Exploring the impact of a student-faculty partnership program at a Hispanic Serving Institution

Alyssa Guadalupe Cavazos, Lesley Chapa
and Javier Cavazos-Vela

Abstract

Guided by a strength-based framework and counter-storying lens, we use a qualitative case study approach (Cook-Sather, 2020; Cook-Sather & Motz-Storey, 2016; Lechuga-Peña & Lechuga, 2018) to explore students' and instructors' experiences with a students as learners and teachers (SaLT) partnership program at a Hispanic Serving Institution (HSI). This study includes five students and five faculty members who participated in the student-faculty partnership program. Data collection involved student partners' self-assessment reflections and faculty members' pre- and post-program reflections on their experiences. Several themes were identified following a phenomenological analysis of students' and faculty partners' self-reflections. Themes emerging from student participants included empathy, personal growth, solidarity, and feedback awareness. Faculty partners' themes included receptivity, resistance, and collaboration. Implications for institutions of higher education and HSIs are provided.

Keywords: SaLT, Latinx students, Hispanic Serving Institutions

The Latinx population is a growing group in the United States (U.S. Census Bureau, 2012) with potential to influence the higher education landscape

(Cruz et al., 2021). Latinx students' college graduation rates continue to be lower than their non-Latinx peers (Cruz et al., 2021) with 28% of Latinx individuals having earned an associate degree or higher when compared with 48% of White adults (Excelencia in Education, 2023). Factors linked with Latinx students' academic underachievement include perceived discrimination, microaggressions, and lack of support from high school counselors (Cavazos & Cavazos, 2010; Huynh, 2012; Sanchez, 2019; Vela et al., 2016; Vela-Gude et al., 2009). The COVID-19 pandemic also created challenges for culturally diverse students, such as lack of internet access and inability to study from home (Means & Neisler, 2020). Therefore, exploring the impact of programs to improve teaching and learning during the pandemic for this culturally diverse population is significant.

While researchers have explored programs at Hispanic Serving Institutions (HSIs), such as peer-learning development, less attention has been given to factors that influence faculty members' teaching practices and students' learning in college classrooms, particularly for Latinx students. This area of investigation is important because students' engagement and learning experiences may influence their college success and persistence (Victorino et al., 2022). One program that has potential to improve students' learning experiences, particularly at HSIs, is a students as learners and teachers (SaLT) program where students are positioned as consultants in a faculty member's course where they are not currently enrolled (Cook-Sather, 2020).

Theoretical Framework

SaLT is a collaborative model between faculty members and student partners built on equity and inclusivity. Student teaching consultants take observation notes and offer feedback, and, through dialogue with student consultants, faculty members both affirm what they are already doing to create inclusive and equitable practices and "revise pedagogical practices in an effort to create welcoming and productively challenging learning environments" (Cook-Sather &

Des-Ogugua, 2019, p. 597). By placing students as knowledgeable in engaging teaching and learning spaces, those students build their own academic resilience and interpersonal leadership skills.

Cook-Sather and Motz-Storey (2016) explained that pedagogical partnerships can allow for new perspectives and improved course experiences. By having a student consultant, faculty members gain new perspectives on teaching, such as improved awareness of their students' experiences as well as understanding the importance of collaboration. Examples of improved course experiences from a pedagogical partnership program include enhanced engagement and motivation among students (Cook-Sather & Motz-Storey, 2016). Additionally, student consultants are placed in a unique *counterspace* where they can flow through the academic hierarchy and provide thoughtful feedback without fear of retaliation (Cook-Sather & Agu, 2013; Cook-Sather et al., 2019). Equally, student consultants engaged in a pedagogical partnership demonstrated an enhanced sense of empathy, awareness of pedagogical intent, self-determination, and confidence (Cook-Sather, 2011).

Additionally, students are not only gaining the confidence to approach future faculty but are also developing the "*vocabulary and skill set*" to have effective and meaningful conversations in the future (Cook-Sather & Abbot, 2016, p. 10). The potential for equitable and inclusive student-faculty partnerships can be transformative for the student partner, the faculty partner, and the students enrolled in the faculty members' courses. This partnership can foster student resilience and academic growth through a strengths- and asset-based mindset (Bernal, 2002). Student partners play a vital role in shifting teaching landscapes in postsecondary education while building their academic engagement, sense of belonging, and leadership skills in spaces that foster inclusive, equitable, and diverse learning (Cook-Sather & Des-Ogugua, 2019).

