Notice of the Final Oral Examination
for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy

of

SHAILOO BEDI

B.A. (University of Victoria, 1993)
M.A. (University of Victoria, 1996)
M.L.I.S. (University of British Columbia, 1998)

“‘You Live What You Learn’: Identity and Practice among Visible Minority School Administrators”

Department of Curriculum and Instruction

Thursday, December 10, 2015
8:30 a.m.
David Turpin Building
Room A144

Supervisory Committee:
Dr. Helen Raptis, Department of Curriculum and Instruction, University of Victoria (Supervisor)
Dr. Deborah Begoray, Department of Curriculum and Instruction, UVic (Member)
Dr. Catherine McGregor, Department of Educational Psychology & Leadership Studies, UVic (Outside Member)

External Examiner:
Dr. Kate Rousmaniere, Department of Educational Leadership, Miami University

Chair of Oral Examination:
Dr. Lisa Surridge, Department of English, UVic

Dr. David Capson, Dean, Faculty of Graduate Studies
Abstract

Principals and vice-principals occupy a vital role in our public schools. They hold politically and organizationally powerful positions to influence change and support educational reform. Riehl (2000) points out that one’s practice of leadership are influenced by one’s identity, thus knowing who are administrators are is significant. Although understanding who our formal administrators are is still an emerging area of scholarly inquiry, most of the educational literature focuses on administrators from the mainstream, dominant culture. Little attention has been given to who our visible minority principals and vice-principals are, especially within in a Canadian and British Columbia context. This study explores how the life-histories and life experiences of visible minority principals and vice-principals of BC who are immigrants and children of immigrants have created their identities. In particular, how have their experiences as “other” influenced their praxis as formal school leaders? Using a life history methodological approach, data were gathered through semi-structured in-depth interviews. Six themes and three sub-themes emerged from the interviews that highlight participant life experiences, meaning and learning about their identity and praxis as leaders. Participants linked their present views, beliefs, and approaches to leadership with events and personal experiences from their past. Participants’ enactment of school leadership was informed by their experiences trying to fit in with mainstream culture; identity issues and cultural identity development; connecting with minority students and families; needing to promote diversity; being mentored and now being mentors; and influencing change. Therefore, a connection was made by the research participants between who they are as leaders and how their experiences have influenced them.