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## School Personnel's Perceptions Toward Transfer Versus Nontransfer Students in a Borderland School

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# Walden University

College of Social and Behavioral Sciences

This is to certify that the doctoral dissertation by

Maria Isabel Quiñones Velez

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Walden University  
2021

Abstract

School Personnel's Perceptions Toward Transfer Versus Nontransfer Students in a

Borderland School

by

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MS, Carlos Albizu University, 2001

BA, Interamerican University, 1996

Dissertation Submitted in Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

Educational Psychology

Walden University

August 2021

## Abstract

School personnel serving highly transient student populations in borderland schools in the southwestern United States may have different perceptions toward transfer students and nontransfer students. Few quantitative studies have measured the perceptions that arise as school personnel confront the unique challenges of providing services to transfer students. The purpose of this quantitative study was to identify the presence, or not, of different perceptions of school personnel toward students who transfer from other school systems due to specific circumstances versus the perceptions toward nontransfer students who are local students. The theory of dual process of thoughts was used to explain perception as a psychological experience and the two different processing styles. The sample included 92 school personnel working in a public high school in a border town in a southwestern state. The Community and Youth Collaborative Institute School Experiences Survey was used to measure school personnel's perceptions toward the school experiences of transfer students and nontransfer students. One-way ANOVAs, simple linear regression, and multivariate analysis of variance MANOVA were used. Results indicated differences in perceptions by school personnel for the scales of school connectedness and social skills. Possible implications for positive social change include the development of new strategies to mitigate the influence of differences in perceptions by school personnel on transfer students and nontransfer students.

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## Dedication

I dedicate the milestones and obstacles of this journey to my Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, who has given me the strength to believe that I can do anything in His name. I also want to dedicate this work to my daughters, Patricia, Bianca, and Lakshmi, for the many long hours, days, and years of playing time they gave up as an unconditional sacrifice for me to complete my studies. I dedicate this work to them for being the reason I could never consider giving up!

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## Chapter 1: Introduction to the Study

School personnel serving highly transient student populations in borderland schools in the southwestern United States confront unique challenges. Perceptions can have a direct impact on the way that school personnel perceive and serve different types of students. This study was conducted to determine if school personnel have different perceptions toward transfer students and nontransfer students. School personnel are encouraged to focus on academic and behavioral indicators, but future policies may hold schools accountable for creating safe, supportive learning environments (Anderson-Butcher et al., 2012).

There has been an increasing trend in the number of transfer students in school systems, mainly in rural areas. The challenges facing school personnel increase as they provide educational and emotional services to students in this transient population. Data from the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) indicated that schools with high mobility rates had more than 10% of their students no longer enrolled at the end of the school year (U.S. Office of Accountability Office, 2010). The percentage of children who move within a state annually varies from region to region, with the lowest rates in the northeastern part of the country. The highest rates, which are found in the southwestern United States, pose additional challenges to public school personnel in borderland towns. States reporting the highest percentages of school-age children moving were Arkansas (14%), Arizona (15%), Nevada (17%), and Oklahoma (14%; Education Week Research Center Analysis of American Community Survey, as cited in Burnette, 2017).

A gap exists in the current literature regarding school personnel studies that focus on perceptions toward the transient student population. I intended to address a breach in knowledge in the discipline of educational psychology to add to the limited body of scholarly literature available regarding school personnel perceptions in a southwestern border town. This cross-sectional study offers data on whether the perceptions of school personnel are different toward transfer students and nontransfer students. At various times throughout their educational careers, school personnel serving transfer students experience challenges, such as adverse or different perceptions, that affect relationships and perceptions of others and influence policies and real-world conditions (Haslam, 2018).

There is potential for positive social change in informing school personnel of potential differences in their perceptions toward transfer students and nontransfer students in certain specific areas. School administrators in similar communities could potentially replicate the study to understand how to support school personnel in meeting the challenges of dealing with different perceptions toward transfer and nontransfer students. School personnel participating in the study may develop greater awareness of their perceptions toward the two groups of students and identification of efforts toward more inclusive and equal services to transient population.

The major sections in this chapter include details about the background of the problem and the need to measure the perceptions of school personnel toward different groups of students. The primary goal of identifying possible differences in the perceptions by school personnel, along with the immediate purpose of providing a

quantifiable measurement of those differences, sustains the purpose of this study. The findings may lead school personnel to self-reflect on the presence of different perceptions that may be implicit and unnoticed. Furthermore, the results of this study can impact the broader domain of the field of psychology, specifically within the scope of educational psychology in the area of school personnel and to the unique challenges of school personnel in borderland schools. Also included in Chapter 1 is an explanation of the theoretical framework of the theory of dual model (Petty & Cacioppo, 1986) and its application to the understanding of quantitative data collected using the Community and Youth Collaborative Institute School Experiences Survey (CAYCI SES).

The survey was used to measure the perceptions of school personnel toward a group of students. The chapter also presents the background summarizing the research literature available and the gap in knowledge. Chapter 1 includes a problem statement connecting the problem and the focus of study on perceptions of school personnel. The chapter also includes the purpose of the study describing how school personnel can identify possible differences in perceptions with data obtained from a quantitative study.

The research questions (RQs), variables, research design, methodology, nature of the study, and proposed tools of measurement are provided. The theory selected for the study is presented under the theoretical framework section. Sections providing definitions; assumptions, scope, delimitations, and limitations; and significance of the study are followed by a summary and a transition to close the chapter.

## **Background**

School personnel in borderland schools may be experiencing different perceptions toward transfer and nontransfer students. Serving a fluid population of transfer students means that school personnel have encountered challenges to their services that were created for traditional nontransfer students' services. Transient students move to different schools because of life circumstances, such as the relocation of military families, students who were previously homeschooled, students transitioning from the juvenile justice system, transfers from other nearby schools, students experiencing homelessness, students in foster care, students relocated with their parents on U.S. government orders to borderland work locations, students participating or are transitioning from behavioral/emotional/physical rehabilitation programs, students transitioning from boarding schools, transfers due to disciplinary offenses, and foreign exchange students.

School personnel serving in unique geographical locations such as borderlands may develop different perceptions based on previous experiences and the immediate information available to them when dealing with transient students. School personnel serve transfer students at all educational levels and are a critical aspect of school community support systems. In this research, I studied how school personnel in educational settings in a borderland school are currently perceiving transfer versus nontransfer students in a traditional school setting intended to serve the general nontransfer student body. The study took place in a school where transfers students are a vast part of the student population. There is a need to research and provide data to school personnel on how this trend is being handled in borderland schools.



School personnel's perceptions are a critical part in the milestones and challenges associated with educational services to transient student populations, thus becoming an important aspect of the challenges this group experiences. As part of addressing those challenges, it is important to measure school personnel's attitudes and perceptions and the processes school personnel and minority groups encounter. For example, Urkuhart (2012) studied the ways that school personnel in a suburban high school in a southern U.S. border town could deal with the challenges of teaching transfer students. Similarly, Fisher et al. (2002) studied the perceptions of school personnel about effective programs for working with students who transfer due to family mobility. Cashman and McDermott (2013) studied border pedagogy at a border high school and explored the dynamics of border classrooms and the ways people who live in borderlands perceive themselves.

In addition to the aforementioned studies concerning the challenges that transfer students encounter in their transient circumstances, many researchers have referred to the important roles that school personnel play in the experiences of transfer students in the school setting. Pollock et al. (2015) explored the perceptions of successful school administrators in their roles within the changing context of schooling. The authors discussed the need for school administrators' involvement and the importance of their perceptions as part of school personnel. Many areas need to be considered when discussing the role of school personnel and their perceptions. Greer et al. (2019) considered the principals' and teachers' interests within a racially and ethnically diverse, lower-income urban school district in the northeastern part of the United States. The researchers studied ways to gain principals and teachers' support for the development of

programs that support environments similar to students' inner communities. It is beneficial for school personnel to understand how their beliefs and perceptions can impact areas of inclusion and equity. For instance, Heyder et al. (2019) explored the ways that teachers' attitudes toward inclusion relate to the socioemotional school experiences of students with and without special educational needs concluding that teachers show differentiated attitudes toward inclusion. The desire and determination to improve school personnel's positive perceptions and attitudes toward diverse groups of student population exists, but literature that offers quantitative evidence of perceptions by school personnel in borderland schools is needed.

I measured the perceptions of school personnel to contribute to the literature gap that shows a genuine desire for improvement in school personnel connections with all students to include transfer students. The relationships with and connectedness of school personnel to all students are an essential part of the efforts toward the quality of positive school environments. A comprehensive assessment of school personnel perceptions toward transfer students versus nontransfer students purposefully provoked reflections on whether those perceptions toward the two groups are or are not different and initiated dialogue on how school personnel can consider efforts to foster more positive and equal perceptions toward the two groups of students.

### **Measurement of School Personnel Perceptions**

Quantitative studies that are focused on the perceptions of school personnel have been scant. I used a quantitative methodology to assess the perceptions of a sample of school personnel. Understanding perceptions is an essential part of understanding human

behavior, and it is an area commonly studied using qualitative research tools. I collected data to identify the possible existence of different perceptions of school personnel toward transfer students and nontransfer students in a southwestern borderland school. The results of the study will be key to creating awareness and understanding of school personnel's connection to and relationships with the student body. The study will enable educators and administrators to understand these perceptions and their influence and provide the opportunity for them to consider evidence-based data when reflecting on the influence of their perceptions in the services they provide to students.

To contribute to the current literature, I used the CAYCI SES to determine if perceptions of school personnel toward transfer students and nontransfer students are different. Steck and Perry (2015) studied the ways that school leaders' perceptions limited the transformative power in their behaviors of changing and challenging existing school practices that foster intolerance and marginalization. School personnel need evidence-based data to verify areas in which changes are needed. I used a statistical presentation of the results using one-way ANOVAs and results of a simple linear regression analysis.

There has been increased interest in the fields of psychology and education in finding ways to support educational professionals on the improvement of services they provide to minority and underrepresented groups, such as transfer students in border towns. Casey et al. (2012) affirmed that social science research on implicit stereotypes, attitudes, and bias has accumulated across several decades into a compelling body of knowledge and continues to be a robust area of inquiry. Perceptions have been studied by

many researchers in the field of psychology who have posed similar concerns.

Nonetheless, few researchers have studied minority student groups served by borderland schools. In psychology, almost everything known has focused on White people, but White people do not represent the entirety of human capacity (Jones, 2020).

In most of the research literature, scholars have discussed the impact of perceptions that affect services rendered in school settings by teachers, principals, and administrators only as those perceptions pertain to their roles. Minimal studies have been focused on the perceptions of the entirety of school personnel who render services toward different student groups, such as transfer students. Scialabba (2017) mentioned that the first step in overcoming implicit bias is to identify and acknowledge the bias, and considerable research has been devoted to exploring how school personnel's biases and perceptions can impact students. Less attention has been given to the challenges and needs of school personnel serving unique and distinctive groups.

I intended to add new and relevant knowledge to the field of psychology on specific attitudes that are challenging to school personnel while serving transfer students. Ultimately, this study with a particular and unique sample of participants, will offer relevant and customized information through data analysis on perceptions among a specific unique sample of participants. The study is an opportunity for schools in border towns to understand how statistical data can be used to obtain measurable and justifiable information on perceptions, an important aspect related to the nonacademic experiences as they build relations and support transfer students. This study may result in value added

to the processes associated with students and school personnel's educational experiences in borderland schools.

### **Perceptions and Attitudes of School Personnel**

Numerous researchers have used surveys to examine the attitudes and perceptions of school personnel. Wilkins and Nietfeld (2004) compared the survey responses of school personnel based on a program focused on promoting inclusion-based classrooms to examine similarities and differences in teachers' attitudes toward different groups of students. The National Association for the Advancement of Colored People's Legal Defense and Educational Fund (NAACP, 2017) discussed the different aspects of judgments, adverse perceptions, stereotypes, racial anxiety, discrimination, prejudice, and stereotype threat in the educational setting. Abacioglu et al. (2019) tested whether teachers in a school differed in their ethnic minorities' interventions. In their study, students were compared to ethnic majority students for the same kind of misbehavior and whether differences were related to their multicultural attitudes and their abilities to recognize and interpret emotions. Similarly, Bisoux (2017) studied school personnel processes and how they should evaluate all students in the same ways and view different types of students in the classroom fairly.

### **Challenges of School Personnel**

The challenges that school personnel encounter while serving a transient student body in a borderland school environment are unique. Myburgh et al. (2017) discussed how though school personnel can have perceptions toward their students, and transfer students in particular, but rarely are allowed to share their experiences in confronting

issues in the school setting. Stites (2015) studied the importance of educator perceptions based on their role as direct observers of students' needs, specifically regarding why and how they could offer support to these young students. Considering this, Coles (2017) used a cross-sectional design in a quantitative study to measure teachers' perceptions of their students' families/caregivers, communities, learning supports, and school climate to determine relationships among school location, gender of teachers, race ethnicity, and years of teaching experience in a southwestern border town.

Bennet (2016) studied transfer connections and the welcoming of new transfer students in a college in a northwestern border town in Arizona. Tore (2020) studied teachers' attitudes toward multiculturalism according to various variables and provided a quantitative study on analyzing teachers' attitudes and perceptions. Anderson-Butcher et al. (2013) created the CAYCI SES to gather data on the school's environment. Several researchers have recognized the overlooked scenarios that school personnel confront daily while trying to serve transient students. Others have recognized the importance of collecting data on the attitudes and perceptions of school personnel to produce knowledge that can assist and potentially affect future policies and guidelines in school personnel training, policies, and procedures when dealing with recurrent transient population. The study of the educational experiences impacted by school personnel's perceptions in transient student body should be relevant to research related to all educational levels and within the different geographical areas of the country where transfer students are served. Of great need are current studies within distinct geographical areas of the country that

consider various groups of school personnel influenced by the unique characteristics of being part of schools at border towns communities.

### **Problem Statement**

The purpose of the quantitative study was to determine if perceptions of school personnel are different toward students who transfer from other schools due to specific circumstances that cause mobility than they are toward nontransfer students who are local and not moving to different schools. The purpose of this quantitative study was to identify and assess the presence of different perceptions of school personnel toward transfer and nontransfer students. Specific unique circumstances result in the movement of transfer students to a border town school in the southwestern part of the United States. These students are part of groups at risk due to life-changing circumstances and the impact of school personnel in their nonacademic and social attainments are as important as their academic achievements. Little is known about the perceptions of school personnel toward transfer students, specifically students of underrepresented groups in remote geographical areas such as border towns. The priority of school personnel is to promote, collaborate, and support all students in achieving their social and academic goals. School personnel are school leaders who encounter daily experiences that are a continual series of emotion-evoking encounters requiring appropriate responses (Crawford, 2009; Oplatka, 2011; as cited in James, Crawford & Oplatka, 2019). School personnel must be empowered with the appropriate tools to respond to the needs of the underrepresented group of transfer students.

The study took place in a school under a traditional model that has always operated under the assumption that all students are nontransfer local students. Researchers such as Handel (2012) have explored ways to understand more clearly the experiences of transfer students after they enroll at the new institution while existing in a native student paradigm, meaning in an environment normed on native students. The results obtained from this study may provide quantifiable evidence that will allow administrators to explore different ways to enable school personnel to respond to the needs of transfer students.

It is a challenge for school personnel to find ways to support students in areas different from academics. In addition to these challenges, the rising number of transfer students in border town schools in the country could lead to increased challenges for school personnel. Unattended challenges can be carried over to transfer students' future educational goals and school experiences if not addressed properly. Quaye and Harper (2015) were concerned with the ways that diverse populations of students experience college differently and encounter group-specific barriers to success. Some of the perceptions of underrepresented diverse populations previously researched have been related to characteristics such as low-income students; students of color; international students; students with disabilities; lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer students; religious minority students; student athletes; homeless students; transfer students; commuter and part-time students; adult learners; student veterans; and graduate students.



O'Brennan et al. (2017) identified student mobility as one factor in the burnout of school personnel that could influence their perceptions toward transfer students. Han (2014) expressed that school mobility is more prevalent in high schools, urban schools, and schools serving minority students and identified more than 37 million cases of residential mobility in the United States during the 2008–2009 school year. Ihrke et al. (2011) asserted that residential mobility could have a significant influence on school mobility.

It is imperative to identify perceptions, to acknowledge their presence, and to positively adjust the connections and services offered to this student population and all school personnel. Indicators of this problem reflect the high numbers of transient students in the school. School personnel often voice their concerns about the lack of resources to understand and tailor their services to transfer students and are eager to identify factors that represent progress in improving services for underrepresented groups.