Only a few researchers (e.g., Cook-Sather & Seay, 2021) have explored the impact of student-faculty partnership programs in higher education. Cook-Sather and Motz-Storey (2016) studied the benefits of positioning college students as pedagogical consultants in faculty members' classes, which included affirming and improving pedagogical

practices, designing a collaborative teaching approach with a student partner, and improving awareness of class-related issues. While peer observations often occur during a single class session, faculty partners appreciated how the student partners were present for an entire academic semester and gathered feedback from students in the course, which enabled them to make changes to their course.

Statement of the Problem

The purpose of this study was to investigate student partner and faculty participants' perceptions of how their participation in a pedagogical partnership program influenced their views on teaching and learning as well as their educational and professional growth. We explored two research questions: (1) How do student partners' sense of agency shift throughout the semester and impact their views on teaching feedback, personal growth, and sense of belonging in higher education? (2) How do faculty partners understand the role of student partners in building equitable educational spaces and impacting the success of students enrolled in the course?

Our Positionality and Research Framework

Alyssa is a bilingual Latina who is the director of the center for teaching excellence (CTE) at a large HSI. She is from Mexico and immigrated to the United States with her family when she was eight years old. She also is responsible for overseeing the SaLT HSI program, which has given her extensive experience with the case in this study. Lesley is a bilingual Latina who is a medical school student and served as the lead student partner in the SaLT HSI program as an undergraduate student. She grew up in South Texas and attended school at a large HSI. Finally, Javier is a Latino who is the associate dean for research and graduate programs in a College of Education. He also is the former director of

a CTE at an HSI where he helped design faculty development. Like Cook-Sather and Seay (2021), we share our positionalities, so readers know how our experiences and cultural backgrounds influenced this case study.

We used a strength-based, research framework and counter-storying lens (Lechuga-Peña & Lechuga, 2018; Solórzano & Yosso, 2001) to guide our data collection and data analysis. For many years in the literature and in educational practices, Latinx students were viewed from a deficit lens, which included blaming the Latinx culture and families for educational underachievement (Salas et al., 2014). However, a strength-based framework examines Latinx students' and their families from the perspective of value-added. We used counter-storying (Lechuga-Peña & Lechuga, 2018; Solórzano & Yosso, 2001) to design our research questions, self-reflection questions for data analysis, and analysis of students' and faculty members' responses. With counter-storying and self-reflection, we can "change the master narrative of Latina/o education success" (Lechuga-Peña & Lechuga, 2018, p. 3).

Methodology

Guided by a strength-based framework and counter-storying lens, we use a qualitative case study approach to explore students' experiences with student-pedagogical partnership programs. A case study can be used to explore a group of participants' experiences with a specific phenomenon (Wolf et al., 2017). The focus in this study is the students and faculty members who participated in the partnership program.

Participants

Following Institutional Review Board (IRB) approval, participants were recruited across academic disciplines through an open call distributed via student and faculty Listservs at the institution. Students and faculty

interested in collaborating to explore and revise teaching approaches were invited to apply. A total of five faculty members and five students applied for the program. The criteria used to determine which students and faculty partners would participate included a commitment to collaborate to design inclusive and innovative teaching and learning activities. When possible, faculty-student pairings were based on student major and faculty discipline, and we also considered if the student partner had been a former student in the faculty partner's course.

All students in the current study were undergraduates. Students' classification was as follows: sophomores (1), juniors (3), and seniors (2). Students' majors included nursing, engineering, history and criminal justice, English and political science, and biology. Only two students had been in a faculty member's course before the start of this partnership. Additionally, faculty partners included lecturer I (1), lecturer II (1), lecturer III (1), assistant professor (1), and professor (1). Faculty disciplines included philosophy, history, learning framework, criminal justice, and English. Please see Table 2 for assigned student-faculty partnerships.

