Examining a Measure of Cultural Identity in Minority Youth at the Middle School Transition within the Context of a Culturally-Responsive Curriculum

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Abstract

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Research suggests that early intervention programs are vehicles for change in addressing the educational debt afforded to children of color related to their academic experiences. Early intervention programs that provide services to minority youth are in a unique position to teach to cultural differences and acceptance, providing an overall awareness of culture. As children of color have the added experience of understanding the role of culture and diversity in their lives, it is beneficial for the field to understand how teaching about culture and discussing it can facilitate positive development. The present study is at the intersection of early intervention programs providing academic enrichment and college preparation services and culturally responsive practices for cultural identity development. This study examines a measure of cultural identity for minority youth who participate in a critical race theory-informed, culturally-responsive curriculum, as part of an academically rigorous early intervention program. Cultural

identity is examined through the growth of participants during participation in a culturally-responsive intervention for six weeks. The social validity, or acceptability of the curriculum, from the students' perspectives is also examined. Results of the study support the addition of cultural components for small group intervention and encouraging discussions that bring awareness and acceptance of cultural differences in students and school staff. Additional education regarding the role of culture and ethnicity in the lives of minority youth and their families is integral to inform the scope of early intervention programs for minority youth.

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Chapter 1: Introduction

The United States has long been considered a country with a diverse population of immigrants from all over the world. A national value of the U.S. holds that all of its citizens are created equal and in turn require and deserve equal and fair treatment. It is well documented that while versions of this value have been written and discussed, it is also well known that minority populations have not known equality or fairness throughout U.S. history in several capacities, In the 2006 presidential address to the American Educational Research Association (AERA), Gloria Ladson-Billings discussed the work to be done to address the historical inequalities that minority populations have experienced, especially in education. There are documented disparities in access to and receipt of proper education for minority children, which is known as the *achievement gap*. Ladson-Billings highlighted the major strides forward that have been made since the civil rights movement in the 1970's including: desegregation of schools and access to free and appropriate education for all children, to name a few, while also making clear there is still much work to be done. The introduction of the idea of *educational debt* asks for a shift in perspective to thinking more about the whole picture of these complex issues. The educational debt addresses how several complex societal phenomena and experiences contribute to the inequalities experienced by minority populations. There are historical, economic, sociopolitical, and moral debts that have made lasting impacts on the lives of minority populations. It is in the understanding of these debts and how each has directly impacted the educational opportunities of minority population, that ways to eradicate these debts are found.

Critical race theory (CRT) was developed following the lack of response by the U.S. government in making racial considerations due to African American individuals being treated unfairly within the legal system (Delgado & Stefancic, 2000). This theory became the foundation

through which the legal community and eventually others viewed racial issues affecting African American people. CRT's primary tenet is to address the ways in which African Americans experience racism on a daily basis and following, how it effects their lives (Delagdo & Stefancic, 2017). In U.S. history, racial issues tend to primarily focus on the Black White dichotomy (Howard, 2010). Scholars of other minority backgrounds created variations of CRT to address the experiences with racism of other ethnic groups in an effort to address the complexity of experiences across cultural and ethnic groups. This allows the theory to expand and highlight the importance of separate ethnic group experiences, and how the differences among groups should be acknowledged and recognized.

Since the late 1960's, early intervention programs have been created to increase equitable educational opportunities and access to higher education for minority and low-income youth to disrupt the pathway to academic failure (Nettles & Perna, 1997). Academic, social, psychological, and financial support is provided as comprehensive preparation for successful college experiences for underserved children and families (Swail & Perna, 2002). The early intervention program agencies range from federally to privately-funded, yet all have the similar mission of increasing college enrollment for ethnic minority youth. The ultimate goal is to send minority youth onto pathways to higher education and early intervention programs begin for children as young as fourth grade (Nettles & Perna, 1997). According to data from the National Center of Educational Statistics (1999) research shows that by the end of eighth grade the documented academic performance differences in racial and ethnically diverse students is clear evidence of need for early intervention programs.

Some early intervention programs have been designed for implementation as early as fourth grade, in order to capitalize on protective factors that lead to academic success (Nettles &

Perna, 1997). One approach is to incorporate culturally responsive practices in programming for ethnic minority youth, which has been shown to have positive effects on their educational outcomes (Gay, 2001). Specifically, ethnic identity has been shown to have positive correlations with self-esteem (Goodstein & Ponterotto, 1997; Phelps, Taylor, & Gerard, 2001), higher quality of life (Utsey, Chae, Brown & Kelly, 2002), attitude toward school and education (Guzman, Santiago-Rivera & Hasse, 2005), and career decision-making and self-efficacy (Gushue & Whitson, 2006). While identity exploration is just emerging in early adolescence, encouraging identity exploration in the context of culture and ethnic group may prove to be a valuable addition to the literature on culturally-responsive practice as a protective factor for minority youth. Integrating cultural enrichment into early intervention programs for minority youth may be a way to provide added support for positive social and psychological development.

Scholars have studied protective factors that are influential for youth in promoting school success, which are pertinent to ethnic minority youth as well (Gutman & Midgley, 2000). Factors that promote academic achievement include: parental involvement and engagement in their child's schooling (Jeyes, 2014), development of social emotional coping strategies (e.g., skills to recognize and manage emotions for handling challenging situations, effective problem solving, and developing caring relationships with others) (Zins & Elias, 2004), and confidence and self-efficacy skills enhancing self-esteem (Bandura, 1989). Further, the inclusion of culture and recognition of cultural differences is known to positively influence academic achievement for children of color (Gay, 2005). The identification of ways to boost these known protective factors may allow for new pathways to be constructed for encouraging academic success in minority youth.

Statement of the Problem

In the 1990's, the comprehensive school reform (CSR) model was introduced to schools as a way to use research-based methods to improve the quality of education for all students and increase educational opportunities and outcomes, especially for students of color and low-income youth (Berends, Kirby, Naftel & McKelvey, 2001; National Research Council, 2004). In promoting school-wide change, CSR designs were created to either eliminate or drastically reduce academic tracking of students (Bodily, 2001), as the curriculum models were designed to promote flexibility and heterogeneous grouping within the classrooms. Many CSR models envisioned that all students would be exposed to high-quality curriculum and instruction. However, there are other CSR models that allow individual schools to determine how learning groups are organized (American Institute of Research, 2006). Despite the encouragement of educational equality, curriculum differentiation and pre-existing tracking practices has presented significant challenges in achieving this goal.

The consequence of curriculum differentiation has long been debated as the continued practice of ability grouping and tracking has maintained the gap in educational opportunity for all students. Ability grouping refers to the placement of elementary or middle school students into homogenous learning groups (Kulik, 2004) and tracking describes how secondary students are placed into course based on test scores, grades, academic interests, or vocational interests (Harris, 2011). Research continues to show that pre-existing tracking practices in schools may inhibit the ability to provide rigorous instruction and academically-rich and high-quality instruction, especially for students in the bottom ranking groups related to academic ability (Harris, 2011). Oakes (2002) describes three dimensions of how tracking is perpetuated in schools: there is a structural dimension, representing the ways that schools and classrooms are

organized to addressing learning needs; there is a political component, that reflects the "public labels, status differences, expectations, and consequences for academic and occupational attainment"; and last, there are entrenched societal norms that justify the differentiation of schooling of students, given the variability in pre-existing student abilities (Oakes, 1992, p.12).

This tracking system has increased the achievement gap rather than reduced it and appears to magnify the gap in representation of minority youth in gifted tracks as compared to other students (Diamond, 2006). Societal issues and lower expectations have significant consequences on the educational experiences and opportunities for minority youth. Ethnic minority students are often overlooked for consideration to access advanced academic curricula in schools and gifted and talented programs (Diamond, 2006). Instead, these youth are overrepresented in special education programs, which are known to provide additional educational services for students requiring more educational assistance (Skiba et al., 2008). This is just one example of how minority youth are subjected to implicit bias resulting in assumptions of under-performance or lower cognitive abilities than their White peers (Howard, 2010). Proving this assumption wrong is difficult to do when societal issues at the system level perpetuate these beliefs.

Historically, there have been higher concentrations of minority populations in low-income neighborhoods due to limited access to adequately paying jobs and lower financial resources. Schools in low-income areas are known to receive less federal funding and support, have limited educational resources (e.g., access to textbooks and other educational materials), and are more likely to hire less-qualified teachers due to teacher shortages (Diamond, 2006). These compounded issues can lead to minority youth receiving a lower quality education simply based on where they live. These circumstances may then limit access to, let alone preparation

for, the pathway to higher education for minority youth. Not all ethnic minority youth are impacted by low socio-economic status, although research has shown that even without this impacting variable, implicit biases can still lead to a similar outcome (Diamond, 2006).

Early intervention programs for minority youth were created to address the underrepresentation of minority youth in gifted education tracks and programs. National data collected by the College Board shows that the primary goal of these programs is to increase college enrollment in underrepresented student populations. There have been documented increases in college enrollment of minority populations and continues to show promise. These programs, while primarily focusing on academic support and financial assistance, have discovered the other social and psychological factors to consider for preparing ethnic minority youth for college. Among these social and psychological factors, some protective and others risk, are ethnic identity development (Phinney, 1993), racial socialization (Hughes et al., 2006), exposure to stereotypes, bias, and prejudice, poverty and homelessness, and exposure to community violence (Ullucci & Howard, 2015).

The transition to middle school is one of many vulnerable periods in child development. Given that early intervention programs intervene around this age and in an effort to work preventatively, focusing on how children at this age understand culture is important. Most early adolescents have not explored the meaning of ethnicity in their lives in any depth; however, society or caregivers may impose preconceived ideas about it. Intervening at this developmental period with culturally-responsive practice may allow for avoiding the risk of minority youth internalizing negative stereotypes and may positively inform identity exploration. Phinney (1993) suggests that with an achieved ethnic identity, minority youth can develop a way of dealing with negative stereotypes and prejudice, ultimately contributing to positive psychological

adjustment. Results of the proposed study may provide supportive evidence for adding cultural components to small group intervention and encouraging discussions that bring awareness and acceptance of cultural differences in students and school staff. Understanding the importance of the role that culture and ethnicity has in the lives of minority youth and their families will better inform early intervention services.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

The consequences of the educational debt are expansive therefore, when studying how this has affected minority populations, consideration of the theoretical underpinnings within the field of educational research is important. When understanding these repercussions, critical race theory (CRT) is a lens through which to view this societal issue, as the theory exemplifies how racism effects the daily lives of African Americans (Delgado & Stefancic, 2001). CRT emphasizes having an awareness of racism as the first step to working toward social justice advocacy. While CRT provides a valuable theoretical lens through which to view racial societal issues, its biggest critique has been its lack practical accessibility and dissemination into various fields. While this may be true at the societal level, there may be ways that CRT can be indirectly disseminated to smaller groups and individuals and there may be unexplored avenues that have the potential to shift societal thinking on racial issues.

Programs providing early intervention who provide academic enrichment and access to higher education for minority youth have a unique opportunity to embed culturally-responsive material in their curricula. There is a call for normalizing culture in every day practice and acknowledging that cultural understanding and practice cannot fit neatly into a box, but rather, one must have respect for the complexity of cultural differences (Howard, 2010). Research has shown that the integration of culturally-responsive content in curriculum in school increases

several positive psychosocial variables in minority youth (Howard & Terry, 2011). The theoretical framework utilized in the proposed study is a CRT-informed curriculum, disseminated within an early intervention program that integrates key terminology of CRT and teaches to awareness of racism in everyday life. These theoretical concepts are taught in a developmentally appropriate way to minority youth may be a way to exercise social justice advocacy earlier.

Identity development is the focus of the adolescent psychosocial developmental period. It is at this time that adolescent's develop the cognitive ability to understand more abstract ideas that enable them to question how they show up in their world. The majority of identity development research is conducted during adolescence and through young adulthood therefore, considerations for what identity development may look like in early adolescence is not as clear nor available. Early adolescence is a considerably impressionable time during child development and understanding the role identity holds at this time is equally as important. Ethnic minority youth exhibit unique identity needs and as research suggests development of ethnic identity leads to positive psychosocial development, this curriculum is for a population that would significantly benefit from this early intervention.

The National Educational Debt

Ladson-Billings (2006) introduced the concept of educational debt at the American Education Research Association in 2006. The educational debt is a shift in the conceptualization of the achievement gap to a larger societal scale. When thinking of the achievement gap, it often refers to the historical academic underperformance and disadvantage of minority populations as compared to their Caucasian counterparts (Schwartz, 2001). Ladson-Billings argues that a four-part societal debt owes to the underserved, minority populations more accurately reflects

minority population experiences in the U.S. Ladson-Billings (2006, p. 2) defines the educational debt as “the foregone schooling resources that could have and should have been invested in primarily low-income children, whose deficits lead to a variety of social problems (i.e., crime, low productivity, low wages, low labor force participation) that require on-going public investments.” This concept is likened to the U.S. national debt that constantly grows, despite multiple contributions and interventions to lower it. This translates to how over time, U.S. society as worked to close the gaps and eradicate disadvantages for minority populations, and while there has been positive change, the debt has lessened a significant amount. The four debts described are historical, economic, sociopolitical, and moral debts; all of which encompass not only the achievement gap, but the structural and systemic disadvantages that minority populations have been subjected to throughout history.

A compelling call for addressing this educational debt implores that even though the historical, economic, sociopolitical, and moral debt that we have accumulated toward children of color seems insurmountable, we must continue to work at addressing it (Ladson-Billings, 2006). According to Ladson-Billings, there have been suggestions made, namely school desegregation and funding equity that have not received adequate, full, and sustained hypothesis testing. There is still much work to be done to eradicate these debts toward children and families of color and it will require societal recognition of and action against the inequities and disenfranchisement of minority populations in the U.S.

The historical debt. The historical debt refers to the legal withholding of proper education from African American, Hispanic, and Native American individuals. For example, in the 1920’s and 1930’s African American and Latino/a students were denied access to education because of their race, the perpetuation of the White superiority myth, and the perpetuation of the

ideals of the eugenics movement. Black students in the South did not receive universal secondary education until 1968 (Anderson, 2002) and Latino/a students have experienced sizable disparities in their education dating back to 1848. The U.S. government, which has been predominantly composed of White men since its inception, made it a punishable crime for enslaved Africans in the South to become literate, due to the fear that they would in turn try to over through the government (Spring, 2016). The 14th amendment was added to the U.S. constitution in 1868, with its clause to provide equal protection, which included equal educational opportunity. However, this protection was heavily restricted by the U.S. supreme court which ordered the segregation of schools as constitutional, and later unconstitutional in the Brown v Board of Education verdict in 1954 (Spring, 2016).

Another example is when the United States Congress made it illegal for Native peoples to be educated in their native language (Ladson-Billings, 2006). The people and children of Indigenous tribes in the U.S. were met with unparalleled violence and whitewashing upon the arrival of European White men. All Native adults and children alike were expected to fully denounce their culture and former ways of life and yet white society insisted that they advance educationally, along with the Christianization of all as highest social priority in as early as 1819 (Oakes, 2013). Native children were removed from their families and homes and sent to these remote “schools” to learn about Christianity and American values as realized by the European White men. According to Oakes (2013), the boarding schools have been described less like actual schools and more like centers for training Native children to assume roles as productive, detribalized citizens. Oakes also describes the disenfranchisement of the Native population swiftly deprived children of any traditional connections and were judged incapable of competence due to their race. As a result, it was determined that the only work suitable for these

populations was in agriculture and farming (Oakes, 2013). A significant amount has changed in the education system throughout the history of the U.S., and unfortunately, racial inequality is still present in schools today, it just looks different.

Racial inequality in schools. Minority populations are rising rapidly, which is in turn changing the demographics in schools across the U.S. (Darling-Hammond, 2004). Children of color are increasingly being educated in homogeneous schools and in some cases, schools that have less diverse student populations than there were in the 1950's (McPherson, 2011). Equality in education assumes sameness for all students, conversely equity implies providing the resources to meet individual needs as necessary to create a level academic playing field in schools (Ford, 2010). Understanding the difference when examining racial inequalities and how to properly address them in schools is essential. Historically, minority populations have been assumed to be intellectually inferior to their White counterparts in a number of ill-conceived theories. A significant body of research documents that Asian and White students score higher on achievement tests compared to Black, Latino, and Native American students (Gregory & Weinstein, 2008, U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, 2003). Many scholars believe this misconception to be attached to the social construct of race. Lewis (2003, p. 178) contends that "ascribed race automatically tells something about people, can immediately provide them with legitimacy or cause their status to be questioned." The eugenics movement, which began in the 20th century, suggested there is a biological basis for superiority of White individuals wherein racial paradigms were ultimately created (Howard, 2010).

As an extension of this intellectual inferiority belief, White individuals were more likely to believe negative stereotypes about minorities such as laziness, criminality, and lack of work ethic (Rubio, Williams, Beech, & Goodman, 2004). Further, White teachers were more likely to

hold lower expectations of African American students' potential compared to White students (Diamond, Randolph & Spillane, 2004; Ferguson, 1998; Rist, 1970). This concept of deficit-based thinking speculates that "intellectual inferiority" assumes that performance deficits in children of color are a result of the student's own cognitive and motivational deficits (Menchaca, 1997; Valencia, 2010). Much like the individual faults myth, that assumes minority populations are solely at fault for their poor circumstances, attributing performance deficits to individual student traits does not explain the mass performance gap between minority students and their White counterparts (Brooks, 2004; Baptist & Rehman, 2011). Cognitive assessments used in schools to test of intellectual functioning students for to special education identification have been shown to be biased in favor of American culture and tend to lack norms based on a sufficient sample of minority youth across several ethnic backgrounds (Harry & Klingner, 2014). This assessment bias has been shown to lead to an overrepresentation of minority populations qualified for special education in school (Harry & Klingner, 2014). As a result, children of color perform lower than their White counterparts, which feeds the confirmatory bias that children of color are not functioning at higher cognitive levels that White children.

Thus, the disadvantages that children of color face in school regarding intellectual opportunities are connected to the structural and institutional disadvantages that have been clearly depicted throughout history and in the present day. With the deck stacked against them from the outset, children of color must operate within schools under the assumption that adults who work with them may harbor biases toward them, which undoubtedly is enough to affect academic achievement.

The achievement gap. This phenomenon addresses the disparities in academic achievement between racial minority and White children. Historically excluded groups are at the

bottom of the gap and have been since the beginning of the history of the U.S. Howard (2010) references many phenomena including the aforementioned eugenics movement and deficit-based thinking; and stereotype threat, and cultural mismatch theory, all of which imply that minority populations are inferior to the White race. Even further, opportunity gaps and the lack of availability of resources, which address the lack of support and resources provided to communities of color on a societal level play a role. *Stereotype threat* studied extensively by Claude Steele (1992) refers to a threat that is triggered in the presence of preexisting racial, gender, class, or other stereotypes which results in the belief that minority individuals are not expected to succeed. Steele (1992) found that stereotype threat directly contributes to the achievement gap based on his work with adults. Kellow & Jones (2005) completed a study in schools with African American students and found that high school students are impacted by stereotype threat, similarly to their adult counterparts. This study emphasizes the impact of stereotypical messages children receive in school and the importance of addressing how teachers, parents, and communities may perpetuate the phenomenon. Arguably, these findings are relevant across all levels of schooling, as if high school populations are affected it seems likely other populations would be as well.

Cultural mismatch theory suggests that the classroom or teacher’s culture is at odds with their students’ culture, making it difficult for teachers to connect with their students. This hypothesis refers to the individualism perpetuated within U.S. classrooms and the power that the dominant cultures exudes in guiding classroom ideologies (Boykin, Tyler, & Miller, 2005). Individualism, or the focus on one’s own successes versus those of the larger group, is an orientation that may clash with values of students with diverse backgrounds, who may place a stronger emphasis on communal learning (Gay, 2006). The patterns established in the discussion

of the inequalities and disadvantages that minority populations have experienced show how the structure of an unbalanced system has a dire impact and influence on the most vulnerable populations.

Academic track differentiation. In a further perpetuation of the achievement gap, Diamond (2006) discusses the academic differentiation of students into distinct educational environments. This process places White students primarily on advanced academic tracks, providing access to more challenging curriculum, while the representation of students of color on these tracks remains minimal. This differentiation is also evident in standardized testing environments, where White children on average achieve twice the number of points on assessments than their African American counterparts (Diamond, 2006). These differences may not account for the level of skill students enter school with, however it illustrates at least an association with different learning opportunities (Diamond, 2006). Academic track differentiation is especially problematic for students of color, given research that shows students who are in lower educational tracks are typically taught using instructional materials and strategies that are less challenging and engaging and are instructed by less qualified teachers, ultimately learning less (Oakes, 1990; Oakes, Haslam, & Turner, 1994). Some scholars have attributed socio-economic status of families to a child's underachievement in classes and on standardized school assessments however, contradicting evidence has been found. In a case study conducted within a more affluent school district, Diamond (2006) found that discrepancies in test scores continued to be present even when families of color have comparable socio-economic status to their White counterparts. Thus, environmental factors were deemed to not have an influence on academic achievement, despite socio-economic status for minority children.