Specific to this study, transfer students move from one school to another, often returning to the school that will be the focus of the study because of the lack of available secondary schools in the area. There is separation and inequality in the experiences of students of minority groups despite the rhetoric of American equality (Darling-Hammond, 2001). Darling-Hammond (2001) mentioned that one common presumption about educational inequality is that it resides primarily in students who come to school with inadequate capacities to benefit from what education the school has to offer. Darling-Hammond also argued that U.S. schools are structured such that students routinely receive dramatically unequal learning opportunities based on race and social

status. Specific needs such as professional development and meaningful conversations about resources available to school personnel are important and necessary steps toward creating awareness in school personnel on the perception's effects. According to the Gay, Lesbian, and Straight Education Network (2017), teachers and educators are unlikely to receive much professional development in their preservice training or after they start working in schools.

Studies on distinctive populations such as in schools in southwestern borderlands with diverse student and school personnel population are needed to fill in the gap in the literature on the perceptions by school personnel. To promote diversity and equity among all services rendered to all students, similar studies should be conducted to improve school experiences and create a positive environment. When teachers have a positive view of the school and high expectations for students, academic outcomes also improve (Brault et al., 2014).

School personnel have challenges to overcome with transfer students, and at times, adverse beliefs about transfer students can result in conflicting support, approaches, and experiences that are inconsistent (Wu et al., 2015). School personnel and the student body have better academic outcomes and enhanced school setting experiences when students feel engaged and part of a positive environment (Larson, 2014). According to Farrales (2017), more research on the influence of teachers' perceptions of children's social-cognitive, affective, behavioral, and academic adjustment would be beneficial. Although all school personnel's daily organizational and administrative duties have been discussed in the literature, the process of supporting empathetic, healthy beneficial school

experiences for school personnel and transfer students in border towns is understudied, particularly quantitative research. Studies focused on school connectedness experiences can help delineate the academic and social experiences of students transferring to schools in southwestern border towns (May et al., 2018). The lack of awareness and recognition of differences in perceptions has resulted in more challenges for school personnel serving transfer students.

According to Fiarman (2016), educators can increase their knowledge of perceptions and recognize their possible negative effect on students by building empathy for multiple perspectives and using data for accountability. School leaders' must increase educators' awareness of their commitment to supporting a safe, supportive, respectful, and engaging learning environment (Cohen, as cited in Espelage et al., 2014). Parker (2018) contended that socially based behaviors in the secondary school setting often are structured by stigma. Similarly, Golbeck et al. (2016) studied racial disparities that may arise in the educational system, the judicial system, and the health system.

### **Purpose of the Study**

The purpose of this quantitative study was to identify the presence, or not, of different perceptions of school personnel toward students who transfer from other school systems due to specific circumstances that cause mobility versus nontransfer students who are local and not moving to different schools. This quantitative study was intended to measure the perceptions of school personnel toward transfer students and nontransfer students in a public school in a southwestern border town in the United States. The dependent variable was the perceptions of school personnel, as measured by the CAYCI

SES (Anderson-Butcher et al., 2013). The independent variable was the administration of the CAYCI SES for school personnel regarding perceptions toward transfer students and the CAYCI SES for the same group of group personnel regarding their perceptions toward nontransfer students.

Demographic information regarding number of years working in the school, number of years working in a school setting in general, primary roles in the current school and teaching assignments if applicable, age, gender and ethnicity, and race was collected. Current indicators suggest that in schools with transient populations, school personnel encounter challenges recognizing the presence of different perceptions toward different group of students. Administrators' observations, evident behaviors, and staff's verbalizations related to the group under study are evident to school personnel, and the consensus exists among them that the underrepresented group of transfer students alters the culture and course of social encounters in the school, and their need to learn how to positively impact transfer students in their school community. Many transient students regularly withdraw from school for a period of time and go back to rejoin the school several times and repeatedly interrupting the average course of their school experience.

The results of this study may inform amendments to policies, programs, and resources available to support school personnel and student experiences in a border town school setting. This study aimed to fulfill part of that deficiency and bring awareness to the shortage of resources available to provide school personnel with relevant tools and professional development directed toward transfer students. The study also may serve as a tool to empower school personnel to adopt more positive, fair, and equitable

perceptions toward transfer students. The study also may inform the reality of inconsistencies in services that can potentially impede equity in connectedness between students, family, and other staff within the school personnel group that often arises due to perceptions as part of judgmental actions. The awareness and identification of different perceptions toward the two different groups can expand the current channels of more significant services offered to students and school personnel.

### **Research Questions and Hypotheses**

The study was guided by the following RQs and hypotheses:

RQ1: To what extent are the perceptions of school personnel toward transfer and nontransfer students different, as measured by the CAYCI SES?

*H<sub>0</sub>1*: The perceptions of school personnel toward transfer and nontransfer students are not different, as measured by the CAYCI SES.

*H<sub>a</sub>1*: The perceptions of school personnel toward transfer and nontransfer students are different, as measured by the CAYCI SES.

RQ2: Is the variation of scores, as measured by CAYCI SES, significant?

*H<sub>0</sub>2*: The variation of scores, as measured by CAYCI SES, is not significant.

*H<sub>a</sub>2*: The variation of scores is significant.

### **Theoretical Framework**

The theoretical framework used in this quantitative study was the theory of dual process of thoughts originated by William James in the 1800s. The theory was modified by Richard E. Petty and John Cacioppo in 1980, creating the elaboration likelihood model (ELM) of persuasion to describe a change of attitudes. The ELM justifies different

ways of processing stimuli and the outcomes on attitude change. This theory indicates there are two underlying thinking processes: One is a fast, unconscious, and contextually bound process, whereas the other is a slow, conscious, effortful, and decontextualized process (Monteiro et al., 2019).

As applied to my study, this theory holds that I would expect my independent variable administration of CAYCI SES survey about transfer students and the administration of CAYCI SES survey about nontransfer students to influence the dependent variable the perceptions as measured by the CAYCI SES. The theory supports the study in explaining the psychological process behind the formation of perceptions. The theory is relevant to the current study because it relates to how perceptions can drive the formation of school personnel's attitudes. Holender and Duscherer (2004) studied unconscious perceptions not as a separate state of the processing system but as denotations of perception under high uncertainty. The theory has been used in research into the attitude-behavior relationship (Chaiken & Ledgerwood, 2012).

The theory of dual process of thoughts includes the distinction between conceptual and nonconceptual content and sustains that a concept is a heterogeneous notion where different aspects of conceptual competence are likely to be ascribed to different types of systems providing details on bias and perceptual systems (Frixione & Lieto, 2014). If school personnel serving students in educational settings are not aware of their attitudes and beliefs toward these groups of students, they might develop adverse attitudes toward them, which can reflect in many areas of the services students receive. The theory of dual process of thoughts will help understand and interpret school

personnel's behaviors and attitudes. It can also provide insight into the influence on the behavior of others and the implications of social influence in settings such as schools.

School personnel often view transfer students as not caring much about their overall school experience and educational goals and displaying low levels of resilience (Gray, 2015). Transfer students' enrollment in particular schools may be short, and if they enroll in the middle of the school year and interrupt the educational process of other students, they may become isolated socially from peers and school personnel. The ELM allows us to consider that school personnel may display a universal approach to deal with school environment issues considering their perceptions and practices. It is the responsibility of school personnel to customize the services they provide to students, including transfer students.

The theory of dual process of thoughts was used to conceptualize the role of the daily interactions in school settings by school personnel. I also hypothesize that the theory could facilitate how school personnel think about the information they have at hand in regard to transfer students when they make judgments. Furthermore, the theory of dual process may aid in explaining how school personnel could better use their natural tendency to make experiences meaningful and allow them to anticipate and act in an effective way when making perceptions on transfer students. Adverse perceptions that can arise when thinking fast spontaneously can be restored with a more in-depth systematic reasoning approach by understanding how fast and slow thinking could help in finding more rational solutions to problems that we as society face, (Kahneman, 2021) as the sciences of learning and development demonstrate how tightly interrelated are the

mutually influential relations between individuals and contexts, (Darling-Hammond et al., 2020). School personnel can practice strategies that would support the growing challenge of renovating their attitudes and perceptions toward transfer students. Studies in this area may challenge existing practices of forming and sustaining different perceptions to different types of groups. It may open opportunities to inform routines, practices, and professional development to increase awareness of perceptions that can represent risks and imbalance in the services provided by school personnel. The theory may help understand the formation of perceptions toward transfer students that might be different from those toward nontransfer students. It may also contribute to school personnel's ongoing willingness to see students succeed academically and socially in the school setting.

The understanding of school personnel decision-making processes and how they relate to perceptions of two different groups of students—transfer and nontransfer—can be better understood when applying the theory of dual process of thoughts. This theory supports the explanation on the reflective cognition as being a conscious process of evaluating options based on some social effect combination of convenience, risk, and capabilities (Hartmann et al., 2018). The other part of the cognition described by the theory of dual process of thoughts is the automatic, in which cognition is largely an unconscious process. In this study, in the automatic cognition process, school personnel respond to environmental or emotional cues based on previously learned decision-making techniques.



The theory of dual process would inform school personnel of the possibility of unlearning the automatic unconscious process of perceptions and substituting it with a more reflective approach reducing, if not eliminating, the adverse effects of bias and perceptions on transfer students. The theory of dual process presents the possible way in which attitudes and perceptions are created and how social information is interpreted. Using this theory to guide study helped to analyze how the independent variable impacts the dependent variable. This theory also provided the basis of how this type of thinking postulated affects the way school personnel perceive the underrepresented groups of students and how this influences the perceptions they create toward the two different groups.

Perceptions may have adverse effects. School personnel are continually making decisions and taking action in the educational settings often under the constraints of time, the rapid pace they are accustomed to, and the previous experiences in their interactions with transfer students. Intentional or unintentional bias can cause school personnel to create different perceptions about diverse group of students, which can obstruct the relationships between them.

Judgments are a pivotal part of perceptions. Judgment errors have historically served as evidence for dual-process theories of reasoning (Sinclair et al., 2017). Tobolowsky and Cox (2012) studied the neglect of transfer students by examining how institutional agents shaped the transfer of students' experiences. They identified structures, programs, policies, people, and practices that contributed to the rationalized and largely institution-wide neglect of transfer students. Conversely, Tobolowsky and

Cox used the organizational theory (Weber, 1947) as a guiding framework and added the perspective of rational, natural, and open systems. Tobolowsky and Cox found that support for transfer students was often impeded and suggested that future researchers take a multidimensional approach to the analysis of institutional influences on student experiences. Transfer students are part of a distinct subculture within educational settings and educational institutions often build further barriers by not providing more effective mechanisms for integration, (Ron-Balsera, 2015). For instance, Ron-Balsera (2014) found different institutional discrimination levels related to curriculum content, teacher–student relationships, peer relations, and family factors.

School personnel need to be made aware of the possible presence of adverse perceptions toward transfer students. It is difficult to understand processes related to cognition when there is a lack of awareness, which can contribute to their understanding of how they are addressing them effectively or ineffectively. The theory of dual process explains how moral judgments result from two competing processes—System I and System II—that can predict the outcome of attitudes. Such understanding might also contribute to evaluating perceptions so personnel can consciously weigh the information they receive or perceive from transfer students. In Chapter 2, more detailed information on this theory is presented.

### **Nature of the Study**

This study followed a nonexperimental quantitative approach. One-way ANOVA was used to compare the means between the groups under study and to determine whether any of the means were different from each other to a statistically significant

degree. A simple linear regression analysis also was conducted. The aim was to measure differences in the perceptions of school personnel toward transfer students and nontransfer students in a public school located in a southwestern border town in the United States. The design was selected based on the need to quantify attitudes to be able to generalize to larger target populations with the same characteristics and transient student body populations. I conducted this study to understand the relationship between the variables in a specific sample drawn from the target population. The study was motivated by concerns gathered from my many years working in different educational settings in various geographical areas where school personnel provide services to transfer students experiencing specific life circumstances. There was a need to measure whether differences in perceptions by school personnel existed and if the extent of the differences.

RQ1 asks if there are differences in the perceptions of school personnel toward transfer students compared to their perceptions toward nontransfer students, as measured by the CAYCI SES. The CAYCI SES uses various scales to assess any differences in the general perceptions of teachers and staff about the relationships of transfer students and nontransfer students to the school. The survey was administered electronically. The dependent variable was the perceptions of school personnel (Anderson-Butcher et al, 2013). The study included one independent variable with two levels that were represented by the survey CAYCI SES about transfer students and the CAYCI SES survey about nontransfer students. Data were collected from school personnel working in a public secondary school in a southwestern border town in the United States serving students in Grades 9 to 12. The school personnel needed to meet two criteria to join the study: (a)

they must be working in the school at the time of the study, and (b) they must be 18 years of age or older.

The definition of a *transfer student* in the study includes children who move frequently from one school to another for reasons other than promoting academically to the next level in another school, such as the progression from an elementary school to a middle school. For this study transfer students are identified as students who move to a different school due to life events and extreme circumstances; examples include being relocated as part of a military family, returning to school after previously being homeschooled, transitioning from the juvenile system, transferring from other schools within proximity, experiencing homelessness, in foster care residency, relocated with parents on U.S. government orders to a border town work location, participating in or transitioning from behavioral/emotional/physical rehabilitation programs, transitioning from boarding schools, transferring because of expulsions related to disciplinary offenses, foreign exchange students, and students who alternated between schools during the novel coronavirus pandemic known as COVID-19. Students who did not meet these criteria were considered nontransfer students in the study.

A priori probability using G\*Power (Faul et al., 2007) was used to compute the required sample size. The results of the analysis generated an output of the suggested sample size 89 participants, with power of 0.95. The analysis was predetermined using power (1- $\beta$  error probability) of 0.95, an effect size  $f$  of .15, with an  $\alpha$  error probability of 0.05, for linear regression analysis with a single predictor. Descriptive statistics was used based on the scores obtained from a sample of 89 participants with a one-way ANOVA

within the factors and a simple linear regression analysis. Data were analyzed using SPSS Version 22. A one-time administration of the survey allowed the group of school personnel to complete the CAYCI SES in regard to their perceptions toward transfer students in Part I, and the same group of school personnel completed the same electronic survey in regard to their perceptions toward nontransfer students for Part II. The survey was part of a school personnel monthly meeting development training.

Participants were instructed to answer a nonidentifying demographics section to ensure a fairly equal representation of the variables for the study. The survey was sent to all school personnel and sampling size analysis was conducted. Demographic information was collected as part of the survey through the CAYCI SES survey. The demographic section consists of questions regarding gender, age, and ethnicity. Other questions were included in the survey such as: How many years of experience at this school have you had? How many years of working in schools have you had? What is your primary role in your school? One question for teachers only was: What teaching assignments do you have?

The participants were school personnel working in a public high school in a border town in a southwestern state. Transfer students and nontransfer students attend Grades 9 to 12 in this school. For this study, school personnel were defined as teachers, administrators, paraprofessionals, classroom aides, secretaries, administrative assistants, support staff, case managers, special needs caregivers, administrator aides, clerical and professional staff, coaches, teacher aides, maintenance and technology resources, and any other school personnel who interact directly with transfer students and nontransfer

students. I received permission from the school principal to conduct the study (see Appendix B). Participants were able to read details of the study and provide consent in the informed consent form. There was no need for a pilot group because all school personnel have experience taking online surveys.

### **Definitions**

*Nontransfer students:* Students who attend schools based on the zones assigned to their physical addresses and who do not meet the criteria of transfer students (Rumberger, 2015).

*Perceptions:* How school personnel understand or perceive transfer students and nontransfer students (Annamma & Morrison, 2018).

*Public school:* Public, tuition-free schools that are part of a school district. Any public institution established for the purposes of offering instruction to pupils in programs for preschool children with disabilities, kindergarten programs, or any combination of Grades 1 through 12.

*School personnel:* Administrators, teachers, paraprofessionals, aides, counselors, classroom aides, special needs caregivers, administrators, administrator aides and interns, support staff, clerical and professional staff, coaches, teacher aides, maintenance and technology resources, and any member of school personnel who interacts directly in the school setting with transfer students and nontransfer students (U.S. Department of Education, 2020).

*Transfer students:* Children who move frequently from one school to another for different reasons other than promoting academically to the next level in another school.

Students from families that have been relocated to border towns by their employer, military families, previously homeschooled, transitioning from the juvenile system, other proximity school transfers, experiencing homelessness, in foster care residency, relocated with their parents on U.S. government orders to border town work location, participating in or transitioning from behavioral/emotional/physical rehabilitation programs, transitioning from boarding schools, transfer due to expulsion related to disciplinary offenses, and foreign exchange students (Rumberger, 2015). Also, students who alternated between schools during the COVID-19 pandemic.

### **Assumptions**

I assumed that various factors play a part in the formation of the perceptions of school personnel. The theory of dual process of thoughts implies that various factors influence perceptions. Various researchers have studied perceptions in the school setting, but none has considered studying the variables in this study. All participants in the study were employees of the school district who are 18 years of age or older.