Faculty and student partners participated in a two-day workshop prior to the start of the semester for which Dr. Alison Cook-Sather served[*] as guest speaker and facilitator and introduced the student-faculty partnership model. Additionally, Alyssa and Lesley facilitated a workshop conversation with the group around the student-faculty partnership framework they developed to serve as a model for how to elicit, provide, and reflect on feedback received from student partners (Cavazos & Chapa, 2022). During the semester, faculty partners participated in monthly conversations with Alyssa and Lesley and their student partners, met weekly with their student partner, and designed a deliverable collaboratively on meaningful teaching partnerships. Examples of deliverables included a revised assignment, revised evaluation rubric, or revised teaching activity. The monthly meetings with faculty partners highlighted student partners' insights from over the weeks, especially any challenges. Through guided reflection questions, faculty partners were invited to reflect on their expectations for

student partners, how they elicited feedback, and how they reflected on the feedback received. Student partners were also expected to participate in collaborative weekly meetings with Alyssa and Lesley to reflect on their observation experiences, share insights over weekly readings on feedback strategies, and present over their own observation and feedback approaches. They also designed a collaborative document with student partners on the impact of the program on their personal and educational journey.

Data Collection and Data Analysis

To understand faculty and student partners' experiences, we collected self-assessment reflections at the beginning, middle, and end of the program as well as faculty participants' pre- and post-program reflections on student-faculty partnerships. See Table 1 for a list of sample student and faculty reflection questions. We used a counter-storying lens (Cook-Sather & Seay, 2021; Lechuga-Peña & Lechuga, 2018) to design students' self-reflection questions that focused on perceptions of sense of belonging and personal growth. By using a counter-storying lens, we were able to view student partners as experts of their own experiences (Cook-Sather & Seay, 2021). We also used a counter-storying lens to design faculty partners' self-reflection questions that focused on equity and student success, which allowed us to shift faculty members' attention toward Latinx students' positive experiences. Additionally, self-assessment questions focused on students' and faculty partners' experiences with the program.

We conducted a phenomenological research analysis to help understand the meaning of people's lived experiences informed by their reflections with a specific phenomenon (Moustakas, 1994). Data were analyzed through a systematic thematic analysis process (Saldaña, 2015) and counter-storying informed by the research questions. We used counter-storying to read and reread students' self-reflections focusing on how the pedagogical partnership program fostered personal growth and sense of belonging. We also read and reread faculty

Table 1. Student and Faculty Sample Reflection Questions

Student partners	Faculty partners
Self-Assessment Reflection 1	**Pre-Semester Reflection**
• What insight about conducting observations as a student consultant have you gained from the readings we have shared? • How were your observation notes guided by your faculty partner's questions, concerns, interests? • How did your faculty partner receive your feedback; how did they respond? • What connections do you notice between your experiences and what you read in the readings? • What challenges are you experiencing as a student partner?	• What did you learn about student-faculty partnerships? • What challenges do you think you might encounter? • How might we address them collectively? • What's one thing you'd like to learn more about related to student-faculty teaching partnerships? Why?
Self-Assessment Reflection 2	N/A
• What insights about conducting observations as a student consultant and sharing your perspective as a student with a faculty partner have you gained from your peers' presentations? • How would you assess your experience with the program overall (with your partner, other student partners, Drs. Cavazos and Lesley, and with the structure)? • What aspects of the program do you enjoy? What aspects would you like to change for future iterations? Why?	
Self-Assessment Reflection 3	**Post-Semester Reflection**
• What impact do you think participating in this program as a student partner had on you, your educational experiences at UTRGV, and how you plan to approach your education and/or your future professional aspirations? • What have you learned about yourself, your academic potential, and/or your future professional aspirations through your participation in this program as a student partner? • To what extent do you feel your contributions made a difference on the teaching and learning culture at UTRGV? • What advice would you give to future partners beginning this type of partnership?	• What impact did the program have on your views toward teaching/learning? • How did you elicit feedback from your partner? How would you process/reflect on the feedback? • What revisions did you make throughout the semester? What impact do you feel these revisions had on your teaching approaches and student learning? • What revisions were you unable to address this semester? Why was this the case?

Note. UTRGV = University of Texas Rio Grande Valley.

