CULTURALLY RESPONSIVE PEDAGOGY AND ITS IMPACT ON THE ACADEMIC OUTCOMES OF MARGINALIZED STUDENTS (K-12) IN THE PEDAGOGICAL SPACES OF URBAN SCHOOLS: A PHENOMENOLOGICAL CASE STUDY

by

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ABSTRACT

ELIJAH EDDIE DUNBAR. Culturally Responsive Pedagogy and its Impact on the Academic Outcomes of Marginalized Students (K-12) in the Pedagogical Spaces of Urban Schools. A Phenomenological Case Study. (Under the direction of DR. GREG A. WIGGAN)

Culturally Responsive Teaching is a holistic pedagogical approach that appeals to the "whole child," "whole school," and "whole community" (Gay, 2001; Teschers, 2020); it is a multicultural practice that improves teaching and learning, promotes quality education, taps into the potential and uniqueness of students, and impacts learners intellectually, emotionally, kinesthetically, and physically (Gay, 2010; Widodo, 2019). This qualitative phenomenological case study examines the concepts and pedagogical practices of culturally responsive teaching through the shared experiences of educators and implementers of culturally responsive pedagogy to find out how effective those concepts and practices are in improving the academic outcomes of marginalized students (K-12) in urban classrooms.

A purposive case sampling method (PCSM) and semi-structured interview were instrumental elements of the data collection process. A grounded theory method was used to both collect and analyze the data. Themes that emerged from the data of the interviews conducted with the participants were amalgamated to form four main themes for the study. Though this study may be limited by generalizability, it however provides answers to some lingering limitation questions of existing studies on culturally responsive practices. This study draws on and adds to the works of Geneva Gay on Culturally Responsive Pedagogy.

Keywords*: holistic education, education equity, educational inequity, multicultural education, opportunity gap, culturally responsive pedagogy*

DEDICATION

This plateau of my academic achievement is dedicated to hundreds of aspirants and enthusiasts of my generation of my native Liberia who aspired to excel beyond high school to the highest echelon of the academic world as physicians, lawyers, surgeons, economists, scientists, chemists, physicists, and many more but could not. They could not because the only government institution of higher learning in the country, in its capital city, Monrovia was incapacitated to accommodate and enroll them, leaving them frustrated and hurt for the rest of their lives. Those brilliant minds were not given the chance to further their education and prove to the world who they were.

However, I cherish their competiveness in high school and their assiduity for excellence. I give them accolade for doing their part of being hopeful and optimistic about postsecondary education, even though they were not given a chance. Many of them were placed on a "waiting list" at the university and never had the chance to get off that list. They got tired of waiting as months and years went by. They had to give up their dreams and find jobs to survive and take care of their loved ones. In whose state of bewilderment came a civil war that claimed the lives of some and changed the lives of many.

I take this moment to honor them by sharing my Doctor of Philosophy platform with them. I commemorate this accomplishment with my high school cohorts, known and unknown, dead or alive, who did not have the opportunity to fulfill their dreams. I share this moment not only with high school graduates of Liberia, also with high school graduates of developing nations who anticipate furthering their postsecondary education but unfortunate cannot due to the limitation of institutions of higher learning in their countries.

I also dedicate this doctoral accomplishment to my father who departed this life a few years ago and not being able to know that his son has been conferred with the highest academic degree in existence. May his soul rest in peace. I also share this platform with my mother who I did not have the chance to know, who departed this life when I was just two years old. I know she would have been proud of me, may her soul also rest in peace. I dedicate this achievement to my wife and children for their tolerance, unwavering love, and patience during the course of this academic journey of mine.

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Accolade to Dr. Charles B. Hutchison, from whom I obtained my inspiration to pursue my Ph.D. Impressed with his studious and literary genius, I walked over to him during the open house of the Ph.D. program at the Cato College of Education and told him that I wanted to be like him. His response was, "sure, I'll be willing to help you, if you need help, feel free to contact me." Factually, prior to starting the Ph.D. program, he taught me a few graduate courses. He was always willing to be a recommender whenever I asked him for a recommendation. Thank you, Dr. Hutchison.

"Own your dissertation." Those were awakening and motivating words from Dr. Stella Kim. Her astounding acumen in statistics made me interested in doing quantitative research. However, due to the content and context of my research I had to do qualitative research instead. Nevertheless, she agreed to be a part of the committee and assist me the best way she could. Thank you, Dr. Kim. I appreciate your support.

I want to thank Dr. Gloria Campbell-Whatley for her willingness to be a part of the committee. I appreciate the time and support she gave to help me complete this journey.

To the “wiz,” Dr. Chance W. Lewis, the wise man, skilled academic, and literary genius. Thank you. One of his wise sayings that stuck with me over the years was “it does not matter how long it takes to get there, just get there.” The “there” he was referring to is the “end” of the Ph.D. program or “graduation.” Every time I felt a little weary during the journey, those words gave me assurance that the end was reachable. Thank you, Dr. Lewis.

“Interest Convergence” are the words that come to mind when I think of Dr. Bettie Butler. Those were words reflected in one of her lectures on Critical Race Theory. I also remember her for the “Turning Point” project. Thank you, Dr. Butler.

I want to thank Dr. Tina Heafner for being a part of my educational journey at the University of North Carolina at Charlotte. Dr. Heafner has taught me in every phase of my education at the university (Undergraduate or Baccalaureate, Masters, and Doctoral).

To all the other professors whose names I did not mention, my apologies. Thank you for the time and support you extended towards my education. I appreciate you.

I want to extend a special thank you to my research participants for their willingness to be a part of this study.

To my cohorts, some of whom graduated earlier, it was a pleasure taking this glorious Ph.D. journey with you.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATED WORDS

ACL: Applied Critical Leadership

BIE: Bureau of Indian Education

CCM: Constant Comparative Method

CCP: Culturally Competent Pedagogy

CDP: Cultural Deprivation Paradigm

CDT: Culturally Difference Theory

CLRTL: Culturally and Linguistically Responsive Teaching and Learning

CML: Critical Multicultural Learning

CP: Critical Pedagogy

CPT: Critical Pedagogy Theory

CRL: Culturally Relevant Literature

CRMT: Culturally Responsive Mathematics Teaching

CRP: Culturally Responsive Pedagogy

CRT: Critical Race Theory

CRTSE: Culturally Responsive Teaching Self-efficacy Scale

CSP: Culturally Sustaining Pedagogy

DOD: Department of Defense

ES: Ethnic Studies

ELL: English Language Learners

HE: Holistic Education

HL: Holistic Learning

HT: Holistic Teaching

IES: Institute of Education Sciences

IRB: Institutional Review Board

MAKSS: Multicultural Awareness-Knowledge-Skills-Survey

ME: Multicultural Education

NAEP: National Assessment of Educational Progress

NCES: National Center for Education Statistics

NEL: Nurturing Early Learners

NIES: National Indian Education Studies

PAR: Participatory Action Research

PCK: Pedagogical Content Knowledge

RHET: Religion Humanist Education Theory

RP: Resources Pedagogy

SEL: Standard English Learner

SLT: Socio-Cultural Learning Theory

ST: Socio-Cultural Theory

TL: Transformational Leadership

TS: Third Space

UC: Urban Characteristics

UE: Urban Emergent

UE: Urban Intens

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTORY STATEMENT

Educational inequity continues to affect the academic outcomes of marginalized students (k-12) in the United States (Darling-Hammond, 2017; Gay, 2000;Volckman, 2017). Inadequate funding (Darling-Hammond, 2017; Hesbol et al, 2020), inaccessibility to equal educational resources (Darling-Hammond, 2017), high-stakes testing (Darling-Hammond, 2017; Milner & Lomotey, 2014), and the lack of access to quality education (Darling-Hammond, 2017; Gay, 2002), are few of the many leading causes of the opportunity gap that exists between minority students and other students which is widening exponentially as the U. S population and schools become more diverse (Flores, 2007; Gay, 2000: Ladson-Billings, 2007; U, S. Census Bureau, 2020).

Today, the beauty of the world can be seen through the brilliance of its peoples and cultures. The literary contribution of Imhotep, the worldwide infusion and diffusion of knowledge by renowned academics at Timbuktu's Center of Learning of ancient Africa, the mathematical genius of Aryabhata of India's Gupta Civilization, and the artistic and scientific prowess of the great minds of the Mayan society of the Americas are examples of how the uniqueness of one person or culture can impact the world. Appreciating and acknowledging the achievements and values of other people and their cultures civically and morally add to the wellbeing of society. It is within this framework of valuing the cultural contributions of others a group of educational theoreticians over three decades ago came up with the concepts, "culturally responsive pedagogy," "culturally relevant pedagogy," "culturally sustaining pedagogy," "culturally competent pedagogy," and "multicultural education;" an idea that education can only be equitable if the histories, languages, and values of other cultures were included in the

curricula, lessons, and teaching practices used in a classroom where majority of the students are linguistically, culturally, and ethnically different (Banks, 2013).

This dissertation comprises five chapters; chapter 1 is introductory statement, chapter 2 is literature review, chapter 3 is methodology, chapter 4 is the findings. Also, along with the chapters are subheadings. In this introductory statement section, the subheadings are: a) the problem statement, b) the purpose statement, c) research questions, d) definition of terms, e) the theoretical framework, and chapter summary. In this segment of the research, I explore the theories and practices of teaching and learning to determine their effectiveness in: 1) supporting and providing holistic education and 2) improving the academic outcomes of marginalized students (K-12) in urban settings. The theories and practices examined are: a) culturally responsive pedagogy, culturally relevant pedagogy, culturally sustaining pedagogy, and multicultural education. I provide a historical context that connects to the following theories: culturally relevant pedagogy, culturally sustaining pedagogy, culturally competent pedagogy, and multicultural education which inform my study. Next, I compare and contrast these major theories: culturally relevant pedagogy, culturally sustaining pedagogy, culturally competent pedagogy, and multicultural education to explore how they relate to my topic. After a thorough examination of the aforementioned theories and practices, I selected Culturally Responsive Pedagogy or Culturally Responsive Teaching to be the main concept and theory for my research. I decided to model Culturally Responsive Pedagogy (CRP) because: a) it supports and promotes holistic teaching and learning, b) it has a broader and specific appeal to teaching and learning for all students, c) it is a source of reference for many educational theorists and researchers, especially those who are constantly in search of educational practices that address the needs of a diverse population of students (Allen, & Boykin, 2009; Aronson, 2016; Au, 2009; Banks, 2013;

Biery, 2021; Delpit, 2003; Hollie, 2009; Hurley, Ladson-Billings, 1992; Maloney & Hodges, 2017; Nelson, Nieto, 2017; Paris, 2012), d) it identifies the disparity that exists between marginalized students and other students (Gay, 2000; Ladson-Billings, 2007), e) it singles out the reason African American Latinx, American Indian and Alaska Native students are not as competitive as other students (Gay, 2000), and f) it reveals how divisive and rhetorical the "achievement gap" discourse is and how, instead, it should be replaced with the discourse of the "opportunity gap" (Flores, 2007; Gay, 2002; Ladson-Billings, 2007)." The opportunity gap" relates to educational resources that are denied to all students, especially marginalized students (Flores, 2007).

Following the delineation of the major frameworks (culturally relevant pedagogy, culturally sustainable pedagogy, culturally competent pedagogy, and multicultural education) that relate to my research, I explain the similarities between "holistic education or holistic learning" and Culturally Responsive Pedagogy (CRP). I also explain the importance of the discourse on "equity learning" or "equity education," "inequitable learning" or "inequitable education," and "marginalized students" in the context of CRP. Subsequently, the problem statement is presented, preceded by the purpose statement, research question, the definition of terms, theoretical framework, and chapter summary.

This study draws on the work of Geneva Gay, an educator, academic, and researcher, who has written extensively on Culturally Responsive Pedagogy (CRP). Throughout this paper, the terms, "culturally responsive pedagogy" and "culturally responsive teaching" are used interchangeably. Also, used interchangeably are "holistic education," "holistic teaching," and "holistic learning." In the text, some references are related to: the theoreticians of culturally

relevant pedagogy, culturally responsive pedagogy, culturally sustaining pedagogy, culturally competent pedagogy, and multicultural education as well as their theoretical frameworks.

The South African soldier and naturalist Jan Christian Smuts coined the word "holistic" taken from the Greek word "holos" which means "whole" and reveals how nature in essence is a composite of many parts that make it whole and better (Merriam-Webster Online Dictionary, n. d.). Over the years, his concept of "holism" or "holistic" has been used in many professional areas, including medicine with the approach that it is better to treat a patient as a 'whole person" than in smaller parts (Merriam-Webster Online Dictionary, n. d.). Rianawaty et al. (2020) describe "holistic education" as the teaching and learning process through which the contexts of the spiritual, intellectual, emotional, creative, artistic, and cultural characteristics of the student come together in harmony; also, it is a teaching and learning practice that aims at developing the whole individual by creating a balance in the intelligence, emotion, spirit, kinesthesia, and creativity of that individual as a well-rounded being through the four character pillars of education: (a) intellectual development, (b) affective development, (c) spiritual and emotional development, and (d) physical and kinesthetic development. As one of the main goals of CRP, holistic education typically is a pedagogical practice that taps into the potential of the student and reveals the uniqueness of that student (Gay, 2000).

"Equity Education (EQ)" is an important factor of CRP (Gay, 2000). Equity in education means: a) to provide high quality education to every student intentionally to dismantle the intergenerational cycle of perpetual inequality, b) to enhance developmental inclusion in societies and communities, c) to be concerned about the basic needs of students irrespective of their varied academic abilities, and d) to give all students the opportunity to grow and develop the skills needed to make them succeed in school, college, and postsecondary life (Darling-

Hammond, 2017; Sahlberg & Cobb, 2021). Education equity is about promoting fairness, inclusion, social justice, non-discrimination, equitable distribution of education in society, equal opportunity for all students, the removing of all barriers that prevent equal access of all students to learning and anything that hinders a student from succeeding in the class, school, and life; education equity eliminates social privilege, undermines the status quo, takes into consideration the academic outcome of the individual student and every social group, and relates to social equality (Darling-Hammond, 2017; Gay, 2000; Salberg & Cobb, 2021).

Principles of Culturally Responsive Pedagogy (CRP) Compared to other Concepts

Gay (2002) compartmentalizes the tenets of Culturally Responsive Pedagogy into five (5) parts: 1) The development of knowledge which is based on cultural diversity, 2)The inclusion of ethnic and cultural diversity in the curriculum, 3) The demonstration of care and building of learning communities to meet the diverse needs of students, 4) The establishment of a relationship of constant communication with ethnically diverse students, and 5) Responding to diverse students with the delivery of instruction. The concepts of Culturally Responsive Pedagogy and Culturally Relevant Pedagogy are similar and interchangeable regardless of the differences in the number of principles each of them has. Culturally Relevant Pedagogy was created by Gloria Ladson-Billings. The theory has three basic principles as opposed to Culturally Responsive Pedagogy which has five (Gay, 2000. 2002; Ladson-Billings, 1992). The principles of Culturally Relevant Pedagogy are as follows: 1) self and others, 2) classroom of social change, and 3) knowledge. Ladson-Billings (1992) argues that teachers and school leaders are: 1) to provide the necessary support needed to enable all students to succeed, 2) respect and student-centeredness should be a norm in the classroom, and 3) students are to be held at high standards even if it required curriculum and lesson adjustments to include the culture and heritage of every

student in the learning environment. Figure 1 is a graphic feature of the six principles of culturally responsive pedagogy.