I also assumed that the results would be generalizable to school personnel working in elementary or middle schools in borderlands in the southwestern United States that also have transfer students. This study strengthens research in the field of psychology with a specific underrepresented group of school personnel who serve an educational location with specific characteristics. Making this assumption is of particular importance to the study due to this specific population. The last assumption was that the participants would provide honest responses in the survey.

### **Scope and Delimitations**

The scope of the study was a sample of school personnel working directly in a secondary school in a southwestern border town in the United States with transfer students and nontransfer students in Grades 9 to 12. The participants were a representation of the different roles of personnel in the school. The study sample did not include personnel from elementary or middle schools or those working in areas other than a border town.

The study focuses on a specific population of school personnel serving students in Grades 9 to 12 as part of a school district in the city. The school district in the city has eight different schools ranging K–12; the school under study is the only secondary school in the public school district. Exploration of a broader population to include all school personnel in the school district from kindergarten to Grade 12 could be considered for future studies. The focus of the study was to measure the perceptions of school personnel toward transfer students and nontransfer students enrolled in a public high school in a border town in a southwestern U.S. state.

### **Limitations**

It is a potential limitation of this study if the results are used to generalize in other borderland schools with lower transfer student population. The results may be generalizable to similar identified target populations, but perceptions may vary because of cultural differences and particular practices in different educational settings. The transfer experiences of school personnel may represent a limiting factor in the formulation of their perceptions. An identified limitation is that perceptions can be



misunderstood as bias adding an adverse connotation to the cognitive process of perceptions. One limitation lies in the nature of the self-reporting to the survey items. Another limitation is that even though I work in the school where the study took place, once classes were moved online, my chances of developing any close association with school personnel were drastically reduced.

The COVID-19 pandemic caused school closures in many areas of the United States, causing disruptions in the general educational system. School openings were delayed, and schools that reopened partially were operating with significant reductions in school personnel. In some instances, these nontraditional circumstances have seen some school personnel working in an online learning model. The survey in this cross-sectional study was administered electronically. The change in environment for school personnel may or may not have had an impact on their responses to the survey. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (2020), school communities were facing increased rates of student and staff absenteeism as a direct result of the pandemic; however, school personnel continued to conduct their regular scheduled duties from a virtual or hybrid educational platform. Sample size might be another limiting factor in the study because of the availability of schools in the southwestern border town where the study took place. Through the careful selection of appropriate statistical tests, meaningful conclusions may arise from studies with small sample sizes (Morgan, 2017). Another limitation might be the reticence of school personnel to admit the influence of perceptions toward transfer students.

The findings of the study will only include a school in a border town in a specific geographical zone of the United States border with Mexico; therefore, it is possible that school personnel in other border town schools experience different circumstances. To support school personnel at similar schools with high rates of transfer students, the results of this study are intended to be generalizable to schools with transient populations in border town schools where resources, programs, funding, and availability of services prevail. I practiced strategies to minimize any possible negative consequences of the limitations and delimitations. I ensured the participants' privacy by not revealing their names and sending the survey link to the school's distribution lists comprised of different groups within the school personnel group. Their responses were reported only in aggregate and in nonidentifying ways. I conducted the study during the spring term of the 2020–2021 school year and during the fourth instructional quarter to allow school personnel to readjust to in-person learning and teaching after being in the online model for previous months due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

### **Significance**

The results of the study may contribute to the current knowledge base in educational psychology specific to the perceptions of school personnel employed at borderland schools in the southwestern United States. The results may fill a gap in the research on the beliefs, attitudes, and perceptions of school personnel toward transfer students and nontransfer students. Research related to perceptions in the school setting has focused on teachers, parents, and students in rural or urban school locations, but no study has been conducted on the perceptions of school personnel toward transfer and

nontransfer students in a borderland school in the southwestern United States. The school systems in borderland communities continue to look for resolutions and improvements in the services provided to highly transient student populations. Schools that have used the CAYCI SES have been able to implement changes based on the survey results to improve their respective school environments. These schools have developed more comprehensive forms of support to include socioemotional learning lessons; quarterly family newsletters; and additional professional development for school personnel to make informed decisions on improvements, priorities, strategies, programs, interventions, and supports that align with their overall needs (Anderson-Butcher et al., 2019).

Understanding the perceptions and biases of school personnel can help inform practices and school policies and help advance professional development on perceptions as targeted programs. Consideration of tailored inclusion programs for transfer students and school personnel in southwestern borderland schools may arise. The social, emotional, civic, ethical, and academic components of the school setting affect student engagement and learning (Larson, 2014). Schools that foster safety, positive relations, relevant academic purpose, and adequate structure contribute to the increased engagement of students (Thapa et al., 2013). In addition, when teachers have a positive view of the school and high expectations for students, teaching and learning outcomes improve (Brault et al., 2014).

I conducted this quantitative study with the aim of filling the gap in research by examining the perceptions of school personnel toward transfer students and nontransfer students. Little is known about the perceptions of school personnel toward students of

underrepresented groups such as transient students in remote geographical areas such as border towns. The results provide advanced knowledge in the psychology discipline in the identification and recognition of school personnel's current needs and concerns serving a group of transient students in their communities.

The results have the potential for positive social change in advancing considerations that conservative–traditional models in school systems were created and tailored for local nontransfer students. These models might not satisfy the needs of a highly transient student population. The significance of the study lies in supporting further research in the study of perceptions and the delivery of support to school personnel serving remote locations in the southwestern border of the United States. Adequate training and readiness are needed to promote increasing connectedness and positive relations with transfer students, to renew staff commitment to all students, and to encourage personnel to remain at schools that promote equity and a bias-free environment.

### **Summary**

The purpose of this quantitative study was to measure differences in the perceptions of school personnel toward transfer students and nontransfer students. Understanding these perceptions may facilitate discussions in professional development sessions as part of the efforts toward more inclusive and comprehensive school environments. A gap exists in the literature specific to the potential impact of these perceptions on services received by transfer students and nontransfer students.

Chapter 2 begins with a discussion of the importance of identifying the perceptions of school personnel and their effect on transfer students and nontransfer students. Included in Chapter 2 is a review of the literature to highlight the need identified by previous researchers in regard to deficiencies in school services, school personnel, their evolving role, and their current responsibilities. Finally, the chapter summarizes description of the literature search strategy and literature review sections as well as the gap identification is presented along with the theoretical framework.

## Chapter 2: Literature Review

### **Introduction**

Based on the current literature, it is unknown if school personnel have different perceptions toward transfer students and nontransfer students. When students transfer to a school in a border town in the southwestern region of the United States, these students might have experiences based on school personnel's perceptions toward them. Understanding the perceptions of school personnel toward transfer students could be used to develop strategies to help school personnel to become more aware of their perceptions toward transfer students and nontransfer students and to ensure services are provided to all students equally.

Presented in Chapter 2 is a discussion of the gap in the research on the perceptions of school personnel in a southwestern border town toward transfer students and nontransfer students. I provide a synopsis of the current literature that establishes the relevance of an investigation from the perspectives of school personnel. Chapter 2 also includes a review of studies related to the evolving role of school personnel and indications of what is known about the research topic.

### **Literature Search Strategy**

The strategies to search for relevant literature included using databases available from the Walden University Library: Thoreau, Google Scholar, Ulrich's: Verify Peer Review, and ScholarWorks. Other databases were PsycINFO, PsycArticles, and ERIC. The appendix provides details about the search terms. I found scant research on the topic, despite using copious search terms: *school staff, school personnel, and teachers; transfer,*

*transient, mobile, non-transfer, mobility, and nomad student; border town; schools; youth; discrimination, bias, and unconscious bias; perceptions; attitudes; beliefs; minorities; integration; ethnicity; inclusivity; experiences; socioeconomic; roles of schools; roles of school personnel; peer relations; family factors; teacher-student relationships; isolating student; perspectives; teachers' perspectives; standpoints; views; staff perceptions; border town schools; schools; transient students; teachers' experiences; attitudes; approaches; unfairness; favoritism; and third-culture kids.*

Other resources I used during the literature search included a Walden University webinar that provided library tips relevant to the literature review, which helped me to refine my search for relevant literature. All searches were conducted for academic articles published between 2013 and 2020. The main articles and resources were searched within the last 5 years. Studies outside the 5-year range were included because they were the most current sources available.

### **Theoretical Foundation or Conceptual Framework**

The primary theoretical foundation for this quantitative study was the theory of dual process of thoughts originated by William James in the 1800s. The theory was modified by Richard E. Petty and John Cacioppo in 1980 to become the ELM of persuasion to describe a change of attitudes. The ELM of persuasion justifies different ways of processing stimuli and their outcomes on attitude change. The theory claims two there are underlying thinking processes: (a) a fast, unconscious, contextually bound process and (b) a slow, conscious, effortful, decontextualized process (Monteiro et al., 2019). The ELM served to explain the psychological process of implicit or unconscious

perceptions by school personnel at a border town school in the southwestern United States. Holender and Duscherer (2004) studied unconscious perceptions as denotations of perception under high uncertainty rather than a separate state of the processing system. The ELM has been used in studies of patterns of deviation from known norms, generally referred to as cognitive processes, and has been applied to research in the areas of attitude–behavior relationships (Chaiken & Ledgerwood, 2012, p. 224). The ELM began as a theory about the process responsible for changes in attitudes and strength of the attitudes and currently has been applied to the phenomenon of judgmental change. According to Frixione and Lieto (2014), ELM has been used by researchers to provide details about bias and perceptual systems.

May et al. (2018) mentioned that future studies in school connectedness experiences will allow students to define their academic and social experiences transferring to schools in southwestern border towns. The rationale for the selection of this theory was based on the decision-making processes that are normally adaptive in school settings and can become maladaptive. According to Helfrich et al. (2018), in psychology, the theory of dual process thoughts of cognition proposes two decision-making processes that involve reflective cognition as a conscious process of evaluating options based on some combination of utility, risk, capabilities, and/or social influences. Helfrich et al. added that automatic cognition is a largely unconscious process occurring in response to environmental or emotive cues based on previously learned, ingrained heuristics. The theory of dual process could be useful in positive transformations of thoughts used to support school personnel to recognize and understand maladaptive



strategies based on differences in perceptions toward transfer students and nontransfer students.

The theory of dual process of thoughts provides an opportunity for school personnel to become aware of their perceptions to identify and classify them to facilitate the development of tailored policies and guidelines to better serve transfer students in the border town school setting. The theory also provides an opportunity to reflect on the possibility of unlearning adverse perceptions practices based on reflective cognition. The theory provides a greater sense of awareness level, which can help school personnel use more inclusive and equal strategies to better serve all students (Helfrich et al., 2018). This theory can help inform and fortify school personnel's reflection skills and their awareness levels, preventing adverse or different perceptions toward different groups of students based on different characteristics.

## **Literature Review**

### **School Personnel's Perceptions and Inclusion**

School personnel's attitudes have an effect on student's educational experiences and the formations of relationships in school settings. Heyder et al. (2020) explored how teachers' attitudes toward inclusion relate to the socioemotional school experiences of students with and without special educational needs, concluding that teachers showed differentiated attitudes toward inclusion. Baglama et al. (2017) also studied and measured teachers' attitudes toward individuals with special needs and the perceptions of individual differences and attitudes.

Perceptions are always present in the cognition process of humans, but the presence and impact on perceptions of others often remain unaccepted. Steck and Perry (2015) reported school leaders' perceptions limited transformative power in changing and challenging existing school practices that foster intolerance and marginalization. The NAACP Legal Defense and Educational Fund (2017) discussed the different aspects of implicit bias—namely, stereotypes, racial anxiety, discrimination, prejudice, and stereotype threat—which are relevant to the educational setting. Wilkins and Nietfeld (2004) compared the survey responses of school personnel based on a program focused on promoting inclusion-based classrooms and examining the similarities and differences in teachers' attitudes.

Ignoring the presence of school personnel's perceptions only increases negativity, miscommunication, and frustration. Identifying and measuring their presence has been explored qualitatively. Abacioglu et al. (2019) tested whether teachers in a school used different interventions with students from ethnic minorities than with students from ethnic majorities for the same kind of misbehavior and whether these differences were related to their multicultural attitudes and their ability to recognize and interpret emotions.

Various sources mentioned in the literature review are relevant to understanding the perceptions of school personnel toward transfer students and nontransfer students. Research on the impact of the perceptions of school personnel on students transferring to schools in border towns has been minimal. I found no research on school personnel and the possible adverse influence of different perceptions toward transfer and nontransfer

students. The studies available presented explorations and recommendations at the general awareness level, not the responsiveness level, and these studies were mostly related to teachers', parents', or students' perceptions of different aspects of their school experiences. Moreover, few researchers have investigated the aspects of teaching transfer students and classroom considerations or schooling options for transfer students, and no studies had been conducted on perceptions of school personnel toward transfer students.

Urkuhart (2012) studied the ways that school personnel at a suburban high school in a southern border town could deal with the challenges of teaching transient students. Fisher et al. (2002) also studied the perceptions of personnel working with mobile students and families. Cashman and McDermott (2013) studied pedagogy at a border high school and explored the dynamics of border classrooms as it relates to how people who live in borderlands perceive themselves. Pollock et al. (2015) explored the perceptions of successful school administrators in their roles within the changing context of schooling.

The extant research of perceptions by school personnel is often related to educational matters and less about the presence or not of perceptions of groups among school personnel overall. Student connectedness and relations with school personnel are determined largely by the existence of strong communication practices through available programs that allow for discussions of the subject of perceptions toward transfer student body by all school personnel.

The unique needs of school personnel in borderland schools cannot be ignored by researchers. Research on the perceptions of school personnel about race, trauma, and the

stressors that students face has been lacking (Blitz et al., 2016). Acevedo and Hernandez-Wolfe (2014) studied vicarious resilience and discussed the importance of research to generate conversations about educators' resiliency in challenging school social contexts. Acevedo and Hernandez-Wolfe explained how teachers working with underserved student populations could be empowered to identify best practices to serve different groups of students.

Bisoux (2017) asserted that school personnel need to follow processes that hold them accountable and allow them to evaluate all students in the same way and view different classroom types equitably. Comparably, Stites (2015) studied the ways that educators perceive the educational needs of dependent children from military families and concluded that teachers perceive differences between military and nonmilitary dependent children. In the study, Stites called for future research on the educational needs of military children as a distinctive transient group. Stites highlighted the importance of educators' perceptions of their role as direct observers of students' needs and why and how they could offer support to these young students.

It is vital to consider the challenges that school personnel encounter while serving transfer students and the services they provide within their roles of educators as part of the support system. However, it is vital for school personnel to learn how to embrace their diverse student populations and explore any milestones, such as perceptions that can cause unfavorable effects in the efforts of strengthening and improving educational relationships as part of a community. Determining if the perceptions of school personnel toward transfer students and nontransfer students are different will inform the actions that

school personnel can focus on to provide objectivity and balance in relations that are equal for all.

The results of the study may inform changes to the development and implementation of strategies to raise the awareness of school personnel about their perceptions toward transfer students and nontransfer students. Previous researchers have demonstrated that even though school personnel exhibit different perceptions toward nontransfer students and transfer students, rarely have school personnel been allowed to share their experiences in confronting issues in the school setting (Myburgh et al., 2017). The value of this study lies in current needs of school personnel and reflects the significance of considering ways to minimize inequity in services and maximize equity and fair services provided to all students, transfer and nontransfer.

### **Uneasiness Among School Personnel**

All school personnel should feel safe and comfortable sharing frustrations and antagonistic feelings about aspects of their roles and responsibilities involving their service to diverse student populations. Secrecy in different work environments has been proposed as one of the adverse consequences of not having a healthy communication process in an organization which can lead to dysfunctional management, (Samier, 2014). Schools are no exception. School personnel often gossip and secretly share feelings and less positive comments on their perceptions with each other about highly transient students. At times, fear of reprimand or judgment prevents personnel from asking for support on how to improve the ways in which they can provide better services to their students. As educators and school leaders, it is expected that school personnel increase

their tolerance to the behaviors and outcomes that prevailed in the student's day to day, however, when teachers' experiences grow, the level of development of communicative tolerance fluctuates, (Povarenkov et al., 2018). School personnel often seem to be already inclined to perceive situations or students based on what they already know about previous experiences with the same students. Prior research suggests that teacher perceptions of parents vary by children's family background identifying differences in perception's patterns for teachers in different subject areas (Ho & Cherng, 2018). Coles (2017) called for a cross-sectional quantitative study to measure teachers' perceptions of their students' families or caregivers, communities, learning supports, and school climates to determine if a relationship exists among school location, gender, race, ethnicity, and number of years of teaching experience in a southwestern border town. Coles found significant differences in perceptions among the groups presented.