Table 2. Student-Faculty Assigned Partnerships

Student partner pseudonym	Classification	Major	Faculty partner pseudonym	Rank	Discipline
Catalina	Sophomore	Nursing	Sophia	Lecturer III	Learning framework
Abram	Junior	Engineering	Olivia	Lecturer I	Philosophy
Diego	Junior	History and criminal justice	Monica	Lecturer II	History
Camila	Senior	English and political science	Kevin	Professor	English
Jessica	Senior	Biology	Joaquin	Assistant professor	Criminal justice

members' self-reflection focusing on how they cultivated equitable educational spaces for student success. The second coding process involved an in-depth reading of both the data collected and the overall narrative analysis to identify thematic nuances and themes that overlapped across student and faculty participants (Saldaña, 2015).

Results

Following data analysis, several factors were identified. Student partners' themes were empathy, personal growth, solidarity, and feedback awareness. Faculty partners' themes were receptivity, resistance, and collaboration.

Student Partners

Empathy

Two themes we noted in students' reflections were that they developed a sense of **empathy** for and **solidarity** with faculty partners, students in the course, and fellow student partners. The student partners' empathetic mindset strengthened their feedback strategies and observation focus and, consequently, their faculty partners' willingness

to implement teaching revisions. Abram, a junior and engineering major, developed an empathetic mindset toward the challenges his faculty partner encountered, especially regarding online instruction during a pandemic. He reflected:

> The program has made me sympathize with the struggles of educators a lot more than I did before, as well as deliver a bit more insight into the guts of the process of teaching for a course. Prior to my participation I delivered feedback almost on a whim, with an almost full expectation of being ignored; in the middle and after [the program], I've begun to understand the difficulties of sorting through and implementing suggestions and feedback.

Abram's sense of solidarity with his faculty partner allowed him to frame his commentary through an empathetic lens that centered a student's perspective, especially during unprecedented teaching circumstances due to the COVID-19 pandemic, when a sense of adaptation was needed to respond to students' diverse needs.

However, certain student partners realized that empathizing with others goes beyond understanding someone's circumstances and instead moves toward making commitments to teaching practices. For instance, Camila, a senior English and political science major, shared:

> When someone is experiencing life changing experiences or just difficult situations, it is important to be mindful and to give opportunities . . . realizing how, as a student, I go through a lot of things and need the extra assignment time, yet it was easy for me to question the performance of other students . . . if there are professors like me, then there is a probability that someone could have been helped and wasn't helped.

Camila initially questioned other students' performance but quickly empathized with them and the need for professors to also question their assumptions to provide support for students' learning.

Solidarity

Students developed solidarity among one another as student partners. Diego, a junior and history and criminal justice major, shared that he appreciated listening to and building a unified understanding with fellow student partners because it allowed him to "compare [courses] to one another and see how [faculty partners] tackle[d] the COVID crisis in the classroom." When student partners shared their experiences, they explored how their faculty partners responded to challenges in the classroom, such as internet connectivity difficulties, balancing new daily life circumstances resulting from the pandemic, and navigating through new technology tools for learning. Abram reflected on the impact that listening to his fellow student partners' experiences had on him as he navigated conversations with his faculty partner:

> The primary insight given from my peers' presentations came from them as a collective; every case had struggles, and every struggle had workarounds. Without them, I would have thought I was the only one having trouble with the circumstances and that the others had adapted just fine. With them I realized that while I and the others were struggling, adaptation was within reach. It was quite encouraging. From [Diego], in particular, I got a takeaway message that specificity is a cornerstone of effective feedback and should be focused on; general feedback is about as unhelpful as no feedback at all it seems.

While Abram was the only student partner who expressed doubts about the impact this program had on his educational journey, his reflection highlights that solidarity can transform how we cope with challenges and adapt in ways that may lead to positive impact in a student-faculty partnership context.

Personal Growth

Student partners also noted **personal growth** as they reflected on their experiences in the program, particularly noting increased confidence, empowerment, and engagement in their education. Jessica, a senior biology major, noted:

> I have learned that I now have more confidence in myself as a student. I am more confident in my voice in the sense that my presence in academia truly matters and I will take that to the professional scene as well. I am just in general much more confident in myself, in part because of this program but also due to some self-growth that occurred during these crazy times. . . . my voice matters in any context.

