience a feeling (s) of disidentification, disconnection and contradictions with
other Latinx community due to the limited and problematic racial schemas and prototypical Latinx appearance.

➢ For more in-depth exploration and analysis, read Hordge-Freeman and Veras (2020)

❖ Anti-Blackness

➢ Anti-blackness is a “form of colonial oppression that includes practices, policies, and dogmas that uniquely harm, disregard, reject, and devalue the lives and contributions of Black people” (Adames, et al., 2021, p. 29). Anti-blackness has been a tool Latin American countries have used as a tool to continue the legacy of settler colonialism.

➢ A prime example could be seen by former president of Mexico, Vicente Fox where they stated “Mexicans [in the U.S.] are needed to perform the jobs that not even Blacks want” (Houston Chronicle, 2005, para 1).

➢ For more in-depth exploration and analysis, read Adames, et al. (2021)

❖ Triple consciousness & Afro-Latinidades

➢ Triple consciousness is described as the feelings and experiences Afro-Latinx people develop as being Black, American, and Latinx.

❖ Asian-Latinx Diaspora

➢ Asian Latinx peoples are defined as people with ancestry and connections to asia and Latin america. Latinx people have typically been described in three groups,
Black, indigenous, and Europeans, however completely erased the Asian diaspora in this category. Asian-Latinx people have been in Latin America since the 16th century and have historically as a group experienced discrimination, ethnic cleansing, and dispossession.

- An example of this is in Mexico's nation building state process where they excluded Chinese Mexican people from receiving citizenship, removed/evicted them from their homes and businesses, and massacred them, particularly in Mexicali, Baja California.

➢ For more in-depth exploration and analysis, read Calderon and Urrieta (2019) and Hu-Dehart and Lopez (2008)

❖ **Settler-Colonial logics & Nation/state-building projects** in Latin America - Reference scholar

➢ Settler-Colonial logics can be defined as the ideas, policies, and practices that are influenced by settler colonialist societies and power structures in order to maintain and uphold those same settler-colonist societies (this includes Latin American nations). A prime example of settler colonial logic is the idea of mestizaje as a nation-building identity, where they encourage and promote racial mixing and cultural assimilation and indigenous erasure.

➢ For more in-depth exploration and analysis, read Calderon and Urrieta (2019)

❖ **Blanqueamiento**

➢ The process of whitening or becoming lighter skinned
❖ Intersectionality

➢ Intersectionality is a “way of understanding and analyzing complexity in the world, in people, and human experiences” (Collins & Bilge, 2020, p. 2). In other words, intersectionality helps us to understand how our positionalities of the world, the identities that we hold, influences and works together to shape people's experiences, and the world. Intersectionality examines how power dynamics influence social relations and uniquely affects people's everyday lives and experiences, why we are the way we are.

➢ For more in-depth exploration and analysis, read Collins and Bilge (2020)

❖ Brave Spaces

➢ Brave spaces can be defined as spaces that validate, accept and acknowledge individuals' different levels of awareness and learning journeys as people work to critically reflect on themselves, and the world.

❖ Authentic Accountability

➢ When an individual takes responsibility for behaviors/ actions that have caused harm to a community or individual and works to repair the harm that centers the person/community harmed.

Principle 3 Key Terms

❖ Collective Latinx Identity
Liberatory Agency

 Defined on page #64

Youth Self-determination & Resistance

 Defined on page #64

Youth self-determination is defined as youth being able to decide their own life choices and paths in life and being able to have autonomy over their own bodies. Youth self-determination is a way of resistance to oppressive, controlling and restrictive environments that they are consistently surrounded by.

Emancipatory agency

 Emancipatory agency is defined as being “invested in freedom for themselves but also for all those who are oppressed, and that they seek to achieve freedom through methods that do not perpetuate or replicate oppressive structures” (Banales and Rivas, 2021, p. 1010).

 For more in-depth exploration and analysis, read Banales and Rivas (2021)

Transformative agency

 Transformative agency is composed of 5 different factors of agency that work towards social justice, change and transformative futures. These five factors are Sustained Agency, Relational agency, Coalitional agency, and strategic agency. Sustained agency focuses on agency that is sustained and maintained across
different contexts. Relational agency is centered on building agency through developing relationships and connections with others. Lastly, Coalitional agency which primarily focuses on how people, history and culture are bound to one another.