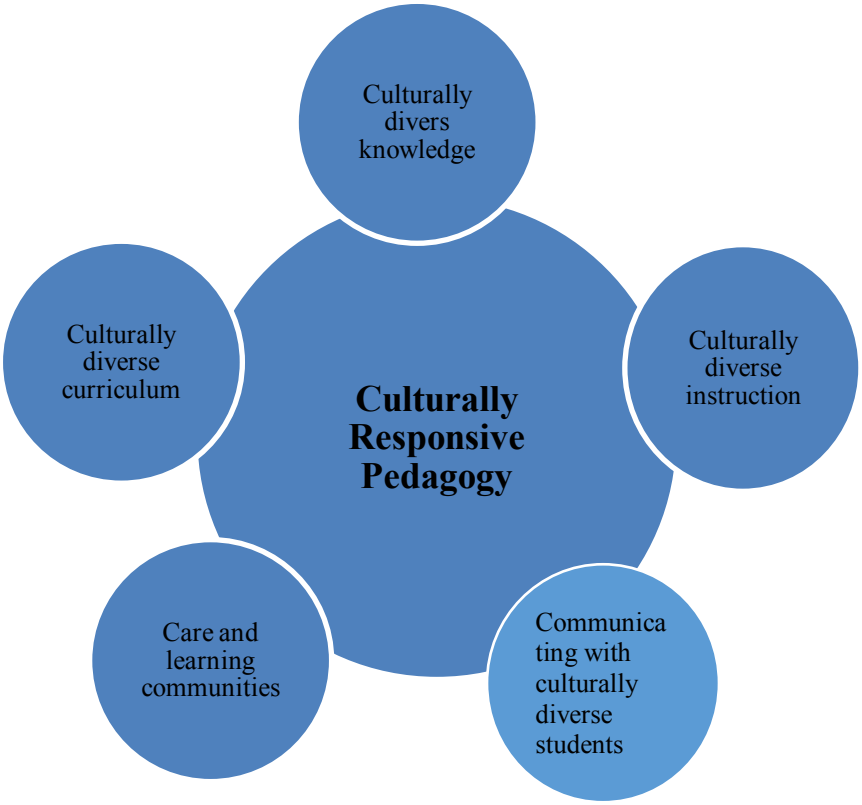

Figure 1: *5 Tenets of Culturally Responsive Pedagogy (CRP) (Gay, 2002)*

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CRP also relates to Culturally Sustaining Pedagogy (CSP). Culturally sustaining pedagogy is mostly built on the principles of Culturally Relevant Pedagogy. It promotes social justice for all students, decolonization of educational practices, materials, and curricula, supports the inclusion of the culture, language, and ethnicity of the student in the lesson and curriculum, and it encourages the connecting of fund knowledge which is in the homes and communities of students (Paris, 2021). The interrelation of CPR also expands to Culturally Competent Pedagogy

(CCP). According to Hamdan and Coloma (2022), CCP relates to the teacher being able to: enable students to develop critical-thinking skills, understand how cultural values and beliefs consciously and unconsciously can influence behavior, get to understand how inequality is spread through socialized behavior, and capably use his or her agency to disrupt the perpetuation of inequality in order to enable all students to succeed.

CRP shares some characteristics of Multicultural Education (ME). ME, which was created by James Banks, is a movement and process with a goal to change the educational structure of society to make sure that all students have access to equal learning (Gay, 1994). ME is built on three basic principles which are: a) the bonding of individuals from different cultures and making sure that human rights and democratic values are made an integral part of the social structure of society, b) promoting the socialization of individuals and the dispelling of social conflicts in a society with multiple cultures, and c) encouraging the comprehensive coming-together of multiple cultural groups for the common good of society (Aslan, 2022).

Using single words to describe each of her principles, Gay (2000) details what each concept represents: (a) knowledge, (b) care, (c) communication, (d) curriculum, and (e) instruction. Regarding *knowledge*, it should be that which is based on the ethnic, language, and cultural heritages of the different cultural groups in the learning environment, with regards to the concept of *care,* she says it is inter-relational and is where the teacher connects to the students, displays patience and persistence, serves as a facilitator of the teaching-learning process, validates the cultural, ethnic, and linguistic backgrounds of the students, and empowers the students. She continues to narrate that *caring* also reflects on the success of the "whole student" emotionally, physically, economically, and interpersonally. She asserts that it is action-provoking which means it is reciprocal, consistently based on sensitive matters, gives attention to the needs

of all students, holds students to high academic standards, such as allowing them to be able to submit quality work, be socially competent, and accountable for their learning.

Gay (2000) continues to say that *caring* is also multidimensional and relates to the teacher's understanding of students and responding to them in an ethical, honorable, honesty-prone, emotional, respectful, collaborative, and motivational manner to enhance commitment, competence, and confidence. In relation to the concept of *communication,* she adds that it intertwines with culture, learning, and teaching. She argues they co-exist and are interchangeable as well. She asserts that language is a key factor in the communication process as teachers deliver the lessons for students to retain and give feedback. She explains that quality outcome is the product of effective communication on the part of the teacher and that communication is an intercultural interaction between teachers and students that is reflective of who the students are, how they live, where they are coming from, and how they all co-exist in the learning environment. In addition, she asserts that communication goes beyond content or written and spoken language structuring. She says it is socio-cultural, shows how stakeholders connect to each other in meaningful ways, and the manner in which knowledge can be facilitated and assessed.

On the concept of *curriculum*, Gay (2000) narrates that it is objectively designed to enable culturally different students to be successful in the classroom. She narrates that it is the medium through which students can strongly demonstrate their past, present, and future experiences, powers, attitudes, and capabilities, Moreover, she says that Culturally Responsive Teaching curriculum should be multicultural; one whose content relates to the performance of students, a curriculum that aligns with textbooks and other materials used in the classroom, should be meaningful to students, and be helpful in improving the academic learning and

outcomes of all students. She asserts that curriculum should be relevant to all students, relate to the histories, cultures, contributions, experiences, perspectives, and issues of the individual groups, and sources of the curriculum should be diverse and go beyond the normal boundaries of schooling. On the last concept which is *instruction,* the educator and researcher asserts that it is a pedagogical approach that bases instruction on understanding how students of ethnically diverse groups learn and their styles of learning.

Gay (2000) also notes that culturally responsive instruction can be grouped into six categories or principles: (1) the principle of similarity emphasizes on the use of the prior knowledge of the learners to introduce new knowledge or new lesson, (2) the principle of efficacy which states that success in the past eventually produces effort and success, (3) the principle of congruity which alludes to the fact that comprehension and retention of knowledge can be possible when connected to prior knowledge, frame of reference, or cognitive schemata, (4) the principle of familiarity which emphasizes on the simultaneous reduction of the "strangeness" of knowledge that is new and the "threat of unfamiliarity" in order to motivate students to be engaged with the task and obtain mastery, (5) the principle of transactionalism which states that new knowledge may not sorely be ascertained from prior knowledge, instead it can be based on organizational and structural factors pertaining to how students learn, which potently affects the way new knowledge is attained, and (6) the principle of cognitive mapping which relates to the understanding of the relationship and organization of students' knowledge as it pertains to their learning environment (pp. 45-149).

The premise of the theoretical and conceptual arguments of Geneva Gay and her contemporaries is the changing of the narrative from the "achievement gap" to the "opportunity gap" as it relates to the academic outcomes of students on standardized tests (Delpit, 2006; Gay,

2000; Ladson-Billings, 2013). The theoreticians argue that the discourse about the achievement gap is divisive and contains a deficit rhetoric that gives superior performance status to some students and inferior performance status to others (Ladson-Billings, 2013). They believe that a focus on the "opportunity gap" can easily reveal where the problem lies and how it can be solved (Delpit, 2006; Gay, 2000; Ladson-Billings, 2013). Gay and her contemporaries conceptualize their frameworks through the theoretical lens of Critical Race Theory (CRT), which is further explicated in this section. Figure 2 is a graphic organizer of embedded educational concepts in CRP.

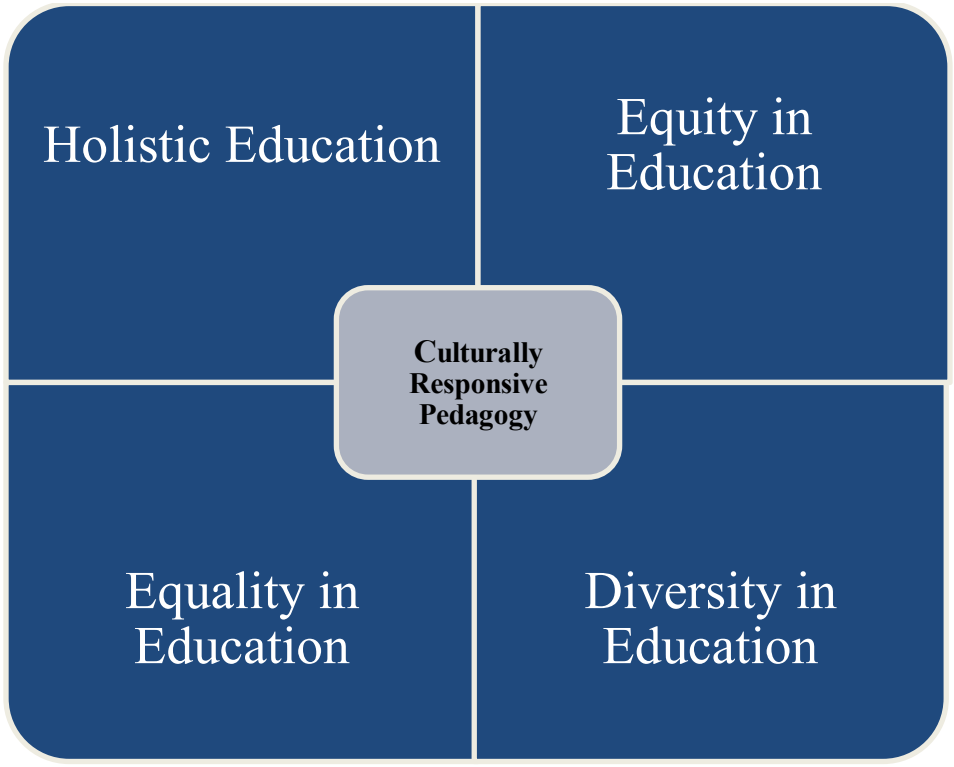

Figure 2: *Culturally Responsive Pedagogy in Education*

Contributions of Current Study to Gay's Work on Culturally Responsive Pedagogy

This research provides the following: a) updated and current data on the demographic trends of the general population and student population of the United States compared to data used by Geneva Gay decades ago when she released her publication on culturally responsive teaching, b) shows the relationship between culturally responsive teaching and the performance of students, c) reveals the statistically significant differences in the outcomes of students who received culturally responsive lessons and students who did not, d) discloses few new ways how CRP practices have been applied in educational settings over the years, e) shares national data on the percentage of color teachers in public schools as relating to the influence that student-teacher ethnic matching may have on students' learning (NCES/ DES, 2020), f) shows a couple of ways how culturally responsive pedagogy can operate for different ethnic groups, and g) identifies one or two ways how culturally responsive pedagogy may differ in mono-racial, mono-cultural, multi-racial, and multicultural learning practices and settings.

Though regional data on the effect of culturally responsive teaching on the outcome of marginalized students are limited, there are few national and global data in circulation about the impact it can have on the performance of students. In her release addressing the perpetual existence of educational inequity, Gay (2000, p. vii) states that 28% of the population of the United States was color and 35% of the students enrolled in public schools were color as well. Then, it was alarming, but now more alarming as the minority trend of the U. S. population and enrolled color population in public schools have increased immensely (NCES/ DES, 2020; U. S. Census Bureau, 2021).

According to the U. S. Census Bureau (2021) the current minority population of immigrants who are foreign born in the United States is 83.4% out of whom 75.4% are

naturalized U. S. citizens. Currently, 49% of minority students are enrolled in elementary and secondary schools in the United States and it is projected to increase to 51% by 2030 (NCES, 2020). Out of the 49% of minority students enrolled, 15% are African American, 28% are Latinx, and 6% Asian American. Out of the projected 51%, 14% will be African Americans, 30% will be Latinx, and 7% Asian Americans (NCES, 2020). The data show that majority of the students in schools and classrooms across the United States are minority and have different cultural backgrounds which warrant the employment and implementation of educational policies and practices that can successfully address and meet the needs of this diverse population of learners (Gay, 2000; Ladson-Billings, 2007; U. S. Census Bureau, 2021).

National data continue to show the racial and ethnic disparities that exist in the academic outcomes of African American, Latinx, Native American/ American Indian or Alaska Native, and Caucasian students on National Assessments due to poor implemented education policies in the United States. According to the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) and the National Center for Educational Statistics (NCES) and the United States Department of Education (2022), from 1971 to 2022 African American, Latinx, Native American/ American Indian or Alaska Native students consistently performed below their Caucasian peers on the Mathematics and Reading National Assessments; the results for the 4th-grade and 8th-grade 2022 Mathematics and Reading Assessments were as follows: the 2022 4th-grade Mathematics Assessment results in Table 1 show African American students 29 points and Latinx students 22 points below Caucasian students, Table 2 displays the 2022 8th-grade Mathematics Assessment results showing African American students 32 points and Latinx students 24 points below Caucasian students, Table 3 showcases the 2022 4th-grade Reading results of African American students 28 points and Latinx students 22 points below Caucasian students, and Table 4 reveals

the 2022 8th-grade Reading results showing African American students 24 points and Latinx students 17 points below Caucasian students.

Table 1

2022 4th- Grade Mathematics Assessment Results by race/ ethnicity

Race/ Ethnicity	Score	Differential Point (s) of scores between Caucasian and other students
Caucasian Students	246	
African American Students	217	**29** points between Caucasian and African American students
Latinx Students	224	**22** points between Caucasian and Latinx students
American Indian/ Alaska Native Students	221	**25** points between Caucasian and American Indian/ Alaska Native students
Pacific Island Students	*224*	***22** points between Caucasian and Pacific Island students*

Note. 1st differential points = 29 (246 – 217), 2nd differential points = 22 (246 – 224), 3rd differential points = 25 (246 – 221), and 4th differential points = 22 (246 – 224) (NAEP, 2022).

Table 2

2022 8th- Grade Mathematics Assessment Results by race/ ethnicity

Race/ Ethnicity	Score	Differential Point (s) of scores between Caucasian and other students
Caucasian Students	285	
African American Students	253	**32** points between Caucasian and African American students
Latinx Students	261	**24** points between Caucasian and Latinx students
American Indian/ Alaska Native Students	258	**27** points between Caucasian and American Indian/ Alaska Native students
Pacific Island Students	264	**21** points between Caucasian and Pacific Island students

Note. 1st differential points = 32 (285 – 253), 2nd differential points = 24 (285 – 261), 3rd differential points = 27 (285 – 258), and 4th differential points = 21 (285 – 264) (NAEP, 2022).

Table 3

2022 4th - Grade Reading Assessment Results by race/ ethnicity

Race/ Ethnicity	Score	Differential Point (s) of scores between Caucasian and other students
Caucasian Students	227	
African American Students	199	**28** points between Caucasian and African American students
Latinx Students	205	**22** points between Caucasian and Latinx students
American Indian/ Alaska Native Students	197	**30** points between Caucasian and American Indian/ Alaska Native students
Pacific Island Students	207	**20** points between Caucasian and Pacific Island students

Note. 1st differential points = 28 (227 – 199), 2nd differential points = 22 (227 – 205), 3rd differential points = 30 (227 – 197), and 4th differential points = 20 (227 – 207) (NAEP, 2022).