Jessica's awareness of her personal growth, notably her confidence and belief her "voice matters in any context" is one of the highlights of the potential impact this program can have on students' agency, sense of belonging, and self-efficacy in education.

Feedback Awareness

Empathy, solidarity, and personal growth were key factors that helped student partners understand teaching intentions and practices, which ultimately facilitated their **feedback awareness** and ability to provide targeted feedback. Students' reflections on the teaching conversations with their faculty partner revealed that their feedback on teaching focused on inclusivity and accessibility, student engagement, feedback and assessment processes, representation, and implicit biases. For example, Abram's most successful feedback moment stemmed from his understanding of the educational challenges Olivia experienced while teaching during a pandemic. This allowed him to shift his feedback on teaching toward an accessibility lens. Abram shared:

While our initial focus was on simply improving the quality of the class, our tangent into accessibility became our mainstay. Quickly implementing subtitles, improving screen-reader readability, allowing text manipulation options for those with reading impairments like dyslexia; I count all these and more into the most successful moments of the partnership.

Abram's understanding of the constraints that may have impaired his partners' ability to implement his feedback might have influenced their decision to focus on accessibility concerns in the design of the course. However, we should also note that there might have been other concerns, such as faculty partners' resistance to pedagogical changes, that might have led to this focus, as we will learn from the faculty partners' themes.

Similarly, Catalina, a sophomore nursing major, offered insights informed by her growing sense of empathy toward the students enrolled in the course. Particularly, her views centered on challenging implicit biases about students' engagement (or lack thereof) in learning moments. She reflected:

The program allowed me to become more educated on what goes on behind the scenes not only with the students, but with professors. I think this program really helped me out with communicating feedback to professors and what we can look at not only in my observation class but in all to attain a collaborative/engaging class [during] coronavirus. . . . I have been able to get a better understanding of how to answer questions to students [while] thinking of everyone's situation and being respectful.

Catalina challenged her implicit biases about the extent of students' engagement in the course by understanding their unique personal situations and suggesting an emphasis on their professional aspirations through small group activities to foster community.

Student partners' feedback was also informed by what worked well in the course, particularly when faculty partners were responsive to issues of representation. In this context, representation refers to the inclusion of different voices, experiences, and identities to inform the design of teaching and learning activities. For instance, Diego reflected on his experience being a former student in his faculty partner's course:

> Of all the history professors I have taken classes with as a junior, Dr. [Monica] is perhaps the most connected professor with the culture and identity of the [location] and [institution]. She teaches her students about their history, a heritage that was overshadowed by years of rigid teaching in regular school.

Informed by this context as a former student in the course, Diego's feedback to his faculty partner often centered on building a sense of community and responsiveness to students' identities through her approach in designing an online course.

Jessica's feedback to her faculty partner was also informed by students' experiences in the course, particularly their performance on timed quizzes. When asked about what she learned about eliciting and sharing feedback on teaching with her faculty partner, she reflected:

> Trust, trust, trust. Learn to trust your [faculty] partner. Upon giving some feedback to [Dr. Joaquin] on the quiz time length, I knew he would be hesitant about the idea because it was basically one of his "non-negotiables." I instead, offered reassurance that I knew the reasoning behind as to why he created the quiz how he has in the first place; it's to try to circumvent cheating. Knowing this I instead offered to just add 2–3 minutes to quiz time length. That would give students enough time to check their work, but not enough time for them to cheat.

Jessica deliberately notes that one way to challenge faculty partners' resistance or hesitance in listening to student feedback is to

understand their teaching intentions and approach the feedback from the faculty member's perspective.

Faculty Partners

Resistance and Reluctance

Faculty participants' reflections on how student partners contributed to their teaching revisions highlighted three themes: receptivity to student partnerships, navigating resistance, and building a collaborative mindset. Olivia, a lecturer in philosophy, shared, "I learned about the kinds of boundaries that need to be worked on and set between faculty and student partners." This illustrates that at the start she was not entirely receptive to the idea of engaging in a pedagogical partnership. Her choice of the word *boundaries* foreshadowed her experience with her student partner. By the end of the initiative, each faculty member was required to complete a final reflection piece. Olivia reflected on the impact the collaboration may have had on her student partner:

> I honestly do not know. I hope it's been positive. My concern is that I was not as effective as I could have been. Because I've felt so uncomfortable this semester, it has shown in my unwillingness to change too much during the semester.