Disparities in school discipline practices. An additional contributor toward academic performance disparities is the discipline gap (Gregory, Skiba, & Noguera, 2010). The "discipline gap" addresses the racial disparities in disciplinary strategies African American, Latino/a, and Native American students are subjected to in school (Gregory et al., 2010). It has been documented that low-income students with a history of low achievement, residing in neighborhoods with high crime, high poverty, and with exposure to violence, are more likely to engage in behavior resulting in disciplinary action at school (Gregory & Weinstein 2008). A considerable amount of literature has recognized that African American, Latino/a and Native American students are subject to unbalanced amount of discipline in school settings, with prevalence rates highest for African American students (Gregory & Weinstein, 2008).

The disproportionate rate of school discipline sanctions, which range from office referrals to corporal punishment, suspension, and expulsion highly affects children of color in schools (Krezmein, Leone, & Achilles, 2006; Wallace, Goodkind, Wallace & Bachman, 2008). In theory, disciplinary action is taken to preserve safety and order by removing students who violate school rules and disrupt the school learning environment (Gregory & Weinstein, 2008). However, Arcia (2006) found that schools rely heavily on exclusion from the classroom as the primary discipline strategy and this practice has a disproportionately high impact on minority students. Thus, the more a child is in trouble in school, the less time spent in the classroom, which then contributes to the well-documented racial gaps in academic achievement (Gregory & Weinstein 2008). One of the most consistent research findings in modern education research shows an empirically strong positive relationship between time engaged in academic learning and student achievement (Greenwood, Horton, & Utley, 2002). Therefore, it becomes increasingly clear using strategy of

exclusion from the classroom is significantly increasing the risk of academic underperformance in minority youth (Davis & Jordan, 1994).

In further argument for non-school exclusion disciplinary action, school suspension has been found to be a moderate to strong predictor of drop out and not graduating on time (Mendez & Knoff, 2003). It is essential for all students, especially for students of color, to be immersed in a positive learning environment for as long as possible throughout the school day and the adoption of disciplinary practices within the school building could prove to be a better way to keep children in school, while also allowing them to learn from their mistakes. Behavioral issues in school maybe indicative of difficulties outside of school and removing a child from their academic learning environment rather than providing the necessary resources to support continued learning appears counterproductive.

The economic debt. The economic debt emphasizes the funding disparities and lack of resources providing to communities of color as compared to funding and resources provide to White families (Ladson-Billings, 2006). While it can't be proven that schools are poorly funded because Black and Brown students are in attendance, it is demonstrated that funding rises with the presence of more White students at a given school (Ladson-Billings, 2006). Ferguson (2002) explains that across the Minority Student Achievement Network (MSAN), a national consortium of suburban school districts focused on addressing the racial achievement gaps in the United States, African American and Latino/a families were in far more economically precarious situations than White families. For example, minority families are more likely to live in areas with higher rates of poverty and neighborhood violence, and minority children more often live in single parent households, which can present additional difficulties (Ferguson, 2002).Given the student population in schools are often reflective of the surrounding neighborhood populations,

the socio-economic status (SES) of minority families and where these families are concentrated plays a role in where minority youth attend school, and consequently the quality of education they receive.

Diamond (2006) found that while African Americans living in suburbs, outside of larger cities, may be considered highly privileged and often fare better economically compared to their urban counterparts, they are still not as well off as White families. Further, middle-class African American families often walk a fine line between privilege and peril when compared to their middle-class White peers (Pattillo-McCoy, 1999). According to the Census Bureau (2002), Diamond (2006) explains that in one suburban community, African American families were at the bottom of the income distribution; and that on average African American families' median income was half that of their White counterparts. Similar patterns are evident when examining the disparities between race, income, and wealth. Some studies have indicated that wealth, rather than income gives a more illuminating measure of racial inequality in the U.S. (Conley, 2010; Shapiro, 2004). Additionally, family wealth has important implications for quality of education, as those with more means have access to more resources for educative purposes. For example, parents with greater assets are able to use them to pay for private tutors, educational materials, independent schools, and more expensive college tuition (Ferguson, 2002). Interestingly, despite the documented gap in wealth, Conley (2010) found that White and African American students have similar high school graduation and college completion rates regardless of wealth. Diamond (2005) suggests that if race, income, and community are compared on the same census tracts, the most individuals with the lowest income were African American residents and those with the highest incomes were White residents in a given community. As a result, there is an interplay between residential segregation in some suburban areas and in family economic resources, which

leads to very different experiences for children of color and their White counterparts outside of school.

The sociopolitical debt. The lack of legislative representation and exclusion of communities of color from the civil process, reflects the sociopolitical debt. Since the beginning of U.S. history, the legal system has ignored minority populations. In as early as 1790, the Naturalization Act excluded enslaved Africans from naturalized U.S. citizenship and in 1857 the Dred Scott decision was a continuation of that act and added that Native-born African Americans had no rights to U.S. citizenship (Spring, 2016). It wasn't until more than 100 years later that full citizenship was granted and voting rights were given to African American males (Spring, 2016). The sociopolitical debt addresses the disenfranchisement of these communities in Southern states in the 1960's, and even after the enactment of the 15th Amendment, ensuring people of all race, color, or previous condition of servitude were allowed to vote in the U.S.. Since then, the Voting Rights Act of 1965 has been the most successful legislation in eradicating the sociopolitical debt. Further attempts to eradicate this debt came in the pursuit of affirmative action and while it is seen to have only benefitted White women, it is still credited for the creation of the "Black middle class" (Ladson-Billings, 2006). The African American community has been fighting for quality education and to be recognized as part of the decision-making mechanisms in education since 1849. The first case brought to court arguing for desegregation of public schools for Latino/a students took place in 1925, in Romo v Laird. Several years later, the landmark case that lead to integration of Latino/a students into public schools was Westminster v Mendez in 1947, which is said to have paved the way for the success of the Brown v Board of Education in 1954, ultimately leading to the desegregation of all schools in the U.S.

The moral debt. The moral debt refers to the disparity between what individuals know is right and what they actually do. Ladson-Billings (2006) connects this moral debt to moral panics, described by Cohen (1972) as a panic where individuals attempt to describe other people, groups of individuals, or events that become defined as threats throughout society. This debt addresses cases like that of Henrietta Lacks, who was wholly unaware that her cervical cancer cells were extracted from her body by her doctor who went on to create the HeLa cell, which is one of the most important and widely used cells the medical research community. Another example during a similar time period, as a result of the Tuskegee Study of Syphilis in African American Males was conducted between 1932 and 1972 by the United States, in which treatment was withheld from patients despite a known cure, today there are human subject protocols in place for all U.S. research studies, which reflects the moral debt owed to the victims of these research studies.

Implications for Minority Populations

There is a long and arduous history of historical, educational, and social disadvantages and opportunity gaps for minority populations in the U.S. Minority groups have experienced persecution, oppression, and inequalities in all facets of life and continue to experience today (Howard, 2010). Scholars on this critical part of U.S. history have thoroughly studied, taught, and produced information to educate the public on the trials and tribulations the people of this diverse country have experienced (Howard, 2010). The task of eradicating the educational debt is one that will continue to take time and energy from its advocates. With what is well known about the racial gap in achievement, it has become increasingly important to not only conduct research to find and present evidence to affect change, but to also translate research outcomes into concrete action. While the injustices experienced by minority population are so vast and impossible to eliminate, the literature instills a sense of hope and an extensive list of action items

for advocates to reference when resisting racial injustice and inequities (Ladson-Billings, 2006). Acknowledging what is known to be the true historical experience of minority populations, while advocating for acceptance of diversity will require advocates that cross racial and ethnic lines. Engaging in discussions that acknowledge the experience of racism, social injustice, stereotyping and universal disadvantages across societal factions is imperative. Critical race theory addresses this societal plight and provides a lens through which the effects of racism can be viewed and understood by the larger population.

Critical Race Theory

Critical race theory (CRT) was founded to address how race and racism toward African American individuals affected the legal system in the U.S. in the 1970's (Delgado & Stefancic, 2017). Today, scholars of critical race theory address more broadly- not *if* racism plays a part daily life of individuals of color, but *how* it plays a part in their daily lives (Delgado & Stefancic, 2017). CRT was developed in response to the Critical Legal Studies (CLS), which was a left-leaning legal scholarship that argues the law must focus on how it is applied to specific groups in particular circumstances (Brayboy, 2005). CRT was deemed "a form of opposition scholarship" (Calmore, 1992) out of discontent at the pace with which the CLS were critiquing and changing societal and legal structures that focused on race and perpetuating racism (Delgado & Stefancic, 2000). The initial development of CRT centered on race and racism and other forms of subordination that African Americans have been and continue to be subjected to in society. A primary source of data reflected in CRT are narrative accounts and testimonies, also known as storytelling, with a heavy reliance of experiential knowledge as a way to inform thinking and research (Brayboy, 2005). The "storytelling" aspect of CRT has been one of its primary criticisms in the legal field, with the question of utility in the courtroom (Delgado & Stefancic,

2017). However, as CRT has been introduced to other fields outside of law, namely in education, storytelling as data collection has proven to be of great value.

Primary Tenets of Critical Race Theory

There are a number of themes in the CRT framework, and it should be noted that not all CRT theorists ascribe to every tenet. The primary tenet makes the claim that “racism is ordinary-not aberrational,” in other words it is engrained in the ordinary, everyday experiences of people of color in the U.S. (Delgado & Stefancic, 2017, p. 8). Second, most CRT theorists would agree that the “white-over-color ascendency” otherwise known as material determinism, serves important purposes in our society. In short, this tenet suggests that racism benefits the white elite and white middle-class groups therefore, there is little incentive to make any changes. Color-blindness serves as a way to mask the interest of these white groups in masking the intentions behind “treating everyone the same.” Third, CRT holds the social construction theory that race, and races are products of social thought and relations. These social constructions were created by the dominant (white) culture in order to make a classification hierarchy of humans based on faulty assumptions that people of color are “less than” intellectually and in other ways. The final theme concerns the notion of “a unique voice of color” (Delgado & Stefancic, 2017, p. 9). This theme holds that because diverse ethnic groups in the U.S. have different histories and experiences of oppression, ethnically diverse writers and thinkers can share their experiences with their White counterparts who are unlikely to know or understand what they have been through. The goal of this theme is to educate Whites on a different perspective and interpretation of diverse historical experiences in the U.S. These themes inform the variations of CRT that have been created to reflect the experiences of other ethnic groups.

Variations of CRT for other ethnic groups. As CRT was originally developed to address the Civil Rights issues of African American people, other scholars have used the CRT framework to inform theories based on specific ethnic group membership. LatCrit elucidates Latinas/Latinos' multidimensional identities and addresses the intersectionality of racism, sexism, classism, and other forms of suppression (Bernal, 2013). LatCrit touts an anti-subordination initiative that works to link theory with practice, scholarship with teaching and the academy with community (Primer, 1999). LatCrit emphasizes issues that affect the Latino/a people in everyday life, including immigration, language, identity, culture, and skin color (Solórzano & Bernal, 2001).

AsianCrit places an emphasis and critique on the nativist racism embedded within the model minority stereotype, immigration and naturalization, language, and the disenfranchisement issues that relate to individuals of Asian descent in the U.S. (Brayboy, 2005; Chang 1993). Lowe (1996) argues that Asian Americans continue to be marginalized as permanent outsiders in the U.S., thus Asian Americans are forever associated with their country of origin. In a general sense, Asian American individuals have been viewed as the model minority in the United States for decades (Lee, 2005). In the breakdown of how this stereotype was assigned, it is clear that not all individuals of Asian descent are considered within this umbrella term. While Asian American individuals may appear to benefit from the model minority stereotype, the complex diversity within the Asian culture must be addressed, as economic, social, and societal experiences vary widely across individuals from different countries throughout Asia. The middle- and upper-class Chinese immigrants were "ideologically whitened" in the dominant culture, while lower income Southeast Asian (Filipino, Vietnamese, Cambodian, Laotian, Hmong, Samoan, Thai, and others) immigrants were "ideologically blackened" in the dominant

culture due to higher rates of poverty in their communities. Howard (2010) also includes those of Japanese and Korean descent in the middle to upper class Asian communities who were seen as more favorable and higher achieving than their Southeast Asian counterparts.

Brayboy (2005) developed a variation of CRT, called TribalCrit. Also known as "TribalCrit," this ideology addresses the commonalities within CRT, while acknowledging and discussing the complicated relationship between American Indians and the United States government. Like CRT, TribalCrit places significant value on narrative and stories as important sources of data. The primary tenet of TribalCrit emphasizes that colonialism is endemic to society (Brayboy, 2001).

The parallels with CRT are clear, that racism is pervasive within society and the historical effects on these groups have made a noteworthy impact. Consistent across theories, is the transdisciplinary effort of scholars to understand and improve the educational experiences of people of color (Parker, Deyhle, & Villenas, 1999). These theoretical variations give a voice to the complexities present within the experiences across multiple ethnic groups and what each group finds important to address in achieving social justice. The variations of the central CRT highlight the importance of individual experiences and how they are different from the larger African American White dichotomy in the U.S. All of these groups have experienced oppression and racism and have responded in different ways.

Critical Race Theory in Education

The field of education was introduced to CRT in the mid-1990s. In research, utilizing the CRT lens offers an alternative way of viewing educational institutions and the difficulties facing people of color within these institutions (Ladson-Billings & Tate, 1995). The stance of CRT in education is that racism is endemic in society and in education, and "that racism has become so

deeply ingrained in society's and schoolings' consciousness that it is often invisible" (Brayboy, 2005, p. 427). Further, the use of CRT when examining P-20 education (preschool through college) entails scrutinizing the insights, concerns, and questions students of color have about their experiences, whether they are in elementary school or graduate programs (Howard & Navarro, 2016). CRT also challenges the traditional views of education in regard to issues of meritocracy, claims of color-blind objectivity and equal opportunity (Crenshaw, 1989; Bernal, 2002; Delgado & Stefancic, 2000; Solorzano & Yosso, 2001a; Villalpando, 2003). Similarly, CRT serves as a framework in educational research to emphasize the following: the importance of transdisciplinary approaches, experiential knowledge, challenging dominant ideologies, the centrality of race and racism, and their intersectionality with other forms of subordination, and a commitment to social justice (Parker et al., 1995). Fundamentally, CRT emphasizes that "race talk matters" in normal, everyday schooling situations and that ignoring the issue or taking a color-blind approach exacerbates the issue of race and racism in schools and perpetuates the achievement gap (Howard, 2010). This inclusion places the concept of race centrally in the discussion of the achievement gap.

Ladson-Billings (1998) outlines ways that CRT can be a powerful explanatory tool for the sustained inequity that people of color experience, based on the way public education is currently configured. First, CRT sees public school curriculum as a culturally specific artifact designed to maintain a White superiority master script. This master scripting erases the history and stories of African Americans when they challenge the dominant culture authority and power. Not only is the content of the curriculum addressed, but also the rigor of the curriculum and access to what is deemed enrichment programming and the limited access to these programs for children of color. Second, CRT suggests that current instructional strategies presume that African

American students are deficient intellectually and academically. Third, for CRT theorist, intelligence testing has been a movement to legitimize African American student deficiency based on standardized testing. According to Ladson-Billings (2006), CRT argues that inequality in school funding is a function of institutional and structural racism. Lastly, CRT posits that the desegregation of schools was only for the benefit of the dominant culture, instead of serving as a solution for social inequity, which was its original purpose.

Critical race theory limitations. Howard & Navarro (2016) discuss the empirical development of CRT continuing to grow, while also acknowledging that work remains to be done. The biggest limitation of CRT is that dissemination and follow through has not happened at the societal level and it is minimally accessible outside of the academia community. Educational scholars must continue to be prepared to go beyond mere recommendations to inform reform and become more active in the integration of CRT into the field. It will be imperative for research, practice, and policy communities to play an active role in identifying, analyzing, and seeking replication of racially inclusive and sensitive learning environments for all students of color (Howard & Navarro, 2016). Though it is not mandated for use, there is room for the integration of CRT principles in practice for educators and others in the field, through small group instruction and integration of theoretical principles into culturally-responsive curricula. It continues to be important to review recent research related to CRT to ensure dissemination reflects the most recent updates. Teaching to CRT principles and addressing social justice issues will continue to remain important given the historical and present-day experiences of minority populations in the U.S.

As a caution, Ladson-Billings (2005) addresses the fact that while using the CRT framework for an educational lens could have many benefits, it is often the case that these

changes in conceptualization of major societal issues take root and more than likely the creators lose control of the narrative as it becomes adopted by society. Further, adopting and adapting CRT as a framework for educational equity would mean acknowledging and exposing racism in education and proposing radical solutions for addressing it (Ladson-Billings, 2005). Therefore, on a macro, or systems level, CRT will more than likely not gain mainstream traction within the U.S. education system. However, this does leave room for what integration would look like on small group level or classroom level and providing opportunities for CRT integration into intervention work at the individual level. As educators strive toward educational equity for all students, teaching to and embracing diverse cultures and the experiences of ethnic groups in the U.S. is a way to integrate CRT principles into schools. Recent research has documented the benefit of integration of culture in schools and the awareness of societal and structural barriers brought to children of color. Based on the larger systematic barriers to CRT dissemination, the integration of CRT principles within interventions at the small group and individual level may be a more practical place to start.

Need for Culturally-Responsive Practices and Curricula

In an effort to promote the understanding and embracement of cultural differences, shifting to the use of cultural difference versus cultural deficit, both stark contrasts of each other, is imperative (Ladson-Billings, 1995). Cultural deficits focus on the absence and pathological basis of culture, while cultural differences emphasize culture as rich and unique (Ladson-Billings, 1995). It is in schools that this terminology shift is most relevant. The cultural deficit lens suggests transforming the child to fit within the dominant cultural model, while the cultural difference lens encourages the schools' transformation. These two theories and how they are represented in schools are important to consider when working with children of color given the

enormous impact each could have. The cultural differences theory aligns more with CRT and research has emphasized the positive benefit of integrating culture into the classroom for all children. In a comprehensive review of culture in schools, Howard (2010) explains that often it is only children of color who are believed to have "culture". This is not necessarily true, as all children have culture and are thought to "live culturally." The term "culture" is not bound exclusively by one's race or ethnicity, but is shaped by many different factors including ethnicity, religion, gender, social class, traditions, and customs of a group of people (Howard, 2010). Therefore, addressing culturally responsive pedagogy and its positive influences on children of color in schools is vital. Gay (2000) describes culturally responsive pedagogy as recognizing the uniqueness of student culture by using "the cultural knowledge, prior experiences, frames of reference, and performance styles of ethnically diverse students to make learning more relevant to and effective for them." More specifically, it teaches to and through the strengths of students of color, while also being culturally validating and affirming (Gay, 2000).

The need for culturally-responsive practice is clear however, assisting educators, school staff, and other adults working with children of color to understand the role of cultural identity in their students' lives and the role of implicit biases arguably precedes the ability to effectively promote culturally-responsive techniques to reach all children. Beaubouf-Lafontant (1999) investigated how teachers constructed their own self-concept by studying six African American teachers and discovered that the teacher's worldview had a significant influence on the way in which their culturally-relevant teaching approaches were carried out in the classroom. This finding was consistent with Ladson-Billings (1995) claim that stressed teachers' conceptualization of self is integral to their successful implementation of culturally-relevant

practice in the classroom. Bias identification and awareness are key components of implementing these practices.

Scholars have studied culturally responsive techniques used by teachers in schools with promising outcomes. Across all subjects, the integration of culturally relevant practices has shown to increase feelings of belongingness, positive psychosocial factors, and aides in getting children to college (Howard & Terry, 2011). An early critique of culturally-responsive pedagogy has been how to generalize the concepts to implement within more concrete, objective subjects like mathematics (Howard, 2010). Martin (2000) examined mathematics proficiency with African American students and found that the history and context of African American experiences are crucial for improved math proficiency and reasoning. Similar findings can be seen in other subjects, for example, educating children of color on the accurate portrayal of the history of their people in the U.S. has been a key approach to the integration of culture in the classroom.

Based on research, the integration and cultivation of cultural acceptance and recognition of cultural difference in the classroom, provided through a quality education, provides the most benefit to students of color. There is a plethora of research that supports the integration of culture into schools and curriculums through culturally responsive practices. In schools, mainstream academic knowledge may conflict with students' personal and cultural knowledge (Banks, 1996). The concept of cultural capital is introduced as a framework to understand the "kinds of culture" that are valued by society and those that are not (Yosso, 2005). It was found that children of color often encompass cultural capital that is not valued by mainstream society, which in turn makes it difficult for them to successfully navigate being treated well within that society. Sociocultural theory, which traditionally emphasizes the external factors involved in the

learning environment and how they shape individual knowledge, moves "culture" away from being described as an individual construct and recognizes it as also being influenced by external forces that shape human cognition (Kozulin, 2003). Rogoff (2003) introduced cultural repertoires of practice to incorporate into intervention work with children of color. Through this, there is a call for normalizing culture in every day practice and acknowledging that cultural understanding and practice cannot fit neatly into a box, but rather one must have respect for the complexity of cultural and cultural differences.