Table 4

2022 8th - Grade Reading Assessment Results by race/ ethnicity

Race/ Ethnicity	Score	Differential Point (s) of scores between Caucasian and other students
Caucasian Students	268	
African American Students	244	**24** points between Caucasian and African American students
Latinx Students	251	**17** points between Caucasian and Latinx students
American Indian/ Alaska Native Students	246	**22** points between Caucasian and American Indian/ Alaska Native students
Pacific Island Students	254	**14** points between Caucasian and Pacific Island students

Note. 1st differential points = 28 (268 – 244), 2nd differential points = 17 (268 – 251), 3rd differential points = 22 (268 – 246), and 4th differential points = 14 (268 – 254) (NAEP, 2022).

Kinloch et al. (2019) define equitable learning as: a type of learning that includes teaching and learning strategies that align with the learning styles and cultures of the students and their communities, one that connects to real-life situations, one that involves active listening on the part of the teacher, and one that is against educational exclusion of students of different

cultural groups and humiliation of student groups in society, especially student of color. Kinloch et al. (2019) continue to describe equitable learning as: a type that gives students equal access to quality schools, curricula, resources, and educators, one that provides a teaching practice that promotes the usage of techniques and methods in the classroom to enhance the academic achievement of students, especially those from diverse racial, ethnic, and social-class groups, and includes the historical, sociopolitical, and racial scopes of the learning environment. Contrariwise, education inequality affects the academic outcomes of students, especially those from low-income and socioeconomic backgrounds (Volckman, 2017).

1.1: Problem Statement

Education inequity continues to affect the academic outcomes of marginalized students (k-12) in the United States (Darling-Hammond, 2017; Gay, 2000; Volckman, 2017). Inadequate funding (Darling-Hammond, 2017; Hesbol et al, 2020), inaccessibility to equal educational resources (Darling-Hammond, 2017), high-stakes testing (Darling-Hammond, 2017; Milner & Lomotey, 2014;), and lack of access to quality education (Darling-Hammond, 2017; Gay, 2002), are few of the leading causes of the opportunity gap that is exponentially widening as the U. S population and schools become more diverse (Flores, 2007; Gay, 2000: Ladson-Billings, 2007; U, S. Census Bureau, 2021).

The “opportunity gap” is a contributing factor to the poor performance of marginalized students (K-12) in urban settings and national data continue to show the following: 1) the racial or ethnic disparity that exists in the academic outcomes of African American, Latinx, and Caucasian students on National Assessments (NCES; NAEP, 2022), 2) disparity in the implementation of education policies in the United States (Darling-Hammond, 2017; Gay, 2000), 3) the disproportionate increase of the opportunity gap and achievement gap for African

American (Flores, 2007; Gay, 2000), Latinix, Native Americans/ American Indians or Alaska Natives and marginalized students, 4) An expected astronomical increase in the "opportunity gap" as the nation's population and schools become increasingly diverse (Gay, 2000).

African American, Latinx, Native American/ American Indian or Alaska Native students are shown to constantly be trailing their Caucasian peers in academic performance, and as the general population and student population are increasingly becoming diverse, the trend could increase exponentially. According to the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) and the National Center for Educational Statistics (NCES) and the United States Department of Education (2022), from 1971 to 2022 African American, Latinx, Native American/ American Indian or Alaska students consistently performed below their Caucasian peers on the Mathematics and Reading National Assessments; the results for the 4th-grade and 8th-grade 2022 Mathematics and Reading Assessments were as follows: the 2022 4th-grade Mathematics Assessment results show African American students 29 points and Latinx students 22 points below Caucasian students, the 2022 8th-grade Mathematics Assessment results show African American students 32 points and Latinx students 24 points below Caucasian students, the 2022 4th-grade Reading results show African American students 28 points and Latinx students 22 points below Caucasian students, and the 2022 8th-grade Reading results show African American students 24 points and Latinx students 17 points below Caucasian students.

The performance disparity trend is also visible in other subject areas, such as Science, Civics, and Geography; the 2019 National Science Assessment results showed African American students 33 points and Latinx students 25 points below Caucasian students, the 2014 National Geography results showed African American students 35 points and Latinx students 23 points below Caucasian students, the 8th-grade 2014 National Civics Assessment results show African

American students 27 points and Latinx students 21 points below Caucasian students; from 1998 to 2018 the outcomes of students who performed at proficient and advanced levels were recorded; *proficiency* related to students who demonstrated competency over challenging subject matter, mastered subject matter, can ably apply subject matter to real world situations, and have analytical skills, and *advanced* related to the superior performance of students above proficiency; the 1998 proficiency results reveal that 7% of African American and Latinx students performed at or above proficiency and 26% Caucasian students performed at or above proficiency; the 2014 proficiency results showed that 9% of African American students, 11% of Latinx students, and 29% of Caucasian students performed at or above the proficiency level; the 2018 proficiency results again show that 9% of African American students performed at or above proficiency, and 12% of Latinx students and 28% Caucasian students performed at or above proficiency; at the advanced level, the 2014 and 2018 results show that no African American student performed at that level, the advanced level results for 2014 and 2018 show that no Latinx student performed at that level but show that in 2014 and 2018 only 1% of Latinx respectively performed at the advanced level; for Caucasian students, in 2014 and 2018 3% respectively performed at that level as well (National Assessment of Educational Progress/The Nation's Report Card: Civics, 2014-2018).

The Advanced Placement (AP) Program of the College Board is one of its largest programs that provides advanced curricula to high school students to prepare them for college and life after high school but College Board's Advanced Placement Program data along with data from the United States Department of Education 2019 report show that the participation rate of African American students is lower than their Caucasian peers. The percentages of students

earning Advanced Placement credits in 2013 were as follows: 72% of Asians, 40% Caucasians, 34% Latinx, and 23% African Americans (National Center for Educational Statistics, 2019).

According to the Education Law Center (2017) many States like Pennsylvania are denying children of color and students in poorer communities adequate funding and equal access to the resources they need to succeed in school and after graduating high school. For instance, in Pennsylvania, although high-poverty stricken communities are levied higher taxes than wealthier tax payers, they pay their share of the taxes but State officials continue to provide insufficient funding to those districts than wealthier and whiter school districts. Until underserved school districts get the kind of funding needed to meet the educational needs of their students, the opportunity gap will continue to widen for minority students and create academic challenges for them (Flores, 2007; Gay, 2000)

This study seeks to find a pedagogical practice that can improve the academic outcomes of marginalized students. Marginalized students are identified as: those from families with low-income and low-socioeconomic status, from underserved communities, poor, disadvantaged, homeless, low-performers and achievers, victims of social, political, and economic disparities, migrants, immigrants, English Language Learners, refugees, having a different culture or multiple cultures, of minority groups, African Americans, Latinx, Asians/ Pacific Islanders, Native Americans/ American Indians or Alaska Natives, victims of educational inequality, lack of equal access to education, having unequal educational resources, are in high-need schools with the shortage of well-prepared teachers, being in a school or school district that is underfunded, a part of an unequal school system, being in large urban cities or school districts with large class sizes and fewer teachers and counselors, offered fewer and lower-quality academic courses, participate in fewer or no extracurricular activities, use fewer or no textbooks,

given access to fewer or no school materials and supplies, attend schools with small or no libraries, privileged to having fewer or special services, lack learning opportunity and victims of the opportunity gap, and those whose culture and language are alienated from the lesson and made to feel excluded from the pedagogical process (AERA, 2022; Darling-Hammond, 2017; Education Law Center, 2017; Gay, 2020; Ladson-Billings, 2007).

1.2: Purpose Statement

This section examines: a) the relationship between Culturally Responsive Pedagogy (CRP) and holistic teaching and learning practices (Gay, 2000; Rianawaty et al. 2020), b) how CRP practices and characteristics meet the needs of the growing population of diverse schools and students (Gay, 2000), c) how CRP can address the opportunity gap problem (Flores, 2007; Gay, 2000; Ladson-Billings, 2007), and d) how CRP can improve the academic outcomes of marginalized urban students (Gay, 2000). Culturally Responsive Pedagogy (CRP) is a holistic practice that appeals to the whole-child; it transcends the traditional approach to teaching and learning by catering to the intellectual, emotional, cultural, artistic, kinesthetic, creative, physical, and spiritual needs of the student (Gay, 2000; Rianawaty et al., 2020). CRP improves teaching and learning, provides quality education, and creates a balance in the intelligence, emotion, and creativity of the student, and is a practice that is inclusive and one that impacts the student, teacher, school, and community (Gay, 2000; Rianawaty et al., 2020; Teschers, 2020; Widodo, 2019). Culturally responsive pedagogy is designed to effectively teach multicultural groups, especially ethnically racial minority groups, it teaches multicultural competencies to all students to enable them to learn about their culture and the cultures of others, It connects to the reality of students, it makes the classroom safe, welcoming, and interesting for ethnically diverse students, and uses multicultural instructional strategies (Gay, 2001; 2003; 2010; 2015).

It is a challenge for urban school leaders to meet the academic needs of their growing population of diverse students, most of whom are from underserved communities, and low-income and low socioeconomic backgrounds (Milner & Lomotey, 2014). Many of these students are poor, victims of being labeled with deficit epithets, such as "low performers" and "low achievers" (Milner & Lomotey, 2014). Finding funding to erect new school facilities, provide larger classrooms and quality education, and employ the right pedagogical practices to improve the performance of their students is beyond the budget of these schools and school districts (Milner & Lomotey, 2014). Building on the work of Geneva Gay, this study reflects on teaching and learning practices that can improve the academic outcomes of marginalized students (k-12) in underserved urban classrooms. Gay (2000) wrote extensively on Culturally Responsive Pedagogy. Below are some facts on culturally responsive theory and its key characteristics:

1.3: Theory of Culturally Responsive Pedagogy/ Culturally Responsive Teaching

Theorists responsible for the formation of the Culturally Responsive Teaching theory were: Kathryn Au, Roland G. Tharp, A. Wade Boykin, Sonia Nieto, Lisa Delpit, Jacqueline Irvine, Gloria Ladson-Billings, and Geneva Gay. They argue that there were inconsistent, inadequate, insufficient education and educational resources, and inaccessibility of equal educational opportunity to low-income students and students of color which they believe are relevant causes of their low and poor academic outcomes but assert that the only way these students can succeed is to appeal to their cultural and linguistic strengths (Gay, 2000, p. ix).

Culturally Responsive Teaching: focuses on the creation of multicultural curriculum that can address the needs of a multicultural learning environment, designs programs that deconstruct hegemonic educational practices to foster educational equity and excellence in the classroom, is a teaching and learning practice that positively impacts students and teachers by allowing

teachers to be accountable, knowledgeable, and conscious of "what they teach, to whom they teach it, why they teach it, and what they teach it with" (Gay, 2003). Culturally Responsive Teachers use the cultural traits and experiences of ethnically diverse learners as channels through which they teach them that which is based on the theory that the infusion of knowledge and skills with the lived experiences of the learners make learning intentional, and meaningful, and exponentially elevates the interest and motivation of the learners (Gay, 2003).

The incorporation of the learners' ethnicity, race, and culture with the lesson and in the classroom results in motivating the learners to learn, which enables them to be productive and perform well knowing that they are included in the lesson (Shepherd et al., 2018). Research shows a positive correlation between learning and motivation (Jeno et al., 2018; Lee & Song, 2022; Shepherd et al., 2018; Weiker, 2005). In her study, Gay included findings of the English Navajo Arts Program as a bilingual/ bicultural program of the Navajo and Alaskan students of the Navajo Nation's Rough Rock Demonstration School, the Math Cultural Context (MCC) project of Alaskan Native, the Algebra project designed to enhance that mathematical performance of African American students; the Kamehameha Early Education Program (KEEP) for native Hawaiian students, and the Cultural Modeling Narrative Project for African American students (Milner & Lomotey, 2014). All of the aforementioned initiatives were validations of works that were done to prove that culturally responsive teaching can impact the academic outcomes of not only students of color but all students.

In the English-Native Language Arts project, Navajo teachers and students interacted with native elders to share traditional stories which teachers incorporated in their lessons and created lists of vocabulary based on the Navajo culture. Students became motivated to learn and excelled academically (Milner & Lomotey, 2014). Similar to the English-Navajo Language

project was the Yap'ik Alaskan Math Cultural Context project spearheaded by a team of local university professors, researchers, and mathematicians who also worked with the Native Alaskan elders over the span of 20 years to create a mathematics curriculum. Results showed that students were positively affected by the curriculum and their academic outcomes were consistently and repeatedly statistically significant (Milner & Lomotey, 2014).

The purpose of the Algebra Project was to raise the mathematical literacy level of African American students whose performance was in the lowest quartile of State and National Achievement tests. The project which comprised a team of university mathematicians, Project staff, teacher educators, and classroom teachers primarily incorporated local knowledge and applied social and cultural experiences to enable students to identify math concepts and skills in activities and events they are a part of everyday. The students were also given scripted texts of mathematical concepts to be able to match their experiences with those concepts to understand how mathematical concepts are developed, know the significance of it, and be able to get familiar with mathematical terms and concepts. The project which entailed mastering high-level pre-algebra, algebra, and geometry skills showed that the scores of students who participated in the program were higher than those who did not participate (Milner & Lomotey, 2014).

In reference to the Kamehameha Early Education Program (KEEP) which was a language arts initiative purported to enhance the reading skills of elementary students, it was successful. The performance of students on standardized tests rose from the 20th percentile to the 50th. The aforementioned was a pedagogical-based teaching practice used in a diverse learning environment that infused cultural knowledge with the regular curriculum to improve the academic outcomes of underachieving Native Hawaiian students. Students were motivated to learn and became actively engaged in their class activities (Milner & Lomotey, 2014).

The purpose of this study is to examine the concepts and pedagogical practices of Culturally Responsive teaching to find out how effective and efficient they are in improving the academic outcomes of marginalized students (K-12) in urban classrooms and the extent to which they impact the performance of marginalized students compared to non-culturally responsive taught students. In this study, the concepts and pedagogical practices of culturally responsive teaching are implemented in 4th- and 8th-grade classrooms of Native American [American Indian] and Alaska Native students in several marginalized urban communities in fourteen States to determine the impact of culturally responsive practices on their performance. The national Mathematics and Reading scores of 4th- and 8th-grade Native American [American Indian] and Alaska Native students of 2015; their scores following culturally responsive practices and their non-culturally responsive scores of 2007 are compared and analyzed. The research questions are based on comparing and analyzing the relationship between culturally responsive practices and the performance of the Native American [American Indian] and Alaska Native 4th and 8th graders in Mathematics and Reading.

1.4: Research Questions

The research questions for this study are as follows:

RQ1: How do urban school teachers (k-12) define and identify with culturally responsive pedagogical practices?

RQ2: How do the culturally responsive practices of urban school teachers (k-12) impact the achievement and outcomes of their students?

1.5: Definitions of Terms

Achievement Gap is a scholastic disparity between African American and Latinx students, and Caucasian students; also called an "education debt" (Ladson-Billings, 2013).

Critical Race Theory is a theoretical framework that fully examines how race and racism affect individuals in terms of their beliefs and actions in all sectors of society, such as but not limited to governmental, educational, religious, and social (Kubota & Lin, 2009, p. 84).

Culturally Responsive Teaching is the use of the cultural traits, experiences, and perspectives of students who are ethnically diverse as the channel through which they are effectively and efficiently taught (Gay, 2000).

