

Impact of Sustained Scholarship: Enduring Opportunities for High-Quality Education

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Topic of the Study

The investigation explores the influence of receiving ongoing scholarship funding for the recipients, their families, and on the school's culture.

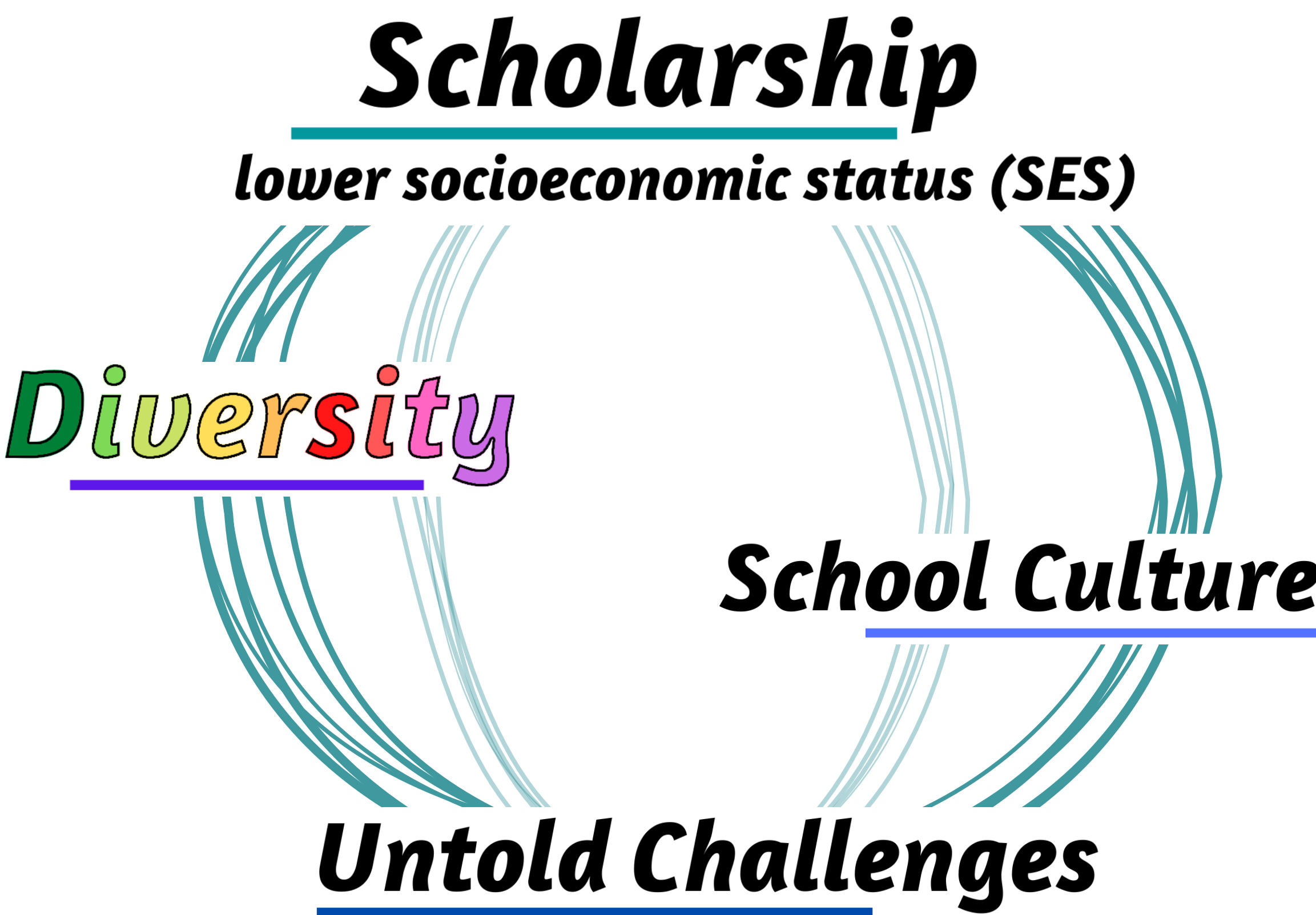
Abstract

The mixed-methods research study was designed to identify outcomes of sustained scholarship support on a targeted group of students. The investigation explored the influence of receiving ongoing scholarship funds on the recipients, their families, and on the school's culture. The identified sample of students attended a non-profit private preschool and was then awarded a scholarship to attend a private, faith-based preparatory institution serving students from pre-kindergarten to eighth grade in a rural hub city. Two scholarships are given annually to preschool students who have demonstrated academic potential and whose families actively engage in their child's education. Data was collected from 26 study participants