➢ For more in-depth exploration and analysis, read Bajaj, M. (2018)

❖ BIPOC

➢ Black, Indigenous, People of Color. This term has been used to describe Latinx people as a whole as part of this grouping, however it is important to note that it is not interchangeable or synonymous with BIPOC. The Latinx community consists of a diverse group of people including BIPOC and White Latinx’s.

Principle 4 Key Terms

❖ Critical & Liberatory Communities

➢ We are all part of a various racial, ethnic, cultural community(ies), however for the purpose of this guidebook, a community, more specifically Critical & Liberatory Communities will be defined as the people we build and sustain connections with, and share critical and liberatory values and goals.

❖ Collective Imagination

➢ The process of reimagining a space, area, city, neighborhood WITH community, and with the collective, where they envision a world where everyone is free.

➢ For more in-depth exploration and analysis, read Bajaj, M. (2018)
❖ Solidarity & Allyship

➢ For this guidebook, Solidarity and allyship encompass the process and the willingness to show up for individuals and communities. Showing up and building community care as a solidarity framework involves not only showing up when violence happens but also showing up to create safer, healthy, equitable, liberatory futures by actively engaging in critical liberatory behaviors. It means understanding that what happens to one, to a few, to a community affects us all everywhere.

❖ Critical Liberatory Behaviors

➢ Defined on page #52

❖ Liberatory humility

➢ Liberatory humility can be defined as the ongoing reflective process, understanding, and growth journey that brings acknowledgment and value to our worth, bodies, energy, and all others. Liberatory humility involves honoring, respecting, and having patience and empathy for oneself and others. Most importantly, it also involves being aligned with social change, justice, and liberation efforts for everyone.

❖ Afro & Indigenous Latinx liberation Movement building
This guidebook calls for an Afro & Indigenous Latinx Liberation movement. This means building a movement that centers on the needs and experiences of marginalized Latinx communities. It also means building a movement that addresses the realities of anti-blackness, anti-indigeneity, and other oppressive ideologies and practices rooted in Mestizaje racial ideologies, White supremacy, capitalism, patriarchy, ableism, homophobia (among others) within the Latinx community spaces. Acknowledging our different positionalities as Latinx people and how we all experience different levels of privileges and disadvantages through these oppressive systems is also an essential factor in movement building. Finally, building a movement around Afro and Indigenous liberation means practicing reflective and critical collective imagination to envision liberatory futures for all.
In Chapter 4, a summary of the project will be provided, including an overview of the guiding principles and the project's overall purposes. Next, this final chapter will discuss future implications for the project within educational, leadership, and Latinx/Chicanx studies spaces and scholarship. Then, the discussion will move towards what is needed to prepare critical Latinx youth now and in the future for liberatory futures. Finally, the chapter concludes with the author's final thoughts, reflections, and remaining questions about the project.

**Principles Summary**

The four Critical Latinx Leadership Principles offer a collective and liberatory framework for Latinx leadership. Principle 1: Critical Global & Leadership Praxis focuses on building Critical Latinx leaders that practice critical reflections of the self, community, the world, and specifically within Latinx leadership spaces. Principle 2 Critical Latinidad focuses on addressing, challenging, and even reimagining a Latinidad that can be aligned with Liberatory futures for all Latinx people. Principle 3, Collective Identities & Liberatory Agency, focuses on building out leaders' 1) Latinx identity to be broad and 2) their capacity to enact liberatory actions for the community and the self. Finally, Principle 4, Critical Dialogues, Connections, & Actions, focuses on building leaders that intentionally build genuine and authentic relationships with the community with the intention of liberation for Afro and Indigenous and other marginalized groups in and outside the Latinx community.
Overall, Critical Latinx Leadership promotes Latinx youth's critical thinking, analysis and reflection, identity building, relationship building, and action building that is oriented towards liberation for Afro, Indigenous, and historically marginalized oppressed groups in and outside the Latinx community. Finally, this guidebook strives to foster Latinx youth leaders who lead with a critical lens of love for the community and the self. To continue building for a better future and world for everyone, our Latinx youth are pivotal in creating this change.

