

UNHEARD VOICES OF DEMOCRACY: IMPLICATIONS FOR LEADERS REGARDING HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS' PERCEPTIONS OF SCHOOL SAFETY MEASURES

John Horner

Dr. Cynthia MacGregor, Dissertation Supervisor

ABSTRACT

This phenomenological study documented junior and senior's perceptions of their rights, surveillance cameras, and School Resource Officers in school environments. Participants included 109 seniors and 47 juniors from an urban, a suburban, and a rural district. Mixed-methods design allowed triangulation of data between 15 Likert-scale quantitative 15 open-ended qualitative survey items, and focus groups. Survey and interview responses were coded with an ethno-methodological approach.

Parts one and two of the study revealed three themes: Treated Unfairly, Marginalized, and Disenfranchised. Consistency existed between students' perceptions of their rights while at school and the schools' use of surveillance cameras. The third section revealed students felt safer because districts employed School Resource Officers. Vague use of the word safety in survey items was problematic. Study informed school leaders of impact of social justice theories on school cultures.