### **Multiculturalism and Equitability**

At all educational levels, school personnel confront challenges in the continuity and fairness of services provided to transfer students. Although this may seem trivial, it is particularly important in terms of how school personnel handle equity in school environments and how they provide the same experience and opportunities to all students they serve. Bennet (2016) questioned transfer connections and the welcoming of new transfer students in a college in a northwestern border town in the state of Arizona and found discrepancies in the continuity of the processes. Considering multiculturalism and the importance of equity on services toward a diverse population of students, Tore (2020) conducted a quantitative study to analyze teachers' attitudes toward multiculturalism

according to various variables. School personnel's impact on students' school experiences is vital. There is a continuous effort in supporting staff, teachers, and educators in general to consider the differences and exceptional characteristics of populations with unique circumstances. More important is the need to assess and measure factors impeding equity and transparency in services rendered to all students and not just to the traditional, local, nontransfer permanent students. There is scarce quantitative studies into those factors and how the measurements of perceptions can be assessed. Anderson-Butcher et al. (2013) created the CAYCI SES to collect data on the school environment from the input of different stakeholders, including school personnel.

### **Sense of Belonging Influenced by School Personnel**

School communities are diverse. School personnel can have significant influence on the experiences of transfer students. Sinclair et al. (2017) studied the perceptions of school personnel toward youth with disabilities who were returning to high school from the juvenile justice system. The researchers also studied the implications of those perceptions on student relationships and student engagement in reducing recidivism rates (Sinclair et al., 2017). Results showed that transition services were implemented inconsistently, school personnel believed they could influence youth positively, and school personnel had low expectations for the youth after they graduated from high school (Sinclair et al., 2017).

Monico et al. (2018) perceived mainstream teachers as the most critical assets for students with diverse conditions who hoped to achieve real inclusion in the school setting. Monico et al. found significant differences in teachers' self-confidence and the

number of personal and material resources that they received from administrators and schools in general. The benefits of relationships that are positive, strong, and free of bias between school personnel and all students have long been acknowledged. However, that is not the case when it involves underrepresented groups in geographical areas with unique characteristics and particular needs. The challenges facing school personnel in highly transient school communities in borderlands have been understudied.

According to Healy et al. (as cited in Little, 2016), there are four areas in which staff-student partnerships may develop: learning, teaching, and assessment; subject-based research and inquiry; scholarship of teaching and learning; and curriculum design and pedagogic consultancy. However, resistance happens when school personnel is challenged to explore services that involve self-evaluations of perceptions and practices by school personnel. Studies on school health programming often have mentioned the importance of school personnel, and teacher involvement as schools present resistance to new models, as posited by Kulina (2016). Many subgroups in the school setting also experience similar unique life circumstances as studied by Sinclair et al. (2017) who stated that little is known about school personnel's perceptions and expectations toward youth transitioning out of the juvenile justice system. Espelage et al. (2014) studied the perceptions of school personnel about the school environment and their correlation to self-reports of bullying, aggression, victimization, and willingness to intervene in bullying incidents. Espelage et al. found that strong relationships between school personnel and students resulted in more students being committed to preventing such situations.



School personnel and students share responsibilities as a community but also have their own defined roles to carry and so are the schools in general as entities. Cartmell and Bond (2015) remarked that contemporary schools have an essential role in promoting international students' sense of belonging. Kahu and Nelson (2018) studied student engagement and reported that engagement depended on interactions between students and school personnel, specifically in ways that these interactions influenced students' self-efficacy, emotions, sense of belonging, and well-being in the school setting. Ramsey et al. (2016) reported that the school climate could influence student, teacher, and school outcomes. They also stressed the need to understand different perceptions and how it can inform interventions to prevent adverse outcomes. Bradshaw et al. (as cited in Williams et al., 2018) noted that nurses, counselors, school administrators, and teachers have many opportunities to connect with all students and that engagement and belonging are essential contributors to a safe and positive learning environment.

In addition to the need for school administrators to recognize the importance of supporting school personnel being free of unfavorable perceptions and adverse perceptions, there is a greater need for current studies to measure quantitatively the aspects of perceptions. According to Autry (2017), there is a need for studies that explore the focus of education in developing a sense of empathy, peace, and the delivery of academic and social achievements. Their study also showed that educational psychologists have a role in supporting schools to recognize the importance of fostering a sense of belonging (Cartmell & Bond, 2015). The authors also recommended that educational psychologists work with school personnel to consider their induction

procedures and incorporate holistic support to promote a sense of belonging among school personnel and students. Similarly, Slam (2018) argued that judgments not only affect individual relationships and the perceptions of others but also influence policies and real-world conditions, both of which are critical components of the educational system. Zilvinskis and Dumford (2018) asserted that it is imperative to provide research-based support to school personnel to inform them of their perceptions toward transfer students and offer ways to mitigate the adverse influence of these perceptions. Because the cognitive process functions in the unconscious mind, people, including school personnel, are not typically aware of the negative cultural predispositions that they have developed.

### **Current Roles and Functions of School Personnel**

There has been a shift in the roles of school personnel. Initially, the primary responsibilities of concerned school personnel were curative; next, they tried to prevent problems from happening; and finally, they focused on the optimum development of the person (Rocecrance & Hayden, 1960).

When evaluating the roles of school personnel, Hussey et al. (2019) mentioned the absence of new research focusing on responsibilities, workload, or satisfaction of this significant school personnel's leadership role. According to Hussey et al., those responsibilities cause widespread disagreement on school system personnel concerning role's responsibilities. It is the responsibility of administrators, teachers, and other school personnel to have strong relationships with students to decrease the adverse impact of negative perceptions toward transfer students in particular (Danby & Hamilton, 2016).

These findings have important consequences on the broader domain of concepts involving the understanding and empathy of resources available related to the modern needs of school personnel. School personnel seem to be prepared to recognize and deal with the challenges inherent in perceptions and bias, but on closer assessment, their efforts might require additional assistance from their districts and a clearer understanding of complex ephemeral groups such as transfer students that research can provide.

Fiarman (2016) asserted that educators should develop systems among school staff to reduce biased decisions, build empathy for multiple perspectives, and use data for accountability. Gruman et al. (2008), who explained the importance of understanding the perceptions of school personnel, also suggested that transfer students' experiences are part of building solid relationships with peers and school personnel to promote students' academic success. Supporting the emotional and social needs of transfer students in new school settings is a central component of building those relationships (Gruman et al., 2008).

Training is provided to school personnel in many areas, and professional development is offered in areas related to academics, data, assessments, academic achievement and how to increase school letter grades to meet state and local requirements. There is a need to educate school personnel to consider aspects of cognitive impact like perceptions. Offering intentional and significant professional development for school personnel is vital. It is imperative to support school personnel so that they can assess how their own identities have shaped their experiences and how they can use previous experiences to better serve underrepresented groups in the school setting. A live

example of this is the need for training that is meaningful to our school leaders. Ruppert et al. (2018) discussed administrators' visions of instruction and discussed ways in which these visions might influence the expectations of teachers and students.

Research on the perceptions of school personnel toward transfer students and other transient groups has been limited. Esqueda et al. (2014), for example, found that many school administrators struggled to provide adequate support systems for students from military families. School personnel have many responsibilities: receive new students; successfully register transfer students to include paperwork, transcriptions, medical records, grades, and records of special education services; and make calls welcoming new students and their families. In addition, they need to analyze student achievement, complete grading, being trained in topics related to professionalism, and comply with general school improvement indicators which are often part of the professional development of school personnel. However, those urgencies are far from school personnel needs related to non-academic relations and the impact of school personnel perceptions towards the students they serve. There is significant need and lack of training opportunities offered to school personnel in the research topic. Rarely do school personnel receive information on transfer students or their transitioning process. School personnel do not receive many opportunities for support in developing strategies and self-reflection on how to their own beliefs and perceptions.

According to Frisby (2013), the problem is that educators and school personnel are unwilling or unable to practice what is already known about the core of educational best practices, which is the importance to belong to teams that collaborate to support

students' academic achievement. Consequently, children continue to have diverse experiences when they attend different schools (Frisby, 2013). School personnel are expected to help students to reenter the school system and prevent them from dropping out (Sinclair et al., 2017). School personnel are expected to treat all students in the same way and to offer them exceptional services that include understanding of their unique and particular life events that put them in the particular situation of being a transfer student.

Surles (2007) wrote about the importance of preparing the children of U.S. military personnel and other government employees for potential school transitions. Much has been written about alerting schools and school personnel of incoming transfer students and the items that are to be in place when they arrive. Fisher et al. (2002) wrote about the importance of school systems to prepare educators to deal with transient student populations. They suggested that such training should include, among other things, the unique challenges facing mobile students such as transfer students. Expectations during the process are as important as the final result. New transfer students and school personnel benefit from organized measures being in place. Shurts (2016) studied the ways that communication and transparent expectations should be a goal across institutions when dealing with transfer students to close the transfer gap. Shurts also found that although the use of scaffolding to support transfer students initially met resistance from faculty and administrators, it became evident that collaboration and secure communication between institutions were fundamental to ensuring higher levels of program completion. My study can provide the opportunity to initiate conversations on

what options are available for transfer students to adjust and connect with school personnel prior, during and after their stay in a particular school.

Fisher et al. (2002) suggested that future researchers seek to determine if programs available in school systems can help families and school personnel to handle mobility more efficiently and effectively. Fisher et al. also mentioned the importance of developing and implementing interventions to reduce the negative consequences of high mobility for families and school personnel. School personnel often feel the pressure of knowing that transfer students may not be at their schools for long and that all efforts made for them will be in support of short-term goals. Another reason for transfer students not to get involved in school activities is that their parents may discourage such involvement because of pending transfers to other schools (Valine & Amos, 1973). Sometimes, educators are expected to overcome the many challenges presented by particular groups like transfer students.

Warikoo et al. (2016) suggested that school personnel individualize services to students by developing meaningful relations. They recommended that schools investigate when and how teachers' growing relationships with their students may attenuate the negative impact of racial associations on students. They recommended that teachers be taught how to manage effectively the adverse outcomes linked with their racial associations with minimal but psychologically informed training. The existence of perceptions toward minority groups of students that are different from those who are not is an obstacle to developing meaningful services to transfer students.

### **Meaningful Interactions by School Personnel**

Warikoo et al. (2016) also noted that extended and positive contact between teachers and students as the school year unfolds might change teachers' implicit racial associations. It is important to note that harassment in school settings can arise from the limited opportunities that transfer students are exposed to when compare with nontransfer students. Constraints in time to form significant and long-lasting relationships with school personnel and other peers is a limiting factor for transfer students. Long lasting relations and connectedness with school personnel are the foundations for trust in school settings.

Bradley (2007) asserted that no administrators would claim to have found ways to deal with harassment in the school setting. Bradley also mentioned that for students and school personnel to reduce issues of mistrust, anger, and harassment, they need to understand that they are part of a cultural factor. Bradley added that without school personnel having this firsthand knowledge, they might not be aware of their impact on youth, one of which is disengagement from academic challenges. Diversity is also found in groups of people that are part of school personnel where their prior experiences and knowledge. Myers and Finnigan (2018) discussed that school personnel often have not personally experienced interactions based upon racial preferences or systems of structural racism at times, but that education, from early childhood to post-secondary, should challenge and address the racial inequities that inevitably characterize such systems and structures. The lack of programs that can engage students and school personnel in free bias environment is evident in borderlands schools. Historically, teacher training in

student diversity focused on understanding students' behaviors or characteristics who come from different backgrounds than their teachers (Schwartz, 2019). More school districts are considering offering training to their school personnel in equity by asking them to examine how their own identities have shaped their experiences (Schwartz, 2019). Annamma and Morrison (2018) noted that educators and researchers should examine how schools are failing students, not why students are failing.

Hannaway et al. (2014) studied black student teachers' perceptions and experiences of early childhood education centers, sustaining the importance of considering the shortage of qualified and well-trained teachers. Buehler (2012) argued that when issues regarding race in the school setting remain unaddressed, educators' private struggles with race may contribute to racial tension among staff members and students. Buehler added that when these private struggles are acknowledged and explored, the results may be necessary forms of racial learning and school reform progress. Buehler identified non-transfer students' feelings and reactions to being involved with transfer students as "here today and gone tomorrow" as one of the reasons for school personnel not to open up to interactions and form new relationships with transfer students, leading to behaviors that are influenced by adverse perceptions.

### **Summary and Conclusions**

In summary, school personnel are not exempt from experiencing different set of perceptions at school settings. School personnel working in borderland schools in southwestern U.S. face many challenges in their responsibilities to serve students, particularly transfer students. Among many of the challenges that school personnel faces



each day are those dealing with new transfer students. These students bring unique and valued strengths to the classroom and frequently face challenges that other recently arrived students do not typically have in common with them. These challenges include mental, physical, and social needs that are shaped by dislocation and trauma exposure; academic needs that are the result of limited or interrupted prior formal schooling; and adjustment to the norms and characteristics of a new country, a new community, or a new school setting (Umansky et al., 2018).

Personnel must be committed to providing a safe school environment while ensuring that the school environment is supportive, engaging, and free of imbalanced perceptions. A supportive and engaging environment is where students' relationships with school personnel are strong enough to ensure students' successful transitions to a new school. In the past, school personnel were directed to support students in achieving their academic goals, report challenging behaviors, and follow school protocols on how to deal with transfer students. Today, school personnel continue their efforts to balance all their responsibilities along with the constant influx of transfer students in borderland schools.

## Chapter 3: Research Method

### **Introduction**

The purpose of this quantitative study was to identify the presence, or not, of different perceptions of school personnel toward students who transfer from other schools' systems due to specific circumstances. The aim of the study was to identify if school personnel's perceptions were different toward transfer students versus nontransfer students. Transfer students are those students who transfer from other schools because of unique circumstances as defined in this study. Identifying if a difference exists in perceptions of school personnel may ease their impact on the services they provide to all students. Participants in the study were a group of school personnel serving transfer students in a borderland high school in the southwestern United States.

This study followed Creswell's (2003) recommendations on "using quantitative surveys as it provides a quantitative or numeric description of trends, attitudes, or opinions of a population by studying a sample of that population" (p. 253). Using the theoretical constructs of the literature reviewed, I explored school personnel perceptions toward students who are registered and attending a school that is not of their choice; instead, they attend a school in remote areas of the country due to different family/individual life events. Identifying and addressing these challenges will lead to a better understanding of connections between school personnel and students as well as how personnel perceive these groups of students, which will help school personnel better respond to the needs and circumstances of nonacademic areas of transfer students in school settings.

In Chapter 3, I present information about the research methodology, RQs and hypotheses, research design, target population, sample selection, research materials, data collection and analysis, ethical considerations, limitations, and delimitations. The chapter concludes with a summary and transition to Chapter 4.

### **Research Design and Rationale**

The study involved a cross-sectional online survey to obtain school personnel's perceptions about transfer students and nontransfer students. Data were collected using the CAYCI SES, 2016 version for teachers/school staff on how school personnel perceive transfer and nontransfer students. The dependent variable was the school personnel's perceptions as measured by the CAYCI SES survey. The study included one independent variable, with two levels: the administration of the CAYCI SES survey in regard to perceptions toward transfer students and the administration of CAYCI SES in regard to perceptions toward nontransfer students. Transfer students and nontransfer students are naturally occurring groups.

Age, gender, ethnicity, education level, number of years of work experience in the educational setting, and number of years in their current role were covariates included in the study. The characteristics of transfer students to this study were: children who move frequently from one school to another for reasons other than academic promotion. For this study, transfer students are identified as students who move to a different school due to life events and extreme circumstances, such as students being relocated as part of a military family, previously homeschooled, transitioning from the juvenile justice system, other proximity school transfers, experiencing homelessness, in foster care, relocated

with their parents on U.S. government orders to border town work locations, participating in or are transitioning from behavioral/emotional/physical rehabilitation programs, transitioning from boarding schools, transferring after having been expelled because of disciplinary offenses or the juvenile system, foreign exchange, and students who alternated between schools during the COVID-19 pandemic, among others. Students who do not meet these criteria are known as nontransfer students for this study.

I chose to use a quantitative methodology to identify the presence or not of different perceptions toward the two different groups of students by school personnel. Using a quantitative method facilitated the analysis of perceptions from a statistical viewpoint. The quantitative research design chosen also allowed the usage of an instrument to measure the problem under study. This quantitative study was completed using a survey that is a trusted, valid, and reliable tool in social sciences. Furthermore, the data analysis was conducted with a secure, safe space for participants to communicate and share their perspectives. There was no treatment or any interventions poststudy.

The type and sources of data used to address the research questions included the following measurement tools: the CAYCI SES (Anderson-Butcher et al., 2013). The data analysis was performed using one-way ANOVAs, a simple linear regression analysis. Morgan (2017) asserted that through the careful selection of appropriate statistical tests, meaningful conclusions may arise from studies with small sample sizes. The use of these measurement tools ensured the accuracy and reliability of the results. School personnel included any staff working in the school who have interactions with the student body in academic or nonacademic areas. I explored whether identified perceptions are most

influential for underrepresented groups and whether they are most prevalent by school personnel's education level, years of experience in educational settings, age range, gender, ethnicity, or race according to demographic information collected.

