Minority Public Administrators: Managing Organizational Demands While Acting as an Advocate

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Abstract

Building on the work of Adam Herbert, this research examines how minority managers navigate the pressures of their organization versus the pressures of their community. Organizational socialization suggests that the socialization process will introduce employees to the goals and priorities of the organization and result in similar behaviors among managers. However, social identities (i.e., race, gender) also significantly influence the values, attitudes, and behaviors of a public servant. Navigating these two competing pressures, minority managers often experience role conflict in their work. We theoretically explore and empirically examine how race affects minority managers' perceptions, networking behaviors, and hiring outcomes. We test our hypotheses using 6 years of school superintendent survey data. We find that racial minority managers behave in similar ways to their White peers as they have similar perceptions of their role in the organization and engage in professional networking behavior at similar rates. However, minority managers separately address the interests of their same-race minority community by hiring same-race street-level bureaucrats. As public organizations have grown increasingly diverse, this research revisits the experiences of minority public administrators and contributes to our understanding of how race and social identities contemporarily influence public managerial behaviors.

Keywords

minority public administrators, role conflict, managerial behaviors

According to the seminal essay of Adam Herbert (1974), minority administrators face the dual tensions of needing to balance organizational demands with the expectations of the minority community. Organizations quite logically require managers to seek the goals of the organization and to conform to its processes and standard operating procedures. Individual goals and objectives are to be subordinated to those of the organization (Barnard, 1938), and individuals who act accordingly are more likely to become managers and move up in the organizational hierarchy (Downs, 1967). Although surveys have shown that minority administrators seek strategies of compromise between the organization's needs and the interests of minority communities (Murray, Terry, Washington, & Keller, 1994), no study in the field of public administration empirically illustrates how minority managers might navigate the pressures of their organization versus the pressures of their community to strategically pursue managerial behaviors different than their White peers.

This study theoretically explains and illustrates behavioral differences between minority and White public administrators. Government organizations have a reputation for being more equitable in hiring minorities. However, the number of minority administrators at the very top of the organization is still modest, making it difficult to study the systematic

trade-off that top minority leaders face. This study takes advantage of a long-term panel study of the chief executive officers of school districts to examine whether the managerial actions of minority top administrators (both African American and Latino) differ from nonminority managers. In the process, we can determine how minority managers negotiate the tensions between community expectations and organizational requirements. Theoretically, we will argue that minority chief executives are strategic and they deal with conflicting demands similar to other decision makers, by dealing with the different goals sequentially and separately (see Cyert & March, 1963). This generates the prediction that minority top administrators will visibly manage organizational demands and expectations, but will strategically advocate for minority

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community interests by responding to the minority community in less visible but equally important ways.

The article proceeds in three stages. First, we frame the perceived trade-off between organization and community demands in terms of the theories of organizational socialization and identity politics. Second, using classical work on decision making in organizations, we argue that there is a long-established process for dealing with conflicting goals, and the individuals who succeed in reaching the top of the hierarchy are likely to use such strategies. Third, we present empirical evidence that minority administrators perceive differences in environmental support, craft their outward actions such as networking, the use of performance data, and acting as a policy maker similar to White administrators, but systematically pursue different hiring strategies designed to benefit the minority community.

Socialization, Racial Identity, and Public Management

The influence of race and/or sex on managerial behaviors and decision making has received some (Forret & Dougherty, 2001; Jacobson, Palus, & Bowling, 2010; Johansen & Zhu, 2016; Opstrup & Villadsen, 2015), but limited, attention in public management research. One reason for the limited attention on race is that scholars recognize the influence of socialization in shaping managerial behavior. Organizational socialization is the process by which new members of an organization transition from organizational outsiders to organizational insiders (Bauer, Bodner, Erdogan, Truxillo, & Tucker, 2007). This process introduces employees to the goals, priorities, and values of the organization. The socialization of bureaucrats first occurs formally through professional or organizational training programs (Oberfield, 2014). Within public education, this process is evident through educator preparation programs that require educators to illustrate knowledge of data literacy/analysis, apply technology for their field, lead collaboration with education stakeholders, and apply professional ethics/standards (as stated by the Council for the Accreditation of Educator Preparation). Upon instilling organizational and/or professional values through training, organizations often guide the execution of socialized behaviors by providing formal incentives that reward behaviors with material benefits, such as pay and promotion. For example, the implementation of accountability standards in public education has caused educator preparation programs to encourage educators to focus on achieving performance metrics. Similarly, once in the job, educators receive pay incentives or promotion opportunities as their students' standardized test performance improves. These formal incentives become particularly evident in the compensation of school and district administrators.

Beyond formal socialization, organizations may also introduce goals and values through more ongoing, informal socialization procedures (Romzek, 1990). Informal socialization includes the learning that takes place outside of the profession or organization. It is often a result of peer relationships, and bureaucrats may engage in learned organizational behaviors in pursuit of nonmaterial benefits such as status, recognition, and peer inclusion (Downs, 1967). For example, superintendents' informal socialization can exist in the form of interactions with peer superintendents and mentors. Oftentimes informal networks can provide advice on the unstated behavioral characteristics that are critical to the advancement of superintendent careers (Sharp, Malone, Walter, & Supley, 2004). Although the socialization process will vary across public organizations, socialization suggests that managers, particularly top managers in similar organizations, will engage in similar behaviors—irrespective of the process. As socialization pressures shape the behavior of superintendents (Niño, 2018), some scholars argue that organizational socialization will outweigh the influence of individual identity in shaping the policy attitudes of employees (Meier & Nigro, 1976).