from three subgroups: 1) adult and minor scholarship recipients, 2) parents of scholarship recipients, and 3) faculty and staff of the preparatory school. Adult participants responded to online survey questions, while minor recipients were asked face-to-face interview questions at the school. Data analysis revealed that diversification of the student population by race, background, and socio-economic may help students identify more easily with the world around them and be more accepting of different cultures. Analysis of the data also highlighted that even though the scholarship funds covered the students' tuition, there were additional expenses that were sometimes prohibitive for the scholarship recipients, such as school uniforms, field trips, and unplanned costs. Conclusions drawn from the data reveal that a positive school culture enables all students to feel a sense of belonging, participate actively in the educational community, and develop meaningful social relationships.

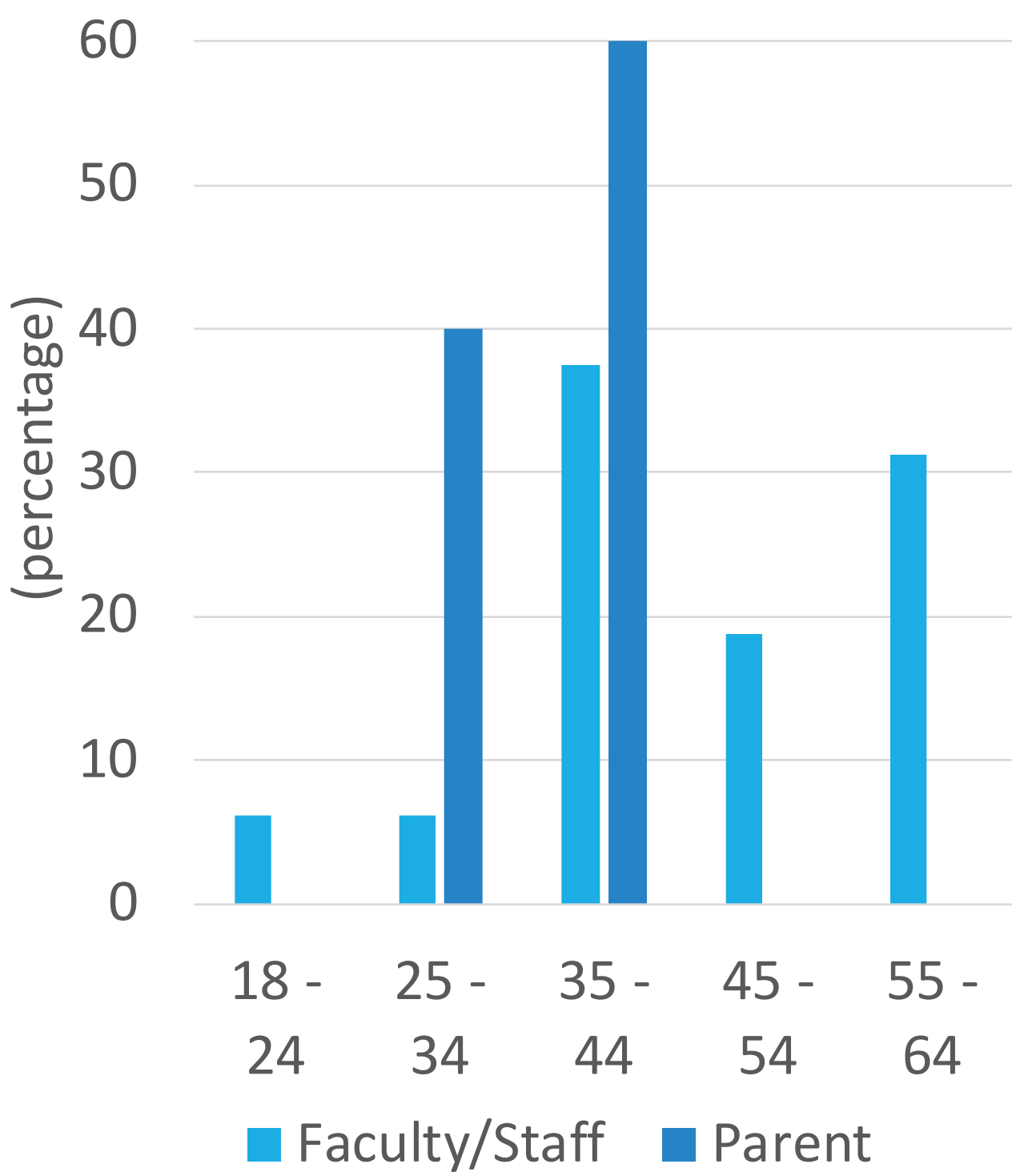
Keywords: diversity, scholarship, school culture