The study provides the opportunity to explore the extent to which the perceptions of school personnel can be measured using the CAYCI SES to predict disparities among school personnel's reactions to transfer students and nontransfer students. The extent to which school personnel's perceptions provide any quantifiable data from the survey will be significant. It will be a value added to understand the significance of the measurement tools selected to predict the presence or absence of differences in school personnel's perceptions. The results will inform school personnel and administration in regard to their effectiveness in managing equal relationships and revising their perceptions toward two different student groups.

Furthermore, using a quantitative method will facilitate the analysis of perceptions from a statistical viewpoint, which will add to the gap in literature in the quantitative arena. A set of specific research questions in this study guided the measurement and analysis of school personnel's perceptions. A quantitative research design facilitated the use of a measurement instrument that allowed participants to identify the existence of attitudes and different views about transfer students. Using a quantitative design also allowed participants to be part of a study within a trusted quantifiable, confidential process that secured a safe space for them to communicate and disclose their perspectives. The study will add to the scarce current quantitative studies measuring perceptions in a school setting in underserved geographical areas. Transfer

students must enroll in other schools due to relocations connected to other reasons different from being promoted to another school grade. It is unknown whether school personnel have different perceptions toward transfer students versus nontransfer students in a border town school. The results could be used to prompt conversations on ways to facilitate the development and implementation of strategies and professional development. In this way, school personnel might gain more awareness of the influence of their perceptions toward transfer and nontransfer students and facilitate the development of strategies or interventions that could mitigate their influence on transfer students' academic and social achievement.

Surveys provide a level of openness that interviews, and observations cannot provide. There was consistency in the data collection because all participants took the survey under the same conditions, time, and considerations. The survey was administered electronically through Qualtrics, which was supportive of accelerating and improving the survey research process by facilitating data collection into organized spreadsheets for data analysis, reducing data entry errors, and accelerating hypothesis testing (Creswell, 2018). The survey process also maintains participants' privacy and anonymity. The study took place in a southwestern U.S. state when the public-school system resumed reasonable practices after a change in instruction mode because of the COVID-19 pandemic. As anticipated, no resource constraints affected the timing of the study. At this time, there is no intervention planned to be conducted in the study.

## **Methodology**

### **Population**

The population under study consisted of 139 school personnel working in a public high school in a border town in a southwestern U.S. state. The school personnel serve students in Grades 9 to 12. From the total population, a sample size of  $n = 89$  was determined after conducting a priori power of analysis using G\*Power (Faul et al., 2007), resulting in a minimum sample size of  $n = 89$ , using power ( $1 - \beta$  error probability) of 0.95 and  $\alpha$  error probability of 0.05.

### **Sampling and Sampling Procedures**

The type of sampling strategy was planned to be a systematic sampling. A statistical formula would determine the interval selection. The electronic consent form was sent out to all school personnel for completion to indicate their choice to participate or not. Respondents willing to voluntarily take the survey complied with the inclusion and exclusion criterion specified in the consent form. The survey was sent to the school's preset distribution email groups containing a summary of instructions on how to provide consent or decline to participate in the survey. It was automatically available with the link to the survey, due date, and instructions for completion. Qualtrics was used to collect the responses to the survey and to collect participants' demographics. Afterward, data collected, and analysis of responses generated two reports to be analyzed using SPSS Version 22. Of all possible participants, a minimum of 89 surveys were used as data. To determine the participants that were part of the sample, a regular interval ( $k$ ) procedure was conducted considering the respondents who met the inclusion criterion. The regular

interval was planned to be attained by dividing the number of the population, approximately 250, by the sample number (89), so  $(k) = 2.8$ . No names were collected. The inclusion criterion: Participants must be part of a school personnel working in the school at the time of the study. The exclusion criterion: Participants must not be under the age of 18 years old at the time of the study.

### **Procedures for Recruitment, Participation, and Data Collection**

The recruiting procedure ensured confidentiality, anonymity, and participants' rights to decline or withdraw from participating at any time. I provided a consent form to the group of school personnel, then excluded from the sample respondents who did not meet the inclusion criterion specified for participating: (a) school staff must have been part of the school personnel in the school at the time of the study and (b) not be under 18 years of age. The electronic consent form was part of the study recruiting process to allow potential participants to understand the study before deciding whether to participate. The form included information about me as the researcher and identified that I was a student at Walden University in the School of Behavioral Social Sciences. The consent form also included the capacity in which I might be known by school personnel and the relationship between the participants and myself as separate roles. The consent form included brief background information on the purpose of the study and the study's intentions. The consent form contained an explanation of procedures including sample questions and clarification of expectations as part of the study. It also included a statement on the study's voluntary nature, risks and benefits in the study, and the notification of their participation. It also included information on an all-inclusive token of



appreciation for all school personnel. The gift basket contained sports water bottles and goodies for school personnel and was available at the main school office for all school personnel, participants and not participants, as a token of appreciation. The consent form was also informative about privacy, contact information, counseling text line in case of emotional distress during participation in the study, and a final disclosure of the IRB approval number and expiration date.

Potential participants were notified of the study through an announcement at the school personnel all-staff meeting. The survey was sent to all school personnel. The instructions for the respondents included a statement indicating that I was interested in learning about their perceptions of transfer students and nontransfer students. For each of the statements, they were instructed to fill in one circle that best represents their answer. The survey instructions were also included as an explanation that the purpose of the study was to learn about their perceptions about students and they should select one answer per request and make a choice based on the answer that best reflects how they feel.

The survey was available to the participants through a computer-based survey and participants were provided with instructions in the survey on how to fill out the survey electronically. Definitions of transfer students and nontransfer students were provided as part of the consent form. Participants self-administered the instrument on their work computer during professional development allocated time. It was estimated that participants would take approximately 15–20 minutes to complete the survey. Participants were reminded that they did not have to answer every question, but they were encouraged to complete as much of the survey as possible, reminding them their

answers would help the school know how to best support its students and personnel. The report included the average scores for the scale and each individual question on the survey. Qualtrics was used to distribute the survey and to analyze the responses. Data collected from the surveys were used to generate two reports: one on perceptions of school personnel toward transfer students and a report on school personnel perceptions on nontransfer students. After data were collected, analysis of responses was completed using SPSS Version 22. Each survey for CAYCI SES requested responses on perceptions toward transfer students and perceptions toward nontransfer students. Data collected were handled and monitored carefully to guarantee security transparency, consistency, and anonymity.

I examined individual items to provide more data on more specific experiences reported by school personnel. There was no pilot group, as all school personnel had experience taking surveys. The sample comprised 89 school personnel from a school site. The specific relevant participants' demographics are included in Appendix C and were evaluated by the distribution of roles to understand the categories of the different school personnel who participated in the study. This information might be useful for the school to consider for future research. Demographics considered relevant to this study were years of experience and general roles of school personnel.

### ***Participation***

The participants were school personnel working in a public high school in a border town in a southwestern U.S. state. The school counts with a student population of transfer and nontransfer students ranging from Grades 9 to 12. School personnel was

defined as teachers, administrators, paraprofessionals, classroom aides, special needs caregivers, administrators, physical and speech therapists, counselors, case managers, principal, vice-principal, administrative assistants, and any school personnel that interacts with transfer and nontransfer students daily.

Permission was obtained from the school principal to conduct the study; see Appendix A. Also, informed consent was obtained electronically from participants. Best practices to administer the survey CAYCI SES electronically were followed. The survey was developed through pilots in Ohio and Utah states, the instrument has been tested to ensure they gather reliable and valid information. The terms of participation included all protocols of the study participation, process during study timeframe, and notification of results.

#### ***Participant's Study Electronic Exit***

Participants received a debriefing electronic exit card after completing the survey. The exit card was available to all school personnel at time of picking up their token of appreciation. As part of the protocol for participants to exit the study and to clarify expectations after the study, a clear statement included the following aspects:

1. Title of the study and the researcher's name and contact
2. Why the study took place, and the researcher interests in conducting the study.
3. Information relevant to the continuing options for participants to withdraw from the study at any time.
4. The expected day when I will provide general results of the survey and the procedures for participants to obtain general results.

5. A note of gratitude acknowledging their participation.
6. Specific information that there will be no requirements for follow-up interviews or treatments after the participants complete the survey.

### **Instrumentation and Operationalization of Constructs**

The instrument for assessment used in the study was the CAYCI SES; Anderson-Butcher et al., 2013). The survey was developed using the community collaboration model for school improvement (CCMSI), a model based in the ecological system theory, (Anderson-Butcher et al., 2008). The survey is in the public domain; however, I requested written permission (see Appendix C) and conducted a virtual meeting with the author after receiving written permission (see Appendix D). Using a cross-sectional study gave me the opportunity to analyze the data of the variable collected at one specific point in time. Scales on the CAYCI SES were initially developed to identify areas aligned with targeted school improvement efforts and then the items and scales to generate valid and reliable measures of each construct for several years for reliability and validity, (Anderson-Butcher et al., 2019).

The survey helped identify and measured professionals' perceptions in an educational learning community in a southwestern border town school. The results of the study can support school leaders creating awareness and plans to minimize and potentially eliminate any differences in perceptions in their school personnel. The Community and Youth Collaborative Institute of The Ohio State University, College of Social Work, developed the CAYCI SES to help inform schools and communities improvement efforts and advance school-family-community partnerships. CAYCI SES

has been used repeatedly among different schools in the country. In one school, a Title I elementary schools in an urban district in the Midwest implemented the CCMSI model to collect baseline stake holder data using CAYCI SES. The measurements were used to assess, and screen needs among students in the school allowing identification of important areas for improvement efforts to include modification of new academic systems, (Anderson-Butcher, et al. 2019). The survey was used as instrumentation to assess the perceptions of the school staff in regard to transfer and nontransfer student's school experiences. The survey indicated to respondents that their responses will help their school better understand how people like them experience the school and community, specifically their experiences considering transfer and nontransfer students and that their answers will not be linked back to them in any way, guaranteeing their privacy and anonymity. The survey also indicated that their responses were going to be combined with other's and used to inform improvement and planning efforts for the school.

The CAYCI SES, developed by Anderson-Butcher et al. (2013), was administered electronically to a group of school personnel. The independent variable was the administration of the survey CAYCI SES which contained two parts. In part I participants were asked to respond to the CAYCI SES reflecting their perceptions on transfer students and Part II the same group of participants were asked to respond to the CAYCI SES reflecting their perceptions on nontransfer students. For this study's purpose, I used the CAYCY SES, 2016 survey version for teachers/school staff. The survey used a Likert scale of 5 response options for each item ranging from # "Almost never" to # "Almost

always” and “Don’t Know” It contains questions in regard to school personnel perceptions toward transfer and nontransfer students about six different areas: (a) academic motivation, (b) school connectedness, (c) internalizing behaviors, (d) psychological well-being, (e) externalizing behaviors, and (f) social skills.

Demographics were collected as part of the CAYCI SES survey which had a set of questions to determine demographics of the participants such as: years of experience at the school, primary roles in the school, teaching assignments, years of experience in schools’ settings, grade level with more interaction daily, gender, age, ethnicity/race, and years working in school settings. A definition according to the study’s operational definition of transfer student and nontransfer student was provided on the survey in the consent form. The results helped schools and districts understand multiples perspectives to maximize their ability to identify and address issues that impact student learning. The CAYCI SES is part of the Safe Supportive Learning Environment’s compendium of tools.

All school personnel in the target population were personnel of the school at the time of the study. The variables remained constant throughout the study. The survey results will inform school administrators and district superintendent to support school personnel in creating and enhancing school awareness of existent perceptions to promote healthy educational practices towards transfer students. The study measured any difference in perceptions towards transfer students and provided garner much quick, actionable data that helps in decision making and offering products or services that were not considered previously. Several published research articles review the ongoing

implementation and utility of the CCMSI model and utilization of the CAYCI SES as a guide to expanded school improvement. The survey was developed using the Community Collaboration Model for School Improvement (CCMSI) which is a model grounded in ecological systems theory and helps schools identify barriers in school settings, (Anderson-Butcher et al., 2013).

The results will also provide information on key areas of strength in the school and community and areas in need of improvement. Past studies have demonstrated that enhanced school connectedness relates to improve grades, higher academic performance, and graduation from high school (Battin-Pearson et al. 2000; Battistich et al., 2004; Klem 7 Connell, 2004; Nasir et al., 2011; Voelkl, 1995; Wentzel, 1995, as cited in Anderson-Butcher et al., 2013).

Anderson-Butcher et al. (2006) mentioned that school staff, group facilitators, individual mentors, and even parents and residents might develop coordinating systems that enhance regular communication and planning around identified student needs and growth areas, thus allowing students to receive more consistent messages from all the adults they interact with on a regular basis. Similarly, Kim (2018) studied low-income and urban schools and reported significantly lower levels of equal relations and empowering coordination and evaluated school–community collaboration to endure equal, democratic, and empowering structures and processes.

Schools with higher populations of diverse low-income youth also experience lower achievement outcomes and face greater challenges (Burchinal et al., 2012; NCES, 2017). Evidence on the implementation of the CCMSI, model used to develop the

CAYCI SES, showed improvement in student and school level outcomes (Anderson-Butcher, et al., 2015; Anderson-Butcher et al., 2018). Gowing and Jackson (2016) discussed how school connectedness is one of a number of terms used to describe a young person's relationship to school within the fact that school is a compulsory feature of most young people's lives, the nature of this relationship can be highly influential in terms of the quality of their overall school experience. Young people experiencing low connectedness are more likely to withdraw from school and experience the parlous outcomes that often follows. Thus, Ball & Anderson-Butcher, (2014) it is especially important for student support personnel and educational administrators to consider the ways in which student support systems impact teachers and concluded that systems that support students not only impact students but, instead, pose implications for the entire school system. It is important to understand how these changes in schools can positively impact all stakeholders.

CAYCI SES has been used in several school districts such as Canyons School District in Salk Lake Utah in 2014 and had been able to support academic, social, emotional, physical, and mental health needs of young people and their families, (Anderson-Butcher et al., 2018). The State college Area School District in Pennsylvania used the CAYCI SES for a needs assessment associated with funding from U.S. Department of Education's Grants to integrate School and Mental Health System Programs to contrast experiences across different groups of stakeholders. CAYCI SES helped identifying nonacademic barriers to learning and improving access to services to the school district, Case Study. Six County Ohio Project used the CAYCI SES in thirty-



nine secondary schools across six counties in rural Ohio in high schools and uses the survey as part of the broader school community agenda to improve academic learning, school climate and youth development, and non-academic barriers to learning, Case Study. Once the study was approved, the study took place during spring term of the school year 2020-2021.

### **Data Analysis Plan**

Collected data through CAYCE SES survey was analyzed using (IBM SPSS, Version 22) to analyze descriptively and statistically the data collected. A one-way ANOVA, a simple linear regression analysis and a MANOVA were conducted. The data collected was analyzed using SPSS as the computer-based program for testing the research questions and hypotheses proposed as follows:

RQ1: To what extent are the perceptions of school personnel toward transfer and nontransfer students different, as measured by the CAYCI SES?

$H_01$ : The perceptions of school personnel toward transfer and nontransfer students are not different, as measured by the CAYCI SES.

$H_a1$ : The perceptions of school personnel toward transfer and nontransfer students are different, as measured by the CAYCI SES.

RQ2: Is the variation of scores, as measured by CAYCI SES, significant?

$H_02$ : The variation of scores, as measured by CAYCI SES, is not significant.

$H_a2$ : The variation of scores is significant.

For RQ1 a multiple regression analysis was conducted and for RQ 2 a multivariate analysis of variance MANOVA was conducted. the analysis was conducted

to determine whether the group means were different given that the participants are in the same group. The data collection provided information on responses of participants. How many participants did and did not return the survey is an important data that will be shown in a table with numbers and percentages describing respondents and non-respondent's data, (Creswell, & Creswell, 2018). The concept of response bias was explained to participants in the survey in a short statement for better understanding of respondent's nonresponses. A descriptive analysis is provided of the variables in the study to include the means, standard deviations, and range of scores for the variables, (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). A simple single linear regression analysis to help predict the effect of changes to understand how much school personnel perceptions are different when the independent variable (survey on transfer and survey on nontransfer students) changes. A simple linear regression analysis assessed the relationship between the dependent variable (perceptions of school personnel as measured by the CAYCI SES Survey) and the one independent variable with two levels: (Part I, CAYCI SES survey administration about perceptions towards transfer students and Part II, CAYCI SES survey administration about perceptions towards nontransfer student to the same group of school personnel. The survey included two parts to assess if school personnel perceptions are similar or different towards the two different groups of students.