Organizational socialization plays an important role in the job of public employees for two key reasons. First, socialization is meaningful in the public context because bureaucrats have discretion to make decisions in providing public services (Lipsky, 1980). Highly socialized bureaucrats are expected to accept and behave in alignment with the values and mission of the organization in spite of their individual agency or values that would have them behave differently. In a democratic society with appointed—not elected—bureaucrats, the objectivity of public servants is important for goals of equity and inclusion in public service provision. Differing from the private sector, the democratic nature of public organizations creates expectations of transparency and objectivity. Thus, it is necessary to instill organizational norms that produce systematic and predictable objective behaviors to avoid public critique and work toward unbiased outcomes. Second, the socialization process benefits organizations as it promotes a group identity that helps to build connections, establish trust, and promote collaboration among employees. Because organizations are comprised of individuals with different social identities, experiences, and values, socialization can help to produce a coherent bureaucratic identity among unique individuals (Oberfield, 2014). When coherence exists within the organization and individual bureaucrats recognize shared values with their colleagues, the interactions between colleagues and the collective work of bureaucrats is more productive toward organizational goals. Scholars find that socialization is associated with positive individual and organizational outcomes including job satisfaction, productivity, individual organizational commitment, and organizational performance (Bauer et al., 2007).

Although the socialization process is important in shaping the behavior of public servants, we argue that scholars should not undervalue the influence of race. Race is a social construct that shapes how individuals understand and respond to the environment around them. How others perceive members

of a racial group also shapes the experiences of those who belong to that racial group (Tajfel & Turner, 1979). Because of the significant influence of race, people of color have life experiences that are different from those of White individuals. This influence "spills into" the workplace creating differences in career dynamics and experiences (Smart, 2018; Thomas & Alderfer, 1989; Van Laer & Janssens, 2017). For instance, recent research on federal employees found that racial minorities were associated with a greater fear of punishment within their organizations (Jung, Bozeman, & Gaughan, 2018). And numerous scholars of public and private organizations have identified differences in job satisfaction, turnover rates, pay, and discriminatory treatment between minority and White employees (Bright, 2008; Greenhaus, Parasuraman, & Wormley, 1990; Grissom & Keiser, 2011; Pitts, 2009; Riccucci, 2009). While most scholars have explored race as a characteristic to consider among many individual controls, few have theoretically explored how racial differences are shaped by environments. Thus, racial identity interacts with the socialization processes and results in differences in the behavior of minority and White employees (Omi & Winant, 1994).

Research on the theory of representative bureaucracy and diversity management also highlights the influence of race on the impact and behavior of minority bureaucrats (Grissom, Kern, & Rodriguez, 2015). In most cases, the effects of social identity lead to improved performance and more equitable policy outcomes for the clients of public and private organizations (Dolan, 2000; Meier & Nicholson-Crotty, 2006; Theobald & Haider-Markel, 2008; Walker & Andrews, 2013). On the contrary, the suppression of social identity in exchange for socialized behaviors of the organization may result in damaging consequences for marginalized groups (Carroll, 2017). For example, in a study of police departments, Wilkins and Williams (2008) found that Black police officers adhere strongly to organizational norms and were associated with *higher* levels of racial profiling than their White counterparts, yielding a bit of a quagmire for minority managers. Relatedly, some studies suggest that Black citizens receive harsher treatment from Black officers (Nicholson-Crotty, Nicholson-Crotty, & Fernandez, 2017). The work on representation within law enforcement agencies implies that promoting organizational socialization over the individual identity of the bureaucrat may create negative consequences for marginalized groups.

Nonetheless, the identity group an individual belongs to can shape the attitude one has toward bureaucratic practices and culture (Wooldridge, Smith-Mason, & Maddox, 2005). Minority bureaucrats may hold values in conflict with their organizations' as a result of lived experiences and historically poor relations between communities of color and public institutions (Hurwitz & Peffley, 2005). Bruch and Soss (2018) explain that poor formative experiences with authority early on can shape later dispositions toward institutions. Thus, minority individuals, who have experienced public

service delivery at a different level than their White peers (Kelly, 2005; Schafer, Huebner, & Bynum, 2003), can find themselves caught between pressures to adhere to organizational norms/behaviors and to be advocates for their racial/ethnic communities (Herbert, 1974). While much of the literature has presented these two pressures to be a mutually exclusive trade-off, we expect that bureaucrats can navigate the responsibilities of being a racial representative and the demands of being an objective public servant by engaging in strategic behaviors to balance the pressure.

Navigating the Socialization–Identity Vortex

Our theoretical arguments reinforce Herbert's (1974) contention that community demands and organizational socialization create cross pressures on minority employees. All managers and employees must demonstrate their value to their organizations, and this effort likely includes incorporation of the norms, processes, and values socialized by the organization. As one moves up the hierarchy, these pressures increase because the organization's leaders are making decisions about how much to entrust the future of their organization to the manager. To be among those considered for top leadership of the organization, managers must demonstrate an understanding of the organization as well as how to lead it. In recruiting top management, the literature stresses the concept of person–organization fit (Chatman, 1989; Goodman & Svyantek, 1999; Moynihan & Pandey, 2007; Rutherford, 2017), the idea that managers need to fit with vision, structure, and processes of the organization. Organizational socialization or the process of recruitment, as a result, will create strong expectations that a top manager will subordinate personal values to the values of the organization (Barnard, 1938).

Racial identity creates equally strong pressures on the minority manager. As mentioned, race is a long-lasting and fundamental political cleavage in the United States and is associated with major differences in attitudes, opportunities, and life's outcomes. It is trite but true to say an African American manager has been an African American longer than he or she has been a manager. In the specific case of school superintendents, there is a history of exposure to the persistent racial inequalities in educational outcomes from attendance, to test scores, to drop outs (Meier & Rutherford, 2017). These inequalities exist along race/ethnicity lines and are likely to make social identity salient in the mind of minority administrators.

