

Advancing Social Justice, Equity, and Antiracism in U.S. Public Schools: The Lived Experiences of Bilingual Latine School Counselors



BACKGROUND



- This doctoral study explores the lived professional experiences of bilingual (Spanish-English) Latine school counselors in U.S. public K-12 schools.
- Persistent educational inequities continue to limit access, opportunity, and support for historically marginalized students.
- Bilingual Latine school counselors play a critical role as cultural brokers, advocates, and leaders in advancing equity.
- Despite their impact, their lived experiences and equity-driven practices remain underexamined in research and the profession.

PURPOSE

To examine how bilingual Latine school counselors:

- Provide academic, career, and social/emotional support
- Advance social justice, equity, and antiracism
- Draw on bilingualism, biculturalism, and lived experience to support historically marginalized students and families

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

1. What are the experiences of equity-minded bilingual Latine school counselors working with historically marginalized students and families in U.S. public schools?
2. In what ways do bilingual Latine school counselors apply a social justice, equity, and antiracism lens in their work?

METHODS

- Qualitative study using:
 - Narrative Inquiry
 - Scholarly Personal Narrative (SPN)
- Centers storytelling (testimonios and pláticas) as knowledge
- Grounded in critical and decolonial research traditions
- Theoretical Frameworks:
 - Critical Pedagogy (Freire)
 - Cultural Intuition (Delgado Bernal)
 - Community Cultural Wealth (Yosso)
 - Humanismo Mexicano (Lopez Obrador)
 - Social Justice & Antiracist School Counseling (Holcomb-McCoy)

PARTICIPANTS

- Credentialed K-12 school counselors in U.S. public schools
- Identify as bilingual (Spanish-English)
- Identify as Latine / Latino/a/x / Hispanic / Chicano/a or of Latin American descent
- Minimum of 4 years of professional school counseling experience
- Demonstrate a commitment to social justice, equity, and antiracist counseling

DATA COLLECTION

- One 60-90 minute virtual plática (Zoom interview)
- Audio-recorded and transcribed with participant consent
- Optional transcript review (member checking)
- Demographic and professional background questionnaire

DATA ANALYSIS

- Narrative coding of participant stories
- Thematic analysis to identify patterns
- Analytic memos to support interpretation and reflexivity

DATA COLLECTION IN PROGRESS

- IRB approval obtained
- Screening questionnaire distributed
- ~200 responses received from eligible participants
- 10-12 participants will be selected for in-depth pláticas (interviews)

PRELIMINARY INSIGHTS

Grounded in the literature and initial recruitment patterns, this study explores how bilingual Latine school counselors may be understood as:

Cultural Brokers

- Bridging communication between schools and families
- Navigating language, culture, and institutional systems

Advocates

- Challenging inequitable policies and practices
- Expanding access to opportunities

Storytellers

- Drawing on lived experiences to build trust and connection
- Fostering student identity and belonging

IMPLICATIONS

- Counselor education should center identity and lived experience
- Schools should recognize bilingualism as a critical asset
- Social Justice, Equity, and Antiracism driven counseling practices are essential

CONCLUSION

- This study centers the voices of bilingual Latine school counselors
- Findings will contribute to advancing social justice, equity and antiracist practice in school counseling

Lived experience is not a limitation—it is a professional asset.

IRB APPROVAL
#FY2026-37

References

Freire (1970); Clandinin & Connelly (2000); Nash (2004); Delgado Bernal (2002); Yosso (2005); Holcomb-McCoy (2022); López Obrador (2023)

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