### **Threats to Validity**

According to Creswell (2003), it is vital to identify the potential issues in the researcher's ability to conclude that the intervention affects an outcome. It is crucial to eliminate any internal validity threat; therefore, participants were requested to comply

with the following criteria: have been working in the school setting at the time of the survey. One possible threat to validity was the participants' characteristics in selection. Participants can have certain characteristics that could predispose them to have certain outcome (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). As an action to respond to this type of threat to internal validity, all school personnel had the opportunity to be a participant in the survey. Potential external threats to consider arise when experimenters draw incorrect inferences from the sample data to other persons, settings, or the researcher generalizes beyond the groups in the experiment, Creswell, (2003). To address external validity threats for this research, a simple random sampling method was used to allow each member of the population to have opportunity to participate in the study. Utilizing simple random sampling will guarantee that the selection method will increase the validity of the results by the participation of school personnel in a voluntary manner. School personnel in different geographical areas may have different experiences with transient students' population, therefore, research generalizability can be claim to different groups in other borderland schools with similar group of participants and not generalize to individuals who do not have the characteristics of participants in this study (School personnel working in borderland school in southwestern US serving transfer students). In applying previous research to current situations, applicability proof lies with the person making the new application, not the original researcher Creswell & Miller, (2000).

### **Ethical Procedures**

Best practices to ensure that ethical procedures were in place during the study were observed. The participants were required to read the consent form and choose

between two options: I consent, or I do not consent. Participants were advised that their participation was voluntary and that no harm will result from their being in the study, that all data and personal information will remain private and confidential, that the answers will not be linked back to the participants and that their responses were going to be combined with others' and used to inform improvement and planning efforts, (Anderson et al. 2016). Statistical data obtained from this study will gather information on school personnel' perceptions towards transfer students in a southwestern border town to better inform schools of the possible differences in perceptions and how those differences can impact the service they provide to subgroups of students. Due to participants being considered a protected group of educators, ethical standards were pursued at all times; therefore, anonymity was strictly practiced throughout the study. Few issues could have potentially turn out during the study, such as concern for continuing employment, concern of post-study repercussions from school administrators, and dishonesty in the answers provided by participants as means to shield or safeguard school best interest for their students.

The participation in the research was voluntary, and it was not anticipated that there was going to be any harm or discomfort during the research, during the administration of the surveys nor during the participant's study exit. Participants received information about the nature of the study and a statement of participation being entirely voluntary as well as a free counseling text line they could have used in case any discomfort arise while participating in the survey. The collected data and the participants' names were confidential at all stages of the study. The researcher did not use personal

information for any purposes. Data collected was secured by the researcher without public access. Any related documents were scanned and encrypted using Software Office 365 through the “protect workbook” feature and a security password was assigned. The software has data encryption for both data collected at rest (stored in Microsoft Cloud) as well as in transit if needed for further research in the future. As applicable data security measures, the researcher did not collect any identifiable information and the surveys were electronically provided. The participants’ employment conditions were secured by the General Data Guidelines to protect their anonymous participation. Participants were reassured that employer would not have access to their survey responses and that their participation will not affect their employment status. Any electronic letter provided to participants for consent forms or related data letters, or any instrumentation information was presented according to Walden University’s Institutional Review Board (IRB) best practices suggestions. All electronic instructions, terms, and guidelines in any documentation given to the participants were provided in a format that was readily understood based on simplicity and transparency of the language, avoiding jargon. The researcher took necessary steps to ensure the participants’ safety and ethical treatment during the study.

Before, during, and after the study occurred, participants received clear and comprehensible information on their right to participate voluntarily to include their options to terminate their participation at any time. The researcher’s pledge to protect and ensure the minimization of harm participants was sustained during the entire process as stipulated by the American Psychological Association (2010). Recommendations on a

study by DuBois et al. (2018), were considered to safeguard standard procedures for archiving and sharing data, such as anonymizing data and establishing data use agreements. The goal of chapter 3 was to outline the methodology that was used to answer the research questions and test hypotheses proposed.

### **Summary**

In Chapter 3, the goal was to define the research method to be used in an attempt to answer the research questions proposed. The chapter provided presented the proposed study participants, data collection and the use of CAYCI SES survey as a tool to identify differences in perceptions of school personnel. Chapter 3 specifies that the population and sample of the study was comprised of a group of school personnel in a southwestern part of the United States working in educational settings. The study was conducted using a quantitative research design that included one-way ANOVAs, single regression analysis and a multivariate analysis of variance MANOVA. The theory of dual process was used to have and understanding if perceptions by school personnel were different or not towards two group of students: transfer versus nontransfer. Chapter 4 includes the results of the study as guided by the methodology described in Chapter 3. Following is 5 which includes a discussion of the study findings, limitations, and areas recommended for future research.

## Chapter 4: Results

### Introduction

The purpose of this quantitative study was to identify the presence, or not, of different perceptions of school personnel toward students who transfer from other school systems due to specific circumstances. In line with this purpose, two sets of research questions and hypotheses were formulated:

RQ1: To what extent are the perceptions of school personnel toward transfer and nontransfer students different, as measured by the CAYCI SES?

$H_01$ : The perceptions of school personnel toward transfer and nontransfer students are not different, as measured by the CAYCI SES.

$H_a1$ : The perceptions of school personnel toward transfer and nontransfer students are different, as measured by the CAYCI SES.

RQ2: What is the variation of scores, as measured by CAYCI SES?

$H_02$ : The variation of scores, as measured by CAYCI SES, is not significant.

$H_a2$ : The variation of scores, as measured by CAYCI SES, is significantly different.

This chapter contains the results of the data analysis procedures conducted to address the research questions and hypotheses. The data were analyzed using simple linear regression analysis, ANOVA and MANOVA. All analysis procedures were conducted using SPSS Version 22. The results of the analysis procedures were used as the basis for accepting or rejecting the null hypotheses of the study.

### **Data Collection**

To collect data for this study, school personnel were informed about the opportunity to participate in the study. Consent forms were explained, and surveys were sent through email to the groups in the established email distribution list. The email distribution list included all personnel who work with students. Interested participants clicked on a link in the email, which directed them to the Qualtrics site for the study. The first page they encountered was the informed consent form. All participants were required to electronically indicate informed consent before being redirected to the survey. A total of 176 responses were collected during the 2-week data collection period.

School personnel comprise 139 individuals, with 99 women and 40 men. School personnel are divided into two main categories: (a) professional or certified staff members and (b) classified or not certified staff, including personnel such as, but not limited to nurses, security personnel, janitorial and custodial staff, cafeterias workers, administrative personnel, and information technology personnel. The school employs two nurses, six administrators, and five counselors. Subjects taught in the school include career and technical education (15 teachers), English (12 teachers), exceptional student services (seven teachers), fine arts (four teachers), foreign language (five teachers), mathematics (14 teachers), physical education/health (six teachers), science (11 teachers), social sciences (11 teachers), and an alternative learning center (two teachers).

Three steps were taken to clean the data for analysis. First, data points with uncompleted responses were removed. Second, the CAYCI SES allows for responses of *don't know* for the survey items. Third, outliers were removed from the data based on the



results of assumption testing. Given that the responses of *do not know* do not translate to measurable data, data points containing this response were eliminated from the data set. After data cleaning, 92 data points remained for analysis. Based on this revised sample size, a post hoc power analysis was conducted to determine the achieved power for the F tests. The result of the post hoc power analysis is in Appendix A, and the results indicated that the achieved power was 0.96. From this final data set, frequency analysis was conducted to derive a demographic profile of the participants.

The results of this analysis are summarized in Table 1 and Table 2. Table 1 contains the results showing the general demographic profile of the participants. Among the 92 participants, the majority were female (66; 71.7%), and 22 participants were male (23.9%). With regard to age, the majority of the participants were ages 51 and above (48; 52.2%). Lastly, 66 out of the 92 participants (71.7%) reported their ethnicity as White.

**Table 1**

*Results of Frequency Analysis, General Demographic Profile of Participants (N = 92)*

	Frequency	Percentage
Gender		
Male	22	23.9
Female	66	71.7
Prefer not to say	2	2.2
No response	2	2.2
Age		
18–21 years	2	2.2
22–25 years	0	0.0
26–29 years	2	2.2
30–35 years	8	8.7
36–40 years	12	13.0
41–45 years	10	10.9
46–50 years	10	10.9
51+ years	48	52.2
Ethnicity		
White	66	71.7
Black/African American	4	4.3
Hispanic or Latino	10	10.9
Asian	2	2.2
Multiracial	2	2.2
Other	4	4.3
Prefer not to answer	4	4.3

Table 2 contains the employment profile of the sample showing 28.3% (26) had worked in a school for 6–10 years. Sixteen respondents (17.4%) had worked in a school for 11–15 years. Responses showed 41.3% (38) had been employed at that school for 1–5 years, followed by 21.7% (20) who had been employed at the current school for 6–10 years. The majority of the participants were reported to be teachers (58; 63%). The remaining participants were support staff (16; 17.4%), administrative staff (6; 6.5%), supervisory staff (4; 4.3%), and eight respondents reported their designation as *other* (8.7%). Among the 58 teachers, 50 of them were regular classroom teachers (54.3%),

while eight were special education teachers (8.7%). The majority reported having daily interaction with students of all grade levels (48; 52.2%). Participants were sampled from a total population of 139 school personnel. The gender characteristics of the sample match those of the population, as 71.2% of school personnel are female, compared with 71.7% of the study sample. Staff roles within the sample roughly mirrored those within the larger population, with a majority of respondents serving as teachers and a minority of respondents working as support staff.

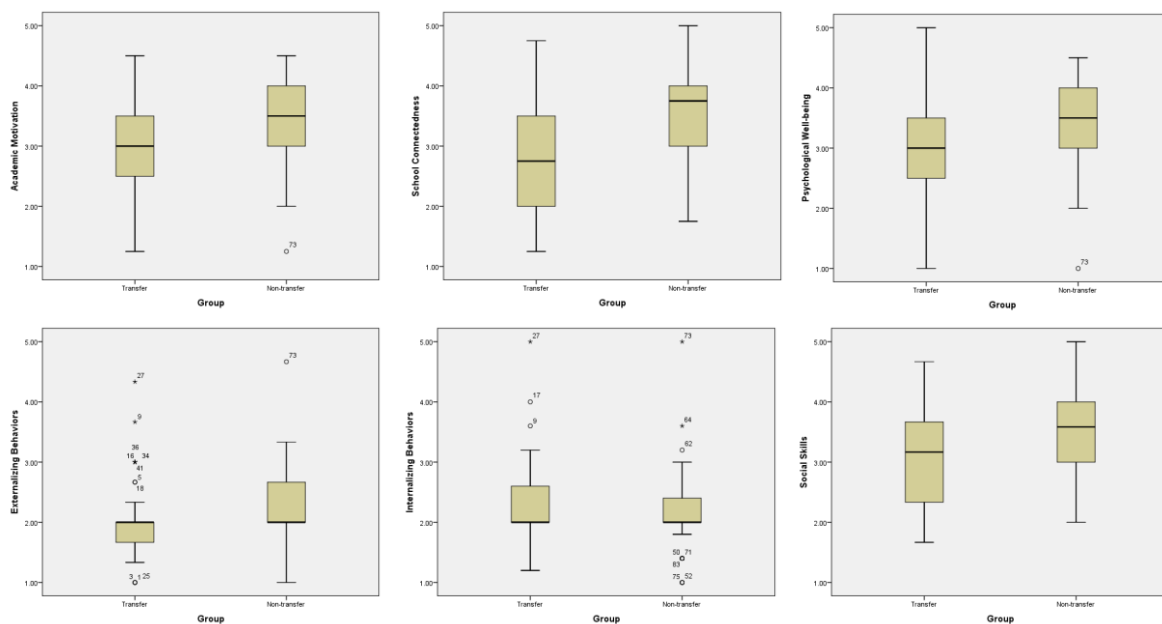
**Table 2***Results of Frequency Analysis, Employment Profile of Participants (N = 92)*

	Frequency	Percentage
Total years of experience teaching		
Less than 1 year	6	6.5
1–5 years	14	15.2
6–10 years	26	28.3
11–15 years	16	17.4
16–20 years	14	15.2
21+ years	14	15.2
No response	2	2.2
Years of experience teaching at current school		
Less than 1 year	6	6.5
1–5 years	38	41.3
6–10 years	20	21.7
11–15 years	8	8.7
16–20 years	8	8.7
21+ years	12	13.0
Primary role at current school		
Administrative	6	6.5
Supervisory	4	4.3
Support	16	17.4
Teaching	58	63.0
Other	8	8.7
Teaching assignment (only for teachers)		
Regular classroom	50	54.3
Special education	8	8.7
No response (nonteachers)	34	37.0
Daily interaction		
9th grade	16	17.4
10th grade	6	6.5
11th grade	14	15.2
12th grade	6	6.5
All grades	48	52.2
No response	2	2.2

The data set was also checked to determine whether the assumptions required for the ANOVAs were fulfilled. First, it was confirmed that all dependent variables were measured as continuous variables. Second, the independent variable of transfer student status is a categorical variable with at least two groups. Third, the data were tested to identify the outliers using boxplots. Outliers from the data set were removed based on the boxplots shown in Figure 1.

**Figure 1**

*Boxplots of Dependent Variables*



Fourth, the data were tested to determine if the assumption of normality was met.

Based on the results, as shown in Table 3, the results indicate that all p values for the Shapiro-Wilk statistic were less than  $p = .05$ , which means that the data set significantly differed from a normal distribution. Although the assumption of normality was not met, F tests such as the ANOVA have been found to be robust against deviations for normality.

Therefore, the analysis was conducted as planned, and the violation of the assumption of normality is discussed in Chapter 5.

**Table 3**

*Results of Normality Testing*

	Kolmogorov-Smirnov <sup>a</sup>			Shapiro-Wilk		
	Statistic	df	Sig.	Statistic	df	Sig.
Academic motivation	.118	92	.003	.955	92	.003
School connectedness	.111	92	.007	.961	92	.007
Internalizing behaviors	.244	92	.000	.861	92	.000
Psychological well-being	.130	92	.001	.936	92	.000
Externalizing behaviors	.277	92	.000	.872	92	.000
Social skills	.102	92	.020	.955	92	.003

a. Lilliefors Significance Correction

Lastly, the data were tested to determine whether the assumption of homogeneity of variances was met. Table 4 shows results of the homogeneity of variances tests.

Results indicated that all the p values for the Levene's test for homogeneity were greater than  $p = .05$ ; the variance was equal across groups. The assumption for homogeneity was met, and inferential data analysis proceeded as planned.

**Table 4**

*Results of Homogeneity of Variances Test*

	Levene's test	df1	df2	Sig.
Academic motivation	.199	1	90	.657
School connectedness	.609	1	90	.437
Internalizing behaviors	.235	1	90	.629
Psychological well-being	.028	1	90	.867
Externalizing behaviors	.697	1	90	.406
Social skills	.335	1	90	.564

The data set was first processed for descriptive statistics. Measures of central tendency were calculated for the average scale scores for the six scales, the results are

summarized below in Table 5. Results show that for the academic motivation scale, scores ranged from 1.25 to 4.50,  $M = 3.18$  ( $SD = 0.77$ ). School connectedness scale scores ranged from 1.25 to 5,  $M = 3.20$  ( $SD = 0.89$ ). The scores for internalizing behaviors ranged from 1 to 5,  $M = 2.23$  ( $SD = 0.72$ ). Likewise, psychological well-being scores ranged from 1 to 5,  $M = 3.15$  ( $SD = 0.83$ ). Externalizing behaviors scores ranged from 1 to 4.67,  $M = 2.17$  ( $SD = 0.65$ ). Lastly, for the social skills scale, scores ranged from 1.67 to 5,  $M = 3.27$  ( $SD = 0.80$ ).

**Table 5**

*Results of Descriptive Statistics Analysis – CAYCI SES Variables*

	Min.	Max.	Mean	<i>SD</i>	Skewness Statistic	SE	Kurtosis Statistic	SE
Academic motivation	1.25	4.50	3.18	.77	-.504	.251	-.385	.498
School connectedness	1.25	5.00	3.20	.89	-.159	.251	-.752	.498
Internalizing behaviors	1.00	5.00	2.23	.72	1.492	.251	3.787	.498
Psychological well-being	1.00	5.00	3.15	.83	-.485	.251	-.322	.498
Externalizing behaviors	1.00	4.67	2.17	.65	1.042	.251	2.449	.498
Social skills	1.67	5.00	3.27	.80	-.190	.251	-.726	.498

The first research question of the study was formulated to determine the extent to which the perceptions of school personnel towards transfer and nontransfer students differ based on the scores ascribed by the respondents for the six scales of the CAYCI SES. To address this research question, a multivariate analysis of variance (MANOVA) was conducted instead of a repeated measures ANOVA because there was only one predictor in the proposed model. Thus, the multivariate ANOVA was determined to be

the more appropriate analysis procedure. The results of the MANOVA are summarized in Table 6 showing that the transfer status of the students significantly affected perceptions of school personnel for the School Connectedness ( $F(1) = 14.486, p < .001$ ) and Social Skills ( $F(1) = 6.788, p = .011$ ) scales. For School Connectedness, the proposed model was calculated to have predicted 13.9% of the variance in the scores for School Connectedness ( $R^2 = .139$ ). For Social Skills, the proposed model was calculated to have predicted 7% of the variance in the scores for School Connectedness ( $R^2 = .070$ ).