Pressures from the minority community may also reinforce the impact of identity for minority managers. The school superintendent is a highly visible person and most constituents, parents or otherwise, have opinions on the quality of schools and use those opinions to make school choices for their children (Armor & Peiser, 1998; Burgess, Greaves, Vignoles, & Wilson, 2015; Kleitz, Weiher, Tedin, & Matland,

2000). Parents likely have expectations that a superintendent who shares their ethnic identity will work to provide better quality education for their children. There are numerous performance indicators in education policy; and data are readily available to the public on many of these indicators, including test scores, graduation and drop-out rates, college attendance, and so on. Federal law requires the release of this information by race and income, and its importance often results in the release of these data being front-page news in local communities. Racial differences in educational policy outcomes should motivate minority parents to expect leaders in the educational realm to act to improve the outcomes of their children.

We argue the pressures of organizational socialization and racial identity create a vortex of contending and conflicting demands for minority managers, particularly in the educational context. School districts have multiple constituents (the school board, parents, teachers, local business leaders, state and federal officials, etc.) who are interested in the schools' performance. The superintendent is expected to deal with, if not please, all these constituents and advocate for the entire organization. Because of this, constituents and others will likely perceive the aggressive representation of one student group as shortchanging or ignoring the needs of all parents or other constituent groups. The conflict between the pressures will not be total. That is, at times the organization and the community will seek common goals because everyone likes it when *all* students perform better. On the contrary, there are also instances when the expectations of the organization and expectations of the superintendent's same-race minority community appear to conflict for some constituents. Navigating this conflict was the concern of Herbert and is the focus of this research article.

Existing organization theory and decision theory provides insights into how a minority superintendent (or any manager) might deal with these conflicting expectations. Multiple and ambiguous goals are a characteristic of public organizations in general (Chun & Rainey, 2005; Frank, 1958). Organizations tend to break down complex problems into small units, treat the smaller problems separately, and reaggregate the solutions (Simon, 2002). A minority manager can follow the same strategy—dividing the performance pressures into those emanating from the demands of the organization and those from the minority community. Managers do many things; for example, managers make public statements, represent the organization to the outside world, assemble budgets and programs, hire personnel, and oversee the day-to-day operations of the organization, among others.

Within this multidimensional myriad of managerial actions, managers have substantial opportunities to respond to either organizational pressures or community pressures. There are many possibilities for how these pressures may interact. Managers may face situations that allow them to deal with both pressures at the same time. On the contrary, managers may seek out places where they can meet one set of demands in a manner that has a neutral impact on the other (or the issue may not be salient to constituents). Moreover, managers may identify actions that are not visible to the organization or the minority community. Because meeting the needs of the organization is the sine qua non that is necessary to be in a position to satisfy the demands of the minority community, we hypothesize that highly visible activities such as networking, using performance information, and making policy would conform to organizational dictates. Other more routine and less visible activities, such as recruitment of personnel who may share the superintendent's views on policy actions or strongly identify with the minority community, would allow minority managers to represent the minority community. In short, we refer to this strategy as "managing organizational demands" (i.e., manage visibly in conformance with organizational expectations) but "advocating for minority interests" (i.e., staff the organizations with individuals who can respond to the minority community).

"Managing Organizational Demands"

Superintendents as the executive managers of school districts are likely to display similar characteristics in meeting the needs of their organization because they experience similar training and address similar tasks (Carter & Cunningham, 1997). Generally, a bureaucrat's professional training leads to the development of isomorphic behaviors (Teodoro, 2014), and there is a great deal of similarities across superintendents. The increased professionalization of education results in requirements for more participation in education training and educational leadership programs. While educational leaders hold a variety of professional backgrounds, between 2010 and 2017, the Texas Education Agency reported that each year more than 67% of school district executives in Texas participated in superintendent preparations via an *in-state*, Post-Baccalaureate degree.[1] Fully 95% of Texas superintendents have a master's degree and one half have a PhD, generally in some field of education. Similar training across the profession is likely to result in isomorphic behaviors where superintendents value specific behaviors and policy approaches due to their training toward such management techniques (Carter & Cunningham, 1997). One key role of superintendents is policy leadership as district stakeholders look to the superintendent as a change agent (Cuban, 1984; Kowalski, 2006).

Beyond training, the job of a school district executive also requires that superintendents focus on particular values and pursue certain behaviors. The introduction of *No Child Left Behind* and the continuing wave of accountability standards enforced by *Every Student Succeeds Act* has brought increased standards of performance to public education. As such, it is likely that all superintendents view the role of state standardized exams and improving results as an important goal in their work. Simultaneously, education executives are

only one actor among many constituents in their organizational ecosystem. However, as an executive, their duty is to manage constituency groups and maintain positive relationships with actors ranging from state education agencies and teachers' associations to parents and community organizations. Because these actors seek to create influence for the school district, we expect that all managers will engage in networking with various actors in similar ways. Regardless of one's racial identity, therefore, visible managerial behaviors such as managerial networking and perceptions of performance information are likely to conform to organizational norms, as these behaviors are simply a part of a manager's job. Stated as our hypothesis, we expect:

> **Hypothesis 1 (H1):** Minority managers will behave similar to their White peers in visible tasks such as organizational networking, and supporting policy leadership and performance-related goals.

"Advocating for Minority Interests"

Minority managers can also engage in more strategic behavior to address the concerns of same-race minority community members. In the educational context, teachers are street-level bureaucrats with significant discretion and close contact with the "clients" of the organizations (i.e., students and their parents). Scholars highlight the importance of a diverse workforce to meet the needs of minority clients (Grissom et al., 2015). Likewise, street-level bureaucrats, such as teachers, have held an important role as policy implementers for centuries (Lipsky, 1980). Diversity in the employees of an organization is critical to ensuring that the interests of traditionally disadvantaged groups are represented (Meier & Rutherford, 2017).