Cultural enrichment curricula. While literature addressing ethnic and/or cultural identity in schools is sparse, there is supporting literature that addresses cultural enrichment programs that focus on teaching children to embrace their ethnic backgrounds and the history of their cultural group. Much like the literature explaining the importance of culture integration into academic curriculum, research has also indicated the importance of cultural variable inclusion in prevention programs for minority youth (Belgrave, Reed, Plybon, Butler, Allison, & Davis, 2004). Specific components including distinct historical, social, and cultural experiences of minority populations hold an important role in these programs (Belgrave et al., 2004). An expanding body of literature has demonstrated the effectiveness of culturally-responsive prevention programs in promoting positive development among African American adolescents (Metzger, Cooper, Zarrett & Flory, 2013). Burlew et al. (2000) examined relationships between cultural prevention programs and drug attitudes, changes in racial identity, and changes in alcohol use. The results of the study supported that participation in a cultural prevention program, which included racial identity and drug use awareness education, decreased the likelihood of future drug use. Much of the current research available is based specifically on prevention programs for African American adolescents in relation to substance abuse, which

signifies that research regarding culturally-responsive intervention programs targeting positive development in minority populations are needed.

One such program, called the *Sisters of Nia* Cultural Enrichment curriculum created by Belgrave and colleagues (2004), focuses on teaching Afrocentric principles to African American adolescent girls, with an emphasis on sisterhood, collectivism, and racial socialization. Preliminary research results for this program show significant increases on self- report ethnic identity measures after participation in the program, which suggests that cultural beliefs and values can be strengthened by participation (Belgrave et al., 2004). These findings are promising for demonstrating the relationship between ethnic identity, cultural values and positive development and resiliency in African American adolescent girls. An additional strength of this program was that it was conducted after school, which aligns with literature that explains youth who participate in afterschool programs are at a lesser risk of experiencing unfavorable outcomes and are more likely to experience improved academic achievement, school behavior, and school attendance (Afterschool Alliance, 2004). Belgrave et al. (2004) created a parallel curriculum to the Sisters of Nia, called the *Brothers of Ujima* for African American adolescent boys, which has a very similar utility to the Nia curriculum. With the promising outcomes of these programs, further research and practice focusing on culturally-responsive intervention and curricula development will be an added benefit to the literature.

Early Intervention Programs for College Preparation

While access to primary and secondary education has steadily increased for children of color, access to post-secondary higher education has become a salient issue in the U.S. more recently (Shapiro et al., 2014). As enrollment in college institutions is expected to continue to grow exponentially, minority population enrollment is also growing (Kena et al., 2015). In the

U.S. post-secondary education system, despite increased enrollment and degree completion, there has been no significant change in the college achievement gap between African American and White students (Frey, 2013). Given these disparities, programs have been developed nationwide to provide services for minority youth in an effort to close the achievement gap. Programs promote academic enrichment and support access to higher education for minority youth, who otherwise would not have the opportunity to attend college. In the school setting, educational enrichment is intended to be provided by offering advanced placement or honors accelerated learning opportunities at the middle and high school level. While this is considered typical, it is also well known that students of color are often overlooked or systematically excluded from differentiated instruction and opportunities to take more academically challenging course work (Diamond, 2006). Thus, examining early intervention and educational outreach programs becomes critical for understanding what support is present for minority youth in successfully getting to college. Early intervention programs were created to provide students from underserved communities and backgrounds with the information and tools necessary for getting to college (Howard, Tunstall, & Flennaugh, 2016). Today, the U.S. has approximately 50 early intervention programs that exist across the country (Domina, 2009; Swail, 2000), with the ultimate goal of diminishing the disenfranchisement of underserved students by increasing college readiness and exposing these populations to higher education opportunities (Pitre & Pitre, 2009). Over 90 percent of the students targeted for these programs are in middle school and beyond (Swail, 2000).

Early Intervention Program Structures and Funding Sources

In the past, the federal government has constructed legislation to target pre-college outreach and early intervention programs, starting with the programs like Upward Bound, which

provided academic support to students on college campuses (Swail & Perna, 2002). Funding was allocated through the reauthorization of the Higher Education Act in 1965 and additional programs were developed, including the National Early Intervention Scholarship Program (NEISP) in 1992, which offered matching grants to states that provided financial incentives, academic support services and counseling, and college related information to disadvantaged students and their families (Fenske, Geranios, Keller, & Moore, 1997). More recently, the High Hopes program, notifies low-income sixth to twelfth graders about their eligibility for federal pell grants to use toward college, which do not have to be paid back to the government.

There are also several non-government programs including private organizations, foundations and colleges and universities that provide early intervention academic support to low-income students. The I Have a Dream project, established in 1981, is one of the oldest private intervention programs. This program was developed by a philanthropist, Eugene Lang, in New York, who promised 61 elementary school students' financial resources for college upon graduation from high school. That first promise has transformed into more than 180 projects across the U.S. in over 60 cities (Swail & Perna, 2002). According to national surveys conducted through College Board in 1999, 67% of the responding programs provided services to students year-round, 53% of all programs offered services to students both during school hours and after school, and about 60% of all programs provided services on the weekend. Additionally, about 80% of programs reported that target low-income students, about 39% target students with poor academic performance, 39% target students of high academic ability or achievement, and about 22% target gifted and talented students. Data provided by the National Center for Educational Statistics (1999) suggested that the most educational damage is done by eighth grade, as statistics show it is unlikely for students to rebound academically if they show poor performance on

standardized tests in reading and math in this year. In terms of targeted student populations, only 10% of the surveyed programs begin services in elementary school and 87% of programs begin services in the middle school years.

Early Intervention Program Elements

Common program elements considered to be essential for early intervention are as follows: first, having a clear and focused mission, starting early, motivate students, involve parents, collaborate with local school districts, sustain funding, practice professionalism and personal development, use proven practices, rely on standardized processes, and incorporate technology. Levine and Nidiffer (1996) recommend that early intervention programs start well before high school, as research shows that in a review of racial/ethnic differences in scores, challenges associated with inadequate academic preparation exist as early as fourth grade (Nettles & Perna, 1997). While these programs have made a significant impact in low-income communities, Swail and Perna (2002) argue that traditional early intervention and outreach programs have focused too narrowly on the academic components (e.g., student financial aid programs) and not enough on “the steps required to be academic, socially, and psychologically prepared to enter and succeed in college. (p. 15)” The primary goals of these programs are to increase college enrollment, and there is evidence to suggest that adding components like building self-esteem and providing role models is also beneficial for students for retention in college. These programs tend to utilize similar strategies, services, and concepts of operation, however there is not a universal model used for structuring the programs.

Parental engagement and involvement in academics. When embarking on the endeavor of early intervention programming for minority youth, parental engagement and involvement is a key component for success. Research has shown that parental engagement in

the schooling of their children is highly related to academic achievement and success (Jeyes, 2014). Christenson, Rounds and Gorney (1992) reviewed how various family factors interact with student achievement. The researchers noted that factors correlating with positive academic outcomes for students are high include the following: realistic parental expectations for school performance, parents' structure and support for learning in the home, positive emotional interactions and responsiveness to emotional needs between parents and children, parents' use of authoritative parenting style, and parent involvement in education at school and at home. This study highlights the importance of parent involvement as one of the many factors essential for academic success.

Hill and Tyson (2009) conducted a meta-analysis on parental involvement to determine which types of involvement are related to academic success in middle school students. Results of the study confirmed a positive relationship between parental engagement and achievement. The study highlighted that academic socialization was highly correlated with academic achievement. Academic socialization is a process that includes the following components: clear communication of parental expectations for achievement, value of education, and fostering educational and occupational aspirations in adolescence, have the strongest positive relationship with achievement for middle school students (Hill & Tyson, 2009). The academic socialization process underscores the use of strategies for scaffolding autonomy, independence, and cognitive ability for children.

The literature indicates a clear contrast between parental engagement and parental involvement in the education of their children. The expression of parental engagement, by maintaining high expectations and practicing the combination of a loving and structured home environment, had a much stronger association with student academic outcomes, than did some of

the more overt expressions of parental involvement (Jeyes, 2003b, 2005, 2007b). Furthermore, positive and consistent communication between parents and children had a strong association with the scholastic outcomes of youth in urban educational settings (Jeyes, 2003b, 2005, 2007b). Lee and Bowen (2006) emphasize that there are limited opportunities for success in the school setting without the active support of families and local communities. Jeyes (2014) stated that there is a significant benefit for educators to acknowledge and understand that only a limited amount of progress can be made with students, in the absence of partnerships with families.

On the other hand, parental involvement is seen has more overt in nature and may include picking up children from school and attending parent teacher conferences. The main difference appears to be a difference in levels of involvement. Parental involvement may not extend past the minimally required actions (Jeyes, 2003b, 2005, 2007b). Parental involvement has been shown to vary across ethnicity for families of color (Hill & Tyson, 2009). The effects of parent involvement are shown to have even more positive influence on children of African American and Hispanic descent, compared to their White and Asian counterparts (Jeyes, 2003a). Jeyes (2003a) explains that the parents of children of color are, on average, less likely to be involved in the schooling of their children. Therefore, in the instances that there is parental involvement for this population, there is a positive impact on the children. While much of the research has shown positive impacts on all children, it should be noted that there are barriers for parent involvement especially with lower achieving children (Pena, 2000). Given it may be difficult for some parents to become involved in their child's academic experiences for a variety of reasons, it is important to consider all aspects of a child's family life on an individual basis when encouraging or requiring parental engagement and involvement (Lee & Bowen, 2006).

From a mental health perspective, parental engagement in services is an essential part of treatment when providing services to encompass “the whole child”. Best practice indicates that parental engagement greatly enhances outcomes for children in clinical services. Parents often represent safety and stability in a child’s life, therefore their presence is an added protective factor when working on social emotional issues. This compliments the research described explaining parental engagement enhances academic success for children and highlights parental engagement in their children’s educational, social and emotional endeavors is highly beneficial.

Early Intervention Program Models

A theoretical framework used by early intervention programs to provide the most support to the students they serve includes three stages. Hossler and Gallagher (1987) proposed the use of a three-stage model for understanding college enrollment and the process for which early intervention programs should structure their programming. The first stage is predisposition, where students actively decide that going to college is a personal, long-term goal as opposed to other options like joining the workforce or the military. The second stage is search, where students seek out information about colleges and decide where to apply. Lastly, the third stage is choice, in which students select the institution they will attend. Further, the three model examples are used to structure programs that are student-centered, school-centered, or out-of-school programs (Domina, 2009).

Student-centered model. The student-centered model provides services to students using a targeted cohort approach. This model typically looks like a subset of the school population identified for the program because students are low-income, first generation college-going, from an underrepresented minority population, or are low achieving academically (Domina, 2009; Perna, 2002). Student-centered programs may offer a wide array of services including academic

support, college counseling, and parent support (Howard et al., 2016). Such programs are designed to increase the likelihood of these students' academic success and influence the academic expectations of children and their parents. An additional underlying goal being, with strengthened academic support, accurate college information and the development of a connection to the college atmosphere, students will be more likely to pursue education beyond high school (Howard et al., 2016).

School-centered model. School-centered program models, which work much like universal interventions, attempt to impact the entire school community by creating a broad academic environment that promotes student success (Domina, 2009). This model requires the participation of teachers and theorizes that teacher expectations and peer influence promote value in academic performance and college aspirations for students. Both student-centered and school-centered models acknowledge the importance of providing accurate college information related to application processes and college counseling to students as vital to student achievement and educational aspirations. Research has documented that underrepresented students tend to view their high school counselors as impediments to accessing college preparatory courses and information (Oakes & Lipton, 2002). As a result, the lack of adequate counseling leads to minority youth being tracked into lower level high school courses, limiting exposure to college preparatory curriculum causing lower performance and leading to lower college enrollment (Gandara, 2002).

A common element shown to have a significant positive impact in these school-centered programs is parental engagement, as it is an essential component in the likelihood of a student enrolling in college (Howard et al., 2016). Therefore, educating parents of minority youth on how navigate the path to higher education for their children involves assisting them in

understanding the role of cultural and social capital in the U.S. education system. In this context, cultural capital is expressed in a particular society's customs and values, which can evolve over time as they are passed down through generations of families (Throsby, 1995, p. 202). For example, assisting minority families in getting their child, who may be a first-generation college attendee, into college by understanding the steps necessary to get there requires knowledge of the college application process. An additional benefit that minority families do not always have access to comes in the form of social capital or knowing the right people and having access to important social networks. Whereas White American families typical have ready access to these networks and navigate the college application processes with ease (Bourdieu, 1977; Farmer-Hinton & Adams, 2006). Many early intervention and outreach programs attempt to bridge this gap by adding parent components to their programs, which provides essential college information to parents (Howard et al., 2016).

Out-of-school model. An alternative to school-based programs are out-of-school enrichment programs, which are described as an "unique, out-of-school educational experiences that engage and challenge students" (Miller & Gentry, 2010). These programs are typically considered extra-curricular activities (e.g., sports, art, and academic assistance), mentoring programs, and rite of passage or culturally based programs (Woodland, 2008). Out-of-school programs have different formats for providing services including after school programs, Saturday programs, and summer camps (Hodges, McIntosh, & Gentry, 2017). Out-of-school programs may be short; however, they have the capacity to drastically improve student outcomes (Makel, Lee, Olszewki-Kubilius & Putallaz, 2012). Student gains and improvements have been documented by researchers in preparing students for college and careers, gaining real world accomplishments, achieving higher American College Test (ACT) scores in high school and

maintaining an overall stronger self-concept (Greene, Lee, Constance, & Hynes, 2013; Milgram & Hong, 1999; Plucker & Stocking, 2001; Cunningham & Rinn, 2007). In terms of quality and effectiveness for out-of-school programs, characteristics of high-quality programs include: the use of research-based curriculum materials (Durlak & Weissberg, 2007), the hiring of qualified teachers and staff (Hynes, Miller & Cohen, 2010), whole family involvement (Woodland, 2008), and providing additional support and differentiated opportunities (Miller & Gentry, 2010).

Limitations of early intervention programs. These programs provide several benefits to the community of underserved families and children and have undoubtedly influenced college preparation and access. As is often the case in providing services for these populations, there are continued barriers to accessing early intervention programs for minority children. These barriers are present in the form of lack of cultural and social capital of parents affecting their ability to navigate the educational system to access enrichment for their children. There is also the variable of lower socio-economic status, in which case some parents cannot reasonably manage to have their children attend enrichment programs. Similarly, intervention and enrichment programs often require a great deal of responsibility for parents and the child participating. As such, single parents working multiple jobs and those without the means of transportation or time, may not be able to meet the demands that such a program may require. Further, although there are frameworks to help guide in the creation of these programs, the quality of instruction and service provide varies widely across programs. There are no requirements or guidelines that must be followed in the creation of early intervention programs that provide academic enrichment and other services. Not all programs will provide the most comprehensive support and services for families, thus individual experiences and outcomes will be dependent on the quality of the program.

Need for Early Intervention Programs for Minority Youth

Early intervention programs can be viewed as vehicles for change in addressing the societal issue of the educational debt. The premise of these programs also addresses the social justice issue of educational inequity of minority youth. The academic, social, and psychological support can provide a way for minority youth to match pace with their dominant culture peers. Parent involvement and assistance around navigating the post-secondary educational landscape in the U.S. may increase the chances of more minority youth accessing the path to higher education. Parent engagement and involvement in early intervention is also an added protective factor and has the potential to enhance the academic success of their children. Early intervention programs provide essential support for navigating this important endeavor for families who may not otherwise be aware of the opportunities available to their children.

In addition to the societal and systems level support for education of minority youth, these programs also hold a unique position for further exploring and integrating culturally-responsive curriculum. This additional component has the potential to enhance cultural acceptance and pride, a sense of belonging and community, and exploration of what culture means and how it is woven into the daily lives of minority youth. Based on research that focuses on the racial experiences of minority youth, engaging in discussions and providing instruction addressing the historical experiences of minority populations in the U.S. can play a protective role in how these children navigate mainstream society. This is an additional area that parental engagement can be a protective factor by enhancing a child’s understanding of their cultural identity and background. Parents are the sole source of learning for a child from a young age and play a very important role in children learning about their family heritage and traditions. The benefits to the individual psychological well-being of minority youth is unparalleled. These

cultural additions, combined with the academic and family support afforded by these programs, suggest promising potential for expanding positive psychological outcomes, higher academic achievement, and increased access to higher education for minority youth through a “whole child, whole family” point of view.

Identity Development in Adolescence as a Global Experience

Early adolescence is considered a vulnerable time for youth especially as they are approaching the middle school transition. Developmental psychologists emphasize that early adolescence is a pivotal stage of development marked by a convergence of normative biological, psychological, and social changes (Eccles & Midgley, 1989; Lord, Eccles, & McCarthy, 1994). These developmental trajectories typically diverge in early adolescence toward either healthy adjustment or pathology, with healthy adjustment more common (Peterson & Hamburg, 1986). During this change, children will face a range of new experiences, expectations, and stressors, therefore it is important to identify the risk factors and complimenting protective factors related to this time period (Rudolph, Lambert, Clark & Kurlakowsky, 2001). The transition to middle school can have an adverse impact on child functioning, including declines in academic achievement and intrinsic interest in school, perceived academic and social competence, negative attitudes toward learning, and decreased classroom engagement (Rudolph et al., 2001; Eccles & Midgely, 1989). Further, the transition has been linked to negative effects on emotional outcomes, such as lower self-esteem (Eccles, Midgely & Adler, 1984) and increases in self-consciousness (Simmons, Rosenberg, & Rosenberg, 1973). The multiple role disruptions and adaption to new task demands can result in high-risk of development of psychological pathology (Bronfenbrenner, 1979). A sharp increase in rates of psychological symptoms and maladaptive behaviors including anxiety, depression, substance abuse, and antisocial conduct are common in

early adolescence (Rudolph et al., 2001). These symptoms can influence a child's ability to adapt appropriately and has implications for affecting several aspects of their lives, especially their relationships with peers and adults at school and at home.

The adjustment to change required is difficult for all children and minority youth experience additional stressors related to race and ethnicity that can add additional layers of protection and/or vulnerability to their development. Understanding the unique developmental factors that minority youth navigate and protective factors in development is essential for working with this population. One protective factor supported by research is ethnic and cultural identity development in minority youth. Investigating the ways that minority youth conceptualize the relationship with their culture in early adolescence has the potential to inform ways to enhance identity exploration through curriculum and intervention at this age.

Stage Models of Identity Development

Individual identity formation is one of the most important developmental tasks of adolescence. This phenomenon was operationalized by James Marcia (1966) in a two-dimensional model: identity exploration and identity commitment. These two intersecting dimensions resulted in four identity statuses: *foreclosure* (low exploration, high commitment), *diffusion* (low exploration, low commitment), *moratorium* (high exploration, low commitment), and *achievement* (high exploration, high commitment). Research utilizing this model has shown that identity development in adolescence is connected to other areas of development. Notably, those with the "achievement" or "moratorium" statuses are more likely to have more favorable overall social development (Arnett, 2015). Adolescents with either of the aforementioned identity statuses are more likely than those with the "diffusion" or "foreclosure" statuses to be self-directed, cooperative, and good at problem solving. The "diffusion" identity status is

considered the most unfavorable and is viewed to be predictive of later maladaptive psychological outcomes. Compared with adolescents in the achievement and moratorium categories, those in the diffusion or foreclosure statuses are more likely to have lower self-esteem and self-control (Arnett, 2015).

Erik Erikson (1968) addressed identity development theoretically within the psychosocial developmental stages across the lifespan and was slightly different from Marcia's (1966) two-dimensional model of identity. Erikson's (1968) theory encompassed eight psychosocial stages that make up personality and identity development in each individual (Sokol, 2009). Erikson complimented Freud's (1954) psychosexual stages of development and incorporated: ego identity or self-identity, personal identity, or what makes everyone unique, and social, historical, and cultural contexts for each individual (Arnett, 2015). Erikson expanded Freud's theory by considering the impact of the external environment, including parental and societal impacts on personality development in children (Sokol, 2009). Erikson's (1968) psychosocial stages of development begin in infancy reflecting the trust versus mistrust conflict and continues through late adulthood with the integrity versus despair conflict. The focus of the fifth stage, *identity cohesion versus role confusion*, centers on integrating past identifications with the adolescent's current sense of his or her talents, abilities and desires leading to the motivating vision of an adult future (Arnett, 2015). Erikson's theory suggests that each person must successfully reconcile the moral tensions or conflicts in or to progress through healthy development.

While Erikson's (1968) psychosocial life span trajectory is often referred to when discussing identity development, the identity status model proposed by Marcia (1966) has dominated the field of identity research. The primary reason being the measurement tool most often utilized in individual identity measurement was the Identity Status Interview developed by

Marcia (1966). Mainstream identity research tends to focus on American and European adolescents and emerging adults and has not addressed issues of global or cultural identity. As the theoretical lens of this study, CRT suggests that the presence of racial bias and racism has a daily presence for minority youth, therefore understand how these issues affect minority youth is a gap in literature that needs to be addressed. For this reason, the study of the unique identity development experience for children of color is necessary for the field to effectively address the developmental needs of all children.