**Table 6**

*Results of Multivariate Analysis of Variance (MANOVA)*

Source	Dependent variable	Type III sum of squares	df	Mean square	F	Sig.
Group	Academic motivation	1.565	1	1.565	2.684	.105 <sup>a</sup>
	School connectedness	9.946	1	9.946	14.486	.000 <sup>b</sup>
	Internalizing behaviors	.767	1	.767	1.507	.223 <sup>c</sup>
	Psychological well-being	1.565	1	1.565	2.302	.133 <sup>d</sup>
	Externalizing behaviors	1.016	1	1.016	2.407	.124 <sup>e</sup>
	Social skills	4.063	1	4.063	6.788	.011 <sup>f</sup>

a.  $R^2 = .029$  (Adjusted  $R^2 = .018$ ); b.  $R^2 = .139$  (Adjusted  $R^2 = .129$ ); c.  $R^2 = .016$

(Adjusted  $R^2 = .006$ ); d.  $R^2 = .025$  (Adjusted  $R^2 = .014$ ); e.  $R^2 = .026$  (Adjusted  $R^2 = .015$ ); f.  $R^2 = .070$  (Adjusted  $R^2 = .060$ )

To further explore the relationships between the variables and to quantify the extent to which the transfer status of the students affects the perceptions of school personnel, six simple linear regression analysis procedures were also conducted, with each regression using the grouping of transfer versus nontransfer students as the independent or predictor variable, and one scale of the CAYCI SES as the dependent or outcome variable. The  $\beta$  coefficients that resulted from the linear regressions are



summarized below in Table 7. The results of the regression indicated that a one-point increase in transfer status corresponds to an increase of .658 in the School Connectedness score ( $\beta = .658, p < .001$ ). Similarly, a one-point increase in transfer status corresponds to an increase of .420 in the School Connectedness score ( $\beta = .420, p = .011$ ). Given that the proposed models were found to be significant for only two out of 6 scales of the CAYCI SES, the first null hypothesis cannot neither be accepted nor rejected.

**Table 7**

*Results of Simple Linear Regression Analysis – Model Coefficients*

	Unstandardized coefficients		Standardized coefficients		Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta	t	
Academic motivation	.261	.159	.170	1.638	.105
School connectedness	.658	.173	.372	3.806	.000
Internalizing behaviors	-.183	.149	-.128	-1.228	.223
Psychological well-being	.261	.172	.159	1.517	.133
Externalizing behaviors	.210	.135	.161	1.551	.124
Social skills	.420	.161	.265	2.605	.011

The second research question of the study was formulated to determine the variation of the scores between the two groups of transfer and nontransfer students. To address this research question, six one-way ANOVAs were conducted to compare the means of the scores ascribed by school personnel for transfer students and nontransfer students.

The results of the one-way ANOVAs are summarized below in Table 8. The results indicate that statistically significant differences were found between the scores ascribed by school personnel to transfer and nontransfer students for the School

Connectedness ( $F(1) = 14.486, p < .001$ ) and Social Skills ( $F(1) = 6.788, p = .011$ ) scales of the CAYCI SES. No post hoc analysis procedures were necessary because there were only two groups in the data. For both scales, nontransfer students were rated with higher average scores by school personnel.

As with the first research question, statistically significant differences were only identified for two out of the six scales. Thus, the second null hypothesis can neither be accepted nor rejected. The research question was formulated to measure the extent to which the perceptions of school personnel toward transfer and nontransfer students were different as measure by the CAYCI SES. The alternative hypothesis for the first research question stated that the perceptions of school personnel toward transfer versus non transfer students are different as measured by the survey. Table 8 shows the results of the One-Way ANOVA.

**Table 8**

*Results of One-Way ANOVA (Grouping x CAYCI SES Variables)*

		Mean	Std. Dev.	df	F	Sig.
Academic motivation	Transfer	3.05	.78	1	2.684	.105
	Nontransfer	3.31	.74			
School connectedness	Transfer	2.88	.85	1	14.486	.000
	Nontransfer	3.53	.81			
Internalizing behaviors	Transfer	2.32	.72	1	1.507	.223
	Nontransfer	2.13	.71			
Psychological well-being	Transfer	3.02	.84	1	2.302	.133
	Nontransfer	3.28	.81			
Externalizing behaviors	Transfer	2.07	.64	1	2.407	.124
	Nontransfer	2.28	.66			
Social skills	Transfer	3.06	.78	1	6.788	.011
	Nontransfer	3.48	.77			

## Summary

The purpose of this quantitative study was to identify the presence, or not, of different perceptions of school personnel toward students who transfer from other schools' systems due to specific unique circumstances. Responses were collected from a sample of school personnel, the majority of whom were teachers. The collected data from 92 participants was analyzed using simple linear regression, one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) and multivariate analysis of variance (MANOVA) to address the two research questions of the study. The results of the linear regression indicated that the transfer status of the students significantly affected the school personnel perceptions with regard to the School Connectedness and Social Skills scales of the CAYCI SES. The two regression models predicted 13.9% and 7% of the variance in the scores for the School Connectedness and Social Skill scales, respectively. Likewise, results from one-way ANOVAs indicated that school personnel ascribed significantly higher scores for nontransfer students as compared to transfer students for School Connectedness and Social Skills. These results will be discussed in relation to existing literature in the final chapter of this study, along with the corresponding conclusions and recommendations for further study.

## Chapter 5: Discussion, Conclusions, and Recommendations

### **Introduction**

The purpose of this quantitative study was to identify the presence, or not, of different perceptions of school personnel toward students who transfer from other school systems due to specific circumstances that cause mobility versus toward nontransfer students who are local and not moving to different schools. This study was conducted due to the increasing number of transfer students in border town schools in the United States (O'Brennan et al., 2017). Research has shown that the rising numbers of transfer students in border town schools in the country results in increased challenges for school personnel (O'Brennan et al., 2017; Quaye & Harper, 2015). As such, it is imperative to examine and identify the perceptions of school personnel regarding students who transfer from other school systems, acknowledging their presence to positively adjust the connections and services offered to this student population. This study was conducted to bridge the gap in current literature regarding school personnel's perceptions toward transfer students and nontransfer students (Esqueda et al., 2014; Myers & Finnigan, 2018; O'Brennan et al., 2017).

There were two major findings that emerged through the process of simple linear regression, one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA), and multivariate analysis of variance (MANOVA). The transfer status of the students significantly influenced the school personnel's perceptions regarding the administration of the CAYCI SES toward transfer students and the CAYCI SES for the same group of school personnel toward nontransfer students, as measured by the school connectedness, and perceptions of school personnel,

as measured by the social skills scales of the CAYCI SES. School personnel ascribed significantly higher scores for nontransfer students compared to transfer students for school connectedness and social skills. For each of the research questions, statistically significant differences were only identified for two out of the six scales: school connectedness and social skills.

The remainder of this chapter will focus on the interpretation of the major findings in this study, which will be followed by the limitations of the study. Grounded in the strengths and limitations of the current study, a list of recommendations for future research will be discussed. This will be followed by the implications of this study, including the potential impact of this study for positive social change. Finally, this chapter will conclude with a synthesis section wherein key points to be considered for this study are outlined.

### **Interpretation of the Findings**

#### **Research Question 1**

RQ1: To what extent are the perceptions of school personnel toward transfer and non-transfer students different, as measured by the CAYCI SES?

For RQ1, the aim was to determine the extent to which the perceptions of school personnel toward transfer students and nontransfer students differed based on the scores ascribed by the respondents for the six scales of the CAYCI SES. The findings from the linear regression analyses indicated that the transfer status of the students significantly influenced perceptions of school personnel for the school connectedness and social skills scales. Hence, the perceptions of school personnel toward transfer and nontransfer

students are different in some ways, as measured by the CAYCI SES for these two scales. For both, school personnel perceived nontransfer students as having significantly higher levels of school connectedness and more developed social skills than transfer students. This main finding is the first empirical evidence regarding the perceptions of school personnel in a borderland school while serving transfer students, specifically in relation to their levels of school connectedness and social skills. This finding thus extends current knowledge in the discipline of psychology, specifically within the scope of educational psychology in the area of school personnel as it relates to the unique challenges of borderland schools.

It should be noted that past researchers have underscored the crucial value of school connectedness in promoting positive relationships with transfer students, as well as improving academic performance outcomes (Anderson-Butcher et al., 2013; May et al., 2018). Past studies have shown that school personnel have vital roles to play in enhancing school connectedness and a sense of belonging for transfer students (Mónico et al., 2018; Sinclair et al., 2017). Sinclair et al. (2017) found that school personnel perceived and believed that they could positively influence the sense of belonging of transfer students. The current study did not examine the degree to which school personnel feel responsible or able to increase belonging among transfer students; it did reveal that personnel feel the need for such improvement exists, at least relative to nontransfer students. This current study is the first research to examine the perceptions of school personnel working in highly transient school communities in borderlands, hence contributing to existing literature on this topic.

Regarding the scale of social skills, the findings from the linear regressions conducted showed that the transfer status of the students significantly predicted perceptions of school personnel. This means that school personnel have significantly more positive perceptions of social skills of nontransfer students than transfer students. This finding may be explained by past research, which has indicated that transfer students experience difficulties in transitioning such as cultural shock and learning environment changes, with no past studies showing whether social skills are significantly challenging among transfer students (Gruman et al., 2008; Santos Laanan, 2007). Furthermore, this current study is the first research to determine how school personnel perceive students differently in terms of their social skills, primarily due to their transfer status.

For the scale of school connectedness, the findings from the linear regressions also indicated that the transfer status of the students significantly predicted perceptions of school personnel. This finding indicates the school personnel had significantly more positive perceptions of the school connectedness of nontransfer students compared with transfer students, possibly indicating bias. This finding is meaningful, as past research has shown the importance of connectedness of school personnel to all students in enhancing the quality of positive school environments, with no past studies considering the perceptions of school personnel toward transfer student and nontransfer students in specific terms of school connectedness (Anderson-Butcher et al., 2013; May et al., 2018). This finding is significant in highlighting that school personnel need to adopt more positive, fair, and equitable perceptions toward transfer students, especially regarding school connectedness. Furthermore, the current study is the first research to determine

how school personnel perceive transfer students and nontransfer students differently, in terms of school connectedness. It is also the first research in a borderland school in southwestern part of the country.

### **Research Question 2**

RQ2: What is the variation of scores, as measured by CAYCI SES? For RQ2 of the study, six one-way ANOVAs were performed to compare the means of the scores ascribed by school personnel for transfer students and nontransfer students. A major finding from the analyses showed there are statistically significant differences between the scores ascribed by school personnel to transfer and nontransfer students for two scales: school connectedness and social skills. The findings of the current study showed that nontransfer students were rated with higher average scores by school personnel. This means that school personnel perceive nontransfer students to have higher levels of school connectedness and social skills than their transfer counterparts.

While past research shows no clear indication that nontransfer students have higher levels of school connectedness and social skills than their transfer counterparts, the finding of this current study underscores the need for school personnel to assess their own identities and perceptions towards nontransfer students and transfer students, specifically examining how their behaviors differ between nontransfer students and transfer students in light of their varied perceptions. This is consistent with previous researchers who have noted the need to examine school personnel and administrators' perceptions, as well as how these might influence the expectations of teachers of their transfer students (Ruppar et al., 2018; Sinclair et al., 2017). This major finding thus



contributes original knowledge to literature, providing information regarding the perceptions of school personnel towards nontransfer students, as they rated higher average ratings of school connectedness and social skills for nontransfer students compared to transfer students.

In addition to the significant findings for school connectedness and social skills, nonsignificant findings were derived for other variables: academic motivation, internalizing behaviors, psychological well-being, and externalizing behaviors. The mean scores for nontransfer students were higher for all variables but externalizing behaviors, suggesting that school personnel perceived transfer students as having lower academic motivation, more internalizing behaviors, and lower psychological well-being. While the findings did not reach statistical significance, the results align with those of studies finding challenges for transfer students (Gruman et al., 2008; Santos Laanan, 2007).

### **Findings and Theory**

The findings from the current study also align with theory. The theoretical framework used in this quantitative study was the theory of dual process of thoughts by James in the 1800s. I used this theory to study how the independent variable predicted the dependent variable. I showed how the type of thinking postulated by the theory influenced the way school personnel perceived the underrepresented groups of students and how this perception influenced the perceptions toward the two different groups. This theory indicated that there are two underlying thinking processes: One is a fast, unconscious, and contextually bound process, whereas the other is a slow, conscious, effortful, and decontextualized process (Monteiro et al., 2019). This theory supported my

belief that my independent variable administration of CAYCI SES survey about transfer students and the administration of CAYCI SES survey about nontransfer predicted the dependent variable the perceptions measured by the CAYCI SES. The theory did support the study by explain the psychological process behind the formation of perceptions, The theory is relevant to the current study because it related to how perceptions can drive the formation of school personnel's attitudes. Holender and Duscherer (2004) studied unconscious perceptions not as a separate state of the processing system but as denotations of perception under high uncertainty. The theory has been used in to research the areas of attitude-behavior relationship (Chaiken& Ledgerwood, 2012), like in this study.

The theory of dual process of thoughts was used to conceptualize the role of the daily interactions in school settings by school personnel. This, the theory can be used to facilitate how school personnel think about the information they have at hand regarding transfer students when they make judgments or experience bias. Furthermore, the theory of dual process of thoughts can be used to explained how school personnel can better use their natural tendencies to make experiences meaningful to anticipate and act in an effective way when making perceptions on transfer students.

The understanding of school personnel decision-making process on how they perceived the two different groups of students (transfer versus nontransfer students) can be better understood when applying the theory of dual process of thoughts. I found the theory supportive of explaining the reflective cognition as being a conscious process of evaluating options based on some social effect combination of convenience, risk,

capabilities (Hartmann et al., 2018). In an optimal circumstance, school personnel can use the theory of dual process of thoughts to inform how it is possible to unlearn the automatic unconscious process of perceptions and substitute with a cognitive more reflective approach reducing, if not eliminating, the adverse effects of bias and perceptions on transfer students. One can use the theory of dual process to show how attitudes and perceptions are created and how social information is interpreted.

### **Limitations of the Study**

There are several presenting limitations to be considered in the design of this study. The first limitation is related to the scope of the study, which is limited to one selected secondary school in a southwestern U.S. borderland school with transfer and nontransfer students in Grades 9 to 12. While the participants were a representation of the different roles of personnel in the selected school, the study sample does not represent other school personnel in other borderland schools in the United States. Furthermore, the sample only includes school personnel serving students in Grades 9 to 12 as part of a school district in the city. Hence, the findings of the perceptions of school personnel in this study cannot be generalizable to other areas, locations, or population groups other than those working directly in a secondary school in the selected southwestern U.S. borderland school with transfer and nontransfer students in Grades 9 to 12.

The second limitation to be considered in this study was in the interpretation of the findings. That is, there is a scarcity of literature regarding school personnel employed at borderland schools and their perceptions towards transfer students in such settings; as such, it was challenging to confirm or disconfirm the findings of this study in relation to

past peer-reviewed literature. Thus, the analysis and interpretation of findings were limited to what was empirically available in existing literature.

The study yielded a significant amount of data that has been previously unknown regarding the perceptions of school personnel employed at borderland schools in the southwestern United States. However, considering there were only 92 respondents who participated in the surveys, there are limitations on what may have been gathered from school personnel in other regions or locations. Furthermore, the majority (71.7%) of the participants were White in ethnicity. There is the likelihood that the perceptions of school personnel towards transfer and nontransfer students may vastly vary, specifically due to cultural differences, racial biases, and particular practices in different educational settings and experiences (Larson, 2014; Warikoo et al., 2016). The demographics of the population could have an impact on the perceptions of these school personnel towards transfer and non-transfer students in Grades nine to 12. As such, information from this study's small sample may not be generalizable to the broader population. Despite the limitations of this study, this research study provides a steppingstone into future studies regarding this unique population, with many more in-depth questions to be explored.

### **Recommendations**

This research study provided school personnel the opportunity to share their own perceptions towards transfer versus nontransfer students in a borderland school. Major findings resulted from the conducted data analysis procedures, simple linear regression analysis and one-way ANOVA. The results of the study may contribute to the current knowledge base in educational psychology specific to the perceptions of school personnel

employed at borderland schools in the southwestern United States, providing a way for school systems in borderland communities to find resolutions and develop improvements in the services provided to highly transient student populations.