Dependent variable is the behavior or outcome that is expected to be changed following the manipulation of the independent variable (Ledford & Gast, 2018, p. 2).

Education Equity means giving all students, irrespective of their racial or ethnic, socioeconomic background, or learning ability equal access to quality education (Karyaetal, 2021).

Equitable Learning is a learning strategy that connects to the learning style, culture, and communities of the learners (Kinloch et al., 2019).

Holistic Education is the teaching and learning practice that appeals to the "whole-child" and promotes quality education in the classroom (Widodo, 2019).

Independent variable is an intervention or a tool, an element, or an instrument that is manipulated in the study by researchers to have an impact on the dependent variable (Ledford & Gast, 2018, p. 2).

K-12 Education is the provision of teaching and learning opportunities to pre-kindergarten, middle, and high school students to enable them to learn the literacy and numeracy skills needed

to enable them to achieve academically, excel, and be globally competitive (U. S. Department of Education, 2010).

Learning is the process through which change in knowledge, beliefs, behaviors or attitudes takes place in the mind of students as a result of their conscious and unconscious experiences that lead to the potential of enhancing their performance (Craver, 2013; Mayer, 2002).

Marginalized Students are English Language Learners, economically underserved, under-resourced, and low-performing students who are victims of educational inequality (Hesbol et al., 2020). It is also the promotion of fairness, inclusion, social justice, and non-discriminatory educational practices (Sahlberg & Cobb, 2021).

Multicultural Education is a reform teaching-learning process that aims at changing the structure of education to enable all students to have equal access to education and academic success and get rid of teaching and learning inequalities among different ethnic groups in society (Aslan, 2022); also, equally educating learners of different ethnicity, religion, race, gender, sexual orientation, and language group based on the conceptual framework of peace, freedom, and equality (Debbag et al., 2020).

Opportunity Gap is the lack of equal learning opportunity for African American, Latinx, and other disadvantaged students compared to students from wealthy backgrounds; also, the funding disparity between underserved and wealthy school districts (Vestegen, 2015. Flores & Bagwell, 2021).

Pedagogy is the process of teaching to enable the learners to develop that skills needed to succeed (Black & William, 2018).

Teaching is a set of activities perform by the teacher in a learning environment to enable students to reach specific learning goals (Al-Ghasab, 2022).

Teaching Method or ***Teaching Methodology*** refers to a set of principles, ideas, strategies or techniques the teacher performs in the classroom to enable students to understand and retain the lesson taught, which includes class participation, memorization, and practical demonstration (Al-Ghasab, 2022).

Total Variation is the combination of explained and unexplained variations between two variables (Coladarci, Cobb, Minium, & Clarke, 2011, p. 155).

Underserved Students are learners who have historically and systemically have not been given the chance to compete and succeed in society and its institutions based on their race and color of their skin, such as African Americans, Latinx, Pacific Islanders or Asians and Native Americans who are experiencing economic hardship and poverty, perform at lower level than their peers from wealthy backgrounds and with higher dropout rates (Paolini et al., 2015); and students from low-income family backgrounds (Simon et al., 2021).

Urban means densely residential, commercial and other non-residential areas that are developed with a population of 50,000 or more (U. S Census Bureau, 2021); large cities and districts classified as urban intensive with a population in excess of 1 million, urban emergent with a population of less than 1 million, and urban characteristics with a population not as large as urban intensive and urban emergent but contains a diverse population of students some of whom are from low socioeconomic backgrounds (Milner & Lomotey, 2014, pp. 201-202).

1.6: Theoretical Framework

The philosophical lens through which this study is guided is the transformative paradigm. The axiological position of the transformative paradigm is to promote social justice, human rights, equality, cultural tolerance, and social transformation (Mertens, 2020). It focuses on the lives and experiences of marginalized groups in society and examines how and why inequality relates to the social dynamics of power and how it is distributed (Mertens, 2020, p. 21). Though the transformative paradigm is notably used by constructivist or qualitative researchers, it can also be used in quantitative and mixed methods studies (Mertens, 2020, p. 11). Some theoretical frameworks that are compatible with the transformative paradigm are: critical theory, critical race theory, feminist theory, postcolonial theory, indigenous theory, participatory theory, and human rights/ equity theory (Mertens, 2020, p. 9).

However, based on the context and scope of the study, Critical Race Theory (CRT) is the selected theoretical framework for this research. Before going into detail about what critical race theory is, I want to dissect the term by first giving some perspectives on the concept of "race." Scientists have proven that there is no such thing as "race" as it relates to human identity (Kubota & Lin, 2009, p. 2). They believe that "race" is a historical, social, political, and an economic construct to group people in society because genetically all humans are related (Kubota & Lin, 2009, p. 3). Scientists have shown that 99.9% of all human genes are similar and to separate humans biologically or genetically is impossible (Hutchinson, 2005, as cited in Kubota & Lin, 2009, p. 2). "Race is not a concept determined by biological evidence…cannot be verified by biological constructs such as genetic characteristics" (Kubota & Lin, 2009). Due to the fact that the term "race" is fluid, it is often used with the word "ethnicity." Usually, on a job application or demographical form both words are seen in this manner, "race/ ethnicity."

However, “ethnicity” is as fluid a term as “race” it is used to identify groups in society based on the language they speak, their religious affiliation, customs, and way of life (Kubota & Lin, 2009). Similarly, like race, ethnicity is not determined by the genetic makeup of people, it is based on the physical and social association of people (Kubota & Lin, 2009).

The concept behind “race” and “ethnicity” is “racialization” which is “the socio-historical process by which racial categories are created, inhabited, transformed, and destroyed (Kubota & Lin, 2009). Racialization is accompanied by a certain discourse that ranks and labels groups in society as superior and inferior which is divisive and prone to creating social conflicts (Kubota & Lin, 2009). Racialization can also function as “racism” in certain circumstances, such as in unequal and unjust policies and practices (Kubota & Lin, 2009). I will describe “critical” in the context of “critical race theory.” I perceive critical race theory to be the combination of two theories; “critical theory” and “the theory or concept of race,” some of which I have just elaborated on. “Critical Theory” examines power relations between dominant and subordinate groups in society and critiques the way dominant groups initiate policies and practices that foster social, economic, and political inequality and control (deMarrais & LeCompte, 1999). Additionally, critical theory supports an advocacy agency for change in terms of social justice and equality for subordinate groups in society (deMaris & Lomotey, 1999). It is on this premise Gay and her contemporaries justify their argument about the “achievement gap” as being a discourse that perpetuates social division and inequality (Delpit, 2006; Gay, 2000; Ladson-Billings, 2013).

Critical Race Theory is a theoretical framework that fully examines how race and racism affect individuals in terms of their beliefs and actions in all sectors of society, such as but not limited to governmental, educational, religious, and social (Kubota & Lin, 2009, p. 84). Critical

Race Theory (CRT) grew out of the legal framework of critical legal studies which was spearheaded by Derrick Bell and some other legal scholars (Bell, 2018, as cited in Hatcher et al., 2022). Emerging out of feminism and legal studies, CRT serves as a post-civil rights call to bring awareness to the existence of racial immobility in America (Bell, 2018, as cited in Reed, Figueroa, & Carpenter, 2022). At the time, the purpose of critical legal studies was to determine whether the making of laws and policies in the United States was based on the social racialization of groups (Reed et al., 2022). The goal of CRT is to examine the "legislation and institutional structures" of society to identify the existence of any forms of inequality and assist in bringing about change for the common good of mankind (Reed et al., 2022).

Critical race theorists advocate for equality, oppose the normalization of racialized policies and practices in society, argue that "the law plays a specific role in reifying racial subordination and inequality," and are against socioeconomic marginalizing (Reed et al., 2020). In education, CRT attempts to dismantle barriers that do not grant equal access to all students who want to learn (Reed et al., 2022). "Critical Race Theory is not a divisive discourse meant to put one race over another, nor purely the product of individual prejudice. It helps us understand events that are critical in shaping our world today" (Reed et al., 2022). Three foci of CRT are to rethink, expose, and transform oppressive attempts that serve as stumbling blocks in the path of equity and equality (Reed et al., 2022). CRT allows policymakers and political leaders to do things differently to foster civil harmony, understanding, and tranquility among the citizenry (Dixson, 2018, as cited in Reed, Figueroa, & Carpenter, 2022).

CRT gives educational researchers and legal scholars the leverage to be able to critique racialized structures that exist in our society and school systems (Hatcher et al., 2022). CRT allows the voices of the voiceless to be heard, intervenes for the disabled, and mediates for

educational equality for the linguistically and culturally different students in our schools (Hatcher et al., 2022). “CRT aims to break down barriers in education by introducing a more equal and engaging curriculum and recognizing mediating interactions with other issues relating to gender, sexuality, background, and citizenship status” (Dixson, 2018, as cited in Reed, Figueroa, & Carpenter, 2022). Gay (2000) and Ladson-Billings (2007) argue that the “achievement gap” and “standardized testing” discourses are divisive and deficit connotations that promote social and academic hierarchy that perpetuates inequality; the same phenomena CRT is against. Figure 3 shows how elements of critical race theory are intertwined with concepts in education. Figure displays the principles of critical race theory.

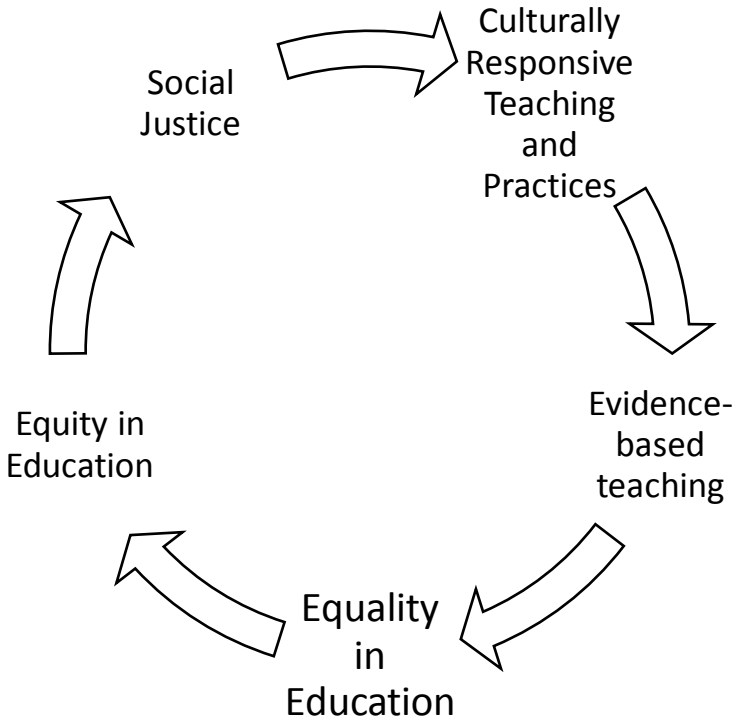

Figure 3: *Critical Race Theory as it relates to Education (Hatcher et al., 2022; Reed et al., 2022)*

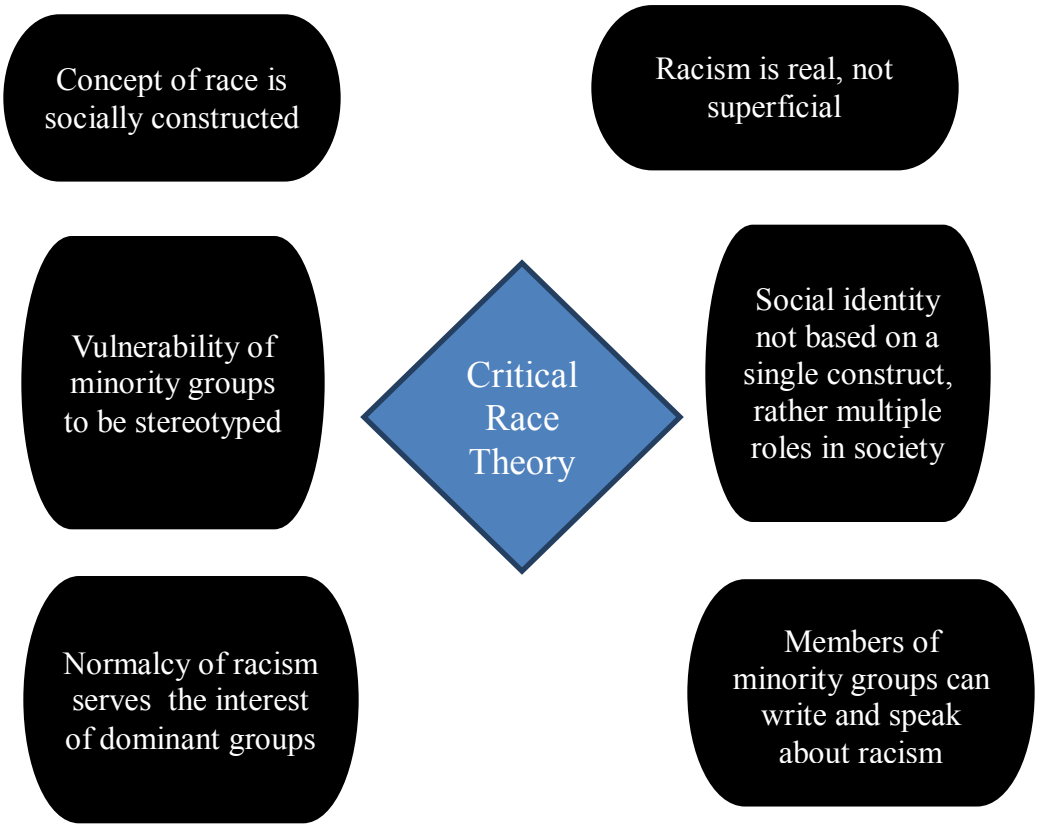

Figure 4: *6 Tenets of Critical Race Theory;*
Critical Race Theory (CRT) (Delgado, Stefancic, & Harris, 2017, pp. 8-11)

1.7: Chapter Summary

In this section I connect the concept and significance of culturally responsive pedagogy as they relate to educating the whole child, educational parity, and the greater community. I explain the relationships between culturally responsive pedagogy, culturally relevant pedagogy, culturally sustaining pedagogy, culturally competent pedagogy, and multicultural education. I also articulate the interrelationship between holistic education and equity education. I delineate the premise of the arguments of Geneva Gay and her contemporaries about the "achievement gap" and the "opportunity gap." I quantify the importance of Critical Race Theory (CRT) as the theoretical framework through which Geneva Gay and her contemporaries conceptualize their arguments, preceded by the Problem Statement, Purpose Statement, Research Questions, and the Definition of Terms. The next section is the Literature Review. In this section, I explore what existing studies reveal about culturally responsive pedagogy and its impact on the performance of students.

