

## ABSTRACT

VILLARREAL, MINERVA M., From Separate but Equal, to Tracking to Choice: Perceptions of Different Stakeholders on the Impact of Magnet Schools on High School Students, Doctor of Education (Ed.D.), December 2005, pp. 161, 6 tables 4 figures.

The purpose of this research was to examine and compare the impact of magnet-vocational high schools on the perceptions of seniors from the magnet schools and on those from the comprehensive/host schools. Additionally, the study examined the perceptions that several stakeholders of those schools and of the services and opportunities presented to the students were also investigated. Finally, the perceptions or parents were also investigated.

The Mixed-Methods Design study used several instruments as the primary sources of self-reported data: school district course listing guides, annual progress reports, official district Web sites and literature about district magnet schools.

The second component quantitatively investigated the perceptions of high school seniors from the district under study. The participants responded to a researcher-developed survey questionnaire.

The third component qualitatively investigated the perceptions of different stakeholders of the high schools: one teacher, a graduate of the first high school to host a magnet school, three Deans of Instruction, five high school librarians and seven parents. In-depth interviews were conducted of these stakeholders.

The results of the quantitative component of the study indicated the following: (1) There is a relationship between Non-Magnet and Magnet students' perception of Magnet schools; (2) There is difference among the students' perceptions of skills taught to them, about their support system, of the resources available for them, of their plans for higher education, of their educational environment at home, and of participation in extra-curricular activities. (3) There is an interaction effect between the Non-magnet and Magnet groups and the subscales.

The findings of the qualitative component of the study supported the findings from the quantitative component.