**Implications & Future Plans**

The Critical Latinx Leadership Principles suggest educational, leadership, and Latinx/Chicanx studies implications for future research and scholarship. There is an urgency to widen and deepen empirical research on Latinx leadership models and frameworks and how critical frameworks of Latinx leadership can foster critical Latinx youth leaders. Through Mestizaje Racial Ideologies (an example of a white supremacist ideology), race (skin color, phenotype, facial structures) has relevance and importance in leadership spaces because it contributes to things like intra-Latinx racism; colorism is violent and pervasive. These principles highlight that even non-Indigenous Brown Latinx and White Latinx people are not immune to causing and perpetuating harm. Overall, the principles imply that there is a disconnection and lack of collective unity and solidarity between the Latinx community and an unbalanced amount of power to White Cis abled-bodied, straight Latinx men in Latinx leadership spaces who have continued to hold a high position of power disproportionately to BIPOC Latinx people.

There are also educational implications related to the Latinx leadership principles. Educational spaces and scholarship, particularly Latinx educational spaces, have consistently focused on equity and social justice to "close the achievement gap" and increase Latinx political
power. The four principles suggest that only providing more resources and opportunities for Latinx youth leaders, building up Latinx people in political spaces, and incorporating Chicanx/Latinx studies is not the sole solution that will ultimately uplift and sustain our community, but rather we also need critical and liberatory leadership, community care, love, and joy. The principles also suggest the importance of the Latinx community for movement building, not just towards equity and social justice, but rather towards collective liberation. With building towards liberatory futures, Latinx youth, particularly Afro, indigenous, and other marginalized Latinx communities, can begin to be centered.

In future projects, the aim is to deepen the conceptualization of Critical Latinx leadership principles and develop a four-part workshop series that explores each principle in depth. Workshops would be particularly focused on developing an understanding of the historical experiences, struggles, and joys of Afro, Indigenous, Asian Latinx and other marginalized Latinx communities. More specifically, exposing and challenging intra-Latinx racism, anti-Blackness, anti-Indigeneity, and harmful leadership practices in Latinx spaces. The hope is to develop these workshops to serve as tools and models for Latinx youth to learn and practice working toward Equity, Social Justice, and Liberation for All. Another future goal is to design a Critical Latinx Leadership Program syllabus that could be adapted and utilized in any Latinx leadership-oriented course/program/cohort to build Latinx youth leaders toward liberatory futures. Lastly, another goal would be to develop an empirical study that explores the various relationships between youths' Latinx collective identity, leadership framework, and critical liberatory behaviors and understanding its implications for building Afro and Indigenous Latinx liberation movements and futures.

The Future for Preparing Critical Latinx Youth Leaders
In the current political, social, and economic climate in the United States and of the world, we are witnessing Latinx youth challenging harmful ideologies and practices, urging leaders to protect the planet, and aligning with liberatory movements. The future for preparing critical Latinx youth leaders is using a critical lens and framework like Critical Latinx Leadership to foster empathy, humility, open-mindedness, and kindness to create a better, equitable, and liberatory world and future.

**The Learning Process, Final Thoughts & Remaining Questions**

Researching, designing, and writing out the Critical Latinx Leadership principles guidebook has been eye-opening, challenging, and uncomfortable, as well as healing, validating, clarifying, joyous, and loving experiences. I heavily reflected on my positionality as a Brown queer, bisexual, Latinx cis-womxn and daughter of immigrant parents with ancestry from Mexico and Japan, and what it means to be a critical Latinx leader as an adult working with Latinx youth leaders every day. This reflection made me realize that Latinx adults working with youth must also challenge Latinidad, practice self-awareness, and understand our biases and positions of power. Particularly for me as a lighter-skinned Brown Latina, it has been pivotal for me to understand that I can also cause harm and perpetuate violence. It is my responsibility and commitment to address this within myself and those around me.

By the end of my guidebook, some questions that remain and that I hope to continue exploring are: 1) what factors still need to be considered in Critical Latinx leadership principles in order to create a space where solidarity between Afro and Indigenous Latinx communities and
non-Afro, Indigenous Latinx youth can happen and 2) how can we nurture community care, love, and joy in Latinx leadership youth spaces using critical leadership frameworks?

For my final concluding thoughts, although Latinx leadership frameworks and models have done well in building our youth to be agents of change in the community, the change the youth are creating still needs to be fostered towards liberation for Afro and Indigenous Latinx people. The impacts of these old, non-critical leadership frameworks continue (even unintentionally) the perpetration of violence on Afro and Indigenous bodies. It is essential that for the planet's future and future generations, we not only prepare our Latinx youth to be leaders but critical leaders who work towards liberation for all people, organisms, and the earth.
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