This highlights her rooted resistance and low receptivity toward the teaching partnership work, which may have played a role in her broad observation goals with the student partner. Her realization and awareness that she might not have been as receptive as she thought regarding student feedback is a critical step toward shifting teaching practices that respond to Latinx students' needs.

At the beginning of the program, Joaquin, an assistant professor in criminal justice, gave an impression of low receptivity to student feedback. When prompted to share what he had learned about pedagogical partnerships, he stated:

I think the student-faculty partnership is kind of a reciprocal relation-
ship, that is, both the students and faculty could learn from each other
by interacting and communicating. . . . What I am curious [about] is
how to select students who are interested in this program. I mean,
does this program have any standards to select students or is it just
based on application?

Joaquin was hesitant to collaborate with his student partner, Jessica,
because she was a biology major who did not share her faculty partners'
academic discipline or have any prior knowledge of the professional
language or concepts used in the education field. By the end of the
initiative, when asked to reflect on the way their collaboration may have
impacted Jessica, Joaquin was the only faculty member who asked his
student partner about her experience in the program. He shared:

She told me that she could look at the courses she took more critically
after participating. She did not objectively accept everything prepared
and [given] by the course instructors; however, she now could know
whether the course was well prepared or not. One sign of this change
is that when she did the course evaluation this semester, she did not
simply circle the value, however, she wrote very detailed comments
and suggestions.

Joaquin grew to value her input and created a space where she felt
safe enough to share her experience.

Faculty partners' receptivity and resistance to student feedback
on their teaching approaches were often informed by one another.
Faculty partners were prompted to reflect on their experiences with
student partners by exploring teaching moments they were unable
to address or revise during the semester. Monica, a lecturer in history,
shared:

I was unable to change my Blackboard (BB) to a weekly folder format
as my students began with topic folders and changing it three weeks

into the semester would confuse them when they had just gotten used to the [current organization]. But I will be doing this in the future.

While it would have been feasible for Monica to change the navigational structure that same semester, Monica's reluctance to shift was shaped by the impact that drastically changing an organizational approach could have on student success in the course. Additionally, this experience helped her further reflect on the importance of seeking student feedback. She noted:

> Teachers get stuck in a structure and we need to be reminded to update our class to our students' current needs. . . . It reminded me that what may make sense to me may not be the best structure or instructions for students. I think [that in the future] I will go through instructions with students and with their help, clear up any confusing wording.

Monica's reflection also illustrates a sense of understanding and responding to students' perspectives.

Receptivity and Collaborative Mindset

While there were moments of resistance in the pedagogical partnerships, there were also moments where faculty and student partners engaged in collaboration from the beginning of the program. Sophia, a lecturer in a learning framework course, shared that because her student partner was a former student, they built a trustworthy partnership from the start. Sophia felt that her student partner could offer valuable insights about how beneficial specific projects were in her class, which could later inform her teaching practices. She reflected:

> My student partner created a survey for our class. I placed it on Blackboard and informed students the results would go to my student partner. Not all students completed the survey, but the results were very helpful from those who did complete survey. I plan to use the survey in following semesters.

By articulating her intention to use the survey her student partner created in subsequent courses, Sophia's reflections illustrate her receptivity and collaborative mindset to listen to student partners' experiences to enhance the teaching and learning experiences in her courses.

The idea of pausing to understand student perspectives was reiterated by other faculty partners. Kevin, a professor in English, reflected on the challenges he encountered: "I'll always find it difficult to stay quiet, not because I don't value other voices, but because I'm constantly seeing connections and lines of thought. I'll be spending time further developing my listening skills and strategies." Kevin's acknowledgment that his outgoing personality might be perceived as resistance to student voices is critical in ensuring he commits to listening in ways that will influence his teaching approaches. When asked about his teaching revisions because of his student partnership, Kevin reflected:

> I usually don't make too many changes during a unit. I like to see how the whole thing plays out and make adjustments for the next class because most of my classes find a comfort zone by midterm. But the intensity of this class made that not possible, so it was actually great to have another set of eyes to notice things during this pilot. It allowed me just to teach and know that [Camila] was going to prompt my reflection later. So that was a difference for me; I was able to focus on the day because she had my reflective back.