CHAPTER 2: REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

This section continues to unpack findings of existing epistemologies that support culturally responsive practices and add to the discourse about the "opportunity gap" as being the reason marginalized students continue to struggle academically, and that as long as it exists, the more the achievement gap continues to widen (Flores, 2007; Gay, 2000; Ladson-Billings, 2007; Neal et al., 2023). This segment of the research: a) reveals how existing studies show that CRP is made up of practices that can meet the needs of diverse students (Gay, 2000) and b) shows evidence of how CRP positively impacts the academic outcomes of marginalized urban students (Gay, 2000). This section also features what the literature says about Culturally Responsive Pedagogy (CRP) in terms of its usage and effects when infused with other disciplines. It aligns with the research question in determining the relationship between CRP and the performance of students. It highlights how statistically significant are the predicted scores of the participants as they relate to CRP-prone strategies and practices. In terms of the problem statement, the literature review uncovers past and present findings of studies that support the "opportunity gap" narratives of Geneva Gay and other theoreticians regarding the educational disparity of marginalized students. The theoretical framework and the review of the literature together serve as the cornerstones of the study. The argument posed in the introductory statement was that CRP can make a difference in the academic outcomes of culturally different and marginalized students and can be effective in closing the achievement gap (Mayfield & Wade, 2015). Chapter I provides some proven accounts of studies that have shown how the academic outcomes of African American and Latinx students on Reading and Mathematics assessments improved and even better than those of Caucasian students (Mayfield & Wade, 2015). Also, in chapter 1 I describe each key element of my research topic (holistic education or holistic teaching and

learning, marginalized students, and academic outcomes) and reflect on how CRP relates to each of them. Additionally, I define and explain the interrelationship of contemporary concepts, such as Culturally Relevant Pedagogy, Culturally Sustaining Pedagogy, Culturally Competent Pedagogy and Multicultural Education and CRP. Each contemporary concept along with CRP is compared, contrasted, and synthesized in chapter 1. In chapter 2, each literature is delineated analytically in terms of its research purpose, research question (s), methodological design (s), findings, limitations, and recommendations, if applicable. I create a context for CRP by listing some of its key elements. I continue with comparing and contrasting culturally responsive pedagogy with other studies, theories, assumptions, or concepts. I highlight how CRP works effectively in the classroom for other subjects, such as Mathematics, Biology, Physics, Social Studies, and English (Schmidt, 2005), and how it also works effectively in alternative schools and after-school tutoring programs (Skelley et al., 2022). I also include how CRP can impact curriculum (Khalifa et al., 2016). The review of the literature climaxes with a chapter summary.

In revelation of the parallelism and tangency of Holistic Education, Equity Education, Educational Equality, Culturally Responsive Pedagogy, Culturally Relevant Pedagogy, Culturally Sustaining Pedagogy, and Multicultural Education, Rianawaty et al. (2020) conducted a study to find out how teaching and learning practices can holistically meet the needs of all students, especially marginalized students (K-12) in urban settings. Despite their individual dissimilarities, Holistic Education, Equity Education, Educational Equality, Culturally Responsive Pedagogy, Culturally Relevant Pedagogy, Culturally Sustaining Pedagogy, and Multicultural Education, together they seek to facilitate learning that takes place in an oppressive-free setting. According to Rianawaty et al. (2020), holistic education is the teaching and learning process through which the intellectual, emotional, creative, artistic, spiritual, and

cultural traits of a person are nurtured and developed. In this qualitative descriptive case study, the researchers were trying to find out how holistic education along with other strategies could impact the outcomes of high school students in Malang, Indonesia. Theories upon which the theoretical framework of the study was built were: Critical Pedagogy, religious humanist education, socio-cultural, and multiple intelligences. According to the researchers, the Critical Pedagogy Theory (CPT) places emphasis on providing education to students in an oppressive-free environment. They assert that the Religious Humanist Education Theory (RHT) is the combination of the Humanist Education Theory and Religious Education Theory. They state that Humanist Education seeks the provision of independent learning, and Religious Education combines religious and social values to create a learning space free of hostility and compromise. The scholars narrate that socio-cultural Theory stresses the importance of including the social and cultural environments in the teaching-learning process. The findings show that the 21st Century Holistic Education model that was practiced at the State High School in Malang was successful. The model comprised four elements: Head (intellectual), Heart (heart, emotion, social, and spiritual), Hand (psychomotor skills), and Healthy (health). The model contained both academic and extra-curricular activities outside of the classroom setting where students developed their talents, learned how to think critically and how to socialize. Results showed that those who participated in the study had high scores on their Mathematics, Biology, Art, Chemistry, Information, and Communication Technology assessments. A couple of limitations were: the study was done at only one high school, teacher competency in fully implementing the model was a challenge, and results could not be generalized with other populations. This study supports components of CRP, such as the inclusion of the social and cultural backgrounds of students in the learning process (Gay, 2000).

In support of holistic education and culturally responsive pedagogy, Bautista et al. (2016) in a qualitative study explore how holistic education can impact the curriculum and performance of kindergarteners. They define holistic education as the teaching and learning process that incorporates both academic and non-academic learning. Areas in the study that represented the academic platform were as follows: a) discovery of the world, b) language, c) literacy, and d) and numeracy. The areas considered to be non-academic were: a) aesthetic and creative expressions, b) motor skills development, and c) social emotional development. The objective of the study was to have teachers or the participants rank the order of the contents of the kindergarten curriculum. The framework used was the "nurturing early learner's (NEL)" which promotes holistic education as being infused with both academic and non-academic contents. The methodological process entailed the measurement or analyzing of the prioritized themes based on the survey responses of the participants. These responses were analyzed in reference to the research questions. The three research questions were: a) how do teachers in Singapore prioritize the importance of various learning areas described in the NFL framework in children's learning and development? b) What are the perceived needs of teachers regarding these various learning areas? and c) whether teachers with different beliefs about children and how they learn (traditional or progressive) are different in their priorities and professional development needs with regards to the learning areas. Findings were based on the research questions. In response to RQ1, non-academic areas were favorable. In terms of RQ2, the results showed that the teachers needed more training in non-academic content areas. Regarding RQ3, there were significant correlations between academic and non-academic areas but none relating the professional development. Some limitations in this study were: a) data collection source was limited, b) the measurement of teacher priorities and professional development was limited to only a

psychometric scale, and c) the sample size was small. The aforementioned research also relates to teachings and practices of Geneva Gay (Gay, 2002). In the next study, Geneva Gay shares her views on holistic teaching and learning as characteristics of her theory, CRP.

Gay (2002) describes Culturally Responsive Pedagogy (CRP) in the context of "cultural caring," "community building," and as practices that are "holistic" that meet the cognitive, physical, and emotional needs of students. CRP is the practice of "using the cultural characteristics, experiences, and perspectives of ethnically diverse students as conduits for teaching them more effectively" (Gay, 2002). She bases the aforementioned assumption on the theory that when academic knowledge and skills are infused with the lived experiences and frames of reference of students they become meaningful, highly appealing to the interests of students, and are more thoroughly and easily learned (Gay, 2000). The scholar also believes that when the lesson is taught through the cultures and experiences of students, their academic outcomes will improve (Gay, 2002).

Furthering the concept of culturally responsive pedagogy in support of the "opportunity gap" argument, in her literary release entitled *reading between the lines and beyond the pages*, Gloria Ladson-Billings also shares some characteristics of Gay's culturally responsive teaching in her theory, "culturally relevant pedagogy." In her Culturally Relevant approach, Ladson-Billings (1992) lays out her concepts about culturally relevant pedagogy and briefly highlights its importance in this fast growing multicultural educational landscape of the United States. She goes way back to the beginning stages when her concept was first developed. She reveals how it originated from an anthropological idea in circulation many years ago that stated the importance of matching the school culture with the culture of the students as the means by which a child could succeed academically. In putting some thoughts together after reading the article, she

started advocating for the matching of the culture of African Americans (one that is linked to poverty and slavery) with that of the school and that it should be included in textbooks and curricula. Later, other education theorists and researchers came up with similar ideas, such as a pedagogical approach that is "culturally compatible," "culturally congruent," "culturally appropriate," and "culturally responsive." She notes that culturally relevant pedagogy allows the cultures of the school and students to be used as the basis of learning to enable students to be able to understand themselves and their peers. She argues that to have African American students and students of other ethnic groups be required to meet the standards and expectations of a curriculum and education system that does not value their cultures is wrong, and that it is the promotion of assimilation. She argues that African American students should be provided the type of education that makes them critical thinkers and masters of both the required culture of the school and their own culture. She asserts that successful African American students should be able to be critical of the society in which they dwell and be able to use their agency to advocate for social change and challenge the status quo. Although she and Geneva Gay have the same approach to teaching and learning in a diverse classroom, she mostly leans toward the improvement of the performance of African American males or students while Gay include a broad spectrum of minority groups of different cultures, languages, and ethnicities (Gay, 2002). The theoretician highlights four principles of Gay's culturally responsive pedagogical practice (Caring, communication, curriculum, and instruction) and key elements of her theory (self and others, classroom and social relations, and knowledge). However, though they are different numerically, they both have basically the same goals and characteristics. Similarly, the next theorist, though has a different name for his concept, aligns it with Geneva Gay's CRP theory.

In concert with most of Gay's perspectives on effectively teaching a diverse population of students but from a different angle, Paris (2012) uses the theoretical framework Culturally Sustaining Pedagogy (CSP) to be the practice that can maintain the linguistic, literate, and cultural values of a diverse population of students. He asserts that culturally responsive and culturally relevant practices do not provide that strong foundation that can enable multiethnic and multilingual groups to be prepared for both the present and future. He classifies Geneva Gay and Gloria Ladson-Billings' theories as applying "tolerance" in learning, which he asserts is not strong enough. He supports both the sustaining of cultural competence of the dominant culture as well as the cultural competence of other students. Though he finds culturally relevant and culturally responsive strategies to not be strong enough, he builds his theory on the works of Geneva Gay and Gloria Ladson-Billings. This is why he classifies his work as an alternative approach to learning that strives to meet the needs of a diverse population of students from different cultures who speak different languages and have different ethnicities. His theory shares major characteristics of both culturally relevant and culturally responsive pedagogies. In the article, he also refers to some earlier theories that influenced his thinking, such as the "resource pedagogy" which rejected the views of existing theories that postulated deficit views about the performance of marginalized students. The goal of the "resource theorists" was to reposition the language, culture, and literacy used by the dominant culture to teach students from poor, culturally, linguistically, and ethnically different communities. He also mentions the "Third Space" pedagogical theory which posits that not only learning has to include the language, culture, and community of the students, teachers as well as students interact together to prepare themselves to be able to function properly in another "space" which is called the "third space."

Adding to the genre of culturally-infused learning and supporting key components of CRP, Hamdan and Coloma (2022) describe teaching competency as having the ability to think critically and be able to use those skills to interpret the ways in which one's cultural values and beliefs influence his or her conscious and unconscious behavior. They further state that Culturally Competent Pedagogy (CCP) also is to be able to effectively teach students who are from different cultural backgrounds. They assert that culturally competent teaching connects: a) to the communities of students and b) is an approach that is transformative, and reflective of curricula that promote social justice. The purpose of the study was to use two tools to measure the teaching competency of teachers. The two instruments used were the Culturally Responsive Teaching Self-Efficacy Scale (CRTSE) and Multicultural Awareness-Knowledge-Skills Survey: Teacher Form (MAKSS-T). The researchers used the Content Analysis method to analyze MAKSS-T and CRTSE to look for the cultural competency of teachers as being examined in the following categories: a) recognizing culture, b) utilizing resources for teaching and learning, and c) creating a sense of community. The findings showed that it was important for teachers to know their students in terms of their students' backgrounds and cultures because it develops and enhances cultural competency. The findings further denoted the importance of teachers to know about the cultural values and beliefs of their students and their students' learning styles. Cultural competency also requires teachers to connect the classroom to the community of their students. The researchers finally affirm that the principles and assumptions of Culturally Competency are sorely based on those of Culturally Relevant Pedagogy and Culturally Responsive Pedagogy. No limitations were given in the study. Though the next study shares some of the characteristics of culturally responsive pedagogy, culturally relevant pedagogy, and culturally sustaining pedagogy, it also serves as a movement.

A contemporary of Geneva Gay, Gloria Ladson-Billings, Kathryn Au, Lisa Delpit, and others, James A. Banks, known as the founder of the Multicultural Education Movement, in his work entitled "the construction and historical development of multicultural education from 1962 – 2012" gives the historical perspectives and origin of the multicultural education movement (Banks, 2013). In his works he mentions how multicultural education is a remedy to structural and institutional racism in schools. Banks (2013) explains how prior to coming up with the name "multicultural education," he used the frameworks of "ethnic studies," "multiethnic education," and then "multicultural education." He used the "cultural deprivation paradigm" and "cultural difference theory" as lenses through which he was able to build his Multicultural Education theory. "Ethnic studies" grew out of the civil rights movement which subsequently led to the demand for textbooks to reflect the cultural values of blacks, their history, and struggles (Banks, 2013). Later, the cultures, histories, and struggles of other ethnic groups in the United States were included in textbooks (Banks, 2013). "Multiethnic studies" came into existence as proponents of the ethnic studies push for education reform to include the languages, cultures, and histories of Mexican Americans, Asian Americans, African Americans, Native Americans, and other minority groups in the curricula and textbooks of schools (Banks, 2013). According to Banks (2013), the "cultural deprivation paradigm" addressed the concerns of low-income children. He reveals that the theorists of the cultural deprivation paradigm argued that deprived children can not only be affected socially and economically, rather, they can be affected mentally and cognitively. The "cultural difference theory" came about because Banks (2013) did not fully support the views of the cultural deprivation theorists. He argued that minority students do not have a cultural deficit that justifies their inability to perform like their white peers. Instead, he argued that minority groups have rich and valuable cultural heritages that should be a part of the

curriculum, and their languages which could give them some leverage in the learning process. Within this framework of seeking educational equity for diverse and marginalized groups in America the Multicultural Movement came about. His work appeals to different audiences, such as educators, politicians, policy makers, education leaders, teachers, historians, social and political activists and education stakeholders. There were no limitations stated in the article. Following this study is another contribution to the review of the literature that touches on one of the main segments of my research topic which is "marginalized students or marginalization."

Containing elements of culturally responsive learning is the study of Nelson, Maloney, and Hodges (2017). They conducted a two-year case study using the Participatory Action Research (PAR) model to analyze data from a survey given to students to find out how effective the model was in addressing the importance of diversity in independent schools, inclusion, and meeting the needs of all students. According to the researchers, PAR is an inquiry-based learning strategy that focuses on gaining knowledge and the empowerment of students to put into practice the knowledge they have learned. The researchers note that most independent schools have a large Caucasian population compared to African American and Latinx students. Also, the study reveals that historically marginalized students, such as African American and Latinx were underperforming. Therefore, the researchers wanted to see whether a democratic, student-centered, and evidence-based model like PAR might demonstrate a balance in which marginalized students can have equal access to quality learning. The findings show that most minority students were not a part of the popular group on campus, and some of them were ashamed of disclosing what their interests were and things they value because they were afraid of being caught in the stereotype trap. There were no limitations stated in the article but the researchers noted the continued existence of educational equity and the need for policy makers to

do something about it. A major portion of this article is on diversity which is a targeting element of CRP. Also, marginalization is linked to inequality which CRP addresses including meeting the needs of underserved students and to give them equal access to education is a goal of CRP (Gay, 2000).

Gay's (2002) five key tenets of culturally responsive teaching are: 1) to develop a knowledge based on cultural diversity, 2) to include in the curriculum contents that are ethnically- and culturally-based, 3) to demonstrate care and build learning communities, 4) to constantly communicate with students who are ethnically diverse, and 5) the use of the proper delivery style of instruction to respond to diversity. Examples of ways the style of content delivery can effectively be used in diverse classrooms and schools are given in subsequent studies: In examining the effectiveness of culturally responsive pedagogy pertaining to closing the achievement gap between African American, Latinx, and Caucasian students, Mayfield and Wade (2015) conducted a longitudinal study of students in a middle school to find out whether culturally responsive pedagogical practices influenced their performance. The approach caused the participants to show signs of growth in Reading and Math which subsequently led to the narrowing of the achievement gap between minority and majority students. The researchers saw that the opportunity to learn was becoming more equitable for all students and tried to determine the role culturally responsive practices had to play in successfully narrowing the achievement gap between African American, Latinx, and Caucasian students. They also compared and analyzed the 2007, 2008, 2009, 2010, and 2011 Reading and Math test scores. The results showed that the scores of African American and Latinx students grew and even were higher than those of their Caucasian peers.