Ethnic Identity Development

French, Seidman, Allen, and Aber (2006) explain that ethnic identity development begins where developmental and social psychology intersect, with ethnic identity being more aligned with an individual's social experience. Ethnic identity is often considered a social construct that includes "a segment of larger society whose members are thought by themselves or others, to have common origin and share segments of a common culture and who, in addition participate in shared activities in which the common origin and culture are significant ingredients" (Yinger, 1976, p. 200). Further, ethnic identity is a way that individuals seek common bonds with others due to cultural traditions, behaviors, values, and beliefs (Ott, 1989). Phinney (1989) studied the process of ethnic identity formation, which refers to the way individuals come to understand the implications of their ethnicity and make decisions about its role in their lives, regardless of the extent of their involvement in ethnic activities. Phinney created a developmental model that suggest all minority populations experience three stages of development: 1) unexamined ethnic identity, 2) ethnic identity search or exploration, and 3) achieved ethnic identity. An unexamined ethnic identity implies an individual has not explored their position on or have a negative view of their ethnic group. Second, ethnic identity exploration assumes an individual is actively

exploring their ethnic group and what it means to be a member of that group. The final category, achieved ethnic identity, suggests an individual has explored group membership and therefore have a clear understanding of the role of ethnicity in daily life.

Phinney (1993) concluded that individuals who had the clearest sense of self were the most secure about their ethnicity and its meaning in their lives, thus one would expect that achieved ethnic identity would be the most adaptive stage. A relationship was found between ethnic identity and psychological adjustment in college students (Phinney, 1993). Additionally, self-esteem was significantly related to ethnic identity commitment for Asian American, African American, and Mexican American students (Phinney, 1993). Adolescents who have explored ethnicity as a value in their lives and are clear in the meaning are likely to show better overall adjustment than those who have not considered the role of ethnicity in their lives, or are unclear about it (Phinney, 1993). Developmentally, most early adolescents have not explored the meaning of ethnicity in their lives in any depth, however they may have preconceived ideas about it, either from caregivers or larger society (Cokely, 2005). The risk presented in this context is that minority youth may internalize negative stereotypes and go through further exploration and questioning about their own ethnicity. Phinney suggests that with an achieved ethnic identity, minority youth can develop a way of combating negative stereotypes and prejudice, so these negative self-perceptions are not internalized, and in turn contributing to positive psychological adjustment. Cokely (2005) found that Black American adolescents who report well-developed ethnic identities are less likely to demonstrate internally racialized attitudes. Additionally, in a Black American sample, it was found that adolescents who felt connected to their ethnic groups and considered other Black Americans has having achieved higher educational attainment, show higher grade point averages than those who did not share

such perceptions (Altschul, Oyserman, & Bybee, 2006). Ethnic identity researchers suggest that the most ideal outcome for positive psychological adjustment for minority individuals is reflected when an individual is both secure in their own ethnic identity and simultaneously have a positive orientation toward mainstream culture (Phinney, 1991; Phinney, Lochner, & Murphy, 1990).

A study conducted by Yip, Seaton, and Sellers (2006), measured ethnic identity in a group of adolescents, emerging adults, and adults and results yielded that adolescents were more likely to be in the moratorium stage, and emerging adults and adults were more likely to be achieved. While the results of this study provide the strongest support to date for a developmental conceptualization of ethnic identity, it is clear more research is needed for examining ethnic identity formation at different developmental levels. As ethnic identity research became further developed, Phinney and Ong (2007) developed a revised version of their original multigroup ethnic identity measure (MEIM), with a narrowed focus on the constructs of ethnic identity exploration and commitment in the multigroup ethnic identity measure-revised (MEIM-R). In this measure, Phinney and Ong (2007) postulate that exploration and commitment constructs can be examined separately or together as a total ethnic identity score, despite theoretical discussion emphasizing exploration and commitment are two distinct factors (Erikson, 1968; Marcia, 1980). Phinney and Ong (2007) define “exploration” as pursuing information, knowledge, and experiences about one’s ethnicity. Commitment refers to a fervent connection or personal attachment and investment in a group and may allude to a greater internalization and acceptance of one’s ethnic identity (Mills & Murray, 2017). The findings in studies using the MEIM-R underscore that the two subscales may represent two distinct roles and should be addressed separately in research and intervention (Mills & Murray, 2017).

Minority youth experience unique ecological demands, social needs, and developmental tasks that stem from societal discrimination against ethnic minorities and the devaluation of ethnic minority group members (Hughes, Rodriguez, Smith, Johnson, Stevenson, & Spicer, 2006). These unique characteristics of development associated with ethnic minority status are thought to be experienced by all children of color. Culture, ethnicity, and race are major constructs as part of an individuals' social identity and addressing the role that these concepts play in an individuals' life is an important part of development (Worrell, 2015).

Racial Identity Development

There is debate in the field of psychology regarding the definitions of ethnicity and race. Phinney (1996) suggests that ethnicity alone could encompass all aspects of race and culture. Helms and Talleyrand (1997) state that ethnicity and race are two distinct terms therefore they need to be addressed and studied separately. Helms and Talleyrand imply that the term "ethnicity" in American society at large and in psychology, "does not have real meaning aside from its status as a proxy for racial classification and immigrant status" (pg. 1246). Race, on the other hand, has a clear meaning, as the ascribed racial category or phenotype, which is crudely assessed by means of research or a self-defined racial designation (Jensen, 1980). Therefore, it does not seem appropriate to subsume the term of race under the definition of ethnicity, which is a word with a broader and less clear definition. Although it is understood that Phinney (1996) is correct in that race does not exist as a biological reality in the U.S., individuals of color continue to be treated and studied as though they belong to biologically defined racial groups on the basis of physical characteristics such has skin color and facial features (Helms & Talleyrand, 1997). The evidence presented in this debate can be used to support the study of racial identity

alongside ethnic identity to ensure the gathering of as much detailed information as possible about individual self-concept.

The term racial identity has been defined in several ways by researchers. Racial identity is viewed as a multidimensional construct that embodies combined components of ethnic awareness, sociopolitical attitudes and cultural or in-group versus out-group preferences (e.g., Cross, 1978, 1991; Resnicow, Soler, Braithwaite, Selassie, & Smith, 1999; Sellers, Smith, et al., 1998; Smith & Brookins, 1997; Vandiver, Fhagen-Smith, Cokley, Cross, & Worrell, 2001). Helms and Cook (1999) define racial identity as the collective identity of a group of people socialized to think of themselves as a racial group. When researchers are interested in how individuals construct their identities as part of a group in response to an oppressive and highly racialized society, it is suggested that racial identity would be the target construct (Cokley, 2007). Further, when research is specific to a particular ethnic group or culture, it is important to use or develop a culture specific measure, as this would allow for a more personalized focus on the cultural norms and experiences of a specific culture or ethnic group. Cokley (2007) noted that racial identity has disproportionately been studied in African American and European American individuals, while a number of ethnic identity studies have been conducted primarily with Asian American and Latino/a Americans. It is essential to understand how diverse populations conceptualize racial and ethnic identity; thus, several studies have been conducted seeking to understand how racial identity status interacts with other factors of well-being.

Racial identity has been linked to several positive and negative psychological outcomes, including stereotype threat (Davis, Aronson, & Salinas, 2006), self-esteem and psychological stress (Collins & Lightsey, 2001), Minnesota Multiphasic Personality Inventory scores (Whatley, Allen, & Dana, 2003), psychological functioning (Carter, 1991), feelings of psychological

closeness (Brookins, Anyabwile & Nacoste, 1996), internalized racism (Cokley, 2002), and skin color preference (Coard, Breland, & Raskin, 2001).

There are perceptual and cognitive processes that contribute to the connection that is made between an individual to others in the ethnic or racial group. Early developmental studies have shown that White children at age four show a bias or favoritism toward their own ethnic group; yet by age seven favoritism declines and cognitive process required for children to be less biased develops (Aboud, 1988). In contrast, ethnic minority children at age four may develop a more negative bias against their own group and by age seven appear to develop more positive attitudes toward their own group (Aboud, 1988). This finding could be indicative of societal and social influence when minority children are young and the result of further ethnic and racial identity exploration as children develop cognitively. This phenomenon is exemplified in the Clark & Clark doll study (1947) for which they presented minority children with dolls of different color skin and the participating children showed not only higher preference for the dolls with lighter skin over the dolls with darker skin, but also beliefs that children of color were “bad children” and less desirable social peers. Consideration of the impact of societal and social influence and biases is essential when examining identity constructs related to ethnicity and racial group membership.

In-group pride. The concept of “in group pride” is based on Kohlberg’s (1969) extension of Piaget’s (1952) cognitive developmental theory and considered a socio- emotional phenomenon. Studies of in-group pride recognize a cognitive shift made in children between four and seven years old from egocentrism, or the inability to differentiate between self and others, to social equilibrium, or theory of mind. Two findings state that the direction of socio-emotional development is toward greater equilibrium on reciprocity between a child and the social world. A

child's self-concept is central to social development and when applied to ethnic identity, it implies that favoritism toward one's own group is related to the notion of belonging to a certain group. There is debate within the field regarding when children develop ethnocentrism, or judging another culture solely based solely on the values of one's own culture Some researchers suggest that ethnocentrism develops at age seven increasing with age and others suggest ethnocentrism begins at four years old and increases, followed by a decrease (Aboud, 1988). The term ethnic constancy reflects the cognitive ability to understand the basis of ethnicity, which is a concrete operational ability according to Piaget's cognitive developmental theory (Aboud & Ruble, 1987).

Kohlberg suggests that strong ethnic self-identification is central to the development of in-group preference, which suggests that pro-outgroup attitudes of some minority children are due to lack of clearly established ethnic identity (Williams & Morland, 1976). Young children are attentive to attributes that bring about social approval, thus they will seek attributes that are necessary for this approval, even if it is white skin and speaking English (Crandall, Crandall, & Katkovsky, 1965). Beverly Daniels Tatum (2017) has discussed as children transition into adolescence, they will often group themselves together based on their race without direction and postulates this may happen due to heightened perceptions of how one is viewed by others. Those changes in perception can cause children of color to question why non-minority friends look at them differently and naturally will gravitate toward their minority group peers given they are having the same experiences based on race. This process appears to naturally draw same-race peers together and fostering a sense of togetherness and collectivism may help to alleviate the feelings of "otherness" they experience with their non-minority peers.

Racial socialization. Racial or ethnic socialization describes the exchange of information between adults and their children regarding race and ethnicity (Hughes et al., 2006). This process has been studied in an effort to understand how families of color experience and discuss racial inequalities and injustices and how they teach their children to manage them. The concept was born out of parental concerns that their children would encounter racial barriers and negative stereotypes, which led to the corresponding emphasis on promoting high self- esteem, instilling racial pride, and preparing children for bias (Peters & Massey, 1983; Richardson, 1981; Spencer, 1983; Tatum, 1987, as cited in Hughes et al., 2006). Scholars have noted that the use of racial/ ethnic socialization is often too broad of a term to use to describe several specific strategies of contact with children. Hughes and colleagues (2006) analyzed the socialization term in an effort to categorize the content of socialization and the types of conversations parents were having with their children about race and ethnicity.

Cultural socialization entails the use of parental practices that teach children about their ethnic heritage and history and promotes cultural customs and cultural pride. *Preparation for bias* is a strategy that parents utilize to encourage their children to be aware of discrimination and how to cope when it happens to them. The concept of *promotion of mistrust* emphasizes the need for wariness and distrust in interracial interactions (Hughes et al., 2006). *Egalitarianism,* or silence about race, is used when parents encouraged their children to value individual qualities over racial group membership (Spencer, 1983). Parents' use of these strategies in conversation with their children serves the function of protection. They are also communicating caution when becoming close to Caucasian individuals and the repercussions of affiliations with groups who are negatively stereotyped. Findings within the research on racial and ethnic socialization have shown mixed patterns of results between favorable, unfavorable, and neutral, highlighting a need

for further research. Minority youth have reported more positive and stronger ethnic identities as a result of their parents' involvement in their education of their own heritage (Hughes et al., 2006). Other positive outcomes associated with racial and ethnic socialization include: fewer externalizing and internalizing behaviors, better anger management, and higher self-esteem with peers, better cognitive outcomes, and lower fighting frequency in adolescents (Stevenson, 1997; as cited in Hughes et al., 2006).

Multidimensional model of racial identity (MMRI). The goal of the MMRI model of identity is to integrate existing racial group identity approaches that are sensitive to the cultural and historical experiences of African American individuals, with the prominent mainstream approaches (Sellers et al., 1998). The MMRI model defines *racial identit*y in African Americans as "the significant and qualitative meaning that individual's attribute to their membership within the Black racial group within their self-concepts" (Sellers et al., 1998). In the development of the MMRI model, Sellers et al. (1998) makes a purposeful distinction between the usage of the terms *Black* and *African American*. The term *Black* is an ambiguous category that may or may not include all persons of African descent. While some African Americans consider the term *Black* to include African Americans only, other African Americans consider the term *Black* to include all individuals of African descent. In this model, the term *Black* is used when referring to one's phenomenological view of the make-up of one's reference group. In contrast, *African American* is used to describe individuals who have experienced a significant portion of their socialization in the United States.

There are four main assumptions within which the MMRI model is grounded: identity is both situationally influenced and stable within a person; an individual has a hierarchical order of identities; an individual's perception of their identity is most valid perception; and the MMRI

focuses on the status of identity in an individual versus identity development. The first assumption posits identities are situationally influenced as well as stable properties of a person, and while traditionally identity theorists believe identity situationally influenced *or* stable, the MMRI model assumes both are true (Sellers et al., 1998). The second assumption of the MMRI model states individuals have several different identities and that these identities are hierarchically ordered, which aligns with Rosenberg's (1979) identity theory position (Sellers et al., 1998). Particularly, MMRI focuses on the importance an individual may place on race in defining self-concept and it additionally provides opportunity to explore race within the context of other identities, such as gender (Sellers et al., 1998). The third assumption states that an individual's perception of their racial identity is the most valid indicator of their identity status (Sellers et al., 1998). This aligns with the importance the MMRI model places on self-perception of what it means to be Black, respecting the differences in the qualitative nature of the meaning individual's assign as a part of the Black community (Sellers et al., 1998). The MMRI makes no judgment as to what constitutes a healthy versus unhealthy identity, which leads to the fourth assumption of the model, that the MMRI is primarily concerned with the status of an individual's racial identity, focusing on where individuals currently identify (Sellers et al., 1998). More specifically, the MMRI emphasizes the nature of an individual's identity at a given point in time, as opposed to placing an individual in a particular stage along a developmental sequence (Sellers et al., 1998). The creation of the MMRI model exhibits a shift toward focusing on the importance of the present moment versus placing an individual in a specific stage, and also provides an integrated view of two critically acclaimed theoretical standpoints on the history of African American self-concept and identity formation.

In addition to the four main assumptions, the MMRI is also comprised of four cross-situationally stable dimensions: *racial salience*, *centrality*, *regard* in which a person holds their identity and the *ideologies* associated with identity (Sellers et al., 1998). More specifically, racial salience and centrality align with the significance that individuals attach to race in defining themselves, while regard and ideology refer to perceptions of what it means to be Black (Sellers et al., 1998). The MMRI model defines *racial salience* as “the extent to which one’s race is a relevant part of one’s self-concept at a particular moment or situation” (Sellers et al., 1998). Thus, salience, considered more fluid than stable, focuses on a specific moment or event and implies that people interpret and respond to various situations differently.

Racial centrality “refers to the extent to which a person normatively defines him or herself with regard to race” (Sellers et al., 1998). In contrast to salience, centrality can be described as relatively stable across situations, based on the normative perceptions of an individual (Sellers et al., 1998). *Racial regard* refers to the positive or negative, evaluative judgment of how one feels about his or her race (Sellers et al., 1998). This dimension has been divided into two parts that focus on the private and public regard of one’s own race. According to Sellers (1998), *private regard* describes an individual’s positive or negative views toward other African Americans, including one’s personal feelings toward their own identification with African American culture. Conversely, *public regard* refers to the way individuals feel that others view African Americans in a positive or negative way, or a person’s own assessment of how society views one’s cultural group.

The last dimension, *ideology,* is divided into four philosophies. The term ideology is used to convey that each racial construct is comprised of an individual’s views and reflects the orientation of an individual’s beliefs. The first is the *nationalist* ideology that highlights the

uniqueness of being Black and that the experiences of being Black is like no other group (Sellers et al., 1998). Nationalist philosophy stems from the deep appreciation for the culture and accomplishments of African Americans, and also posits that all African American individuals should have control over one's own destiny without input from other groups (Sellers et al., 1998). The second ideology, *oppressed minority*, focuses on the oppression that African Americans as a cultural group have experienced, in relation to the oppression other racial groups have experienced (Sellers et al., 1998). The groups by which comparisons are made can include groups who have historically experienced oppression, including other ethnic/ racial groups, women, individuals with a non-normative sexual orientation and individuals with disabilities (Sellers et al., 1998). Third, *assimilationist* ideology, emphasizes the similarities between African American individuals and all others considered part of the United States population (Sellers et al., 1998). Assimilationist philosophy highlights African American individuals who primarily acknowledge their status as American and self-identify as part of mainstream society. This philosophy does not deemphasize the importance of an individual's African American identity and heritage, rather it may advocate for social change and believe that African American's need to work to change the system from within (Sellers et al., 1998). The fourth, *Humanist* philosophy, emphasizes all humans are similar and view each person as human regardless of race, gender, class, or any other distinguishing characteristics (Sellers et al., 1998). Humanist views of the world and oppression of minorities are seen as a plight of humanity that fit within larger issues affecting the world like the environment, peace, and hunger (Sellers et al., 1998). Given the diversity present between the racial dimensions that are addressed in the MMRI model, the importance of examining each one individually can provide a clearer understanding of an individual's racial identity status.

Implications for Minority Youth Development

There are several developmental tasks required of all children at the transition to middle school that can encompass a vast expanse of both positive and negative experiences. The adaption to biological, social, and psychological changes is at the forefront of developmental tasks for children. The protective and risk factors associated with the transition to middle school are highly dependent on individual and environmental circumstances for all children. The process of identity exploration and formation is an overarching developmental task that includes both internal and external experiences and interpretations. Research has documented the stages of identity development for all youth and further research has been conducted on the unique processes of ethnic and racial identity development in ethnic minority individuals. Research has documented the incredibly nuanced process of identity development related to ethnic and racial group membership. The similarities and clear differences between how these two phenomena are represented in the literature is essential to understand when working with minority youth. Consideration of societal and social influences and biases and how they impact the identity and self-concept development of minority youth provides evidence that supporting cultural, ethnic and racial group exploration is imperative. The theoretical basis of racial identity reflects similar components of critical race theory and require the consideration of racism and specific racial experiences in the daily life of ethnic minority individuals.

Purpose of the Present Study

Research suggests that early intervention programs are vehicles for change in addressing the educational debt afforded to children of color related to their academic experiences. These programs were created to provide students from underserved communities and backgrounds with the information and tools necessary for access to college institutions (Howard et al., 2016).

These programs primarily focus on academic enrichment to address performance gaps, with the mission to chip away at the achievement gap. These programs serve the ultimate goal of lessening the disenfranchisement of underserved students by increasing college readiness and exposing these populations to higher education opportunities (Pitre & Pitre, 2009).

Research indicates that the integration of culturally-responsive practices when working with children of color has longstanding academic and psychosocial benefits. Howard and Terry (2011) highlight that across all subjects, integrating culturally-responsive practices are known to increase feelings of belongingness, positive psychosocial factors, and aides in providing children with access to higher education. The integration of culturally-responsive material into early intervention programs for children of color has not been a focus of research objectives. These programs that provide services to minority youth are in a unique position to teach to cultural differences and acceptance, providing an overall awareness of culture. This has the potential to equip ethnic minority youth with an early understanding of the role their ethnicity and culture will have in their future. The developmental period of early adolescence through early adulthood is a time during which exploration of identity is at its highest. As children of color have the added experience of understanding the role of culture and diversity in their lives, it will be beneficial for the field to understand how teaching about culture and discussing it can facilitate positive development and self-esteem.

The present study is at the intersection of early intervention programs, providing college preparation and culturally responsive practices for identity development. This study examines cultural identity in minority youth who participate in a CRT-informed, culturally-responsive curriculum (See Appendix A and B), as part of an academically rigorous early intervention

program. This curriculum is part of a class that addresses social and psychological developmental factors and promotes identity exploration within students' cultures.

Cultural identity is examined through the growth of participants during participation in a culturally-responsive intervention. Further, the social validity, or acceptability of the curriculum, from the students' perspectives is examined. Results of the study support the addition of cultural components for small group intervention and encouraging discussions that bring awareness and acceptance of cultural differences in students and school staff. Further understanding the role of culture and ethnicity in the lives of minority youth and their families is integral to inform the scope of early intervention services.

Research Question #1a. What is the construct validity of the MEIM? What is the nature of the constructs underlying the MEIM?

