



Building Bridges to Equity through CPAR Study 11 CPAR Findings

Educator Research Projects
2018-2019



Critical Participatory Action Research

“Critical Participatory Action Research (CPAR) is an epistemology [how you know something] that engages research design, methods, analyses and products through a lens of democratic participation.”

– Torre, Fine, Stoudt & Fox, 2012, p.171





Critical Participatory Action Research

CPAR projects are “rooted in the belief that those most impacted by research should take the lead in framing the questions, design, methods, analysis and determining what products and actions might be most useful in effecting change.”

– Torre, 2009, p.1





The Cambridge Project

In line with the Building Bridges to Equity Grant, the Cambridge CPAR project was set up to integrate educators from the city into the process of investigating the root causes of inequality in CPS. We adhered to the core principles laid out in the grant proposal:

Core Principles:

- (1) Elevate the voices and expertise of families, students, educators and community stakeholders;
- (2) Proactively cultivate trust;
- (3) Share power;
- (4) Proactively engage families, students and educators from marginalized groups.





The Cambridge Project

- Researchers from 8 elementary schools, all 5 Upper Schools, and CRLS;
- School-day and Out-of-School-Time educators;
- Over 50% educators of color.

These educators were supported by two members of the Building Equity Bridges Grant Working Team, as well as two researchers from the Harvard Graduate School of Education. Additional support was provided by two Researchers who joined the Support Team (shared leadership team).



The Cambridge Project

Across the thirteen studies that the educator researchers undertook, the research questions included questions about:

- educators of colors' experiences of belonging in CPS;
- educators of colors' visions for CPS.students' experiences with belonging and inclusivity in school;
- teachers' understandings of belonging and inclusivity in school;
- teachers' interactions with parents;
- OST providers' experiences of belonging in CPS;





My Research Topic:

Do Students feel Valued at CSUS?

I defined **being valued** as, being respected, appreciated and or important.

The most recent research indicates that **students experience greater academic success and overall healthier self-worth, when they feel valued at school.**

-By [Evie Blad](#) June 20, 2017 for EducationWeek Magazine



Research Questions



- The questions I developed about feeling valued related to *place, frequency and connection to academic success.*
- Using an anonymous Google Form, I asked all CSUS 6th, 7th, and 8th as well as all CSUS Staff members. At the end of my survey period, I had 24 staff and 156 student responses.



Limitations

Some unforeseen hurdles of the research included:

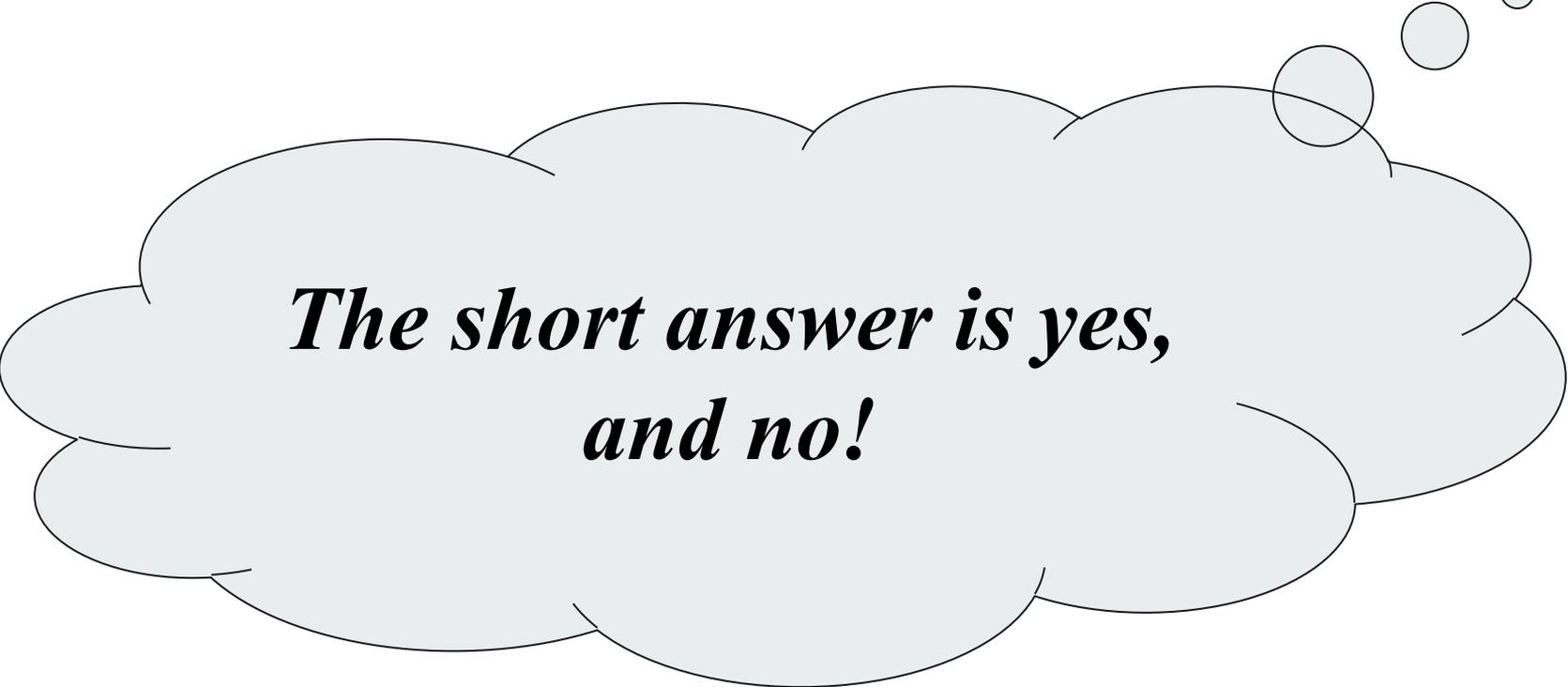
- Receiving responses from only $\frac{1}{3}$ of all staff members
- Receiving only 156 student responses
- My questions focused on the entire student body versus focusing on the individual:
 - ***“Do you think all students feel valued?”***
versus, Do YOU feel valued?