There is a long-standing view that a representative bureaucracy is able to meet the needs of a diverse population. The theory of representative bureaucracy offers insight on the effects associated with the "transition" from passive to active representation (Keiser, 2010; Kingsley, 1944). Scholars note the importance of discretion in the translation (Sowa & Selden, 2003) as "bureaucrats must have a sphere of influence to take actions that reflect [their] values . . ." (Meier & Bohte, 2001, p. 457). There is an established connection between the proportion of minority bureaucrats in a public agency and the outcomes of minority clients (Bradbury & Kellough, 2011; Meier, 2019; Selden, 1997). In the educational context, the presence of minority teachers is associated with many important benefits, including lower levels of discrimination for all minority students— not just same-race students (Pitts, 2007; Rocha & Hawes, 2009) and improved outcomes and treatment of students who share their racial/ethnic identity (Lindsay & Hart, 2017). The presence of Latino teachers is also associated with improvements in Latino student test scores (Fraga,

Meier, & England, 1986; Polinard, Wrinkle, & Longoria, 1990). These benefits make minority teachers an important conduit for addressing the concerns of the minority community.

As minority teachers do not face competing, public pressures to the same degree as minority managers (much of their work is in the classroom rather than in public) and minority teachers benefit minority students (Grissom et al., 2015), minority managers may hire minority teachers as a strategy to navigate the complicated socialization–identity vortex. Strategically using the personnel process, managers can hire individuals who share their values. Scholars highlight that there is a correlation between principals' backgrounds and their preferences for diverse teacher characteristics (Ingle, Rutledge, & Bishop, 2011). Minority administrators are generally associated with the increased hiring of minorities and diversity programing (Doverspike, Taylor, Shultz, & McKay, 2000; Konrad & Pfeffer, 1991; Meier & Rutherford, 2017). Similarly, minority managers express a stronger preference for equity-oriented values than White managers (Ospina & Foldy, 2009; Stazyk, Davis, & Portillo, 2017). By hiring minority teachers, minority managers can act to bring about social change within education organizations by promoting more equitable education access and experiences for minority students through minority teacher representation (Nicholson-Crotty, Grissom, Nicholson-Crotty, & Redding, 2016). In this way, the hiring decisions of minority managers can be strategic because it allows minority managers to engage in behavior consistent with the expectations of the organization, while "putting people in place" (minority teachers) who have the access and discretion necessary to address concerns of the minority community.

Minority administrators may also be more likely to recruit more minority teachers because of regional workforce differences. Considering that a larger percentage of minority school administrators and educators work in urban areas (Brey, Musu, & MacFarland, 2019) or regions with a sizable minority population, minority administrators may hire more minority teachers by drawing on the nearest available teacher workforce (technically teacher labor pools are statewide given certification requirements). In this case, minority administrators would be less influenced by individual biases but will evaluate job candidates equally. Similarly, minority administrators are often hired in school districts where they can politically connect with and advocate for the local communities of color. Depending on the salience of issues such as race and diversity in the region, hiring minority teachers may be necessary to maintain community relationships in the district.

Stated as our second hypothesis, we expect,

> **Hypothesis 2 (H2):** There will be a positive relationship between minority managers and the presence of minority teachers.

Data

The dataset that we use to explore managerial behaviors according to race is the Texas Superintendent Survey dataset. Conducted in 2000, 2002, 2005, 2007, 2009, 2011, and 2014, the Texas Superintendent Survey sampled every public school superintendent in the state, and the survey is available to all scholars on request. This survey gathers information on superintendent managerial behaviors, policy preferences, and individual characteristics. In Texas, there are approximately 1,050 public school districts (charter schools are not included in this total), and each district was sent two reminders in the weeks the survey was in the field. The response rates ranged from 52% to 67%.[2]

Next, the survey data capturing individual superintendent characteristics were merged with administrative and performance data requested from the Texas Education Agency. Texas Education Agency, like most state education departments, gathers annual administrative and district performance data. We are able to match superintendent behavioral survey responses with district performance data, district demographic characteristics, and superintendent race provided by the Texas Education Agency.

The sample includes 3,200 superintendent observations. It is highly representative of the Texas school district population. The mean values for district student population, district performance, and superintendent characteristics are within an acceptable deviation of the population mean values. The mean values for overall performance, Black student performance, and Latino student performance are, respectively, 75%, 62%, and 68% of students passing the standardized exam. The average district size in the data is approximately 4,400 students, and superintendents have been in their respective positions for an average of about 4 years.

Models and Measures

To explore Hypothesis 1 and measure our dependent variable of networking, we factor analyze a group of questions from the survey that asks respondents, "How frequently do you interact with: (insert various network actors)?" The network actors included in this question include the school board, teachers' associations, parent groups, other superintendents, federal education officials, state legislators, and the Texas Education Agency. The superintendents responded on a scale ranging from *never* (1) to *daily* (6) for each network actor. Through factor analysis, the survey items loaded on two factors (see Table 1). The first factor includes the majority of network actors such as, "Texas Education Agency," "State legislators," "parent groups," and "teacher's associations." We refer to Factor 1 as *professional networking*. However, the only network actor that loads well in Factor 2 is "other superintendents," thus we refer to Factor 2 as *peer networking*.

Table 1. Factors Loadings for Network Actors.