Recommendations for further research include examining this phenomenon in other remote geographical areas and border towns. The findings of this research is currently limited to only a specific area in which in the study was conducted.

Furthermore, this is the first research study to examine the perceptions of school personnel toward students of underrepresented groups such as transient students in a borderland school. Thus, future research would do well to further extend this study's findings and examine the topic in other areas, locations, or population groups other than those working directly in a secondary school in the selected southwestern U.S. borderland school with transfer and nontransfer students in Grades nine to 12.

Another recommendation for future research includes gathering demographic information of the selected school, specifically regarding the race/ethnicity composition. Research has shown that there are racial bias and stereotypes are commonplace and relevant in the educational setting (NAACP Legal Defense and Educational Fund, 2017; Wilkins & Nietfeld, 2004). That is, educators' attitudes and beliefs differ as they directly work with students from ethnic minorities (Abacioglu et al., 2019; Wilkins & Nietfeld, 2004). Therefore, it is worth exploring whether perceptions of school personnel differ towards transfer and nontransfer students, considering the student factor of race/ethnicity. Exploring this topic further could provide more in-depth information as to how school

personnel perceive students differently, considering both transfer status and race/ethnicity.

Another area for consideration for further research would be the exploration of a broader population to include all school personnel in the school district from the kindergarten to Grade 12. The focus of the current study was on a specific population of school personnel serving students in Grades 9 to 12 enrolled in a public high school in a border town in a southwestern U.S. state. Therefore, the findings of this study regarding school personnel's perceptions toward transfer students are not applicable to school personnel working with students in other levels other than Grades 9 to 12. Knowing about the perceptions of school personnel who work with transfer students in kindergarten to Grade 12 levels could provide in-depth information in further determining the specific differences of perceptions of school personnel toward transfer and nontransfer students.

### **Implications**

This study of the perceptions of school personnel points to several implications for the field of psychology, specifically, within the scope of educational psychology, and the knowledge base for school personnel, including teachers, administrators, paraprofessionals, classroom aides, special needs caregivers, administrators, physical and speech therapists, counselors, principal, vice principal, administrative assistants, and any school personnel that interacts with transfer and nontransfer students. The level of understanding of the application of the theory of dual process of thoughts will be beneficial to others seeking to understand how school personnel's perceptions differ

toward transfer and nontransfer students. The research conducted promotes educational equality, promoting equal learning opportunities for all students, including transfer and nontransfer students, and encourages social change.

The findings of this research have the potential impact for positive social change at the organizational level, specifically in school systems. Current traditional models that were employed by school personnel as they serve nontransfer students might not have satisfied the needs of the highly transit student population. One of the implications of the study lies at the organizational level, enhancing the understanding regarding school personnel's perceptions and the delivery of support to school personnel serving in remote locations in the southwestern border of the U.S. That is, the findings of this study could be used as empirical justification to develop and provide adequate training for school personnel to promote increased connectedness and positive relations between school personnel with transfer students.

This study also has the potential impact for positive social change at the individual level, specifically for school personnel who serve and work with transfer students. The potential for positive social change will be evidenced by informing school personnel of potential differences in their perceptions toward transfer and nontransfer students. Further, this study's findings could be used to renew staff commitment to all students and encourage school leaders and personnel to promote equity in schools, as well as a bias-free learning environment. Additionally, schools in similar communities also could replicate the current study to understand how to support school personnel in

meeting the challenges of dealing with different perceptions toward transfer and nontransfer students.

With the increasing trend in the number of transfer students in school systems, there will be a continuing need among school personnel, especially counselors and leaders, to understand the milestones and needs of school personnel with focus on their perceptions toward the transient student population (O'Brennan et al., 2017). The perceptions of school personnel unique, as they experience challenges in serving transfer students; these experiences may affect their relationships with their transfer students and their perceptions of others, which influence real-world conditions (Haslam, 2018). With the knowledge of the differences in school personnel's perceptions toward transfer and nontransfer students, school personnel who are in a position to work with transfer students are better aware of their predispositions, as well as how they impact areas such as inclusion and equity.

There is lack of information on ways that connections between school personnel and transfer students can be improved, which results in insufficient knowledge available to school personnel who work with transfer students. The relationships between school personnel and transfer students, as well as the connectedness of school personnel to all students, are essential to promoting the quality of positive school environments (May et al., 2018; Tore, 2020). Any additional resources and information could provide significant assistance for an equitable educational system and inclusive learning environment (Golbeck et al., 2016; Tore, 2020).



## Conclusion

This quantitative study was developed to identify the presence, or not, of different perceptions of school personnel toward students who transfer from other schools' systems due to specific unique circumstances that cause mobility of transfer students versus toward nontransfer students who are local and not moving to different schools. Current literature on the perceptions of school personnel towards transfer students in border town school settings is scarce. There is a scarcity of literature in previous research regarding this topic. A total of 92 school personnel were electronically surveyed wherein the gathered data was analyzed using simple linear regression analysis, one-way ANOVA and multivariate analysis of variance.

There were two major themes found: transfer status of the students significantly predicted the school personnel's perceptions of the administration of the CAYCI SES in regard to transfer students versus nontransfer students based on the School Connectedness and Social Skills scales of the CAYCI SES; and school personnel ascribed significantly higher scores for nontransfer students as compared to transfer students for school connectedness and social skills. These two major findings support the original assumption that school personnel's perceptions towards transfer students and nontransfer students differ. However, the findings showed that the perceptions of school personnel towards transfer students and nontransfer students only differed in two aspects: school connectedness and social skills.

As previously discussed, this study provides only the beginning of understanding the perceptions of school personnel towards transfer students, as well as the ways in

which their perceptions towards transfer students and nontransfer students differs. There is much more to uncover regarding other school personnel in highly transient school communities in borderlands at other areas around the United States, as well as learning how to support school personnel in meeting the challenges of dealing with different perceptions toward transfer and nontransfer students. There is a substantial amount of information regarding the perceptions of school personnel toward transfer and nontransfer students within this study. As the rate of transfer students in school systems increases, it will be increasingly valuable for school personnel who work with and serve transfer students to be more aware of these perceptions and predispositions to provide an inclusive learning environment and an equitable educational system.

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## Appendix A: School Permission Request to Conduct Study

Maria Isabel G

Tue, Sep 22,

10:14 AM

Esteemed School Principal.

As you know, I am in the proposal stage for my PhD. Studies at Walden University. I am requesting permission to conduct the study at your school. The study most likely will take place between late winter term 2020 and spring 2021 considering the current circumstances.

The study will measure the existence or not of school perceptions towards two groups of students: non transfer students and transfer students. For the purpose of this study the researcher is defining transfer students as: students from military families, students previously homeschooled, students transitioning from the juvenile system, other proximity schools transfers, homeless students, students in foster care residency, students relocated with their parents on U.S. government orders to border town work location, students participating or are transitioning from behavioral/emotional/physical rehabilitation programs, students transitioning from boarding schools, students who transfer from one school to another due to expulsion from other schools related to disciplinary offenses in previous schools or in the juvenile systems among others.

The significance and specificity of the study rests in the needs of schools in border town's areas in the southwestern of United States, specifically the challenges of school personnel in serving underrepresented group of students and themselves as a group of school personnel with a distinctive set of challenges that includes their perceptions towards transfer students. The study will follow all research best practices for confidentiality, anonymity, and privacy of all participants in the sample.

I am including in this email an attachment with a letter for permission request for your consideration. If permission is granted, please send me back a confirmation letter in your school's heading indicating your intentions to grant or not permission for conducting the research at your school. If permission is not granted, there is no need for a response in writing. Please know that if permission is not granted, I am as thankful just to share my study intentions with leaders and professionals in our community educational settings.

Thanks in advance for considering this request.

*Maria Isabel Garcia, MS.I/OP*



## Appendix B: School Approval to Conduct Study

September 24, 2020

Ms. Maria Isabel Garcia,

Please accept this letter as my approval for the study titled "Perceptions and unconscious bias of school personnel toward transfer vs. no transfer students" to be conducted at Buena High School.

I look forward to seeing the results of your survey.

## Appendix C: Request to use Measurement Instrument CAYCI SES

May 30, 2020.

RE: Permission Request to use Community and Youth Collaborative  
Institute School Experiences Surveys

My name is Maria Isabel Garcia Quinones. I am a doctoral student at Walden University completing a dissertation in the program of Educational Psychology within the School of Behavioral Science. I understand that the instrument is within the public domain and that you only request permission to track how the tools are used. I am writing to ask written permission to use the CAYCI SES, Teacher's/School Staff version in my research study. The nature of my research is quantitative, and it aims to explore Perceptions of School Personnel in a Southwestern Border Town Toward Transfer Students Versus Nontransfer students. For this study, a survey instrument such as the Community and Youth Collaborative Institute School Experiences Surveys (CAYCI SES) will definitively provide specific evidence about perceptions that I would like to measure. My research is being supervised by my Chair and other committee members.

The CAYCI SES will be used either in its entirety as an instrument or I might need to modify/adapt any of the questions as I am exploring School Personnel perceptions towards transfer students vs perceptions towards non-transfer students. My plan to use the instrument includes to make as minimal adaptations and the parameters of the research study are within a small number of participants to a specific population in a southwestern border town where transfer students are in a school due to their parents' relocations at their workstations and other underrepresented groups of students who attend school in the community. If all possible I am kindly requesting, if possible, receiving copies of any supplemental material that I can include in the appendix section of the written reports of my study. I would also like to request the electronic copies of the surveys to be provided to the respondents in an online format to administer the survey electronically and analyze the results in an online format. If possible, for the appendix section of my study I would like to receive (1) the test questionnaire, (2) the standard instructions for administering the test, online version and (3) scoring procedures if anything is missing from the public domain materials available. In addition to using the instrument, I also ask your permission to reproduce it in my dissertation's appendix. I can provide details of the research publication when available.

I will use the instrument only for my research study and will not sell or use any other purposes. I will include a statement of attribution and copyright on all copies of the instrument. If you have a specific statement of attribution that you would like for me to include, please provide it in your response. At your request, I will send a copy of my completed research study to you upon completion of the study and/or provide a hyperlink to the final manuscript. If you do not control the copyright for these materials, I would appreciate any information you can provide concerning the proper person or organization I should contact. If these are acceptable terms and conditions, please indicate so by replying to me through e-mail. Please print, sign and return (email, scan, or mail) this form signed as approval.

Sincerely,

Maria Isabel Garcia, M.S., I/OP., MPhil, Doctoral Candidate, Walden University student.

Studies in Educational Psychology

## Appendix D: Approval to Use CAYCI SES

RE: Permission CYCI SES

Jun 1,  
2020,  
4:53 AM

Hi Maria,

It is always validating when others find our tools useful for their research and practice. Please see attached signed form. I appreciate your professionalism, too!

Technical reports for each subscale can be found on this link:

<https://cayci.osu.edu/surveys/surveys-and-technical-reports/>

Just hit the X under each one and it will show you are the various psychometrics and scale structures. I am also cc'ing a scholar intern from our team. If you need anything else (copy of survey, etc.), she can point you in the right directions.

Best of luck with your research and studies.

## Appendix E: Letter of Intent to Participants

Esteemed School Personnel,

I have received permission from your school's principal to conduct a research study as part of my doctoral studies in Educational Psychology at Walden University. I am requesting your confidential and anonymous participation in the research study titled "Perceptions of School Personnel Toward Transfer Versus Nontransfer Students in a Borderland School".

The study is intended to explore perceptions from school personnel towards the two groups of distinct students in order to better support the needs of school personnel in serving a transient student body.

I will describe this study to you and answer any of your questions when the time comes. This anonymous study is being led by me and supervised by a group of Committee Members that guide the process as part of her requisites to completion of doctoral studies.

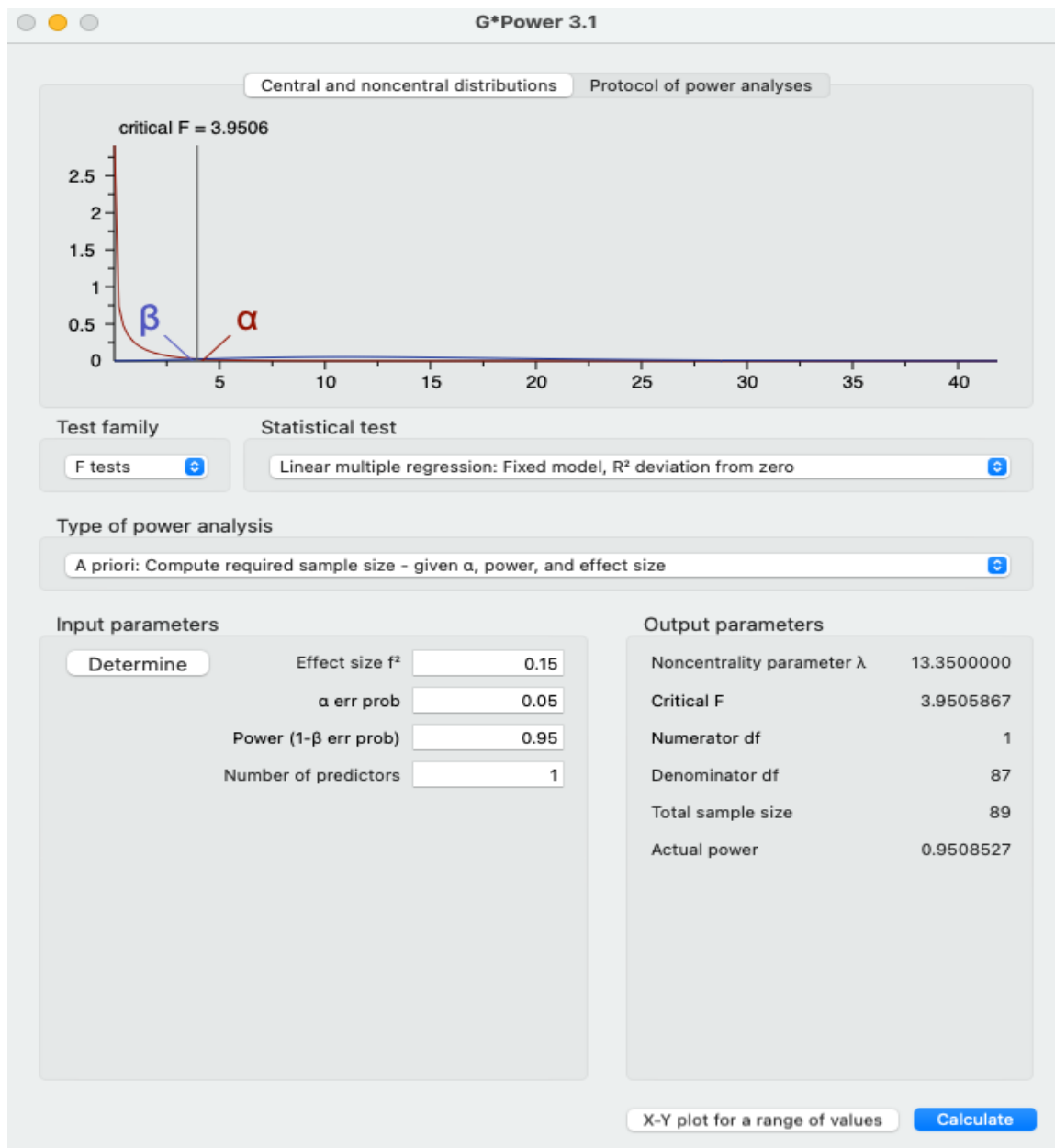
In the next week following the receipt of this letter, all school personnel will receive a Consent Form that includes in more detail the process of the study and specifics in the participation. Looking forward to conducting the study and counting on your voluntary and anonymous participation.

Thanks, in advanced!

Maria Isabel Garcia, MS., I/OP.  
PhD. Doctoral candidate

## Appendix F: F-tests: Linear Multiple Regression

Fixed model,  $R^2$  deviation from zero Compute Required Sample Size Input and Output Analysis



## Appendix G: G\* Power A Priori: Compute required sample size

**F tests** - Linear multiple regression: Fixed model, R<sup>2</sup> deviation from zero

**Analysis:** A priori: Compute required sample size

<b>Input:</b>	Effect size $f^2$	= 0.15
	$\alpha$ err prob	= 0.05
	Power (1- $\beta$ err prob)	= 0.95
	Number of predictors	= 1
<b>Output:</b>	Noncentrality parameter $\lambda$	= 13.3500000
	Critical F	= 3.9505867
	Numerator df	= 1
	Denominator df	= 87
	Total sample size	= 89
	Actual power	= 0.9508527

## Appendix H: Post Hoc Power Analysis Results