Research Question #1b. What type of factor model best fits the MEIM items? Does a simple structure underlying the MEIM fit as well as a more complex structure? It is expected that the item analysis for the MEIM with the study sample will yield different constructs than were previously identified in the original MEIM.

Research Question #2a. Is there significant change in how participants show change in cultural exploration over time? The cultural exploration composite is comprised of significantly correlated items from the MEIM questionnaire used in this study, at each time point. Latent growth curve modeling (LGCM) was used to assess this growth over time and group is used as a predictor to assess differences in trajectories based on cohort membership. Further, the direction and magnitude of this change was examined to evaluate significance. Lastly, the growth trajectories of all children based on reported ethnicity and gender was assessed, as would be developmentally expected. It was hypothesized that participants in both cohorts will show

growth in cultural exploration and in-group pride and that females will show higher growth trajectories than males.

Research question #2b. Is there significant change in how participants show change in in-group pride over time? The in-group pride composite is comprised of significantly correlated items from the MEIM questionnaire used in this study, at each time point. Latent growth curve modeling (LGCM) was used to assess this growth over time and group was used as a predictor to assess differences in trajectories based on cohort membership. Further, the direction and magnitude of this change is examined to evaluate any significance. Lastly, the growth trajectories of all children based on reported ethnicity and gender is assessed, as would be developmentally expected. It is hypothesized that participants in both cohorts will show growth in in-group pride and that females will show higher growth trajectories than males.

Research question #3. What is the social validity of the MEIM? Assessed the developmental appropriateness of this culturally-responsive curriculum for the participants. Social validity, or the social acceptance of the curriculum material by the participants, data was analyzed to determine the participant's attitude toward the curriculum content. These data will inform continued use or modifications of material used in the original curriculum.

Chapter 3: Methods

Data were collected from two cohorts of children at the beginning of an early intervention/college access program in this area. Participant demographics and recruitment for the larger program, and the culturally-responsive curriculum developed for dissemination are discussed, as well as the measures used, followed by a description of the statistical analyses (UW IRB ID: STUDY00005701).

Study Context

For the last 17 years, Rainier Scholars (www.rainierscholars.org, 2017) has operated as a non-profit, out-of-school, early intervention/college access program, in the greater Seattle area. The program provides academic enrichment, counseling, leadership, and college support to minority youth from fifth grade through college. The mission of Rainier Scholars is based on providing academic support and equitable experiences for minority youth and their families, who are at a disadvantage based on race and/or socio-economic status. Youth recruited into the program are considered "highly capable," based on a cognitive ability assessment and evidence of higher academic performance. An additional recruitment component for youth is level of parental engagement and support. This program is as much for the parents as for the youth and the success of the youth in RS is dependent on the support of their families. As part of the RS mission, the creation of a community of families and children with the common goals of educational enrichment, navigating the path to higher education and advocating for social justice takes the committee of the entire family of each youth.

Rainier Scholars utilizes a student-centered, cohort model which includes one group of 64 minority youth each year. The 2017-2018 school year was a year of transition for the Rainier Scholars organization, with the target recruitment population shifting to 4th graders transitioning to 5th grade, one year earlier than all previous years. This transition to an earlier start is in response to research supporting an even earlier intervention start as more effective and, in an effort to increase the number of private school scholarship positions for children in the program that RS cultivates in local private schools, beginning in sixth grade.

This study focuses on the first phase of the program, Academic Enrichment Phase (AEP) of the program, which provides a 14-month academic enrichment program to fifth and sixth

graders. The admitted children progress through the three phases of the program as they get older: 1) Academic Counseling and Support, grades 7-9, 2) Leadership Development Phase, grades 10-12, 3) College Support, grade 12 and beyond. Upon acceptance to the program, as part of the first 14 months of the Rainier Scholars program, the children in each cohort are required to complete a rigorous academic enrichment phase that lasts for an entire school year, including the summers before and after their 5th grade year. During the first summer of academic instruction, the children participate in a full range of class including mathematics, literature, science, history, and one non-academic class called “Conclave.” Parent engagement and involvement in the AEP phase is a critical component. The familial support system at home is as much a part of individual success as the effort put forth by each child during this phase especially. This family endeavor for early intervention services requires a commitment from all members including but not limited to transportation, attending family meetings for the program, helping with homework each evening and participating in RS community events. Educational research has widely supported parent involvement as a key component to academic success in children.

Researcher Positionality

When conducting community-based research, addressing positionality is important for acknowledging the bias, position, and power dynamic that a researcher may bring to their project. As a mental health professional, I held the role of Conclave class instructor for three years and through this role I was provided with the opportunity to become ingrained in the Rainier Scholars community over a four-year period. As the class teacher and being a White female, my positionality would be described as an external-insider (Banks, 1998). The external-insider role is described as someone socialized within a community different from the community they are researching, however based on unique experiences the individual rejects

many of the values and belief claims of their indigenous community and endorses those of the studied community (Banks, 1998). External-insiders are often viewed as “adopted” insiders by the new community. With this positionality comes important responsibilities to ensure several things, including accurately representing the community one is researching and ensuring any positions of power or bias are addressed. Too many times, minority populations have been misrepresented or taken advantage of by the academic community in the name of research. Providing credit to the community in all ways it is due is the only and best way to conduct research in minority population communities.

The Conclave class originally focused on social-emotional skills. We were in the process of developing a new curriculum that incorporated cultural differences and embracing diversity as a key value, and from that, the idea to measure cultural identity exploration and formation was created. In the first class, it was important for me to point out the obvious— that I was a White female teaching the youth about culture and naturally I would not be able to fully emphasize with their experiences. Following, I vowed to listen, and provide all of the support that the children asked of me. I was struck by the rich conversations among the Rainier Scholar’s students, while wrestling with the ideas of ethnic minority racial experience in the United States. Since then, the Conclave classroom continues to be a safe space to consider the historical hardships their ethnic ancestors experienced during the development of the nation in which they now reside. The meaning of this time and space to process with each other was the most important aspect of the curriculum. The development of the research questions for this study were created following the teaching of this curriculum. I felt that asking these questions and exploring student responses could provide valuable information related to their conceptualization of cultural experiences and how they are related to their own lives. There is so much literature on identity development in

adolescents and not enough on how pre-adolescent populations begin to process this sizeable developmental milestone. The Rainier Scholars child population is at the age where outside influence can have a powerful, and sometimes maladaptive, impact on their view of being culturally and ethnically different, which makes the shift to cultural teachings all the more relevant.

The ability to be fully immersed in the dissemination of this curriculum and the collection of data for this research provided me with a personal connection that has propelled me into telling this story. This experience taught me how to be a true ally and understand the role I must partake in to work within the racially-charged system I worked to teach my students to refute.

Table 1.
Sample Demographic Data

	Category	*n*	%
Gender			
	Female	50	55%
	Male	41	45%
Ethnicity			
	African American	13	14%
	African	31	34%
	Latino	26	29%
	Native American	14	15%
	SE Asian	7	8%

Participants

This study includes children from the greater Seattle area who are enrolled in Rainier Scholars (RS), a rigorous academic early intervention program for ethnic minority youth. The academic enrichment program is transitioning to begin at fifth grade and participating children receive support from Rainier Scholars thru their college years. Two cohort groups were included in the current study. The first group consisted of 46 fifth graders and the second group 45 sixth graders, for a total $N = 91$ children. For this study, Rainier Scholars provided participant gender, parent-reported racial/ethnic composition, age, and grade data.

Recruitment. Children accepted to the Rainier Scholars program complete an extensive recruitment process over the course of a year prior to admittance. During the recruitment process, children and their families apply and are selected based on the data collected from applicants including history of academic performance, grades, teacher recommendation, cognitive abilities assessment, socio-emotional functioning, individual interviews, and financial documentation from parents. Selection criteria used to create a new cohort includes, ethnic minority status of whom are underrepresented in advanced academic programming, socio-economic status of the family, documented higher academic performance and cognitive abilities, and access to familial support. All students in the two cohorts agreed to participate in this study.

Procedure

Conclave is a non-academic class that was developed for the new cohorts to explore and discuss culture and social-emotional learning. The six-week summer curriculum (See Appendix B) is based on the book *Seedfolks* by Paul Fleischman, for which each chapter was read, analyzed, and discussed over the course of the seven-week first summer session. Each chapter in *Seedfolks* focuses on a different character who lives in a community, all of whom contribute to one community garden throughout the course of the book. Each class included the same curriculum components in the same order. The beginning of class was used for brief “check in’s” with the group and following, orientation to each new chapter of the book. The book chapters were read aloud by the class, followed by a seminar-style discussion of the character by discussing details, experiences, and making connections to previous chapters with other characters. Students kept track of each character and important details using a grid chart (See Appendix C). As a final project in the class, each child created their own “Seedfolks” chapter reflecting their own lives and how they each uniquely contribute to the “community garden”

represented as the Rainier Scholars community. On the last day of the class, feedback that including self-report ratings a free response questions, was collected from students via survey that requested information about their thoughts on the class, to rate how helpful they thought the content was and if they would make any additions or changes (see Appendix E).

The purpose of this curriculum is to encourage the exploration of diverse cultures and the role it can play in daily life and foster a feeling of belonging in the new cohort community. *Seedfolks* was used as a guiding framework for defining culture within the curriculum. The book presents culture as ethnic group, race, gender, age, regional, and socio-economic differences. The definition of culture includes many more components than just race or ethnic group in an effort to encourage exploration in multiple categories that make up a person's individual identity.

Both cohort groups participated in the six-week summer Conclave curriculum, which focused on teaching the concepts of culture and identity and how diversity plays a role in individual lives. These concepts were introduced and integrated within the context of each *Seedfolks* character. Cohort 1 received the intervention three times per week in 50-minute increments and Cohort 2 received the same intervention two times per week in 50-minute increments. Cohort 1 read and discussed one chapter per class however, since Cohort 2 had the class two days per week, there were days when two-chapters were read and discussed in one class. The difference in class dosage is due to this transition year for Rainier Scholars. The schedules of both cohorts were different, as the summer schedule is being rearranged to provide additional "study hall" time during the days in the summer 1 component of this Academic Enrichment Phase of the RS program. Data collection was completed during week one, week six and at six weeks follow up. The questionnaire was distributed to each child in the last five minutes of the Conclave class for completion, at each time point. Instructions for completing the

questionnaire were read verbatim to ensure understanding. Upon completion, each survey was collected for data entry.

Measures

The following questionnaire data were collected at two separate time points, during the six-week Summer 1 session and at one additional 6-week follow up time point for a total of three time points. The Conclave class teachers, a licensed clinical social worker and a certified school psychologist, collected the questionnaire data.

Cultural identity. The 14-item adaption of the Multigroup Ethnic Identity Measure (MEIM) utilized and tested by Roberts et al. (2009), was used for the current study (See Appendix D). Roberts et al., 1999 modified the original 22-item MEIM measure to 14-items. Upon item analysis, the Robert's study found that the excluded eight items were not directly measuring ethnic identity, therefore their removal was justified. The 14-item measure was administered to a large sample of middle school age children of several different ethnic groups (Roberts et. al., 1999).

The MEIM measures three components of ethnic identity: affirmation and belonging, achieved ethnic identity, and ethnic behavior. The 14-item version for early adolescents includes a four-point Likert scale to measure individual responses (Phinney, 1992; Roberts et al., 1999). The Likert rating scale ranges from 1 = strongly disagree to 4 = strongly agree, where higher scores indicate stronger ethnic identity. The three subscales of affirmation and belonging (5-items), achieved ethnic identity (7-items) and ethnic behaviors (2-items) subscales altogether yield an overall ethnic identity score. The Roberts et al. (1999) study reported that findings indicated that ethnic identity is a valid construct with young adolescents. The study yielded an identifiable structure that emerges within this developmental period and can be measured reliably

across cultural groups while differentiating among adolescents from different ethnic groups. The reliability of the 14-item adaption for this sample was $\alpha = .84$. The validity of the 14-item adapted MEIM was confirmed by the positive correlations with measures of psychological well-being (coping, mastery, self-esteem, optimism, and happiness) and negative correlations with loneliness and depression (Roberts et al., 1999). This measurement tool was chosen for this study due to its use with a middle school age population and the fewer number of items was preferable to reduce time spent completing the questionnaire. In the current study, the MEIM questionnaire language was adapted at the request of the Rainier Scholars organization. The organization's rationale was based on the use of the term "cultural", which more accurately reflects the focus of cultural identity in the Conclave curriculum. The word "ethnic" was replaced by the word "cultural" for all items on the questionnaire.

Statistical Analyses

Data are presented for individual students enrolled in Rainier Scholars during the 2017-2018 academic year. To examine cultural identity of participants while receiving a culturally responsive intervention, sequential explanatory mixed methods was conducted which including collection and analyses of quantitative data prior to the collection of qualitative data. (Creswell, 2003). The first phase of the study examines the construct of cultural identity through confirmatory and exploratory analyses, while controlling for cohort membership. An exploratory factor analyses (EFA) was conducted to investigate the correlation between the revised items to the factors identified in the original measure. Evidence for a 2-factor model has previously been found in a study by Phinney & Ong (2007), in the revision of the original MEIM, which resulted in a 6-item Multigroup Ethnic Identity Measure- Revised (MEIM-R) measure. A Chi-squared test for goodness-of-fit was conducted to establish the appropriateness of the 2-factor model with

this sample. A first-order confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) model was designed to assess the multidimensionality of a theoretical construct (Byrne, 2012). Phinney's (1992) ethnic identity achievement model was tested, as it was hypothesized that there is evidence for a 2-factor model of ethnic identity achievement that would better conceptualize this construct with a younger population.

The second phase of the study, which included the individual growth of participants, was examined using latent growth curve modeling (LGCM). LGCM is within the framework of structural equation modeling (SEM) and has been used to analyze longitudinal data and test for differences in developmental trajectories across time (Curran & Hussong, 2003). Using LGCM can distinguish between group effects observed in means from individual effects observed in covariances and identify the distinction between observed and unobserved (or latent) variables in specification models (Willett & Sayer, 1994). These capabilities will allow for both the modeling and the estimation of measurement error (Byrne, 2012). The analyses were conducted using the Mplus statistical software, in which data missingness is easily addressed through use of the maximum likelihood (MLR) estimator.

The LGCM utilized in this study is a dual domain model, which is conceptualized as a single model of growth in two variables. The two factors identified from the previous CFA analyses were used in the LGCM. Level 1 analyses assessed the intra-individual changes *within* each participant and Level 2 analyses assessed the inter-individual changes *between* each participant (Byrne, 2012; Willett & Sayer, 1994). Lastly, change in individual growth trajectories was examined by including the time-invariant predictors of reported gender and ethnicity to assess the intercept and slope of both models. Finally, developmental appropriateness and social validity of the Conclave curriculum will be evaluated and informed by the results of the LGC

model data as well as the feedback questionnaire data collected from each participant at the conclusion of the intervention. The direction and magnitude of change in exploration will be used to inform additions or modifications of the curriculum.

Chapter 4: Results

Hypotheses were tested with exploratory and confirmatory factor analyses and latent growth curve models to examine associations between cultural exploration and in-group pride based on gender and ethnicity of participants. Descriptive statistics including means, standard deviations, and zero-order correlations for the observed variables are reported in Table 2.

Results for Question #1a: Exploratory Factor Analyses for Cultural Identity

An exploratory factor analysis with oblique rotation was conducted to determine model fit within the study sample. Oblique rotation was purposefully used to better understand and represent the variable- factor and factor-factor relationships. Results showed that a 14-item, 2-factor model moderately fit the cultural identity data, (comparative fit index (CFI) = .91, the Tucker-Lewis fit index (TLI) = .87, and the RMSEA = .07). When evaluating the assumptions of multivariate normality and linearity, one item, "I am not very clear about the role culture in my life" (ID_CO2) was identified as an outlier and removed from the final EFA analysis, due to non-significant association with the rest of the items on the measure (see Table 2). On the original MEIM, this item was aligned with overall ethnic identity achievement.

The 13-item, 2-factor model was shown to be a much better fit, CFI = .96, TLI = .95, and RMSEA = .046 (see Figure 2). With $N = 90$, a critical value of ±0.512 was used to determine which loadings were significantly different from zero (Stephens, 2002, p. 394, based on the Monte Carlo study results of Cliff & Hamburger, 1967). The rotated loadings show that five

items loaded heavily onto one factor, described in this study as, *Cultural Exploration* and four items loaded positively onto the second factor, described in this study as, *In-Group Pride*.

Results for Question #1b: Confirmatory Factor Analyses Cultural Identity

Mplus 7 (Muthen & Muthen, 1998) was used to conduct the CFA and EFA, based on the data from 91 participants in this study. Since the data was normally distributed, maximum likelihood estimation was chosen for the MEIM data which included 13 questions on a four-point Likert scale measuring ethnic identity. Based on the EFA conducted in Phase 1 the two latent variables, Cultural Exploration and In-Group Pride, were used in the CFA. The observed variables (13-items) are represented by each individual item on the measure used. There were two CFA analyses conducted to determine if the 13-item measure was a better fit than a further simplified 9-item measure. For the 13-item measure, the comparative fit index (CFI) = .96, the Tucker-Lewis fit index (TLI) = .95, and the RMSEA = .045. Those values indicate a good fit between the model and the observed data (see Figure 3). Similarly, the 9-item version yielded the following: CFI = .99, TLI = .98, and RMSEA = .037, which indicated a good fit between the model and the observed data (see Table 5 and Figure 4).

However, upon further examination, the BIC, residual error, and CFI reflect that the 9-item version (BIC = 1511.64), as opposed to the 13-item version (BIC = 2313.38) was the *best* fit for these data. An argument is made for the use of the 9-item measure CFA results for further analyses in this study, as only items with significant loadings in the previously conducted EFA were included in the 9-item CFA analysis. This means that the outlier item (ID_CO2) discovered in the EFA and all items that were reverse coded on the original version of the MEIM measure were removed from the analysis. Standardized parameter estimates are provided in Figure 4.

Results for Question #2a: LGCM on Cultural Exploration

A latent growth curve model (LGCM) was employed to assess the association between factor 1, Cultural Exploration (CE), on gender and ethnicity over three time points. Estimates and fit for the model representing trajectories of growth are shown in Table 7. The CE model intercept is significantly different from zero, therefore the baseline mean of ratings is greater than zero. This indicates that the participant's baseline ratings were higher at the pre- time point, which may have impacted rate of growth for each participant. There was no significant growth overall within the sample, as the linear slope, measuring rate of growth in CE for participants, is not significantly different from zero ($p = 0.17$).

All model fit parameters indicate good model fit ($\chi^2 = 12.34$, CFI = 0.95, TLI = 0.86, RMSEA = 0.092, SRMR = 0.056). The correlation of the intercept and slope for CE was not significant ($p = 0.19$), indicating intervention start point does not predict the amount of average linear growth for CE present for individuals. The CE intercept variance is significant ($p = <0.001$), which shows higher individual variation within the sample. Further, the CE slope variance is not significant ($p = 0.29$), therefore no evidence of individual differences in linear growth of participants is present.

Examining CE growth by ethnicity. The baseline intercept shows significant effects with an average rating of 3.094, ($p = <.001$) on a 4-point scale. Both females and those of African descent exhibited higher than average growth (0.167 points/week, $p = <.001$ and 0.180 points/week, $p = 0.03$ respectively).The slope of this model yields significant effects for weekly growth, with an average of 0.008 points/week growth. Those with African American/Black ethnicity showed higher growth than average by 0.027 points/week ($p = 0.01$).

Results for Question #2b: LGM on In-Group Pride

A latent growth curve model (LGCM) was employed to assess the association of In-Group Pride (IGP) variable on gender, age, and ethnicity over three time points. Estimates and fit for the model representing trajectories of growth are shown in Table 8. The IGP model intercept is significantly different from zero, therefore the baseline mean of ratings on this measure is greater than zero. The linear slope of the IGP model, which measures the change in ratings per time point, is not significantly different from zero, indicating there was no significant mean growth overall. The IGP intercept variance is significant ($p = 0.005$), which shows higher individual variation within the sample. Additionally, the IGP slope variance is not significant ($p = 0.821$), therefore no evidence of individual differences in linear growth of participants is present.

All model fit parameters indicate good model fit ($\chi^2 = 8.660$, CFI = 0.98, TLI = 0.95, RMSEA = 0.051, SRMR = 0.03). The correlation of the intercept and slope for IGP was not significant ($p = 0.33$), indicating that the intervention start point does not predict the amount of average linear growth for IGP present for individuals. There are no significant differences present between cohort groups, however there is a positive trend present for the African ethnicity group, which is higher by 0.144 points ($p = .072$). While neither cohort (age) differences nor gender differences were present on these variables, there are apparent differences by ethnicity (See Figure 5).

Examining IGP growth by ethnicity. The baseline intercept shows significant effects with an average rating of 3.628 ($p = <.001$), on a 4-point scale. The slope of this model yields significant effects for weekly growth, with an average of 0.0006 points/week ($p = 0.325$) for all groups combined. When analyzed by subgroups, the African American/Black ethnicity showed

higher IGP growth as compared to the other ethnic groups, with an average growth of 0.032 points per week ($p = < .001$). The Native American group exhibited lower than average growth, with an average of 0.019 points per week ($p = .024$). There is a trend present for the African ethnicity to have lower than average growth (decline of 0.012 points/week, $p = .069$). Further discussion regarding the reasoning for the distinct separation of African American/Black and African ethnicities is discussed later in the Discussion section.

