

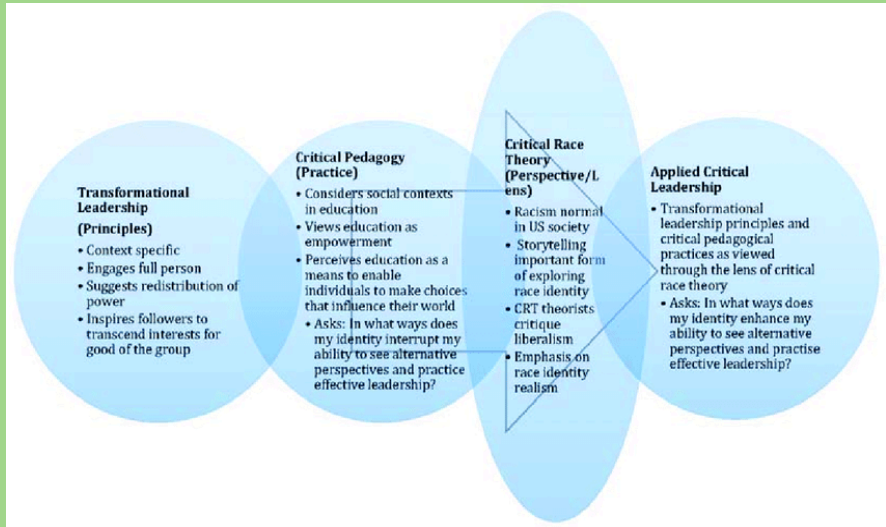
Theory Overview:

A strengths-based model of leadership; leaders consider the positive attributes of their identities and how they can benefit leadership practice; embedded with the principles of transformational leadership, critical pedagogy, and critical race theory.

Example:

Julian, a young Latino principal, uses his identity to establish trust with teachers. He engages in critical conversations to develop culturally responsive teaching techniques and strategies so that school pedagogy can begin to match the learners' needs.

Informational Graphic:



THEORY #1: Applied Critical Leadership

Key Concepts:

- **Strengths** - morale is increased as followers are integrated into the core functions of the institution; uses a critical race perspective to enact context-specific change in response to power, domination, access, and achievement imbalances.
 - Asks: -“Whose perspectives are missing in these conversations? Who benefits from these actions?”
 - “In what ways does my identity enhance my ability to see alternative perspectives and practice effective leadership?”
- **Weaknesses** - potential for burnout; disruptions of routines; exaggerated disagreements; transformational leaders can become exhausted from high expectations.

Key Terms:

- **Transformational Leadership** - engages the full person by looking for sources of motivation in followers and seeking to satisfy higher needs.
- **Critical Pedagogy**- advancing personal liberation by raising critical consciousness and encouraging learners to engage in meaningful dialogue - both in the classroom and in society.
- **Critical Race Theory**- challenging educational politics and leadership by legitimizing narratives of discrimination against people of color and highlighting the importance of counter-narratives; encourages researchers to recognize silenced voices in qualitative data.
- **Interest Convergence** -considers that the interest of people of color in achieving racial equality will be accommodated only when it ‘converges’ with the interest of whites.

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Reading Reflection: As I read about Applied Critical Leadership, I became empowered to use my identity as an Asian-American to question whether there are enough diverse voices in my organization. Inspired by my readings, I reached out to my manager to learn more information about cultural diversity in our leadership team. I asked her, “Do any of our leaders look like me?” After carefully thinking about my question, she agreed that upper management lacks cultural diversity and insisted on following up with her boss regarding this issue. In this moment of allyship, I viewed my manager’s acknowledgment and support as transformational and liberating. By reviewing workplace practice through a critical theory lens, I was able to use my voice to advance critical consciousness in my field and advocate for change that will improve workplace ‘belonging.’