An Overview of Our Findings:

Do Students feel Valued at CSUS?



*The short answer is yes,
and no!*

Do you believe being valued at school is important to your academic success? Why or why not?



“Yes, definitely. When others exhibit that they value someone as a person, it shows that that them life really matters, which encourages individuals to take advantage of their opportunities, and do as much as possible to ensure a good future, of which is staying on top of their academics.”

“Yes, I think it is important because it encourages students to work harder towards their goal and take risks. If someone doesn't feel valued, then it affects how they view themselves and therefore affects the work they do in school.”

“I think it is because when you feel better about yourself, you can do better. Even if you weren't valued, a good student would still probably do pretty well academically, but I think you do your best work when you know that there are people there beside you. Also, if you know that, you are more eager to learn, to be in school, and you are much happier.”



Being valued means to be respected, appreciated and or important. Do you think all scholars feel valued at CSUS?

"No because I feel some people at CSUS might have to hide a part of their identity in fear of getting teased."

67% of
Students said
"No"

"No. Because I see many students be ignored and I see all alone most of the time."

"No. I think this is mostly b/c of students, but partially b/c of teachers. I think that a lot of kids aren't respected and/or are treated like they're invisible. Another problem is that some kids try to change, but people keep treating them the same way - like always getting reprimanded or sent out of class - when they're trying to do better."



The same question was asked of staff, “Being valued means to be respected, appreciated and or important. Do you think all scholars feel valued at CSUS?”

Overall, I think that scholars feel valued. I do think that there are scholars, in particular ones of color, who do not feel treated the same as their white counterparts. They feel that they are the ones called on when doing something wrong, even if a white counterpart is doing the same. They feel that academic expectation are not the same for them and their white counterparts. A B will be celebrated for them if they get a B, whereas a white counterpart will be told to push harder and get an A. This sends a message to kids of color that they are not as valued or as important. It sends a message that their bad behavior will be seen, but that otherwise they may not be seen. It send a messages that their grades are not as important and the pushing for excellence is only for white kids. This is not the perception that all students have, or that they have of all of their their teachers, but it is a reality for some.

**82% of Staff members said
“No”**

Probably not- and I'm sure it depends on the day and the current relationship they have with each of their teachers. (This can sometimes change from day to day). I do think that our work in cultural proficiency seminar is helping to change this.



Implications for Practice:

94% of Students and 100% of staff agree that feeling valued is important to a scholar's academic success

I have been teaching in CPS classrooms for nearly 20 years.

- One measure of success is when students come back to visit me
 - ◆ Never once has a former student reminisced about content
 - ◆ Rather the conversation is **always about how they felt in our classroom**
- Both staff members and students need dedicated time to practice relationship building skills!

"Being valued is one of the most important pieces to academic success. Especially in middle school where scholars are in a uncomfortable place of development, scholars need educators who see them as a whole child. They need teachers who value their opinions, and their presence in class. They need teachers who want them to participate and challenge their own and other's opinions through healthy dialogue. They need to feel that their teachers see them as important and that their opinions matter. It all boils down to relationship building.

if you build a relationship with students, they will be more inclined to engage." -Anonymous CSUS Staff Member