Results for Question #3: Social Acceptability of Curriculum Content

Rapoff (2010) defined social validity for interventions in pediatric populations with three objectives: goal of the intervention is relevant to the population, intervention procedures are acceptable, and the effects of the intervention are satisfactory. Feedback was sought by participants to assess the acceptability and relevance of the curriculum through an open-ended questionnaire (See Appendix D). The questionnaire sought to understand how participants would describe cultural identity, following 6-weeks of Conclave participation. . Participants were also asked to rate their understanding of cultural identity prior to attending the Conclave summer class and after the class in an effort to gauge new learning growth from the participant perspective. Upon initial examination, the ratings from before and after attending the classes varied from slight increases in understanding of cultural identity, slight decreases in understanding cultural, or higher ratings on both pre and post ratings indicating no change. Some ratings reflected higher understanding of cultural identity prior to attending the class, which would suggest variability in cultural knowledge at the start of the intervention. Participants reported the assignments in the class aided in the understanding of how culture relates to their own lives. For the item on the survey that prompted participants to describe Conclave in three words, a word count analysis yielded a variety of words used to describe the class, with the most

used words being: “fun, awesome, thoughtful, helpful, and me”. Other words used were: “inspiring, sad, uncomfortable, encouraging, safe, and trusting” (See Appendix G). The word responses were primarily positive and neutral words, with a couple negative words such as “sad, and uncomfortable”. Another section asked participants how they define cultural identity following the completion of the 6-week curriculum. Responses included: “Cultural identity is how you do things differently than others”, “Cultural identity is who you are”, “It means how or what makes, you, you, or what you do to be you. It also means what makes you a strong and loyal community”.

There was an overwhelmingly positive response to the final project for the class, in which each participant wrote their own “Seedfolks” chapter reflecting their own personal story. The individual chapter of participant in each cohort were combined into a book for all members of their respective cohort. Each participant received a printed copy of the entire cohort’s “Seedfolks” chapters as a visual representation of the diverse experiences each individual brought to the Rainier Scholars community. Based on self-report from participants and Rainier Scholars administration feedback, the 6-week summer Conclave course centered around cultural identity and teachings through the *Seedfolks* book met the goals of the intervention, along with garnering a satisfactory response from participants regarding the class content and objectives.

Chapter 5: Discussion

The purpose of the present study was to examine the cultural identity development of pre-adolescent minority youth after receiving a culturally-responsive and critical race theory-informed curriculum provided within an early intervention program. Analyses were conducted in two phases, the first examined the constructs of cultural identity for the study sample. The revised version of the MEIM survey questions were utilized in this study to identify cultural

identity constructs. The revised constructs, Cultural Exploration (CE) and In-Group Pride (IGP), may provide a more developmentally accurate representation of cultural identity-related processes within the pre-adolescent population. In the second phase of the study, individual growth across three time-points suggests that females and African American children in the sample exhibited higher CE and that African American children showed higher overall growth for this composite, compared to the study sample.

Measuring Cultural Identity in Preadolescence

The factor structure of cultural identity development in a pre-adolescent minority youth population is the focus of the first finding. Several models were explored to identify which items had the best fit for this population. It was hypothesized that a two-factor structure would be present and have the best fit for the construct; and results confirmed that a two-factor structure was the best fit the data for this study. The final factor model of the cultural identity construct identified included nine total items from the Multigroup Ethnic Identity Measure (MEIM) (Phinney, 1992) (See Appendix E). The items that loaded significantly onto each factor were grouped differently than the items on the original measure of the MEIM. Based on the new item clusters, the two latent factors in this model were renamed, as CE and IGP (See Figure 4). The Cultural Exploration construct included five items and the In-Group Pride construct consisted of four items. While this study hypothesized that this measure would indeed use a two-factor structure, the individual items and respective constructs that are represented in this study was an unexpected finding. Roberts et al. 1999 found that the original MEIM constructs were confirmed with an adolescent population, when the MEIM was primarily used with adults. It was expected that the original constructs would have held up for this sample, as well, however the wording revisions on the measure for this study could have accounted for this difference.

Identified Cultural Constructs in this Study

Cultural Exploration (CE) is defined as the behavioral or external process of seeking out information and facts related to the diverse cultural, ethnic and racial groups of individuals in the world, in the context of this study. CE is conceptualized as a foundational task for development of a cultural identity that adheres to the values of one's self and own cultural group. Considering the sizable influence societal and social influences can have on young minds, understanding how and from what sources minority youth gather information about cultural groups will help professionals and families understand the cultural exploration process. There are a number of reasons why preadolescents may benefit from adult facilitation in the understanding of the experiences of cultural groups within the U.S. Before identity development becomes more abstract and internal, information is gathered by preadolescent youth from their immediate environment and their families to better understand the experience of others. It is later in adolescent development that the knowledge acquired through cultural exploration would inform their conceptualization of how cultural group membership will influence their futures. The knowledge collected during cultural exploration in preadolescence about cultural groups is largely controlled by two sources, society and individual caregivers.

There is an established body of research on In-Group Pride (IGP) that is most significantly represented in models of racial identity development. IGP is identified as part of a staged process reflected by the Multidimensional Model of Racial Identity, which posits that in-group pride is linked to internal feelings toward your own cultural group (Sellers, 1998). Group identification, affiliation, and awareness is taught to minority youth through several avenues, with the most salient being racial socialization. Racial socialization, practices utilized by parents of minority youth to educate children in the majority perceptions of race in the world and how to

navigate it (Hughes, 2001). These discussions can be considered required experiences for minority youth acknowledging the presence of racial biases, prejudices, and the perpetuation of stereotypes in society. Bowman and Howard (1985) found that African American individuals given messages of group affiliation, pride and awareness of societal inequities exhibited higher school achievement. They further state strong group affiliation is linked to a strong value for learning and education. Ward (1990) noted minority individuals with positive group identity were more likely to reject the White society negative evaluation of ethnic groups. This internalized feeling can be directly influenced by multiple sources of information including, media, societal norms, personal experience, and historical events.

Societal influence has consistently been a powerful source of shaping and bias circulation throughout history. Mills and Murry (2017) noted that ethnic identity exploration occurring within a prejudiced and discriminatory environment may negatively impact mental health development and result in distress. The impacts of this phenomenon were recorded in children as young as five years in the Clark and Clark doll study (Clark & Clark, 1947), from differences in skin color. The Clark study provides evidence of the influence societal bias can have on young children. Therefore, it is imperative to provide opportunities for minority youth to explore cultural differences in an environment that encourages open discussions and the value of multiple perspectives. Both societal influence and adult facilitation can be considered examples of 'external' aspects of identity formation. The interpretation of information presented to society through the media is a valuable skill that can be developed in a culturally-responsive context. Rainier Scholars focuses on providing these 'external' processes of identity formation by both use of adult facilitation and including parents in these discussions.

This study supports the literature that identity formation is a complex component of adolescence and that the identity formation process may be even more complex and different for minority youth. While the internal formation process progresses through adolescence, foundational components of the process that are external, like cultural exploration, may begin at an earlier age for minority youth. While the internal formation process progresses through adolescence, foundational components of the process that are external, like cultural exploration, may begin at an earlier age for minority youth. Being part of a minority group adds an additional layer of exploration that is not always considered. Based on the findings of this study, the constructs for measuring cultural identity appear different for a younger minority population which is important to note when working with children in this developmental period. Exploring culture as a preadolescent may mean seeking concrete ideas about cultural groups before the intrinsic process begins later in adolescence. These findings support the importance of culturally-responsive teaching that will encourage minority youth to explore culture and to ask the questions they have regarding differences and experiences. The literature supports culturally-responsive teaching and the positive influence in the lives of minority youth.

Subgroup Differences in Culture

Findings of this study support differences in CE between ethnic groups, with the strongest difference between individuals identifying with African American and African immigrant ethnic groups. Findings also indicated there was a statistically significant difference between gender groups for CE. It was predicted that females would show higher growth trajectories in both CE and IGP. The differences between ethnic groups, while small, was an unpredicted outcome. Subtle but significant differences and some positive and negative trends were present between ethnic groups and overall growth for both CE and IGP.

Growth in cultural exploration (CE) appeared higher for females and African individuals compared to the entire sample. Additionally, a positive trend in growth of IGP was present for participants of African descent, however overall growth was still lower than the average of the entire sample. This finding suggests African immigrants exhibit higher cultural exploration, but lower in-group pride over time in this study. It is possible that African immigrants participating in Rainier Scholars (RS) stand out culturally as compared to other ethnic groups in the program. Historically in RS, African immigrant children typically exhibit a higher emphasis on the value of education in the family as part of their cultural group membership, as compared to other ethnic groups. Therefore, if higher academic expectations are set as a cultural value, higher academic performance may be seen as a source of in-group pride. The trend in decline of IGP over time may be present due to the increased knowledge and awareness of the racialized experiences of African American children in the U.S. Further, the realization of the Americanized tendency to include African immigrants and African Americans within the same ethnic group with no differentiation, which results in increased experiences of implicit racial biases, may also contribute to the decline.

The overall average ratings for both cultural exploration and in-group pride were higher than the median score on the adapted MEIM measure for the entire sample. Therefore, as baseline ratings were higher on average across time points across all participants this may indicate that the growth was not as meaningful despite its statistical significance.

African American participants showed higher than average growth in ratings for both cultural exploration and in-group pride as compared to the overall sample. Despite this higher rate of growth at each time point, the African American participants also exhibit the lowest average ratings of all ethnic groups in the study sample. This would indicate that while this

subgroup shows the most growth, their ratings are still lower than the overall sample in both CE and IGP. This finding is especially important due to the fact that this ethnic group has a long history of racialized experiences in education. The Conclave class works to dismantle the impact of implicit bias. This finding may also indicate that participation in Conclave, with the facilitation of cultural exploration and the bolstering of in-group pride, may be especially beneficial for African American children.

This finding also supports the organization's multi-generation African American (MGAA) initiative to focus recruitment efforts and provide increased support for retaining African American families. This initiative was developed due to recognition that African American children exhibit the highest rates of attrition in the program. The variables, CE and IGP, identified in this study suggest that culture is important and on the minds of the children in this program. Interestingly, the data indicates that African American children have the lowest overall ratings for CE and IGP compared the other ethnic groups. However, over the course of the 6-week intervention and follow up, African American children also exhibited the most growth over time. This is both confirming and encouraging that African American children and families will benefit from the additional recruitment focus and added cultural components to the early intervention program curriculum.

Participants in the study of Native American heritage showed lower than average growth per week for in-group pride over time. Significant changes were not identified for Hispanic or Southeast Asian participants. This provides further evidence that participants are experiencing the Conclave curriculum differently.

Critical race theory postulates that African Americans experience racism in some form every day, which effects the way this group of individuals navigates the world. Other ethnic

groups have represented their own group through this theoretical lens to highlight similar experiences, but with a different historical outlook on their racial experience. Variations of critical race theory imply that other ethnic group experiences with historical marginalization, prejudice and racism are present, however they may be experienced differently from African American individuals. Race as a social construct will play a role in the cultural exploration process due to every racial and ethnic group having different social, biological, and environmental experiences. Separate group experiences are ingrained within each culture and can be interpreted through two main sources: societal views and in-group experiences. The point of view that is most salient to minority youth appears to be the in-group experience. However, societal views can have just as much influence, whether direct or indirect on youth and their perceptions of their own cultural group.

Prior research has established there is a clear difference in conceptualization of cultural experiences between African American and African ethnic groups. Martha Nussbaum (1998) noted that African American culture is distinguishably different from any known African immigrant culture, past or present. Nevertheless, both are placed under the ambiguous category of "Blackness" in the U.S. For example, Dodoo (1997) and Butcher (1994) have suggested that African immigrants are reportedly one of the most highly educated immigrants in the U.S. (as cited in Offoh, 2003). Ogbu (1991) has researched African immigrants and the differences between their African American counterparts. Many African families immigrate to the U.S. with the intention of ensuring their children receive an education, acquire a job and make money to then support their families. African immigrant families seek to prepare their children to become competitive in the global job market and assume that can only be done in the United States. Additionally, educational freedom is not provided to females in many African countries;

therefore, families who wish to educate their daughters will pursue success through the education system in the U.S. A voluntary minority (African immigrants voluntarily entering the U.S.) will actively seek higher education in the U.S. while an involuntary minority (African Americans involuntarily entered the U.S. as slaves) may understand that higher education advancement does not necessarily lead to acceptance in the U.S. (Ogbu, 1991). In contrast with African Americans, African immigrants are frequently associated with discipline and strong work ethics (Offoh, 2003). This is not to say that African American families do not value education as highly as African immigrant families—it is the resources to pursue and acquire an education that is problematic (Offoh, 2003). Differences in historical experiences and level of "Americanization" leads to a very different lens through which each group views education attainment and the improvements made to their lives and futures (Offoh, 2003). The complexities between African American and African immigrants alone is enough to support culture-specific research into the process of cultural exploration and conceptualization of culture for these different groups.

Implications for Theory, Practice and Research

The findings of this study have implications for theory, practice and research regarding preadolescent minority youth and early intervention programs using culturally-responsive approaches.

Theoretical implications. The results of this study are supportive of the tenets of critical race theory (CRT). The primary tenet of CRT assumes racism is an ordinary experience that is engrained in the everyday experiences of people of color in the U.S. (Delgado & Stefancic, 2017). The theoretical underpinnings of CRT predict positive outcomes following the addition of cultural components in early intervention programs for minority youth. The Conclave class of RS provides a context for application of CRT and its tenets. This application addresses one of the

primary critiques of CRT that practical application is lacking and that the teachings of the tenets are not disseminated as they could be. Ladson-Billings (2005) speculated that CRT would not be upheld in mainstream media due to the theory requiring others to admit that racism exists and is still a problem in the U.S. While this may be true, there could also be important benefits in educating minority youth in the CRT tenets with the purpose of expanding and enriching the understanding of minority experiences and providing future generations of minority youth with a means to educate their White peers from a diverse point of view.

Previous theorists and researchers postulate that identity development begins in adolescence and is an ongoing process through which adolescents and young adults define their internal selves (Erikson, 1968; Marcia, 1966). Additionally, cultural identity is defined in several different ways within the literature. Given there is no consensus of how cultural identity is defined, understanding the behavioral processes through which identity is explored may provide a more practical approach to understanding this concept within younger populations. The findings of this study also support exploration of the external factors related to cultural groups. External factors and environment include seeking information from others within a similar ethnic or cultural group, societal or social media and through tangible experiences, such as attending cultural events.

The results of this study align with the theoretical underpinnings of identity theory, in that preadolescents (ages 9-11) may not be engaged in the internal identity formation processes at this age. Erikson's (1968) research implied a higher level of cognitive skill required for adolescents to engage in the process of identity formation. The *internal* processes of identity formation are better represented by the adolescent population due to their higher cognitive abilities and insight into the abstract nature of identity. It is more likely that preadolescents are

engaging in cultural exploration through *external* behaviors coinciding with expression of in-group pride based on the constructs identified in this study. Cultural exploration during the preadolescent developmental period could be considered a precursory task to the development of individual identity and cultural/ racial identity.

Practice implications. Early intervention programs can be viewed as vehicles for change in addressing the societal issue of the educational debt. The premise of these programs address educational inequity for minority youth across the country. The academic, social, and psychological support from these programs can provide a way for minority youth to match the pace of their dominant-culture peers by boosting their skills across multiple areas. Along with the early intervention programming, parent involvement and support for attaining the mainstream cultural and social knowledge required to navigate in the post-secondary educational landscape in the U.S. may increase the chances of more minority youth accessing the path to higher education. Parental engagement and support is also essential in the education and discussions related to culture and the role that culture and ethnic background may play in the family unit. There is an abundance of evidence that early intervention programs for minority youth provide much needed equity within the education system. Many minority families are at an immediate disadvantage based on race and socio-economic status alone. Research shows that the earlier the intervention the better— beginning intervention programs as early as fourth grade yields positive outcomes for participating minority youth (Nettles & Perna, 1997). Participation in an early intervention program has positive benefits including increased academic achievement and a higher likelihood of attending college and access to higher education.

Early intervention programs for minority youth hold a unique potential for integrating educational curriculum that enhances cultural acceptance and pride, a sense of belonging and

community, and exploration of what culture means and how it is woven into the daily lives of minority youth. Gay (2000) describes culturally responsive pedagogy as recognizing the uniqueness of student culture by using "the cultural knowledge, prior experiences, frames of reference, and performance styles of ethnically diverse students to make learning more relevant to and effective for them." More specifically, it teaches to and through the strengths of students of color, while also being culturally validating and affirming (Gay, 2000). Scholars have studied culturally responsive techniques used by teachers in schools with primarily positive outcomes. Across all subjects, the integration of culturally relevant practices has shown to increase feelings of belongingness, positive psychosocial factors, and aides in getting children to college (Howard & Terry, 2011; Jones, Lee, Matlack & Zigarelli, 2017). Further, it is during this time in development that adolescents begin to wonder about who they are and who they want to be, searching for their identity in the world. With this, comes experiencing more explicit ways of feeling different from their majority White peers. Minority youth will gravitate toward each other as they enter junior high and high school due to seeking out peers who may have similar experiences of "otherness" that become more explicit as youth get older (Tatum, 2017). School is an especially impactful place for groups to foster a sense of belonging with their ethnic group peers.

According to Gay (2000), a way to encourage perspective taking and acceptance of differences through cultural exploration is by explicit teaching and openly discussing these topics. Discussion of sensitive topics in a safe environment can be a beneficial source of knowledge acquisition and myth debunking (Belgrave et al, 2004). Culturally-responsive material taught to all children, but especially minority youth, has shown to be beneficial in promoting understanding and acceptance of cultural differences (Gay, 2000). The results of the

current study confirm that the addition of culturally-responsive curricula has great potential to promote and facilitate healthy cultural exploration in pre-adolescent minority youth.

Along with beneficial improvements and changes, come limitations and barriers to progress for early intervention programs. The addition of a cultural component to early intervention programs may be met with resistance due to the pressure to focus more on academics for minority youth. Time and resources would be required to support the addition of a cultural component within an academic-focused program, which is not always feasible. These factors should be considered when considering this curriculum addition and focus. Arguably, the benefits would outweigh the costs when considering long-term positive outcomes on both academics and well-being.

The Rainier Scholars experience. The Rainier Scholars program provides minority youth with academic enrichment and emphasizes the importance of cultural pride, education as a value, and expectations of hard work. Each class teaches to the historical experiences for those of minority status in the U.S. Rainier Scholars has created a community for its families that sets expectations high while providing the resources, academic enrichment, cultural exploration and opportunities to allow these children and families to make dreams of success a reality. As such, Rainier Scholars addresses the historical and economic debts, two of the four educational debt components discussed earlier in this paper (Ladson-Billings, 2005). This study naturally focuses on the economic debt in that the sample population is specific to underserved and underrepresented ethnic families in the U.S. Further, the curriculum examined in this study is based on discussing, highlighting, and prioritizing cultural differences in an effort to rewrite negative biases against ethnic groups in education.

Conclave is the aspect of the RS AEP phase that addresses the social-emotional needs of the children the RS program serves. One function of the Conclave class is to provide a space for children to thoughtfully process Rainier Scholars values in their own cultural context. An equally important function of this class is to allow children a space to consider how history and society have influenced (and continue to influence) daily life and experiences of the cultural groups in which they belong. Rainier Scholars has been preparing and recently made two shifts in program practice: the first, an initiative to combat the attrition of African American families from the program and second, a shift in the age of the starting cohort to one year younger to fourth grade students. The second program shift was in response to the literature highlighting that the earlier the intervention start, the more positive long-term outcomes (Nettles & Perna, 1997). In anticipation of the younger cohort group, class curriculums required adjustment to developmental needs. The introduction of the Conclave summer curriculum focus on the *Seedfolks* book was to use concrete examples of cultural diversity for discussion with the younger age group. The pairing of concrete examples with cultural concepts allowed for more fruitful discussion and ease of understanding the idea of cultural identity through exploration given the abstract nature of identity.

Research implications. For research involving the examination of cultural identity or exploration it will be important to control for variability due to diverse ethnicities. The grouping of many diverse groups into one group will continue to influence generalizability of research findings. While it is more cost effective to collect data from multiple cultural groups using one general measure for identity, the richness of data collected using culture specific measure for identity may outweigh the desire for generalization of concepts across groups. Additionally, it is

important to consider controlling for gender when measuring identity constructs, as research has addressed developmental differences between genders.