	Factor 1	Factor 2
School Board	0.48	0.27
Teachers Associations	0.55	−0.44
Parent Groups	0.56	−0.49
Other Superintendents	0.51	0.62
Federal Education Officials	0.58	−0.23
State Legislators	0.62	0.29
Texas Education Agency	0.59	0.04
Eigenvalue	2.18	1.03

We use ordinary least squares (OLS) regression analysis to test our hypotheses. Equation (1) illustrates networking behaviors as a function of superintendent race (R_S), superintendent experience (X_S), and a vector of multiple district controls ($\mathbf{C}_i$).

$$Networking_S = \alpha + \beta_1 R_S + \beta_2 X_S + \beta_3 \mathbf{C}_i + p_t + \varepsilon. \quad (1)$$

Similar to our prior model, we test hypothesis 2 using OLS regression analysis. Equation (2) illustrates an autoregressive model where minority teacher representation is a function of prior representation ($MinorityTeachers_{it-1}$), superintendent race (R_S), superintendent experience (X_S), and multiple district controls ($\mathbf{C}_i$). We operationalize the dependent variable of minority teachers as the percent of Black and Latino teachers within the district. Within each year, we calculate the percentage of total teachers that are Black, Black Teachers/Total Teacher ($\times$ 100), and Latino, Latino Teachers/Total Teacher ($\times$ 100). The mean Latino and Black teacher representation within a district is 10.7% Latino teachers and 3.7% Black teachers.

We account for past teacher representation within the district (i) using the lagged percentage of Black teachers and the lagged percentage of Latino teachers. We include this lagged value because on average, the representation of minority teachers within a district does not vary widely on an annual basis and prior representation will influence representation in subsequent years. By controlling for prior representation, our coefficients better estimate the influence of superintendent race on current gains in minority teacher representation.

$$
\begin{aligned}
MinorityTeachers_{it} &= \alpha + \beta_1 MinorityTeachers_{it-1} \\
&+ \beta_2 R_S + \beta_3 X_S + \beta_4 \mathbf{C}_i + p_t + \varepsilon.
\end{aligned} \quad (2)
$$

All analyses include time-fixed effects (p_t) to control for potential correlation across time. In addition, we include clustered standard errors at the district level. The clustered standard errors will control for potential error correlation between districts.

Table 2. Summary Statistics.

Variable	M	SD	Minimum	Maximum
Percent Black Teachers	3.34	6.95	0	93
Lagged Black Teachers	2.99	6.51	0	93
Percent Latino teachers	10.73	19.13	0	100
Lagged Latino teachers	9.84	18.75	0	100
Networking	3.00	0.48	1.57	5.286
Black	0.02	0.14	0	1
Latino	0.07	0.26	0	1
White	0.91	0.33	0	1
Revenue per pupil (logged)	9.17	0.27	7.47	11.34
Performance	74.27	12.38	21	100
Percent Black students	7.95	11.35	0	87
Percent Latino students	32.95	26.30	0	100
Percent Low-income students	52.68	19.13	0	100
Superintendent Experience	4.89	4.51	0	40
District Enrollment (logged)	7.11	1.50	2.996	12.20

Independent Variable

In both analyses, race is measured using two categorical variables for Black and Latino. Our first categorical variable captures the presence of a Black superintendent. We code this variable "1" for Black superintendent and "0" otherwise. We follow a comparable operationalization for our measure of Latino superintendents; our Latino superintendent variable is "1" when there is a Latino superintendent and "0" otherwise. The omitted or reference category is White superintendents. Within the sample, 90% of the respondents are White, approximately 2% are Black, and 7% are Latino. With approximately 3,600 cases, these percentages translate to approximately 72 Black and 252 Latino superintendents.

Controls

In both models, we control for superintendent and district characteristics that may influence our outcome variables. Table 2 presents the summary statistics for these variables. First, we include a control for superintendent experience. Superintendents with more experience likely have developed expertise on how to interact with various actors and make the most of their time (Juenke, 2005).[3] Their expertise may encourage networking based on the interactions they view as crucial to their performance. We operationalize superintendent experience with a continuous variable that captures superintendent's responses to "How long have you been superintendent in any district?" We measure superintendent experience in years. Next, we control for school district size measured by the logged district enrollment. Superintendents who work in large school districts are likely to be mobile executives and to seek promotion, which often leads to increased political activity (Teodoro, 2011). District performance is also included, measured by the percentage of students in the district who have passed all state standardized exams. As superintendents are expected to show improved performance each year, poorer performance may trigger superintendents to engage in networking as a means to improve performance and/or build political allies to protect their jobs (see Walker, Andrews, Boyne, Meier, & O'Toole, 2010, who find this for English local governments). Student demographic populations are also expected to influence superintendent behaviors. In this case, residential segregation in Texas schools has created a context where the majority of racial minority superintendents work in majority Black and Latino districts. We measure student demographic population by the percentage of Black and the percentage of Latino students in the district. Because potential task-difficulty may also interact with superintendents' ability to engage in networking, we control for the low-income student population. We also control for district wealth, operationalized by the logged revenue per pupil allotted to the district each year. We expect that buffering patterns will prevail and overall networking behaviors will be greater in districts with fewer resources (O'Toole & Meier, 2011).

Results

Descriptive Results

Before investigating the individual behaviors of top managers, it is fair to ask if there is any reason to believe that minority top executives might have greater incentives to engage in strategic behavior relative to their nonminority counterparts. This is a valid concern because superintendents do not have job security and must build political support both on the school board and in the community to maintain their positions (Boyd, Crowson, & Mawhinney, 2015; Carter & Cunningham, 1997; Johnson, 1996). Several years of the survey asked school superintendents how they would rate school board support and community support for their district.

Table 3. Perceptions of Support by Race of Superintendent.