The results also revealed that five (5) out of the six practices of culturally responsive pedagogy were used by the school administrators, parents, and teachers to improve the outcomes of the African American and Latinx students. The culturally responsive pedagogical elements that the researchers found to exist in the school-wide culture were as follows: (a) Leadership, (b) parent engagement, (c) pedagogy, learning environment, and shared beliefs. In terms of school leadership, the leadership team of the middle school had a school-wide policy that respected and tolerated "difference." In reference to parent engagement, parents were encouraged to observe teachers and give feedback, and parents also volunteered to do hall duties at the school. Relating to the learning environment, it was saturated with a warm and welcoming atmosphere for all stakeholders, and images, posters, artifacts, signs of diversity, and decorations were in the hallways of the school and classrooms. As relating to pedagogy, high expectations were set for all students and equitable learning opportunities were made available to empower and challenge students to be successful. Concerning the fifth element of culturally responsive pedagogy that was used at the middle school; *shared beliefs*, teachers and school leaders had a belief system in place, they were determined to make a difference in the lives of their students, and there was a continuous conversation about race and culture going on at the school.

In the expansion of culturally responsive pedagogy, backing of the "opportunity gap" argument, and closing of the "achievement gap," Bonner and Adams (2012) discovered that Culturally Responsive Teaching can be successfully implemented in mathematics instruction as well. Using a grounded theory case study through the conceptual framework of Culturally Responsive Mathematics Teaching (CRMT) with four characteristics of Culturally Responsive Teaching, such as communication, knowledge, trust/ relationships, and constant reflection/ revision, the researchers were able to show how a math teacher by the name of Ms. Finley was

successful in teaching challenged African American students of a predominantly African American community by utilizing the four aforementioned characteristics of Culturally Responsive Teaching with her students, parents of the students, and members of the community. One noble example is about one of her students who were labeled in first grade as having learning disability but when he enrolled in Ms. Finley's class, his behavior changed and he went from scoring 2s on standardized tests to scoring 4s. His academic outcome improved greatly under Ms. Finley. Due to the fact that Ms. Finley lived in the same community as her students she was able to initiate a caring instructional approach to teaching. She mixed social and cultural storytelling strategies with her instruction to teach math concepts which made it easier for her students to understand. She connected the community with her classroom and students by teaching adults in the community the same math concepts so that they can tutor students who were struggling in math and did not have anyone at home to help them. Ms. Finley also incorporated dance and music with her instruction. Data for the research were collected from individual and semi-structured interviews along with 50 observations which were analyzed through the grounded theory coding system (Glasser & Strauss, 1967; Charmaz, 2006, p. 2 as cited in Bonner & Adams, 2012). Findings also showed that Ms. Finley communicated well with her students and members of her community. In terms of "knowledge," Ms. Finley was successful in getting her students motivated to learn and meet the expectations she set for them. She used "interactive methods" by mixing real life's event with her lessons. Regarding "trust," Ms. Finley easily built trust with members of the community and her students because of the passion she had for Math and the profession. She daily reflected on her lessons and responded to the feedback of her students. She revised her lessons and teaching methods on a regular basis. In reference to the "cycle of pedagogy and discipline," chants, stories, and rhythms along with

instruction, assessment, and discipline were constantly interwoven in the fabric of Ms. Finley's pedagogical method. She was respected by her colleagues in the profession and members of her community for being effective in the classroom.

Using the framework of culturally responsive Mathematics Teaching (CRMT) through the lenses of Culturally Responsive Pedagogy (CRP) and Pedagogical Content Knowledge (PCK), and support of Bonner and Adams (2012) of the previous study, Aguirre and Zavala (2013) conducted a qualitative study to introduce a professional development tool to enable math teachers to assess and include different kinds of resources in their mathematics lessons and instruction to make them more culturally responsive. Participants used in the study were six beginning mathematics instructors five of whom were females and one male. The researchers describe Pedagogical Content Knowledge (PCK) as relevant topics in a teacher's subject area, most represented ideas, and most important analogies taking into consideration the prior knowledge and experience, ideas and beliefs, and misunderstandings of students, and having curriculum and curricular materials knowledge. The researchers broke PCK into four parts: a) knowledge of the comprehension level of students, b) high acknowledgement of the belief and knowledge about the importance of teaching, and d) familiarity with instructional strategies and representations for particular topics. Descriptors of CRP used in the study were: social consciousness, cultural affirmation, competence, community building, funds of knowledge predicated on home-based knowledge and experience, culture, community support, and use of critical knowledge and social justice. According to the researchers, in order for mathematics teachers to be able to teach a culturally responsive Mathematics, teachers have to appeal to the "funds knowledge" of the students, teach lessons based on the praxes of social justice and socio-politics and analyze tools and materials that are used for instruction. The researchers used six

elements of CRMT as criteria to analyze mathematics lessons, such as intellectual support, depth of student knowledge and understanding, mathematical analysis, mathematical discourse and communication, student engagement, academic language support for English Language Learners (ELL), and use of English as a second language (ESL) scaffolding strategies. Data for the research were collected from semi-structured interviews and observations. Data were analyzed through a coding system. The constant comparative method was used and so were triangulation and theme. Results showed that the CRMT tool allowed teachers to be able to engage in systematic analysis and critique mathematics lessons with multiple dimensions with special attention given to mathematical thinking, language, culture, and social justice. The findings also revealed that teachers develop purposeful pedagogical dialogue in designing their mathematics lessons.

In addition to the positive effects of an infused culturally responsive pedagogy, Roessingh (2020) articulates how five research-based teaching practices evidently prove that when elements of Culturally Responsive Pedagogy were incorporated with academic vocabulary for elementary students, especially immigrants whose first language were not English, their learning experience was positively impacted. The five research-informed instructional strategies used were: (1) storytelling, (2) the use of artifacts and objects, (3) direct instruction using the Frayer Model, (4) Language Experience Approach (LEA), and (5) recycling tasks. The five-research teaching techniques which are characteristics of culturally responsive pedagogy built on the cultural and linguistic capital or "funds of knowledge" of the students. The five strategies are detailed as follows: (a) object-based learning as a thematic approach through which new vocabulary words can be connected to the student culture, such as the usage of cultural images and artifacts as tangible exemplifications of the lesson's content; (b) storybook reading as the

means by which books written in the language of students can be used to allow the privilege of language awareness and transfer of knowledge practically demonstrated and through which "teacher talk" or dialogic reading takes place engaging students in the learning process; (c) direct instruction can be a teacher-led practice through which the Frayer Model of graphic design usage to scaffold, simplify and clarify instruction; (d) recycling tasks which include the utilization of flash cards or a type of game that is captivating to all students, including the language learners, a game that all students can play to be used as a revision method in preparation of an assessment or check for understanding; (e) Language Experience Approach (LEA) as a language-based learning technique through which the knowledge of the student can be made a part of every strategy and material used for the lesson, such as pre-write, storytelling, drawing or coloring which can help all students to engage in the lesson and enable teachers to reconstruct the lesson or curriculum to meet the needs of all students. Conclusively, the research proved that incorporating Culturally Responsive Pedagogy principles with academic content can improve the outcome of all students, including that of language learners (Roessingh, 2020).

In concert with Aguirre and Zavada (2013), Bonner and Adams (2012), and Roessingh (2020) proponents of culturally responsive teaching in Mathematics and other disciplines, after doing an advanced search of 117 published works to analyze and determine how teachers can be prepared to effectively teach mathematics, using a constructivist approach through the lens of Culturally Responsive Pedagogy (CRP), Wachira and Mburu (2016) selected 26 out of 117 studies to find out how Mathematics teachers can be productive in the classroom in meeting the needs of their ethnically, culturally, and linguistically diverse students. The researchers highlight constructivism as a learning method that makes learning meaningful by allowing students to actively use their past experiences and knowledge to create new knowledge. The researchers

delineate cognitive constructivism and socio constructivism as such: cognitive constructivism focuses on how the individual learns and socio constructivism supports the view that knowledge can be co-constructed. Linking the two together as socio-constructivism, it reveals that learning can be constructed in a social context, learning take place as learners interact with their environment which may include objects, their peers, and teachers (Vygotsky, 1978, as cited in Wachira & Mburu, 2016). The theory further postulates that learning or the lesson should be student-centered by encouraging students to use their way of solving a mathematics problem; one with which they are comfortable. Like culturally responsive pedagogy, the researchers assert that both constructivism and culturally responsive pedagogy complement each other in addressing the education needs of the whole child. They define CRP as a teaching practice that appeals to the personal and cultural strengths of the students, considers what the students are capable of doing intellectually, and taps into what the students have already accomplished. The researchers concluded by asserting that both constructivist and culturally responsive pedagogical practices can equip teachers to be able to effectively teach mathematics in an ethnically, and a culturally and linguistically diverse population of students. They encourage institutions of higher learning that provide teacher preparatory courses to prepare teachers to be able to meet the needs of the expanding learning population of linguistically, ethnically, and culturally diverse students.

Is culturally responsive practice a noble way to teach? A question asked and answered by Tanase (2020) in his longitudinal study using 13 new Mathematics and 9 Science teachers of 8 high-poverty, low-income, low-performing middle and high schools and students, predominantly African American of 90%, a Caucasian population ranging from 2-4%, and a Latinx student body between 1-3% to examine the extent to which culturally responsive teaching can positively impact the performance the linguistically, ethnically, and culturally diverse urban students. Using

the N-VIVO qualitative data analyzing software, data were analyzed thematically. The themes were as follows: (a) the usage of student-centered strategies to teach Mathematics and Science and (b) the incorporation of the culture of students into the Mathematics and Science classrooms. The results showed that the incorporation of the culture, language, and life lessons with the lesson motivated students to learn and engage more in the lesson. Due to the fact that teachers were willing to know about their students' cultures and backgrounds, they became empowered and able to use those skills to dismantle the status quo. The researcher agrees that culturally responsive teaching is good and effective.

In promoting Culturally Responsive Instruction (CRI) in secondary Physics, Mathematics, Biology, English, Social Studies, alternative school classes, Schmidt (2005) selected five teachers to participate in her study. She evaluated their lesson plans to examine how culturally responsive they were and observed the classes of her participants to see how well they could implement culturally responsive instruction in their classrooms. Also, she observed the participants to find out how students might respond to those culturally responsive prepared lessons and strategies. She used seven (7) characteristics of Culturally Responsive Pedagogy (CRP) as criteria to guide and evaluate the preparation, presentation, and performance of the teachers. The seven (7) elements of CRT were: (1) high expectations; which is to support students according to their ages and learning abilities, (2) positive relationships with families and community; that is the teacher's connection of the lesson and classroom to the students, their families and communities, (3) cultural sensitivity-reshaped curriculum, mediated for culturally valued knowledge; which is connecting the backgrounds of students with the standards-based curriculum, (4) Active teaching method; that is making sure that students are engaged in different kinds of reading, writing, listening, and speaking exercises and monitoring how they

might respond throughout the entire lesson, (5) Teacher as a facilitator; the lesson should be student-centered where the instructor briefly presents the information, gives directions, summarizes responses, and works with individuals, pairs, or small groups, (6) Student control of portions of the lesson or "healthy hum:" this is when students are having healthy conversations among themselves in small groups or pairs as they are doing their assignments, and (7) instruction around groups or pairs in the presence of low anxiety; allowing students to sit in groups or pairs to complete their assignments and be able to learn from each other, brainstorm in the case of a discussion, and be able to think critically. The participants used in the study taught at schools with a diverse body of students, some of whom are from low socioeconomic backgrounds, of different ethnicities, cultures, and languages; African Americans, European Americans, Native Americans, Asian Americans, and Latinx. Highlights from the participants' observations were as follows:

Jerry, a European American Physics teacher, taught at an urban high school where 75% of the students received free or reduced price lunch. He brought in a compact disc of Stevie Wonder's songs and played it in class and some of the students sang along. He also brought a guitar and an African drum as exhibits of his lesson on "sound." In his class were Somali Americans, Lebanese Americans, Asian Americans, African Americans, and European Americans. The guitar and drum drove the interest and motivation of the students upward causing them to fully participate in the lesson.

Joyce, a Native American Math teacher taught at a rural high school and was constantly in contact with her students' parents and communities. She visited homes and simplified her lessons to meet the cultural needs of her students. Her classroom walls were decorated with posters and images, symbols, and quotes relating the different cultural groups in her class.

Crystal, a European American, taught English and Social Studies at an alternative school. She was passionate about teaching and cared very much for her students' academic, emotional, and mental well-being. She was in close contact with her students' parents, guardians, and social workers. The bond she made with her students' parents was so strong that the parents trusted her more than the social workers of their child or children. One time a parent had to call her to talk her child out of committing suicide.

Tim, a European American Biology teacher in a poor urban school where 95% of the students received free or reduced price lunch built his lesson on the prior knowledge of his students. He pre-assigned his students to do research on the next day's lesson to be ready for class the next day. His students came to class ready to get engaged and learn. He used an inquiry-based, dialogic, and critical thinking approach in his class to have his students be able to think critically and participate.

Kevin, a European American, taught English at an urban middle school where 70% of the students were African American and Latinx students and 30% European Americans. He had literary figures, images of musicians, athletes, and historical leaders from all continents and cultures on his classroom walls. He also incorporated music and video that might appeal to his students with his lessons. He began his class with yoga exercises to help his students feel relaxed and stress free to be able to focus better in class. On one occasion he invited someone to speak on Korean culture and a topic relating to the lesson. The researcher concludes by praising her participants for aligning and implementing their lessons as planned in accordance with the seven (7) elements of CRI or CRP. She encourages teachers to create lessons that are reflective of the cultures and academic abilities of their students.

With limited studies on how to use culturally responsive practices in an after school literacy program, another set of proponents of culturally responsive pedagogy, Skelley et al. (2022), selected eight (8) participants to be a part of their study to see how, if trained, tutors could use culturally responsive practices to positively impact the learning of a diverse body of students. Seventy-six percent of the students of this urban elementary school in the study were recipients of free or reduced price lunch and 95% were students of color. This study came about due to a previous longitudinal study conducted by the same researchers who found that cultural differences of the tutors and students may have impacted the performance of students both positively and negatively. Therefore, they decided to undertake this study using the practices of CRT to find out what the outcome might be. This study used the frameworks of socio-cultural learning theory along with that of critical multicultural learning through the lens of CRT or CRP. The researchers found it fitting that as diverse as the learning population of the United States continues to grow exponentially, it is logical that educators employ pedagogical practices that can meet the academic needs of all students. According to the researchers, while the socio-cultural theory in education reveals that the social, cultural, and historical context of learning as valuable particles in the attainment of knowledge, critical multicultural theory of learning seizes the opportunity to empower students of multicultural groups to have access to learning and be successful as their peers regardless of their ethnicity, race, language, or culture. The researchers selected three characteristics of CRT by which tutors were evaluated: (1) that in-school and out-of-school learning of diverse learners connect to the backgrounds and culture of students, (2) educational equity should be promoted by the learning environment, and (3) students' agency, efficacy, and empowerment should be supported and encouraged by educators in the learning environment. Data were collected from interviews and observations and were analyzed

thematically. The researchers used three (3) variables to determine the results of their study. The variables were: (a) proficient, in terms of how well the tutors use CRT strategies during the course of the research, (b) curriculum, in reference to how well the tutors utilize the CRT materials and activities they were supposed to use, and (c) environment, in terms of how effective tutors were in connection with the parents and communities of the students. The results showed a consistent bonding of the tutors and students and the students' backgrounds. Overall, there were positive as well as negative findings. Some tutors were successful in implementing the CRT practices and others were not, which meant that additional training was needed to make those participants who did not do well be able to master CRP practices. In the debriefing most of the participants admitted that implementing CRT practices was a challenge. They said it was time-consuming and tedious.