Data Collection Methodology

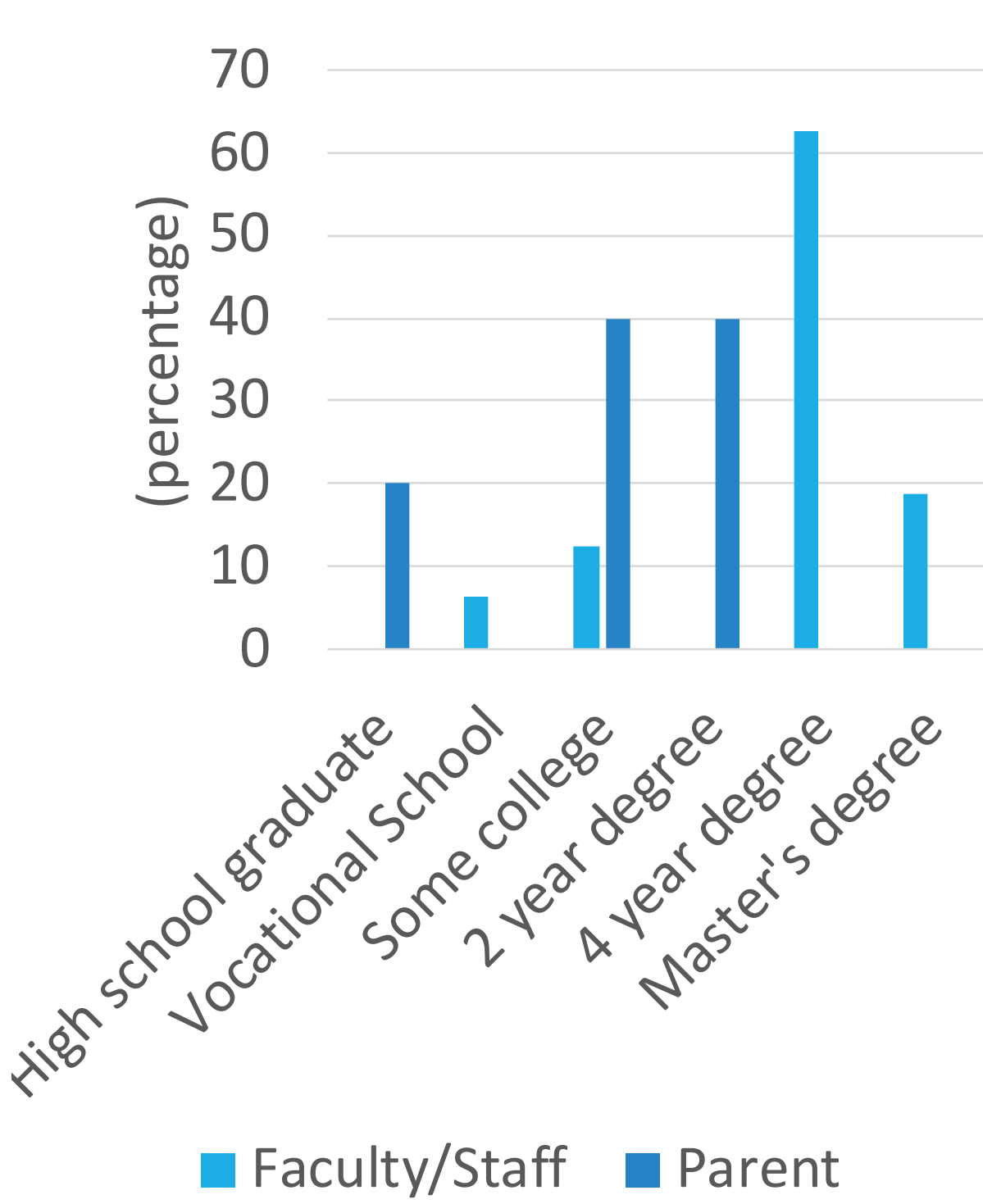
The mixed-methods study collected qualitative and quantitative data gleaned from both online surveys and targeted semi-structured interviews conducted face-to-face. All adult participants were recruited through an email inviting them to participate in the online survey. Minor participants (younger than 18 years of age) were recruited after their parent or guardian gave permission for them to participate in the research study. The participants in the study included the following three subgroups: 1) Scholarship Recipients - both adult and minor 2) Parents of Scholarship Recipients 3) Faculty/Staff of the School. Faculty and staff, parents, and adult scholarship recipients responded to online survey questions, while minor recipients were asked face-to-face interview questions at the target school. The total number of participants was 26, including 16 faculty and staff, five parents, and five scholarship recipients (three minor students and two adult former students).