Further, it is important to continue to examine the differences between cultural exploration and other factors related to identity. Cultural exploration appears to represent a more active process in identity formation that may directly correlate with the internal process of identity formation. Phinney and Ong (2007) have identified that identity can be measured in the simplest form by being separated into two factors: exploration and commitment. It could be implied that these two components of identity formation are constantly evolving or developing at different rates and it is worth noting how early cultural exploration begins for youth. It is during the exploration process that there may be another way to intervene and positively influence the development of feelings of belonging, sense of community and acceptance of individual differences, whereas with in-group pride intervention may be approached differently. Additionally, the development of measurement tools to assess for cultural exploration will allow for more targeted data collection across age groups.

Limitations

The limitations of this study are addressed below and should be considered with future research. The sample size for this study (N=91) affected the power of the statistical analysis and indicated that the significant effects found in the analyses resulted in smaller effect sizes and with lower confidence and increased margins for interpretation. The number of variables measured in this study and the further division of the sample into ethnic groups resulted in an even smaller sample size when completing group comparisons. Additionally, the smaller sample size increased the margin of error within the analyses. Within reliability and validity studies for identity measures, there are sample size and demographic limitations are barriers for testing a

measure across multiple age groups and ethnic groups. This is problematic when attempting to study cultural or ethnic subgroup responses in order to accurately represent these groups in the literature. Furthermore, finding an adequate sample size for factor analysis is often difficult to obtain when studying ethnic minority groups that have historically not been included in social science research.

Measurement issues. The measurement of identity concepts, whether broadly for the population or specific to an ethnic group, will continue to be an important aspect of working with diverse populations in psychology and education. As such, it is important to consider the challenges with the measurement of social constructs such as cultural, ethnic and racial identity. The lack of consensus in the definitions of race, ethnicity, and culture, extends to the constructs of ethnic identity and racial identity and has prohibited scholars from comparing findings across studies or measurement tools in an effort to understand the concepts (Phinney, 1990). Given the varying definitions of racial, ethnic, and cultural identity it proved difficult to find a tool to measure cultural identity. Much of the research on ethnic and racial identity have measurement tools that are broad and allow for the same measure to be given to minority individuals across multiple ethnic and racial groups. However, with the expansive diverse population in the U.S., using broad measures to assess ethnic and racial identity is not sufficient for generalization across ethnic groups. Further, with the lack of consensus on definitions and the operationalization of identity development models, it also proves difficult to ensure that the intended identity process is being measured.

The MEIM measure utilized a 1-4 Likert scale (strongly disagree, somewhat disagree, somewhat agree, strongly agree), which may not reflect the most appropriate response options this age group of children. In future study, using the response option of 1-5, which would add a

neutral response and using emoticons or smiley faces to circle instead of numbers would yield more accurate understanding of what is being measured.

Measurement tool adjustment. An especially important limitation to this study was the modifications made to the measurement tool prior to the collection of data. The language in the measurement tool was changed by the Rainier Scholars organization, due to concerns related to developmental appropriateness of terms used. The Rainier Scholars organization decided that the word “ethnic” should be changed to “cultural” to align with the emphasis on the term “culture” in the Conclave summer curriculum. The use of the word “cultural” was to support adult request by Rainier Scholars staff, but this change also watered down the focus of the original purpose of the measurement tool and subscales. The original form of the MEIM could not be used and is less likely to have led to the same outcome as the Roberts et al., 1998 study that utilized the revised 14-item measure with middle school aged students to measure specifically ethnic identity. In the future, a new measurement tool to specifically measure cultural identity should be created to reduce Type 1 error by changing the constructs.

This study utilized a broad-band identity measure, therefore naturally the detection of differences between and within ethnic groups are not as likely to be detected. Culture-specific data is especially important to inform practice, therefore future focus on those differences is relevant. Additionally, it is possible that in pre- and post-testing participants became familiar with the assessment items which may have led to less sensitization on mid and posttest responses. These limitations can be addressed with extensive planning in replication of this study.

Validity issues. The results of this study indicated that causation is not amenable due to confounding and extraneous variables that could not be controlled (Hepner, Kivilghan, &

Wampold, 1999). First, all participants were included in the intervention therefore random assignment of participants was not completed. The analyses of this study were unable to control for the influence of racial socialization activities outside of Conclave on cultural exploration and in-group pride. For example, studying minority group history in the U.S., community building activities through daily morning meetings, completing an annual group hike, involvement of past Rainier Scholars in the summer activities, family activities to highlight the embracement of cultural differences, and a rite of passage overnight trip and graduation ceremony at the end of the summer. There are several ways this limitation can be addressed including: through study replication with minority youth who are not participating in an early intervention, with a control group that does not have a *Seedfolks* integrated curriculum, or with the use of a delayed start design.

The *Seedfolks* book represented several ethnic groups that contribute to the story of the community garden however, does not include a Native American character in the story. As the Native American children in this sample showed a decline in cultural exploration, it is possible that the absence of a Native American character in the story contributed to this decline. As all other ethnic groups from the sample were represented in the book, it is possible there was a lack of connection to the story for the Native American children.

The findings of this study may not offer sufficient generalizability, as this study was completed with a small, diverse sample of minority youth from one early intervention program. Each program in the U.S. is structured and implemented differently, therefore this study would need to be replicated within other programs for cross validation of findings to enhance generalizability. Additionally, there were three different instructors for this class, therefore the effect of group instructor identity may have impacted implementation of the intervention as well

as influences on participants (Rovai, Baker, & Ponton, 2013; Cook & Campbell, 1979; Kazdin, 2003).

Given the interactional nature of the Conclave class, it is important to address the potential impact of the two Caucasian female instructors and the third instructor, an African American male. Therefore, being cognizant of the how the group instructor presented and facilitated the discussion of sensitive cultural topics must be addressed. The participant's reactions to having Caucasian instructors may have influenced instructor's perception of her own competence in discussing race-related topics. Furthermore, the participant's reactions to the race of their instructors could have caused self-censorship of cultural information. The different racial dynamics between instructors and students were addressed directly, however the potential for residual discomfort for participants was still a possibility.

Future Directions

This study was conducted using secondary data analysis with a measurement tool that was adjusted prior to data collection. The results of this study serve as a starting point for conducting further research on cultural identity in pre-adolescent minority youth participating in early intervention programs. To determine whether similar patterns of development of CE and IGP are constructs across multiple early intervention programs replication of this study is needed. In future replication, data collection of larger samples for subgroups will allow for stronger analyses of group differences. The present literature supports the hypothesis that with increased cultural exploration and in-group pride, academic success may increase. Furthermore, the examination of cultural exploration and in-group pride development related to academic progress will be beneficial.

Further research is required to refine the measurement of cultural identity for future research involving this fluid concept. This study utilized a measure that was previously created to measure the ethnic identity construct. The modifications made to the measurement tool for this study were adaptations to reflect cultural identity. Future research would benefit from the creation of a measurement tool specifically for cultural identity and constructs. With the development of a new measure for cultural exploration and other external processes, items chosen to best reflect the exploration process needs to be used. As an established measure, the tool in this study was limited to nine items. It would be ideal to have the flexibility to add or remove items before data is collected to ensure item validity.

Further examination of how cultural identity and cultural exploration differ is warranted. This study suggests that for the preadolescent minority youth population, examining cultural exploration may be most relevant to learn more about the foundational external process that precedes the formulation of an internal identity. An argument can be made that cultural exploration is just one part of the development of cultural identity, therefore further assessment of how cultural exploration fits with other possible constructs is necessary. Implications of this study identified similarities cultural exploration and racial socialization. Consideration of how these two constructs are related to cultural identity and its processes would be beneficial to add to the literature. This study suggests that cultural exploration and in-group pride concepts were statistically separate of each other although the concepts are directly related. However, it is also possible that the individual development of in-group pride could be an outcome of the cultural exploration process. The results of this study further indicate that focusing on specific cultural groups rather than ethnic minority populations as a whole would yield more ideal data to inform practice.

Lastly, as part of the Rainer Scholars model the Conclave course extends past the 6-week summer curriculum. The school-year Conclave curriculum begins 6 to 8 weeks after summer ends, closer to the start of the next academic year. Rainier Scholars provides extended support to further facilitate learning and discussion related to current societal issues on to culture and race. Given this support is extended over the course of a year, it would be a valuable addition to collect data at multiple time points throughout the year to assess growth across an extended period of time. This extended data collection period would also provide additional data related to cultural exploration and the attrition rates of different ethnic groups over the course of the entire 14-month Academic Enrichment Phase of the RS program.

Conclusion

Educational inequity in the U.S. has resulted in a sizeable educational debt. While this country strives for educational *equality* for all children, minority youth fall further behind due to the lack of *equity*, in more than education. This is not to say that improvements and progress have not been made, as there are many from large organizations to individual people working tirelessly every day to move society forward toward equity and acceptance of all. Critical race theory suggests that racism is a normalized experience for minority individuals therefore, one can infer that minority youth are growing up within a society where their identity and values are questioned and devalued. Research suggests that early intervention programs focusing on academic skills have resounding impacts in as early as fourth grade for minority youth (Nettles & Perna, 1997). Hundreds of programs across the country are working toward eradicating educational inequity for minority youth. Academics continue to be the focus of many early intervention programs; however, when providing services to youth at this age, considering social and emotional development in addition to academic enrichment is essential. Minority youth not

only have to fight to receive the education they deserve; they also have to explore and understand how their culture influences their lives and what that may mean for their future. Preadolescence is a developmental period in which many significant changes happen, including identity exploration and formation. Identity formation for all individuals is vital and the messages youth receive related to their culture and racial background as they grow up can directly impact the internalized feelings and beliefs that they retain toward themselves and their own cultural group.

This study sought to examine how the addition of culturally-responsive teachings to an early intervention program may have encouraged cultural identity exploration in preadolescent minority youth. Identity formation for youth is an ongoing process that changes with daily experiences and when this process truly begins is not entirely clear. The results of this study suggest that exploration related to one's own culture may begin as early as fourth grade and the process of that exploration may differ based on ethnic group membership. Understanding how and through what means cultural identity exploration manifests for preadolescent minority youth could inform how we provide culturally-enriching experiences throughout their education and beyond.

It has become clear that the utilization of culturally-responsive and enriched teachings in all educational settings is relevant and should be inherently obligatory for all youth. Providing minority youth with the space to explore their own culture without bias or maladaptive influence is not only something they deserve but have an innate right to experience; and their majority culture counterparts have an empathic responsibility to learn about and understand cultural diversity along with them.

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Tables

Table 2.

Descriptive Statistics for Cultural Identity (9-items)

Item ID	Item	*M*	*(SD)*	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
ID_EX1_1	I spend time trying to find out more about my own cultural group, such as its history, traditions, and customs.	2.99	0.47	1.00								
ID_EX3_1	In order to learn more about my cultural background, I have often talked to other people about my cultural group.	3.10	0.58	0.32	1.00							
ID_CO1_1	I have a clear sense of my own cultural background and what it means to me.	3.33	0.53	0.54	0.29	1.00						
ID_CO3_1	I understand pretty well what my cultural group membership means to me, in terms of how to relate to my own group and other groups.	3.21	0.56	0.35	0.31	0.46	1.00					
BH_BE2_1	I am active in organizations or social groups that include mostly members of my own cultural group.	3.73	0.29	0.41	0.09	0.26	0.34	1.00				
AF_EM1_1	I am happy that I am a member of the cultural group I belong to.	3.62	0.33	0.27	0.13	0.33	0.34	0.41	1.00			
AF_EM2_1	I have a lot of pride in my cultural group and its accomplishments.	3.63	0.37	0.36	0.24	0.33	0.44	0.50	0.54	1.00		
AF_EM4_1	I feel good about my cultural background.	3.41	0.46	0.36	0.21	0.44	0.53	0.52	0.55	0.45	1.00	
AF_BE1_1	I have a strong sense of belonging to my own cultural group.	2.82	0.78	0.32	0.18	0.31	0.26	0.20	0.24	0.27	0.34	1.00

N=91 children. Pearson's *r* reported.

Table 3.
Summary of Exploratory Factor Analysis Results for Cultural Identity

		Factor Loadings	
Item ID	Item	Factor 1	Factor 2
ID_EX1_1	I spend time trying to find out more about my own cultural group, such as its history, traditions, and customs.	**0.61**	0.06
ID_EX3_1	In order to learn more about my cultural background, I have often talked to other people about my cultural group.	**0.44**	-0.03
ID_CO1_1	I have a clear sense of my own cultural background and what it means to me.	**0.81**	-0.01
ID_CO2_1	I am not very clear about the role of culture in my life.	0.04	0.33
ID_CO3_1	I understand pretty well what my cultural group membership means to me, in terms of how to relate to my own group and other groups.	**0.36**	0.32
AF_EM1_1	I am happy that I am a member of the cultural group I belong to.	-0.01	**0.61**
AF_EM2_1	I have a lot of pride in my cultural group and its accomplishments.	-0.07	**0.8**
AF_EM3_1	I feel a strong attachment to towards my own cultural group.	0.37	0.4
AF_EM4_1	I feel good about my cultural background.	0.04	**0.67**
AF_BE1_1	I have a strong sense of belonging to my own cultural group.	0.19	**0.63**
BH_BE2_1	I am active in organizations or social groups that include mostly members of my own cultural group.	**0.37**	0.15
BH_BE3_1	I participate in cultural practices of my own group, such as special food music, or customs.	0.21	0.19
ID_BE4_1	I think a lot about how my life will be affected by my cultural group membership.	0.29	0.091

Note. N= 91 children. Significant factor loadings appear in bold.

Table 4.
Standardized Loadings for 2-Factor Confirmatory Model of Cultural Exploration and In Group Pride

		Factor Loadings	
Item ID	Question	Factor 1	Factor 2
ID_EX1_1	I spend time trying to find out more about my own cultural group, such as its history, traditions, and customs.	**0.67**	-
ID_EX3_1	In order to learn more about my cultural background, I have often talked to other people about my cultural group.	**0.41**	-
ID_CO1_1	I have a clear sense of my own cultural background and what it means to me.	**0.71**	-
ID_CO3_1	I understand pretty well what my cultural group membership means to me, in terms of how to relate to my own group and other groups.	**0.65**	-
BH_BE2_1	I am active in organizations or social groups that include mostly members of my own cultural group.	**0.45**	-
AF_EM1_1	I am happy that I am a member of the cultural group I belong to.	-	**0.65**
AF_EM2_1	I have a lot of pride in my cultural group and its accomplishments.	-	**0.69**
AF_EM4_1	I feel good about my cultural background.	-	**0.69**
AF_BE1_1	I have a strong sense of belonging to my own cultural group.	-	**0.77**

Note. N= 91 children. Significant factor loadings appear in bold.

Table 5.

Goodness-of-Fit Indicators of Models for Cultural Identity (n=91)

Model	$\chi2$	*df*	$\chi2/df$	GFI	RMSEA
Two Factor (13-items)	75.677	64	0.84	0.96	0.045
Two Factor (9-items)	29.252	26	0.88	0.98	0.037

Note. N= 91 children.

Table 6.

Model Results for LGCM with Cultural Exploration on Ethnicity and Gender as Predictors

Parameter	*Estimate*	*Standard Error (SE)*	Estimate/SE	*p* -Value
Intercept of CE	3.09 ***	0.07	43.92	< 0.001
Change in COH on CE	-0.12	0.05	3.34	0.231
Change in FEMEFF on CE	0.17 ***	0.05	3.34	<0.001
Change in BLEFF on CE	-0.18	0.13	-1.45	0.147
Change in AFREFF on CE	0.18 **	0.09	2.12	0.030
Change in HISPEFF on CE	0.04	0.10	0.37	0.710
Change in NAEFF on CE	-0.10	0.11	-0.94	0.346
Slope on IGP	0.01	0.01	1.33	0.185
Change in COH on CE	0.00	0.008	0.354	0.723
Change in FEMEFF on CE	0.00	0.004	-0.344	0.731
Change in BLEFF on CE	0.03 ***	0.01	2.62	<0.009
Change in AFREFF on CE	-0.01	0.007	-1.048	0.295
Change in HISPEFF on CE	-0.01	0.008	-0.834	0.404
Change in NAEFF on CE	-0.01	0.009	-0.819	0.413
Fit				
Model chi-square	12.34			
df	7			
CFI	0.95			
TLI	0.86			
RMSEA	0.10			
SRMR	0.06			

Note. N =91 children. CE= Cultural Exploration; COH= Cohort; FEMEFF= Female; BLEFF= Black; AFREFF= African; HISPEFF= Hispanic; NAEFF= Native American

* p <.05, ** p <.01, *** p <.001

Table 7.

Model Results for LGCM with In Group Pride on Ethnicity and Gender as Predictors

Parameter	*Estimate*		*Standard Error (SE)*	Estimate/SE	*p*-Value
Intercept of IGP	3.63	***	0.07	53.42	<0.001
Change in COH on IGP	-0.08		0.10	-0.86	0.391
Change in FEMEFF on IGP	0.05		0.05	1.07	0.285
Change in BLEFF on IGP	-0.13		0.12	-1.07	0.283
Change in AFREFF on IGP	0.14		0.08	1.80	0.072
Change in HISPEFF on IGP	-0.02		0.09	-0.17	0.866
Change in NAEFF on IGP	-0.09		0.10	-0.91	0.361
Slope on IGP	0.01		0.01	0.98	0.325
Change in COH on IGP	-0.01		0.01	-0.17	0.863
Change in FEMEFF on IGP	-0.01		0.00	-0.20	0.844
Change in BLEFF on IGP	0.03	***	0.01	3.28	<0.001
Change in AFREFF on IGP	-0.01		0.01	-1.82	0.069
Change in HISPEFF on IGP	0.01		0.01	1.47	0.142
Change in NAEFF on IGP	-0.02	*	0.01	-2.26	0.024
Fit					
Model chi-square	8.66				
df	7				
CFI	0.98				
TLI	0.95				
RMSEA	0.05				
SRMR	0.03				

Note. *N* =91 children. IGP= In Group Pride; COH= Cohort; FEMEFF= Female; BLEFF= Black; AFREFF= African; HISPEFF= Hispanic; NAEFF= Native American

* $p<.05$, ** $p<.01$, *** $p<.001$

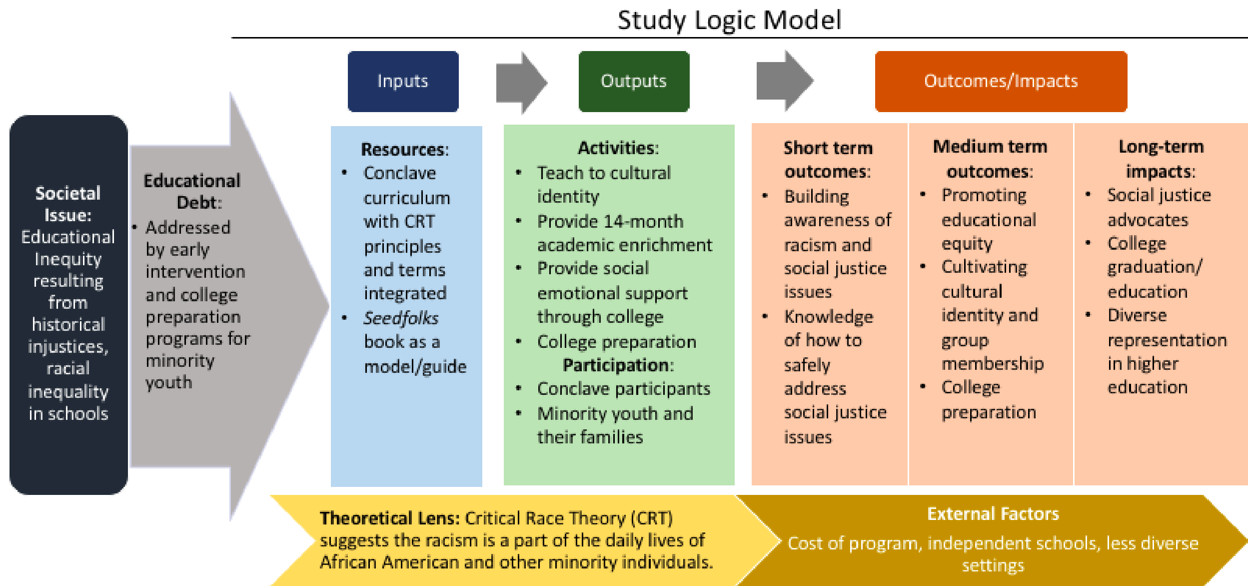


Figure 1. Study Logic Model

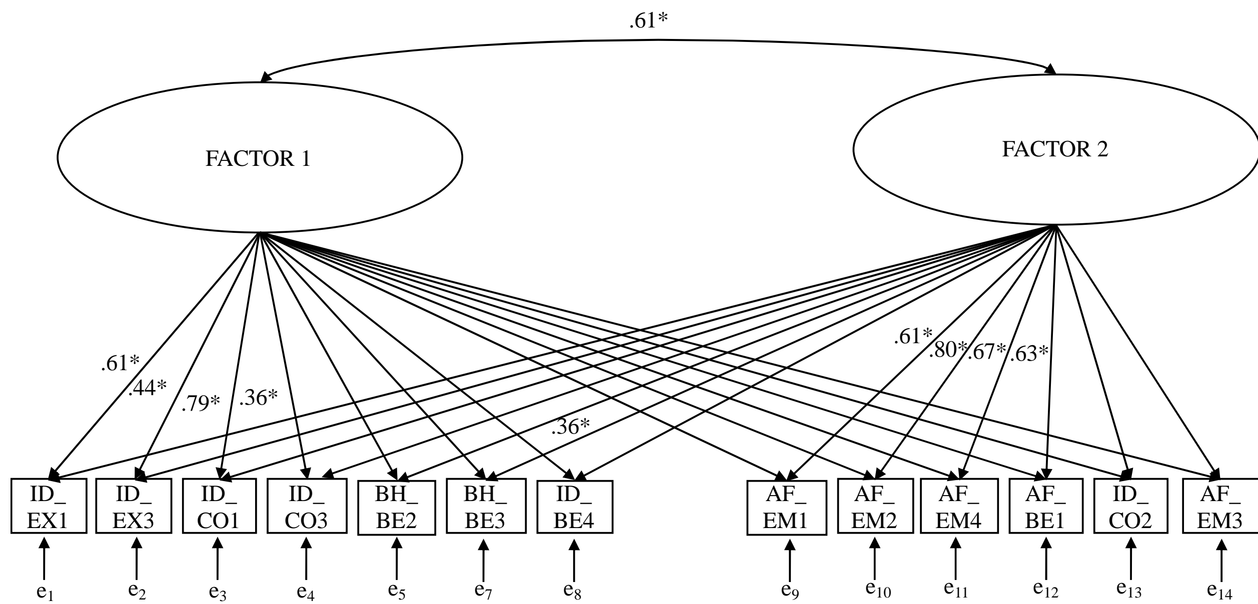


Figure 2. Exploratory factor analysis path results for the 13-item version of the Multigroup Ethnic Identity Measure.