In order for teachers to be gatekeepers and implementers of Culturally Responsive Pedagogy (CRP), Culturally Responsive Teaching (CRT), or Culturally Responsive Instruction (CRI), support must come from school leaders and curriculum builders (Khalifa et al., 2016; Murakam et al., 2017; Santamaria & Santamaria, 2015, as cited in Narine et al., 2022). In their exploratory qualitative study, Narine et al. (2022) examined the effectiveness of a culturally responsive curriculum program instituted by ten (10) principals in a southern Texas school district with a population of students ranging from three hundred (300) to one thousand two hundred (1,200), the researchers purposely selected the principals of those middle schools through a Linked recruiting process to understand how the participants implemented culturally responsive teaching in their schools. The participants were of different ethnic or racial groups; two Whites, four Blacks, and four Latinx, all of whom led schools of culturally, linguistically, ethnically, and socioeconomically different students. The researchers employed the Applied

Critical Leadership (ACL) conceptual framework through the theoretical lenses of: Critical Race Theory (CRT) which theorizes that racism is the norm in the U. S. society, Transformational Leadership (TL) that supports the redistribution of power and by inspiring others to go beyond their individual interests for the good of society, and Critical Pedagogy (CP) which postulates that education is the means by which one can be empowered to make a difference in society. Data were collected from interviews conducted via Zoom that lasted from December of 2020 to January 2021.

The elements of CRP, CRT, or CRI that were implemented were: restorative practices, addressing social and cultural injustice issues, supporting equal treatment regarding disciplinary matters, encouragement of open communication, collaborative culture, inclusion of all students, and transparency. Even though most of the characteristics of CRP were used, there were a couple of challenges spelled out in the findings. The principals admitted that they were not getting support from the students' parents and communities, and support was not coming from the district either to help with the implementation of a culturally responsive curriculum.

Au (2009), a proponent of culturally responsive pedagogy and contemporary of Geneva Gay, Gloria Ladson-Billings, and James Banks, gives an analysis and evaluation of an observation she conducted of a trained culturally responsive teacher implementing the practice in a third-grade classroom in Hawaii. The purpose of that study was to see how well a culturally responsive lesson can be implemented and how it can impact learning. The setting of this study was diverse with students of multiple ethnic groups, many of whom were economically challenged and spoke different languages. In this article she shares light on some of the key elements of culturally responsive pedagogy, answers three culturally responsive related questions, and highlights some ways culturally responsive pedagogy can be implemented to

benefit learning. The theoretical framework relating to this observation is culturally responsive pedagogy which posits that in order for teachers to be successful in teaching students from different cultural and linguistic backgrounds, that teacher has to include the languages and cultural heritages of those students in the lesson and learning environment by showing care, interacting with them and allowing them to interact with one another as well, and be engaged (Gay, 2000). In the text, she shares the same characteristics as Geneva Gay and Gloria Ladson-Billings which state that curricula and lessons have to include the cultures and languages of students and that instruction should build on the prior knowledge of the students. She asserts that culturally responsive instruction and practices can be effective in closing the achievement gap. She compares and contrasts the setting of a mainstream classroom to that of a diverse classroom. According to her, while the mainstream learning approach is individual work, the diverse approach supports students working together, while the mainstream approach promotes competition, the diverse strategy promotes cooperation, and as the mainstream approach seeks learning independence, the diverse seeks interdependence. She asserts that culturally responsive instruction leans in the direction of the diverse learning category. This particular study is not written in a typical research format. In her conclusion, she states that she is pleased with the teacher's use of culturally responsive strategies; how he conducted both independent and cooperative activities, and his creation of a hybrid classroom where lessons were blended only with elements of the cultural heritages of students, not as a duplication of the home life or community life. However, on her list of implications regarding the learning structure of the classroom, she says both whole-class and group approaches can be used but the lesson has to be student-centered. She recommends teachers to give enough time for students to respond to questions, and form teacher-led small group sessions.

Using the framework of a professional development school (PDS); a learning community that promotes equity, antiracism, and social justice in grade schools and institutions of higher learning, Biery (2021) a biology teacher shares how after realizing how her implicitly biased teaching practices alienated her students from her and not being active and responsive in class, she decided to find ways to turn things around by researching about teaching practices that are feasible for a diverse population of students. She read a lot of articles on culturally responsive practices and instructions, and selected the one that best suited her class. She selected the article written by Sharroky Hollie whose work was on culturally and Linguistically Responsive Teaching and Learning (CLRTL). She applied four principles in her practice and instruction which were: (a) the creation of a family-oriented learning environment where she encouraged and motivated students by praising them and assuring them that they can succeed, worked with them closely if they could not understand the lesson, and conflicts were resolved in the classroom through a buddy system or peer social support network setup in the class, (b) the development of relationships with her students by learning different handshakes and doing TikTok dances with them which allowed them to develop trust and were willing to share personal stories, talk about their goals, struggles, and lives, (c) the initiation of inclusion where images, symbols, artifacts, materials, videos, and the classroom walls had some semblances of the cultures of her students, and (d) the establishment of a communal structure by creating lessons and implementing practices that were student-centered rather than being teacher-centered, and allowing the students to be a part of the decision-making process; also, assigning more collaborative tasks to benefit all students. She admits that after applying the above steps all of her students became active participants in the class and were constantly engaged. Later, she

shared the news with some of her colleagues who also had successful stories, and then it spread throughout the whole school and became a school-wide initiative.

Another praxis of culturally responsive pedagogy is culturally and linguistically Responsive Teaching (CLRT). Hollie (2009) expounds on his paradigm of culturally and linguistically responsive teaching by laying out some of its principles and strands that are an integral part of its theoretical platform. He bases the framework of (CLRT) on the foundations of Culturally Responsive Pedagogy (CRP), which states that effective and relevant learning is based on cultural knowledge, prior knowledge, frames of reference, and the performance styles of students who are ethnically diverse (Gay, 2002). He states that CLRT validates and affirms the incorporation of the language and culture of the diverse population of students but through the medium of culturally responsive teaching strategies which act as a bridge or an enabler toward acceptance, achievement, and empowerment of the students in school and the greater society. He highlights several strands. He begins by describing a key word relating to the strands which he terms as Standard English Learner (SEL); a student whose primary language is neither English nor the Academic Language. Interestingly, these strands are based on what he terms as Culturally Relevant Literature (CRL). The *first* strand is Instructional which allows the usage of texts and materials that validate the backgrounds, cultures, languages, and experiences of the students, along with culturally responsive literacy and linguistic strategies that are effective. The *second* strand is systematic teaching in a language that is appropriate for every situation; in this system, there are language variations and implementation of strategies for English Language mastery. The *third* strand is to build on cultural behaviors to create a positive learning environment by engaging students in rigorous activities that will allow them to apply their personal learning styles and be guided by procedures and instruction leading to discussion and participation that

validate and affirm their cultural behaviors in the academic environment. The *fourth* strand which deals with the expansion of academic vocabulary through conceptual coded words focuses on the approving of knowledge-based home vocabulary of the students and linking cultural concepts with academic words, and the application of understanding through the usage of synonyms and antonyms. The *fifth* strand is creating a learning environment that validates and affirms the display of images in the classroom that reflect the cultures of students and the use of instructional materials, such as slides, videos, and other platforms that are representative of the students' cultures. CLRT and CRP have the same goals but CLRT focuses mainly on language.

Additionally, considering the importance of teachers to be trained to able to use CRP strategies in the classroom, the qualitative study of Olston and Rao (2016) focused on the perspectives of some Teacher Candidates (TC) of a teacher training program regarding their assessment of how their clinical experiences impacted their preparation process in becoming effective culturally responsive teachers. The researchers used the socio-cultural theory of learning and culturally relevant pedagogy as theoretical frameworks for their study. The socio-cultural theory of learning postulates that social and cultural contexts and experiences can influence learning (Vygotsky, 1978, as cited in Olson & Rao, 2016). They applied three (3) elements of Ladson-Billings' (1995, 2009) culturally relevant theory which were: teachers being supportive of students by helping them to succeed academically, maintaining cultural competency, and developing cultural consciousness in students to enable them to challenge the existing social order. Results show that the teacher candidates recognized the importance of connecting with the culture and community of the student and integrating social justice with the lesson. As far as concerning limitations, the researchers acknowledge that fully understanding and implementing culturally responsive pedagogy were challenges for the teacher candidates.

Though the researchers used the theoretical framework of culturally relevant pedagogy for a culturally responsive pedagogical study, one key element that brought the two theories together was connecting to the culture and community of the students.

Joining the "opportunity gap" discourse about marginalized students and supporting the views of Geneva Gay, in their research entitled, *examining perceptions of culturally responsive pedagogy in teacher preparation and teacher leadership candidates*, Samuels, Samuels, and Cook (2017) conducted a study to increase the understanding of Culturally Responsive Pedagogy (CRP) and to examine the perceptions of students regarding culturally responsive pedagogy. The researchers aligned their study with an instructional design of culturally responsive strategies to teach three unit courses and find out from the students how the CRP strategies impacted their learning. The units were designed to: a) examine the theoretical framework of culturally responsive pedagogy, b) identify best practices to promote CRP in K-12 classrooms, and c) examine the impact of CRP on student learning. Students were given a task to come up with ways to express their learning and understanding of CRP by poetic, musical, artistic, or photographic means. The findings show that there is a need for teacher programs to be mixed with culturally responsive teaching strategies and diversity-related contents. A limitation was that implementation of CRP was a challenge. Another limitation was that more exposure is needed to understanding CRP and how it works.

Vidwans, and Fraez (2019) explore the self-efficacy perceptions of Internationally Educated Teachers (IETs) and non-Internationally Educated Teachers (non-IETs) for teaching culturally and linguistically diverse classrooms in Ontario, Canada. Using the theoretical frameworks of Gay's culturally responsive pedagogy and Bandura's social efficacy theory, the researchers probed to know the following: a) efficacy perceptions of teachers regarding teaching

in culturally and linguistically diverse classrooms and comparing the self-efficacy perception of IETs and non-IETs and b) self-efficacy perception of IETs and non-IETs on Culturally Responsive Pedagogy (CRP) and general pedagogy practices. The frameworks of the study are CRP and Social Efficacy. CRP is based on five (5) principles which are: 1) developing knowledge based on cultural diversity, 2) ethnic and cultural diversity should be included in the curriculum, 3) care and learning communities should be included in the learning process, 4) a constant flow of communication should exist between the teacher and his or her ethnically diverse students, and 5) delivery of instruction should be in response to the needs of the diverse body of students. The social efficacy theory of Bandura relates to the belief a teacher may have of being confident and capable of modeling or demonstrating the behavior to positively impact student learning. Using Levin's test for unequal variance, the results showed that there was no significant difference between the two sub-groups. In terms of difference between the general pedagogical practice and CRP, the results showed that there was a significant difference. It showed that the 76 teachers demonstrated a higher confident and self-efficacious level for implementing general pedagogy practices than CRP practices. One of the limitations was the reliance on self-perceptions of efficacy which can be unreliable. Another limitation was that the number of non-IETs was larger than the number of IETs.

Gay (2007) describes the conditions of students following the Katrina hurricane disaster as those who were impoverished, marginalized in school due to the unfair distribution of educational resources, and victims of inequitable learning opportunities which she says created an "opportunity gap." Ladson-Billings (2013) calls the opportunity gap a gap in the place of the achievement gap which she says should be the discourse threading among scholars and education stakeholders, and policy makers, instead of the "achievement gap." Flores (2007) gives

examples of the opportunity gap as attributing to the lack of adequate funding allocated for African American and Latinx school districts and the lack of access to experienced and qualified teachers. According to Flores (2007), one of the reasons the opportunity gap increases for marginalized and underserved students is the lack of having access to quality teaching and minority teachers or teachers from their communities. Figure 5 is an example of the teacher disparity in terms of race that existed in the 2017 and 2018 school year for elementary and secondary public schools nationally.

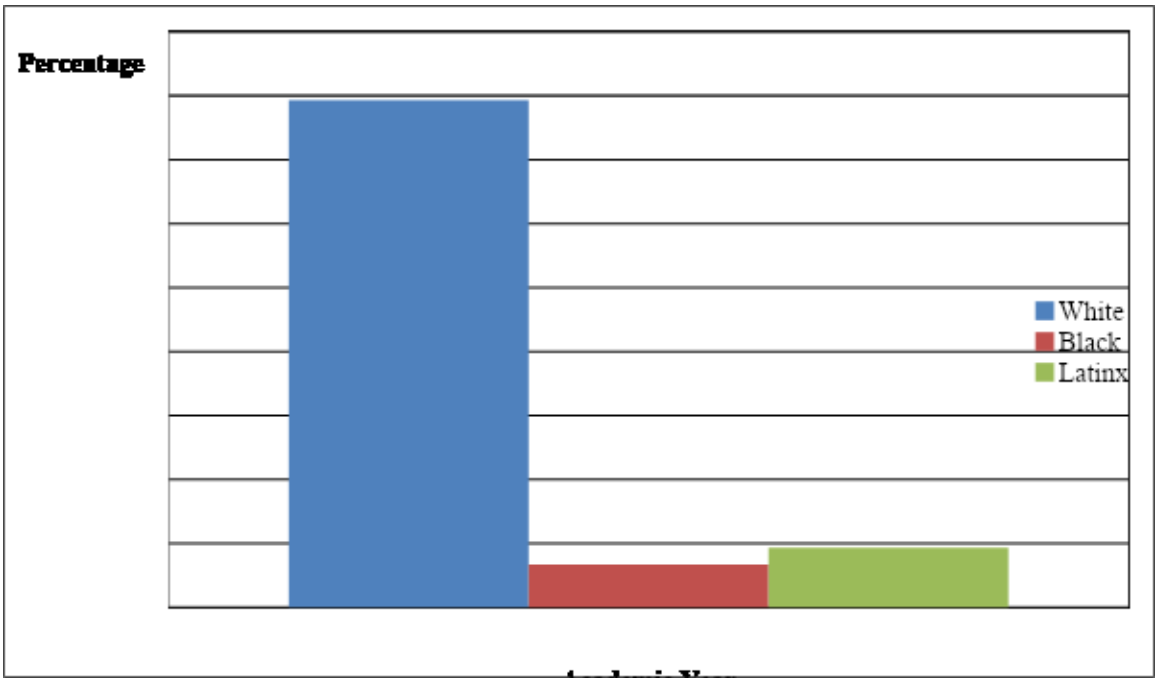

Figure 5: *Percentages of teachers in elementary and secondary Public Schools;* Percentages of teachers by ethnic groups in public elementary and secondary schools for the 2017 – 2018 school year. The blue bar represents White teachers, the red bar represents Black teachers, and the green bar represents Latinx teachers.