	"How would you rate the following in your district: School Board Support?"			"How would you rate the following in your district: Community Support"		
	(1) Below average	(2) Average	(3) Excellent	(4) Below average	(5) Average	(6) Excellent
White	3.48	9.82	86.71	6.38	25.23	68.39
Black	4.48	17.91	77.62	19.70	42.42	37.88
Latino	3.65	10.33	86.01	6.25	31.25	62.5
Observations		2,545			2,545	
χ^2		10.56			35.69	
Pr		.032			.000	

Respondents were prompted by the following question: "How would you rate the following in your district: . . ." and respondents separately rated "school board support" and "community support" on a scale of "1" (*inadequate*) to "4" (*excellent*). Next, the survey asked superintendents, "How important do you see the following in your district: Standardized test scores." Superintendents responded on a scale of 1 to 4, where a response of "1" reflects *not important* and "4" reflects *most important*. Last, we asked superintendents to rate their agreement with a statement that summarized the role of superintendents: "A superintendent should act as an administrator and leave policy matters to the school board." The respondents were given a scale of "1" (*strongly disagree*) to "4" (*strongly agree*) to rate their agreement.[4]

The results in Table 3 show that minority superintendents, especially African American superintendents perceive lower support among the school board and significantly lower support in the community. The first column of Table 1 shows Black superintendents are most likely to perceive "below average" school board support and White superintendents are the least likely to give this response. The opposite exists for responses by race in regard to "excellent" school board support. Column 3 of Table 3 presents that White superintendents are more likely than Latinos and Blacks to perceive "excellent" school board support; Black superintendents are least likely to offer this response.

Columns 4 to 6 of Table 3 presents the superintendent's perception of community support by race/ethnicity. Column 4 in Table 3 indicates that Black superintendents are more likely than Latino and White superintendents to perceive "below average" community support. Column 6 of Table 3 highlights again that White superintendents are most likely to perceive "excellent" community support. There is a drastic difference in the perception of Black superintendents as they are the least likely among superintendents to perceive "excellent" community support. And the results of a chi-square test indicate that there are statistically significant differences in responses across racial groups. Similar to perceptions of political support, Latino superintendents fall between White and Black superintendents in perceptions of community support. However, Latino superintendents do closely resemble their White peers in their perception of community support. The small difference between Latino and White superintendents may be a function of the Texas context where the Latino community has a long-standing political presence that provides Latino executives the opportunity to develop more positive political and community relations and Latino students' position as the majority group among Texas school students. Nonetheless, minority superintendents, particularly Black superintendents, see lower support within their political environment and significantly lower support in the community. This perception should logically create the incentives to act strategically to build greater board and community support.

Our first hypothesis is that minority school superintendents will respond to organizational pressures and behave similarly to White superintendents on highly visible activities. We test this hypothesis by examining how superintendents perceive the importance of standardized tests, how they see their role as a policymaker versus an implementer, and how they engage in public networking behavior. Without question during this time period of high stakes testing, an area where the state of Texas was a role model for national policy, the most important priority was student performance on standardized tests. Table 4 presents the importance of standardized test performance and beliefs on district policymaking for superintendents by race. A small percentage of superintendents rated student standardized test scores of no or low importance. However, these responses are clear outliers as most superintendents say this standard is either "important" or "most important" in their district. Table 4 shows approximately 93%, 100%, and 94% of White, Black, and Latino superintendents, respectively, ranked standardized test scores in their district as important or most important. Likewise, the insignificant chi-square test indicates that there are no statistical differences across groups in their responses. In short, minority superintendents strongly supported the need for good performance on standardized tests just as White superintendents did.

The second visible role is whether superintendents see themselves as "acting as an administrator and leaving policy to the school board." Columns 5 to 8 of Table 4 presents the

Table 4. Perceptions of Standardized Testing and Role in Policy by Race.

| | "How important do you see the following in your district: Standardized Test Scores" | | | | "A superintendent should act as an administrator and leave policy matters to the school board." | | | |
	(1) Not important	(2) Low importance	(3) Important	(4) Most important	(5) Strongly disagree	(6) Disagree	(7) Agree	(8) Strongly agree
White	1.43	5.31	47.14	46.12	22.39	52.01	20.99	4.61
Black	0	0	50	50	20.83	56.25	14.58	8.33
Latino	0	5.71	40	54.29	23.13	44.78	23.88	8.21
Observations			531				1,897	
χ^2			1.76				7.41	
Pr			.94				.285	

superintendents' perceptions of their role in policy. The insignificant chi-square test indicates no significant difference across race in superintendents' perceptions of their role. The majority of all superintendents disagree or strongly disagree that superintendents should act as administrators and leave policy to the school board (see columns 1 and 2). Among Black, Latino, and White superintendents, very few (<10%) strongly agree that a superintendent's role is more of an administrator. Given the stress experienced by school superintendents who must lead a district alongside a part-time school board, it is not surprising that minority superintendents and White superintendents reject the administrator role; there are no significant differences among the superintendents in this visible activity.

Empirical Results

Next, we explore if there are differences in visible managerial behaviors such as, networking. Given our factor analysis results, we explore two networking groups: professional networking and peer networking. Beginning with professional networking, Table 5, column 1, shows that there is no statistically significant difference between the networking behaviors of racial minority superintendents and White superintendents. Although it appears that Black superintendents, on average, may network less than their White peers may, the effect is not statistically significant. Three of the control variables we include are statistically significant. Increases in revenue per pupil and increases in district size both result in increased superintendent networking. Increases in superintendent experience lead to *reduced* superintendent networking, which suggests that more experienced superintendents spend less of their time networking than superintendents who are new to their position. This model as well as the two previous findings support Hypothesis 1 that minority managers are "managing organizational demands" and engage in similar activities in terms of the priorities they hold, the perception of their role in setting policy, and their networking behavior in patterns identical to their White peers.