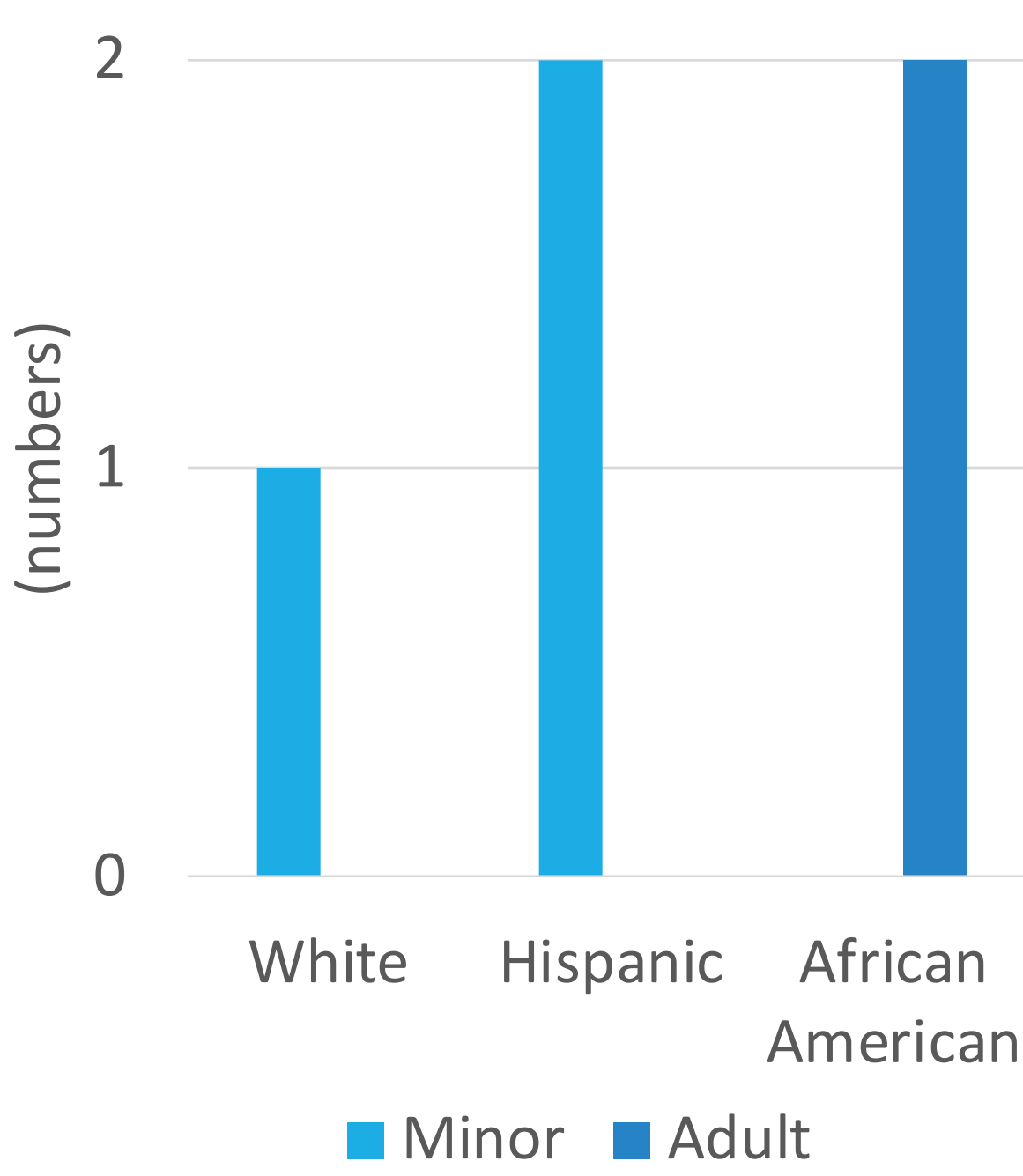
Faculty & Parents' Age Range



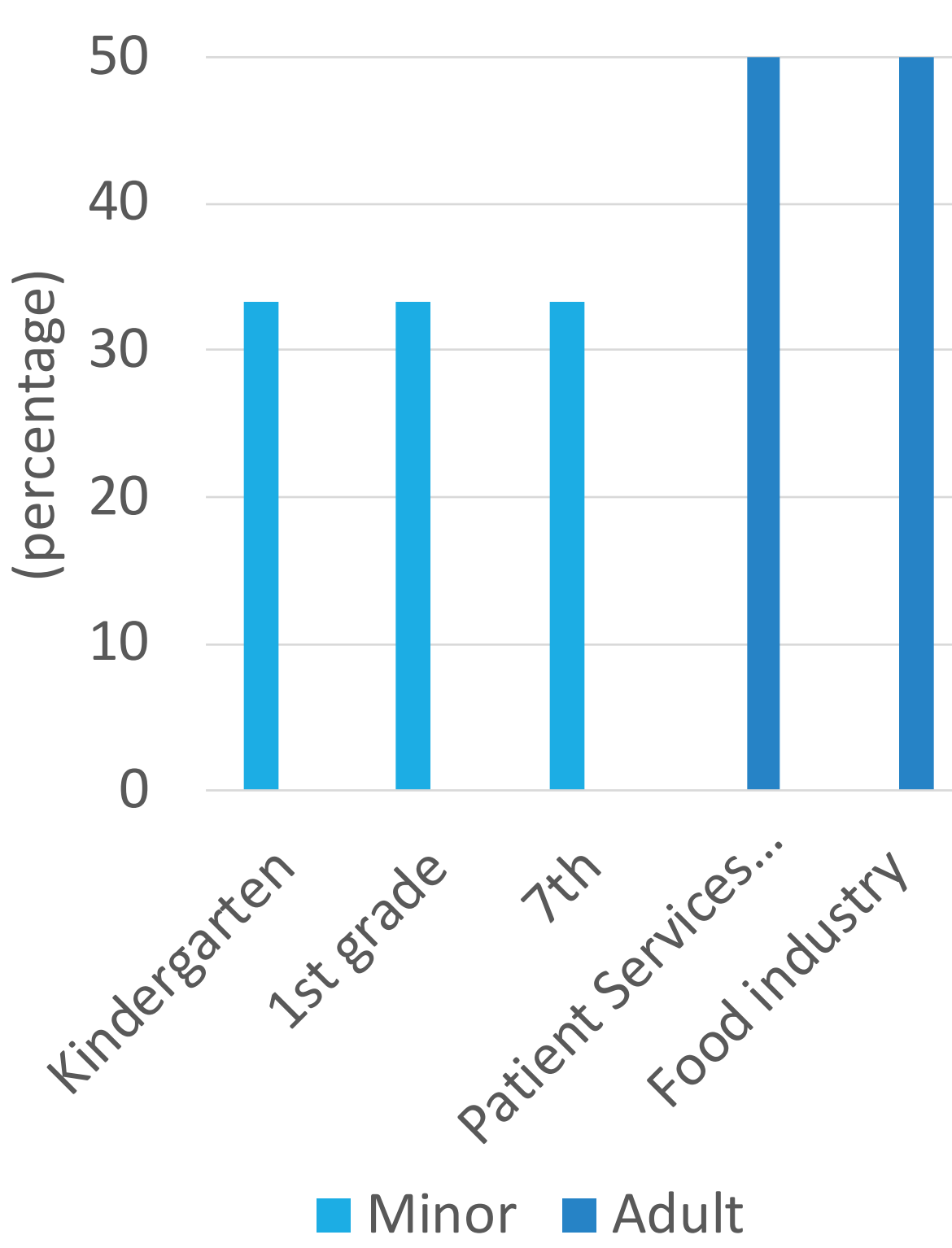
Faculty & Parents' Education



Scholarship Recipients' Ethnicity



Scholarship Recipients' Current Grade Level & Occupation



Discussion

Research findings highlighted the fact that even though the scholarship funds covered the students' tuition, there were additional expenses that were sometimes prohibitive for the scholarship recipients, such as the cost of uniforms, field trips, and unplanned costs. Faculty participants shared that some students faced food insecurity issues and were challenged at times with issues involving social inclusion and meeting higher academic expectations. Conclusions drawn from the data reveal that a positive school culture enables all students to feel a sense of belonging, participate actively in the educational community, and develop meaningful social relationship.

Findings

Data collected in this study revealed that diversification of the student population by race, background, and socio-economic may help students identify more easily with the world around them and be more accepting of different cultures. Both parents and students responded that the school's curriculum and smaller classrooms were beneficial for high-quality education and academic independence. Though the scholarship recipients interacted with their peers just like other students, sometimes they needed extra support for assignments due to not having easy access to computers or additional school supplies.



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