While Kevin's reflections might illustrate he is resistant to making immediate changes to his teaching, he is cognizant of the need to reflect on his instructional approach.

Discussion

The purpose of this study was to identify the impact of a student-faculty partnership program on teaching and learning practices at an HSI,

specifically students' agency, personal growth, and sense of belonging and instructors' values and beliefs on building equitable educational spaces. Benefits of participation in the student-faculty partnership program from the perspectives of student partners included empathy, personal growth, and feedback awareness. Findings regarding students' personal growth support Cook-Sather and Seay's (2021) findings that Black, women students reported positive changes in perception and engagement because of involvement in a pedagogical partnership program that valued their voices. In the current study, student partners' changes in personal growth were possible because the program built a safe space for them to share their successes and challenges in their partnerships, thereby building community and a sense of belonging. The weekly meetings with student partners that Alyssa and Lesley facilitated served as opportunities for students to get to know one another, share their experiences and feelings, and focus on a growth mindset. The emphasis we placed on student partners' voices and experiences throughout the weekly sessions contributed to their empathy, solidarity, and personal growth. These three areas are connected to self-efficacy, which refers to "beliefs in one's capabilities to organize and execute the courses of action required to produce given attainments" (Bandura, 1997, p. 3).

Findings also highlighted that student partners gained greater confidence and feedback awareness to provide their faculty partners with intentional feedback on teaching practices. Through weekly and monthly meetings, we created a space for student and faculty partners to discuss and think about how issues around inclusion and equity can be improved in teaching (Cook-Sather et al., 2021; de Bie et al., 2021). As student partners began to feel comfortable in the current study to use their voice and agency with their faculty partner, they provided specific and intentional feedback on implicit bias, engagement, inclusion, accessibility, assessment of learning, and representation. When student partners feel confident to provide feedback on these issues, faculty members might be more likely to develop a cultural sustaining pedagogy and influence student

learning and sense of belonging (Cook-Sather & Des-Ogugua, 2019; Cook-Sather & Seay, 2021; Paris, 2012).

Findings from the perspectives of faculty partners included receptivity, resistance, and collaborative mindset. Findings regarding faculty partners' receptivity to accepting and using feedback from student partners are similar to Cook-Sather and Motz-Storey's (2016) findings. However, although some faculty partners in the current study were receptive to working with student partners, other participants were resistant. There are several explanations for such resistance, including faculty members' deficit views toward students at HSIs or institutional structures, beliefs, and norms for higher education teaching practices (Bovill et al., 2016). One form of resistance involved faculty members' concerns about using feedback from student partners to make changes to courses in the middle of a semester, as institutional practices regarding peer observation of teaching and student evaluations are typically completed with the goal to create changes for subsequent courses. Another form of resistance was the traditional teaching mindset in which faculty do not collaborate with students as partners in the teaching and learning process. This finding supports Marquis et al.'s (2019) findings that some faculty members might be resistant to listening to student partners' perspectives to improve teaching practices.

Implications for Practice

First, we identified areas to grow a student-faculty partnership program and design purposeful workshops on how to provide and receive meaningful feedback on teaching and learning. To increase student confidence on the impact of their voices, universities can provide hands-on activities as part of the partnership program about implementing a variety of feedback strategies, particularly exploring what effective and meaningful feedback looks like. For instance, we can ask student partners to bring samples of teaching and learning experiences they would like to provide their instructors with feedback on and analyzing feedback strategies examples from former student

partners. Drawing on the findings from the current study on the areas in which student partners provided feedback, future student-faculty partnership programs could focus on inclusivity/accessibility, engagement, feedback on/assessment of learning, representation, and implicit bias as a framework for professional development and feedback requests. Additionally, universities can build moments where student partners receive feedback on their feedback to faculty partners from fellow student partners, their faculty partners, and CTE director and student partner leader. In fact, informed by these findings, this grounded approach to future student-faculty partnership programs is being implemented at the institution where this case study took place.