Note: Item 6 was excluded from this analysis due to being uncorrelated with all other items.

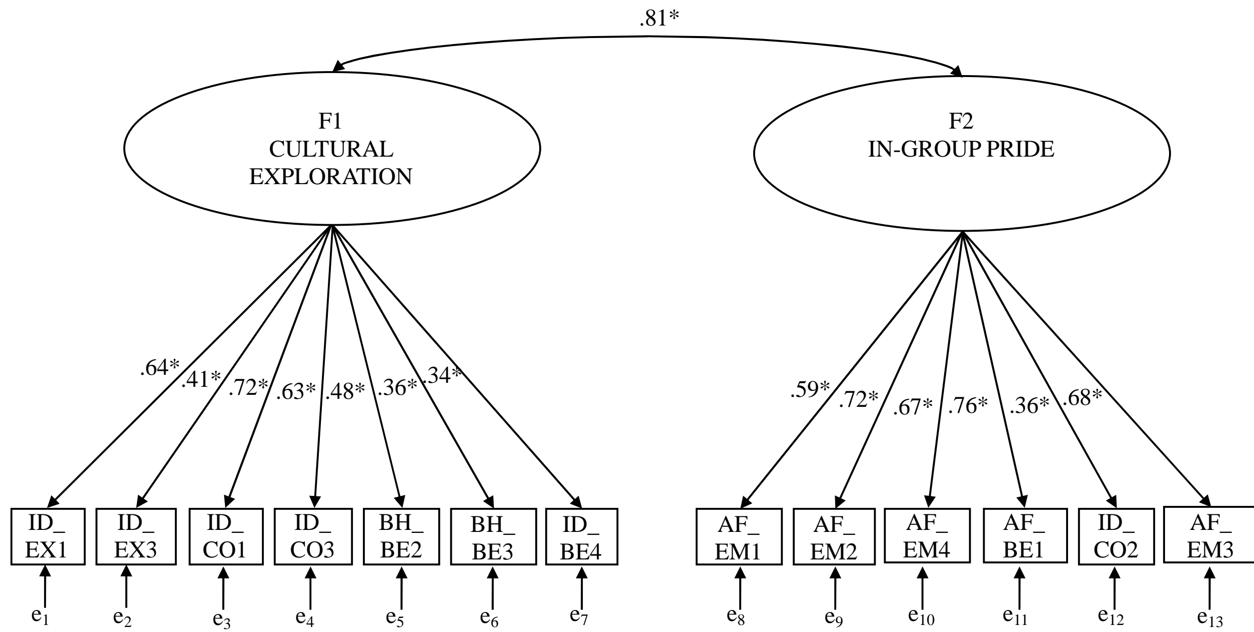


Figure 3. Confirmatory factor analysis path result for the 13-item Multigroup Ethnic Identity Measure.

Note: Item 6 has been removed from the analysis due to being uncorrelated with all other items.

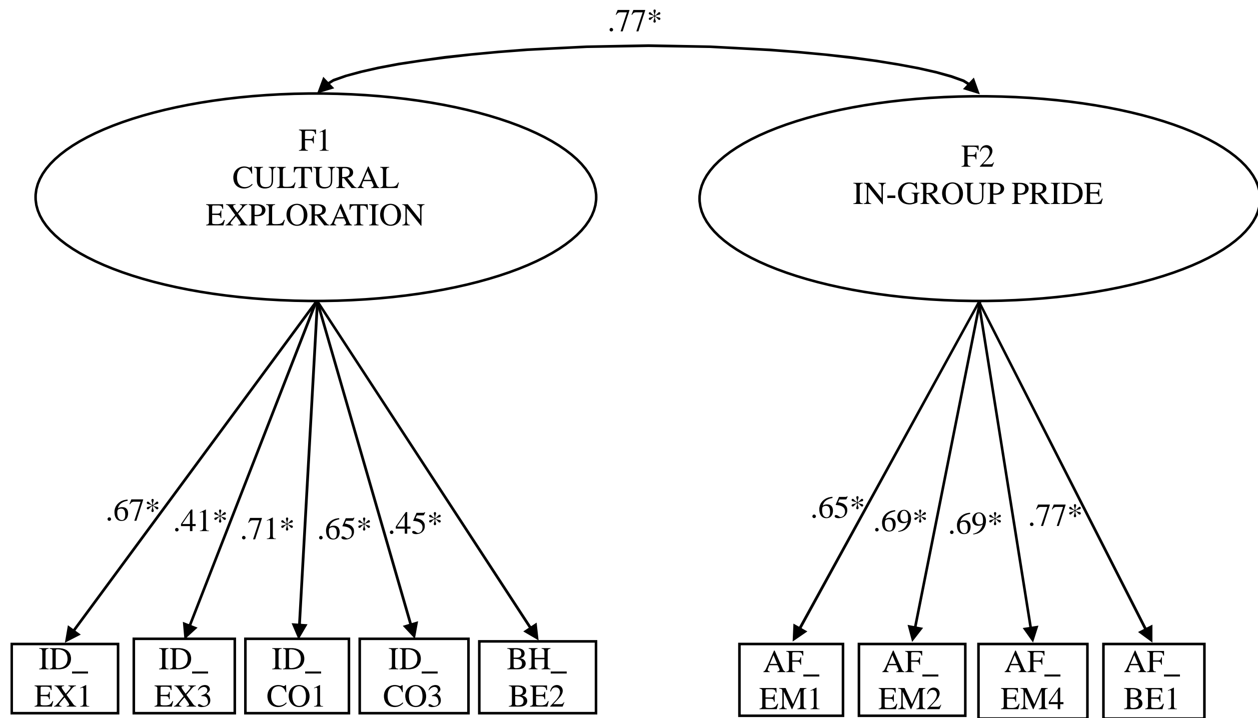


Figure 4. Confirmatory factor analysis path results for the 9-item version of the Multigroup Ethnic Identity Measure.

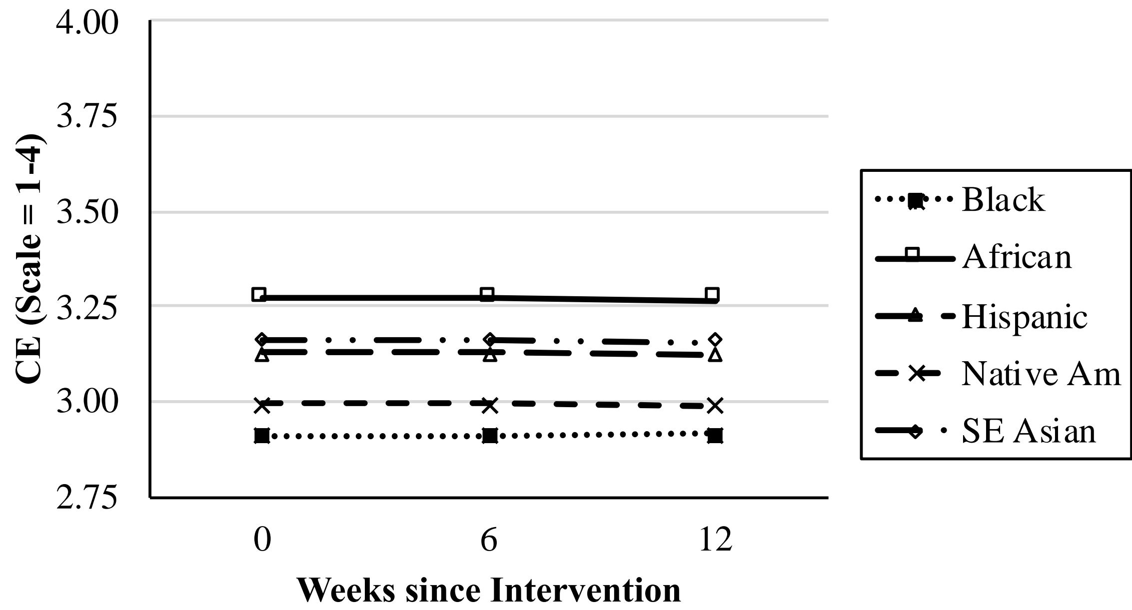


Figure 5. Linear Growth Curve Model Implied Trajectories for Cultural Exploration (CE) by Ethnicity

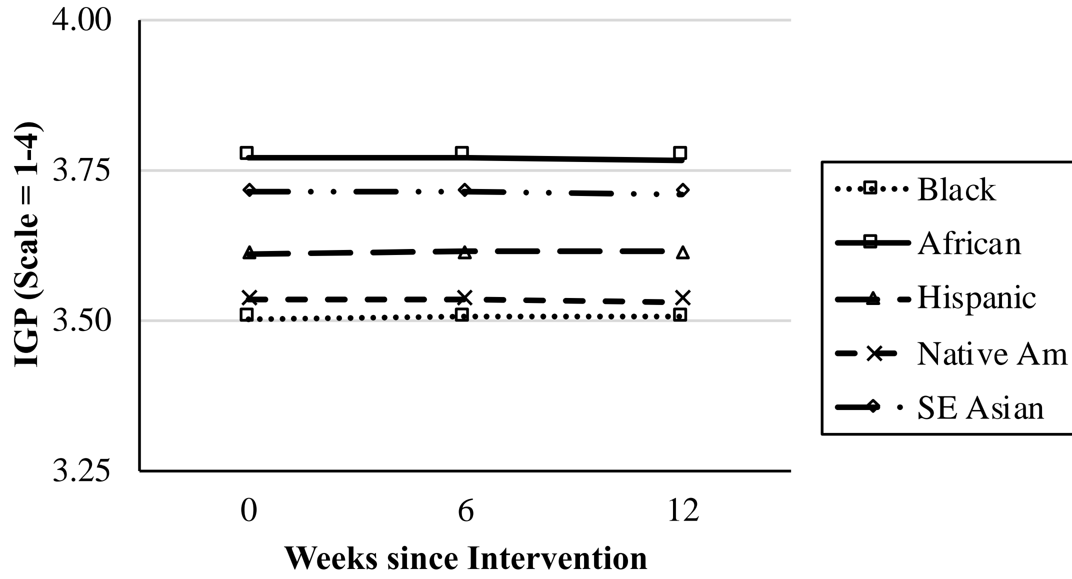
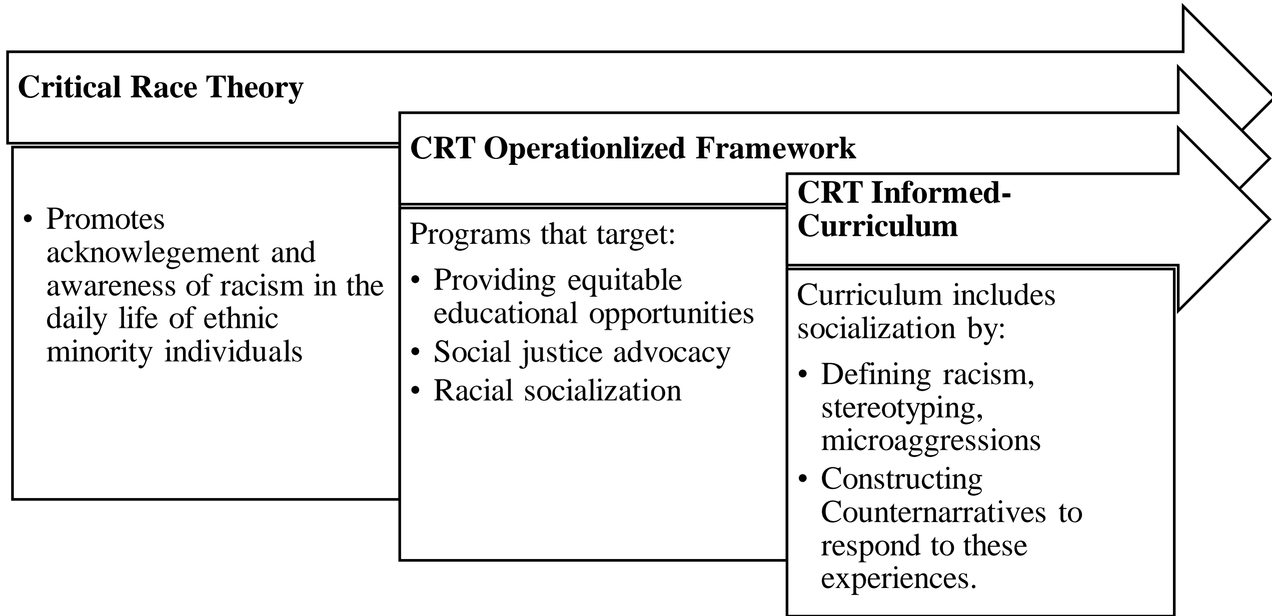


Figure 6. Linear Growth Curve Model Implied Trajectories for In-Group Pride (IGP) by Ethnicity

Appendices

Appendix A: Dissemination of Critical Race Theory in Practice
A Curriculum Informed by CRT



Appendix B: Conclave Summer Curriculum Overview

	Cohort 1 Essential Questions and Seedfolks Chapters	**Cohort 2 Essential Questions and Seedfolks Chapters**
Week 1	**Class 1**: Introduction to Conclave **Class 2**: Defining Cultural Identity: What makes you, you? Read: Kim	**Class 1**: Intro to Conclave & Defining cultural identity: What makes you, you? Read: Kim
Week 2	**Class 3**: What does it mean to get to know someone? Read: Ana **Class 4**: Why is it important to get to know new people in your community? Read: Wendell	**Class 2**: Intro Time Management skills. Read: Ana and Wendell **Class 3**: What does it mean to belong? Read: Gonzalo
Week 3	**Class 5**: What does "belonging" mean? Read: Gonzalo **Class 6**: Define "community." Read: Leona **Class 7**: What does it mean to take a risk? Read: Sam	**Class 4**: What is community? How can you make it better? Read: Leona **Class 5**: What does it mean to take a risk? Read: Sam
Week 4	**Class 8**: Intro RS Values: Excellence, Perseverance, Integrity, Courage. Read: Virgil **Class 9**: How is feeling safe related to feeling like you belong? Read: SaeYoung **Class 10**: No class (Field trip)	**Class 6**: What does responsible risk-taking mean? What does it look like? Read: Virgil **Class 7**: What is the relationship between safety and feeling like you belong? Read: SaeYoung
Week 5	**Class 11**: Who in your life encourages you to be a great student? Read: Curtis **Class 12**: No class (Field trip Hike to RR) **Class 13**: What made you keep going on the RS cohort hike when you wanted to stop? Read: Nora and Maricela	**Class 8**: Who in your life encourages you to be great? Who inspires you to be here? Read: Curtis and Nora **Class 9**: How do our personal experiences have an impact on how we act? Read: Maricela
Week 6	**Class 14**: What are we learning about the Seedfolks garden? Read: Amir **Class 15**: What are some of your "big moments" from this summer? Read: Florence **Class 16**: Writing workshop to create outlines of first drafts for final project	**Class 10**: What are we learning about the Seedfolks garden? Read: Amir **Class 11**: What are some of your "big moments" from this summer that you could write about in your own "Seedfolks" chapter? Read: Florence

Week 7	**Class 17**: Type final project in class using Chromebooks. **Class 18**: Read aloud final projects to the class **Class 19**: Final Session Debrief for the summer; Conclave class feedback	**Class 12**: Read aloud final projects to class, Final class debrief, Conclave class feedback.

Appendix C: Seedfolks Character Tracking Grid

Name: ____________________ Section: ________

Directions: Fill out the character chart as you read each chapter. In the center, record why the garden is important to each person.

What makes Kim, Kim?	What makes Ana, Ana?	What makes Wendell, Wendell?	What makes Gonzalo, Gonzalo?	What makes Leona, Leona?	What makes Sam, Sam?
SEED FOLKS	**Why is the garden important?**				What makes Virgil, Virgil?
What makes Florence, Florence?	What makes Amir, Amir?	What makes Maricela, Maricela?	What makes Nora, Nora?	What makes Curtis, Curtis?	What makes SaeYoung, SaeYoung?

Appendix D: Multigroup Ethnic Identity Measure (14-item adaption)

Use the numbers below to indicate how much you agree or disagree with each statement. (4) Strongly agree; (3) Agree; (2) Disagree; (1) Strongly disagree

1. I have spent time trying to find out more about my cultural group, such as its history, traditions, and customs.
2. I have a clear sense of my ethnic background and what it means for me.
3. I think a lot about how my life will be affected by my cultural group membership.
4. I am happy that I am a member of the cultural group I belong to.
5. I am not very clear about the role of culture in my life.
6. I have not spent much time trying to learn more about the culture and history of my cultural group.
7. I have a strong sense of belonging to my own cultural group.
8. I understand pretty well what my cultural group membership means to me.
9. To learn more about my cultural background, I have often talked to other people about my cultural group.
10. I have a lot of pride in my cultural group and its accomplishments.
11. I feel a strong attachment towards my own ethnic group.
12. I feel good about my cultural or ethnic background.
13. I am active in organizations or social groups that include mostly members of my own cultural group.
14. I participate in cultural practices of my own group, such as special food, music, or customs.

I identify as a(n): ____________________

Appendix E: Cultural Identity Constructs by Item

Item ID	**Construct**	**Item**
ID_EX1_1	Cultural Exploration	I spend time trying to find out more about my own cultural group, such as its history, traditions, and customs.
ID_EX3_1	Cultural Exploration	In order to learn more about my cultural background, I have often talked to other people about my cultural group.
ID_CO1_1	Cultural Exploration	I have a clear sense of my own cultural background and what it means to me.
ID_CO31	Cultural Exploration	I understand pretty well what my cultural group membership means to me, in terms of how to relate to my own group and other groups.
BH_BE2_1	Cultural Exploration	I am active in organizations or social groups that include mostly members of my own cultural group.
AF_EM1_1	In Group Pride	I am happy that I am a member of the cultural group I belong to.
AF_EM2_1	In Group Pride	I have a lot of pride in my cultural group and its accomplishments.
AF_EM4_1	In Group Pride	I feel good about my cultural background.
AF_BE1_1	In Group Pride	I have a strong sense of belonging to my own cultural group.

Appendix F: Conclave Class Feedback Sheet

Now that Conclave for Summer 1 has come to an end, we'd like to know how you feel about somethings in the class! Read each question carefully and mark your response to each one.

How do you define cultural identity?

BEFORE having Conclave this summer, how much do you think you knew about cultural identity? (On a scale of 1 (nothing at all) to 10 (a lot!) **Circle one**.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
(nothing)									(a lot!)

AFTER having Conclave this summer, how much do you think you have learned about your own cultural identity? (On a scale of 1 (nothing at all) to 10 (a lot) **Circle one**.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
(nothing)									(a lot!)

What three words would you use to describe how you feel about Conclave?

____________________ ____________________ ____________________

Use the rest of the space below to tells U.S. any other thoughts you have about Conclave.

Appendix G: Word Cloud of Cohort 17 Responses to Conclave

Appendix H: Rainier Scholars Seedfolks Chapters Cover

RAINIER
SCHOLARS

"Seedfolks"

Chapters

COHORT 17

Summer 2017

Appendix I: Sample Individual Seedfolks Chapter

Child Portrait
(Similar to the chapter headshots of each character in the book)

Prompt:
Every chapter in Seedfolks introduces us to another person from the neighborhood and a "big moment" that described how they became part of the garden community. We are each becoming part of the Rainier Scholars community. Combine what you wrote for your "What Makes You, You?" assignment and one of your big Rainier Scholars moments this summer to help you think about how you contribute to the RS community. Also include how your family has played a part in how you got here to RS.