Table 5, column 2, illustrates the relationship between superintendent race and peer networking. Different from professional networking, on average, Latino superintendents engage in less networking with other superintendents than their White peers. Similar to other networking types, Black superintendents are no more or less likely to engage with peers. Although the significant differences found here among Latino and White superintendents are surprising, the results are consistent with previous literature on networking among peers of different racial groups (Ibarra, 1995). Historically, administrators of color have experienced feelings of isolation and lack of inclusion in peer professional networks. The negative relationship found here may be capturing the bias that exists in the development and continuation of peer network relationships.

Table 6 explores if racial differences in managerial behaviors are present in less visible processes in the organization, such as hiring minority bureaucrats. Our second hypothesis expects that Black and Latino superintendents will discretely affect policy by increasing the minority bureaucrats in their organization. The results offer support for this hypothesis. Even when controlling for past representation of minority teachers, the presence of a Black superintendent, on average, contributes to an annual 1.5 percentage point increase in Black teachers in their district compared with White superintendents. By controlling for last year's Black teachers, the coefficient indicates the average short run or yearly effect of Black superintendents compared with their White peers. This effect is statistically significant with a *p* value less than .01. This growth is particularly noteworthy as the number of Black teachers is decreasing both nationally and in many school districts across Texas. Table 6 also presents a similar analysis that focuses on the relationship between Latino superintendents and the percent of Latino teachers. The results in the second column of Table 6 also offer support for Hypothesis 2. The presence of Latino superintendents contributes to an annual, statistically significant increase (1.6 percentage point) in Latino teachers compared with White superintendents. This increase is statistically significant with a *p* value less than .01. It is important to stress that these are the immediate gains in teacher

Table 5. The Influence of Race on Managerial Networking Behavior.

Variables	(1) Professional networking	(2) Peer networking
Black Superintendent	−0.08 (0.14)	−0.05 (0.14)
Latino Superintendent	0.03 (0.08)	−0.32*** (0.08)
Revenue per pupil	0.34*** (0.11)	−0.09 (0.12)
Performance	0.00 (0.00)	0.00 (0.00)
Black students	0.00 (0.00)	−0.00 (0.00)
Latino students	−0.00 (0.00)	−0.00** (0.00)
Low-income students	0.00 (0.00)	0.00** (0.00)
Experience	−0.01*** (0.00)	0.01 (0.00)
District size	0.13*** (0.02)	−0.04 (0.02)
2005	0.27*** (0.08)	0.03 (0.09)
2007	0.13** (0.07)	0.07 (0.08)
2009	−0.18** (0.08)	0.34*** (0.08)
2011	−0.43*** (0.08)	0.17** (0.08)
2014	−0.44*** (0.07)	0.27** (0.07)
Constant	−4.02** (1.09)	0.61 (1.12)
Observations	3,220	3,220
R^2	.10	.04

Note. Robust standard errors in parentheses.
*$p < .1$. **$p < .05$. ***$p < .01$.

Table 6. The Influence of Superintendent Race on Hiring of Minority Teachers.

Variables	(1) % Black teachers	(2) % Latino teachers
Lagged Black teachers	0.92***(0.02)	—
Lagged Latino teachers	—	0.94*** (0.01)
Black Superintendent	1.45*** (0.46)	0.11 (0.25)
Latino Superintendent	−0.11 (0.10)	1.56*** (0.58)
Revenue per pupil	0.21 (0.14)	0.28 (040)
Performance	−0.01* (0.00)	−0.02** (0.01)
Black Students	0.04*** (0.01)	−0.01* (0.01)
Latino Students	0.00** (0.00)	0.04*** (0.00)
Low-income Students	−0.01** (0.00)	−0.00 (0.01)
Experience	−0.01 (0.01)	−0.01 (0.01)
District size	0.07* (0.04)	0.27*** (0.07)
2005	−0.28** (0.12)	−0.16 (0.27)
2007	−0.06 (0.12)	−0.21 (0.21)
2009	−0.02 (0.11)	0.05 (0.24)
2011	−0.20* (0.12)	−0.01 (0.27)
2014	0.29** (0.14)	0.44** (0.22)
Constant	−1.50 (1.55)	−2.64 (3.80)
Observations	3,308	3,308
R^2	.95	.98

Note. Robust standard errors in parentheses.
*$p < .1$. **$p < .05$. ***$p < .01$.

representation in 1 year and that the specification suggests such gains on an annual basis so that a superintendent serving multiple years can have a substantial impact on the racial composition of the teaching force.

Many of the control variables are statistically significant in the results presented in Table 6. In both Models 1 and 2, there is a statistically significant relationship between the percent of Black and Latino students and the percentage of minority teachers. An increase in each of these percentages leads to an increase in the percent of Black teachers and Latino teachers, except an increase in Black students, which leads to a reduction in the percent of

Latino teachers. Table 6 shows that the percent of Black teachers and Latino teachers decreases as student performance improves but increases due to increased district size. By controlling for the district characteristics, we account for district environments contributing to increased minority teacher representation. Taken together, these results reveal a statistically significant relationship between Black and Latino superintendents and offer support for our expectation that minority managers behave differently than their White peers in less visible activities such as putting teachers in place who will likely influence policies that potentially benefit their racial community.

Discussion

Herbert (1974) contends that racial minority managers face different pressures than their White peers. In the face of an organization with strong socialization pressures, these differences may lead to a goal conflict for managers of color. Whereas scholars (Murray et al., 1994) have previously addressed this conflict with the assumption that managers choose to represent the interests of the organization and forsake community interests or pursue the interests of one's community and dismiss organizational values, this research indicates that this is an incorrect assumption. Instead, minority managers appear to behave strategically and deal with the two goals separately.