Part of the student-faculty partnership program also needs to focus on mitigating faculty and student resistance as well as cultivating a receptive and collaborative mindset. To address faculty resistance to collaboration, a program can create spaces for faculty partners and student partners to listen to each other, welcome various perspectives, and engage in dialogue about process and content (Cook-Sather, 2020). Universities can require the use of a feedback dialogue document during the initial part of the partnership. The purpose of this document is to help student partners understand what their faculty partner wants them to observe and to provide a structured way to give feedback. During each week, we gave faculty members the following prompt: "Please describe what area of the course you would like your student partner to focus on when conducting their observations." The student partner then observed the course, described an aspect of the course, and asked questions. Finally, the faculty partner provided their reflections in response to the student partner's observations and reflection questions, thereby facilitating a series of feedback dialogue loops between each other.

Collaborative activities within the program built a sense of empathy and solidarity, so future iterations should implement collaboration between student partners earlier in the program and build a sustainable way to engage in collaboration with faculty partners as well. One such approach is to develop a community of practice in which student partners and faculty partners have multiple opportunities to engage

in conversation, reflection, and feedback loops. Also, student partners reported benefits in solidarity and empathy. Future iterations of a pedagogical partnership program could also integrate resilience and positive psychology skills (Lenz et al., 2020; Suldo, 2016; Vela, Garcia, et al., 2019) to further support Latinx students' development. Because we found evidence that a student-faculty partnership program can influence students' self-efficacy, HSIs can design similar pedagogical partnership programs to support students' confidence (van Dinther et al., 2011).

The final implication involves student evaluations of teaching. Student ratings are not the best indicator of teaching effectiveness; researchers document minimal relationships between student ratings and student learning as well as biased evaluation against women and underrepresented minority instructors (Braga et al., 2014; Flaherty, 2021; Lawrence, 2018). Another limitation with student evaluations is that faculty receive feedback at the end of the academic semester, when it is too late to make changes to current courses. If student partners collaborate with their faculty partner to collect feedback in the middle of a semester, it could improve teaching and learning for that course. Student consultants could work with their faculty partner to identify a few questions to solicit feedback. Then, the student partner could collect survey or interview data with students in the course without the instructor present (Finelli et al., 2008). The idea is for the student partner to help their faculty member collect and interpret feedback from students to improve their current course.

Implications for Research and Limitations

While some research has begun to explore the benefits of student-faculty partnerships for faculty members and students, little attention has been given to students in these courses. Researchers need to examine the impact of the model on students' academic achievement, sense of belonging, and other outcomes related to inclusion and equity. Additionally, programs on student-faculty partnerships can play an

important role in building students' self-efficacy, and further exploration on how factors such as empathy, solidarity, and personal growth are linked to self-efficacy are important areas of future research efforts. Finally, researchers and/or practitioners should develop and evaluate a framework for student partners to give feedback that focuses on inclusion/accessibility, engagement, feedback on and assessment of learning, implicit bias, and representation. Researchers could then explore the impact of the feedback framework on student partners' sense of belonging and agency as well as faculty members' use of inclusive and equitable teaching and learning practices.

There are several limitations in the study. The partnership program was implemented at an HSI with over 90% Latinx students. Results might not generalize to other HSIs or other universities. Additionally, the number of student and faculty partners who participated in the partnership was small. We also did not address the impact of the program on students who were enrolled in faculty partners' courses.

Conclusion

The SaLT program is one innovative approach that can help improve teaching and learning at HSIs, which can directly impact Latinx students' success, self-efficacy, and sense of belonging (van Dinther et al., 2011). Practitioners can implement the SaLT program, specifically the overall recommendations provided under implications for practice in this study, at their institutions to improve teaching and learning practices and student success.

Biographies

Alyssa G. Cavazos is Director of the Center for Teaching Excellence and Associate Professor of Writing Studies in the Department of Writing and Language Studies at the University of Texas Rio Grande Valley.

Lesley Chapa is a second-year medical student at the University of Texas Rio Grande Valley School of Medicine.

Javier Cavazos Vela is Professor and Associate Dean for Research and Graduate Programs at the University of Texas Rio Grande Valley.

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