First, when it comes to goals of the organization, our empirical results find that minority managers perceive the organization's goals and their role in the organization similar to that of White managers. Descriptive tests indicate that there are no differences in minority and White superintendents' perceptions of standardized performance scores and, that both minority and non-minority superintendents perceive their role to be policymakers more than administrators. Similarly, regression analysis indicates that regardless of a superintendent's race, superintendents engage in visible managerial practices like professional networking in similar ways to their peers. Our empirical models for networking include control variables that account for the characteristics of the district that make up the policy environment and will influence network engagement. The results indicate that even when working in extremely different districts, organizational values and similarities in role expectations may promote similar behaviors among superintendents in their professional interactions.

When considering peer networks, our results support previous research on the lack of network availability for minority administrators (Ibarra, 1995). Specifically, our results indicate differences among Latino superintendents and their White peers in networking with other superintendents; there are no differences for Black superintendents. Because interactions with other superintendents represent an informal

network, we cannot assume individuals of all racial groups have equal access.

Second, while managing organizational expectations, minority managers are advocating for minority interests. Our empirical analysis demonstrates that minority managers pursue significantly different behaviors in ways that promote important policy outcomes. Empirical evidence finds that Black and Latino superintendents address their "personal commitment to community" by staffing the organization with individuals who are generally associated with improved minority student performance. The presence of a Black manager is associated with an annual increase in Black teachers by 1.5 percentage points on average and Latino managers are associated with a 1.6 percentage point annual increase in Latino teachers. For comparison purposes, in 2015-2016, Black teachers in Texas made up 6.7% of the state's teaching population and Latino teachers made up 8% of all teachers.[5] If on average a superintendent of color can increase representation among both groups by more than 1 percentage point, minority managers can make a substantial impact on the organization in ways that benefit same-race clients and the organization overall. Given the fact that minority students rarely have access to the role-model effects presented by same-race teachers and having a same-race teacher will increase minority students' likelihood of graduating and going to college (Gershenson, Hart, Hyman, Lindsay, & Papageorge, 2018), increasing the proportion of minority teachers can affect the outcomes and future directions of an organization. As these findings use the personnel process as an example of minority administrative behaviors, we might similarly expect minority managers to demonstrate their commitment to community by advocating for less punitive discipline policies or encouraging culturally responsive curriculum.

Conclusion

Although minority managers may experience goal conflict, our results find that this goal conflict does not distract from the individual's goals or those of the organization. Instead, racial minority managers can strategically balance the goals of the organization with those of their community. Our findings imply that as managers of color behave according to the values and perspectives associated with their diverse identities, they must bring diplomatic approaches to public managerial strategy. This finding provides increased support for the hiring of minority managers. In the majority of cases, the benefits that come to the organization via advocacy for same-race clients, will often improve outcomes for White students and the organization as well (Meier, 1993). However, pressuring managers to adhere solely to the values and goals instilled through organizational socialization may actually limit the abilities of racial minority managers to use their

diverse perspectives to address organizational needs. Organizations, therefore, should consider the ways in which they may be limiting minority managers from pursuing community interests by presenting the goals of the organization and anything beyond that, including the interests of one's community, as opposite pursuits.

Although this research has demonstrated the effect of race on managerial behaviors in the case of school superintendents, it is limited in some ways and these limitations provide directions for future work. Primarily, it is not lost on us that many minority administrators lack access to some social and professional networks (Ibarra, 1995). Although we attempt to address this by including network actors with whom managers are connected regardless of race, we are still considerate of this as a potential limiting factor. In addition, the data have limited us to using representative bureaucracy as an example of "advocating for minority interests." Although we would welcome the use of survey or administrative data that record policy changes across districts or indicate administrator's support for culturally responsive policies, the availability of such data is limited. Thus, future directions of this work may look to understand the direct link between minority superintendents and the hiring of minority principals, changes in discipline, or implementation of culturally responsive policies. Last, throughout this research, we have spoken of both Latino and Black bureaucrats as minorities who similarly develop values and behave in ways that are influenced by their racial identity. But it is worth noting that race and ethnicity may not operate identically and in fact Blacks and Latinos have uniquely different experiences. These different experiences, such as the long-standing Latino community in Texas and the variation among Latino political perspectives, may result in fewer similarities between Black and Latino public administrators. Although this research has included both groups as they represent the largest number of traditionally disadvantaged minorities, future work would benefit from exploring the differences within administrators of color and how these differences manifest in administrative behavior.

In spite of these limitations, this research contributes to our understanding of race, organizational socialization, and how minority administrators strategically balance seemingly conflicting interests and values within public institutions. We believe this study can be generalizable to managers in various organizational contexts; in particular, public health organizations and law enforcement agencies provide interesting contexts for exploration. Public health and law enforcement executives are similarly influenced by strong organizational or professional socialization, public pressures, and standardized goals of performance. In these industries, we expect minority managers may equally perceive a role conflict. But when given the discretion to act, minority managers will "manage the demands of the organization" and "advocate for the interests of their community."

Appendix

Table A1. Superintendent Survey Response Rate (by Year).

2000	52%
2002	60%
2005	61%
2007	67%
2009	58%
2011	54.2%
2014	43.7%

Notes

1. Superintendent certification information gathered from the Texas Education Agency, Certified Superintendent Demographics by Preparation Route 2013-2017 (https://tea.texas.gov/Reports_and_Data/Educator_Data/Educator_Reports_and_Data/).
2. See Appendix, Table A1, for response rates for each respective year.
3. It may be argued that the historical discrimination experienced by people of color in education may result in racial minority superintendents having overall less experience. The correlation coefficient between race and superintendent experience is −.09.
4. Each survey item was not included in every year of the survey. Questions asking superintendents of the importance of standardized exams were only asked in 2000. Additional survey items on perceptions and beliefs were included in 2000, 2002, 2005, and 2007.
5. Teacher demographics gathered from the Texas Association of School Board. (https://www.tasb.org/services/hr-services/hrx/recruiting-and-hiring/teacher-demographics-and-diversity-challenges.aspx).

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