National Center for Education Statistics (NCES), 2020, *Digest of Education Statistics*. Retrieved from https://nces.ed.gov/programs/digest/d20/tables/dt20_209.23.asp

2.1: Chapter Summary

This section is the continuation of the argument that the existing "opportunity gap" is the reason marginalized students continue to struggle academically, and as long as it exists the more the achievement gap becomes wider (Flores, 2007; Gay, 2000; Lading-Billings, 2007). This section also reveals how existing studies show that CRP is made up of practices that can meet the needs of diverse students (Gay, 2000) and uncovers evidence of how CRP positively impacts the academic outcomes of marginalized urban students (Gay, 2000). The main objective of Gay's (2002) culturally Responsive Pedagogy is to provide an education that is representative of every student in the classroom. The focal point of Culturally Relevant Pedagogy is to provide an instruction that is salient to the culture, wellbeing, and success of every student, especially African American (Ladson-Billings, 2007), Culturally Sustaining Pedagogy aims at not only facilitating learning for all students, it seeks to provide an education that is relevant and sustainable. Nevertheless, the various educational concepts primarily seek to provide education in an oppressive-free environment for all students. A graph was displayed to illustrate that one of the reasons minority students struggle in public schools is because there are far too few minority teachers in those predominantly minority urban schools (Digest of Education Statistics, 2020; Milner & Lomotey, 2014). The next session is the methodology. In this tertiary part of the dissertation proposal, I describe the research design, give detail about the sample used in the study, and reveal and explain the method used to collect and analyze the data relating to the study.

CHAPTER 3: METHODOLOGY

This section details the research design of the study, unveils my positionality epistemology, quantifies information about the participants, gives a summative perspective of the research instrumentation protocol, highlights the determinants of research quality, articulates how data are collected and analyzed, describes the type of sampling method used, and the chapter summary. As noted in chapter 1, the guiding research questions are as follows:

RQ1: How do urban school teachers (k-12) define and identify with culturally responsive pedagogical practices?

RQ2: How do the culturally responsive practices of urban school teachers (k-12) impact the achievement and outcomes of their students?

This qualitative study uses a phenomenological case study to examine the concepts and pedagogical practices of culturally responsive teaching through the shared experiences of educators and implementers of culturally responsive pedagogy. It also determines the effectiveness of those concepts and practices in improving the academic outcomes of marginalized students (K-12) in urban classrooms. Grounded theory is used in this study to both collect and analyze data. However, prior to delving into the mechanics of the research design and presenting elements of its corpus, I want to share some etymological features of phenomenological case study and grounded theory.

Phenomenological case study is a case study that is built around the concepts and characteristics of phenomenology (Nelson et al., 2015, as cited in Mertens, 2021). Phenomenology is the study of: a) giving meaning to the lived experiences of people as those experiences relate to a concept or phenomenon (Creswell, 2013, as cited in Ravitch & Carl, 2021), b) comprehending the person's subjective experience, perceptions, and meaning of a

specific phenomenon (Wertz, 2005, as cited in Ravitch & Carl, 2021), and c) a phenomenon that is very specific (Vagle, 2018). Phenomenology started as a philosophical course and philosophical movement but social scientists made it a human science research method (Vagle, 2018, p. 5).

Many scholars attribute its origin to occidental social scientists, one of whom is, Edmund Husserl, who was given the title, "father of phenomenology" (Vagle, 2018, p. 6). However, Smith (2016) recants that historical perspective and asserts that the practice of phenomenology was also carried out by oriental Hindi and Buddhist philosophers. Smith (2016) also gives credence to David Hume, Immanuel Kant, and Rene Descartes as pioneer users of phenomenology in their reference to words such as *perception*, *thought*, and *imagination*. Rene Descartes earned himself the title, "father of western philosophy" but had a different philosophical view from Edmund Husserl (Vagle, 2016). Decartes asserts that the mechanics of human reasoning are detached from the human body and the natural world, but Husserl believes the opposite (Vagle, 2016). Edmund Husserl argues that the mind is in close relationship with the world which he terms as a phenomenon we live in; a *lifeworld* of human experience and interaction (Vagle, 2016).

Case Study is a methodological approach in research through which the researcher is able to thoroughly investigate and describe complex phenomena, such as events, important issues, or programs and how people interact with elements of those phenomena (Moore, Lpan, & Quartaroli, 2012, pp. 243-244, as cited in Mertens, 2021). Case Study: a) fits well with qualitative research (Quintao, Pedro, & Almeida, 2020), b) has many advantages when used in qualitative research, few of which are the manner in which it can highly be applied to normal human situations and existing contexts of real life, and it simultaneously can give a deep,

broad, and integrated perspective of a phenomenon that is complex and contains many variables (Yin, 2017, as cited in Quintao, Pedro, & Almeida, 2020), c) enables the researcher to deeply understand the phenomenon by gathering information from people, and by which a new phenomenon can arise from those interactions (Quintao, Pedro, & Almeida, 2020), and d) its accessibility to multiple evidence sources that allow the researcher to get multiple views on a phenomenon which in turn makes the perception of the researcher more comprehensive and trustworthy (Yin, 2017, as cited in Quintao, Pedro, & Almeida, 2020).

Thus, phenomenological case study in qualitative research is a case study in which researchers use a phenomenological lens and approach to investigate the lived experiences of the participants as they relate to the phenomenon studied (Nelson et al., 2015, as cited in Mertens, 2021). In this study, the phenomenon expected to be uncovered and described by the participants is culturally responsive pedagogy and how it impacts the outcomes of students.

Grounded Theory (GT) has a dual functionality (Merterns, 2021). It can be used to collect and analyze data (Charmaz, 2014, as cited in Mertens, 2021). According to Mertens (2021), Ground Theory (GT) was created by Glaser and Strauss (1965) and amended by Corbin and Strauss (2008). Going against the hegemony of quantitative research and the research method of positivism, Glaser and Strauss (1967) came up with the constructivist approach for qualitative research by developing of grounded theory as a method of inquiry and analyzing data. They produced the following elements of grounded theory: a) it is simultaneously involved in collecting and analyzing data, b) it constructs analytical codes from data, not from preconceived data that are logically deduced, c) it is a constant comparison method which makes comparison during each phase of the analytical process, d) it advances theory development during each phase of collecting and analyzing data, e) using memo-writing to expand categories, specify the

properties of the categories, define the categories, and to identify existing gaps, f) using sampling to construct theory or theoretical sampling, and g) doing the literature review following the development of an independent analysis (Charmaz, 2014). What makes the grounded theory method unique is that it can accommodate other qualitative data analysis methods (Charmaz, 2014, p. 16). Grounded theory is used to answer the following research questions: RQ1: How do urban school teachers (k-12) define and identify with culturally responsive pedagogical practices? RQ2: How do the culturally responsive practices of urban school teachers (k-12) impact the achievement and outcomes of their students?

3.1: Research Design

This qualitative study uses a Phenomenological Case Study (PCS) to examine the concepts and pedagogical practices of culturally responsive teaching through the shared experiences of educators and implementers of culturally responsive pedagogy, and to determine the effectiveness of those concepts and practices in improving the academic outcomes of marginalized students (K-12) in urban classrooms. Grounded Theory is used in this research to collect and analyze data and answer the following research questions:

RQ1: How do urban school teachers (k-12) define and identify with culturally responsive pedagogical practices?

RQ2: How do the culturally responsive practices of urban school teachers (k-12) impact the achievement and outcomes of their students?

3.2: Rationale

Using Grounded Theory (GT) to collect and analyze data in a phenomenological case study is a rarity but possible (Singh, 2023; Urcia, 2021). According to Singh (2023), both phenomenology and grounded theory can be mixed in a research. He believes combining the two

methodologies can provide a comprehensive understanding of the phenomenon being studied. He states that while phenomenology focuses on understanding the subjective lived experiences and views of the participants in relation to the phenomenon, grounded theory focuses more on generating theories based on the data collected that are reflective of the sociological interactions of the participants and the sample population as they relate to the phenomenon.

As phenomenology provides thick descriptions of abstract and intrinsic qualities in essence of the lived experiences of the participants, the complex investigative process of case study along with the complex analytical steps of grounded theory add rigor and quality to the research (Charmaz, 2014; Mertens, 2021; Urcia, 2021). Complementarily, evidence gathered from other materials relating to the phenomenon and the social interactions of participants can provide new information relevant to the theoretical process (Singh, 2023; Urcia, 2021).

Other studies in which phenomenology and grounded theory were compatibly used are: **a**) *Understanding Taiwanese adolescents' connection with nature: Rethinking conventional definitions and scales for environmental education* by Tseng (2020). In the study both phenomenology and grounded theory were used. In this qualitative study, Tseng (2020) wanted to find out how adolescents in Taiwan connect to nature and how nature reflects their decision-making as it relates to school and career choices. Tseng used phenomenology to understand the lived experiences of adolescents as they relate to how much time they participate in physical activities outdoors or indoors. An in-depth interview was used as a relevant source of data for both methodological approaches. Both phenomenology and grounded theory used coding methods to interpret, analyze, and synthesize the data. Phenomenology provided textual and structural descriptions of the lived experiences of the participants in relation to situations, events, activities, people, and the environment and grounded theory presented a clearer data collection

and data analysis process relating to the phenomenon through a more "systematic coding process" than phenomenology (Tseng, 2020),

b) *Searching for an appropriate research design: A personal journey* is another study in which Probert (2006) articulates why both phenomenology and grounded theory can be used together in the same research. First, Probert gives some unique elements, such as the assumptions and goals of each method to warn neophyte researchers from mixing methods together without taking into consideration the philosophies and assumptions behind the methods being combined, Probert, 2006; Urcia, 2020). Probert believes that the more a researcher is informed about the various research methods, the better the researcher may be able to make sense of the research, research design, and the research methods (Baker, Wuest, & Stern, 1992; Hopwood, 2004; Johnson, 2001; Maggs-Rapport, 2000; Skodal-Wilson, & Amber, 1996, Thorne, Kirkham, & MacDonald-Emes, 1997, as cited in Probert, 2006). Regarding phenomenology, Probert (2006) asserts that being familiar with the fundamental principles of phenomenology is important before deciding to use it as a data collection or data analysis method. She lists the principles as: *intentionality* which explains the interwoven nature of the reality of the phenomenon in the consciousness of the participant, *description* as the medium through which the reality of the phenomenon can be better understood when expressed in the participants' own words, *reduction* or *epoche* where the researcher suspends all judgments and preconceived thoughts about what reality is, and *essence* as being displayed through a sequence of a coding system where data are developed in themes and analyzed to give meaning to the phenomenon. In terms of grounded theory, Probert lists its fundamental principles as: *beginning the analytical process with no preconceived hypothesis*, *simultaneously collecting and analyzing data*, *constantly comparing and contrasting emerging and collected data*, and *to using coding*

methods to group keywords and phrases to create concepts and themes which could eventually be theorized. Grounded theory takes into account the underlying processes of the behavior of humans that are relevant situationally and that includes the complex nature of the context which goes beyond the scope of phenomenology (Creswell, 1998, as cited in Probert). Therefore, Probert asserts that if both methods are used, phenomenology can relate to and maintain the originality of the lived experiences, identities, and meanings of the participants as they relate to the phenomenon and use grounded theory as the systematic means of examining participants' connection to the contexts of the circumstances under which those connections happened (Probert, 2006; Singh, 2023; Urcia, 2021),

c) *Qualitative inquiry into the experiences of high-potential Hispanic language learners in Midwestern schools* is another study in which phenomenology and grounded theory were used (Mauk, 2017). In this study, Mauk (2017) investigated the experiences of low-income and high-potential English Language Learners (ELLs) of low-income families of four schools in the Midwestern part of the United States to understand how they related to their school cultures, classes, class activities, teachers, and classmates. Phenomenology was used to: examine how ELLs in schools in the U. S. make sense of their experiences and how they transform those experiences into their consciousness (Patton, 2002, p. 104, as cited in Pereira et al., 2013), in the study, phenomenology was also used to study the lived experiences of the participants (Creswell, 2007), and grounded theory was used to create concepts and themes through a coding system (Strauss & Corbin, 1998, as cited in Pereira et al., 2013),

d) *Comparing grounded theory and phenomenology as methods to understand lived experiences of engineering educators implementing problem-based learning* was one of the studies that used both phenomenology and grounded theory together. In this study, Chance and

Duffy (2020) were experiencing the experiences and reactions of teachers as they underwent a pedagogical shift from the traditional lecture-base strategy to that of student-centered. Phenomenology was used to understand the lived experiences of the teachers while grounded theory was used to generate questions, form concepts and themes and examined their relationships through open and axial codes (Chance & Duffy, 2020),

e) *Exploring the use of poverty in counselling training and supervision: A qualitative inquiry is* one of the studies that mixed both methods in the same research. In the study, McNichols (2010) used phenomenology to know "what is it like" and "what does it mean" to know the lived experiences of the participants. Grounded theory was used to examine multiple concepts and realities about the phenomenon. The meanings of the participants were also explored by grounded theory and themes were constructed as data changed through "new research" and "new context" (McNichols, 2010),

f) *Miss what's my name? New teacher identity as a question of reciprocal ontological security* is another study in which phenomenology and grounded theory were used together. In the study McNally (2010) wanted to know what the philosophies of new teachers were before they started teaching. Phenomenology was used to understand the philosophies of new teachers in preparation for teaching and during the first phase of their teaching career. Grounded theory was used to identify elements in the practice of the participants that produce emerging data or themes that were evidence-based as the invisible became visible and sensitized concepts were generated (Charmaz, 2000; Clarke, 2003, p. 559; Glaser, 2002, as cited in McNally & Blake, 2010), and

g) *Comparisons of adaptations in grounded theory and phenomenology: selecting the specific qualitative research method* details ethical standards governing the mixing of research

methods in the same research. It is possible to synthesize research methods provided "careful attention is given to the complexity or methodological assumptions underpinning the primary studies and the situatedness of the primary researcher and their participants" (Paterson et al., 2001, as cited in Zimmer, 2006).

According to Urcia (2021), Grounded Theory is a process by which subjective data are collected and concepts, ideas, and themes are analyzed through an emerging process of theory development. Phenomenology pertains to being able to deeply understand the history, structure, and meaning of the phenomenon based on the in-depth relationship of the participants to the phenomenon and experiences with the phenomenon (Burns & Peacock, 2019; Munhall, 2012; Van Manen, 2016, as cited in Zimmer, 2006). Over the years both phenomenology and grounded theory have shifted to different paradigms, philosophies, assumptions that are complex, and methodological strategies (Urcia, 2021). Rigor and quality in a qualitative method depends on the choice of the researcher's method of collecting and analyzing data, the researcher's beliefs, and position about what reality is (Mills et al., 2006, as cited in Urcia, 2021).

The researcher must be informed by the paradigms, epistemology, ontology, and methodology governing the methods used in the research (Urcia, 2021). *Paradigms* are important research guidelines that researchers are required to follow (Guba, 1990; Creswell & Poth, 2018, as cited in Urcia, 2021). *Ontology* is the world's view of what truth or reality is (Urcia, 2021). *Epistemology* is the means by which knowledge is acquired and the development of knowledge is justified (Creswell & Poth, 2018; Lincoln et al., 2018, as cited in Urcia, 2021). *Methodology* is a set of steps and practices pertaining to the development of knowledge that provides instructions to a study (Urcia, 2021). *Positivism*; the traditional or original ontological research paradigm, which postulates that there is only one reality in the world, and holds an objective

epistemological view that knowledge is not based on the view or influence of the researcher (Urcia, 2021). *Post-Positivism has* the ontological view that truth is probable and is based on "critical examination of the context of realities" and has an objective epistemological view that truth can be defined objectively on minimum interactions with participants (Urcia, 2021). *Interpretivism*, *interpretive paradigm*, or *relativism* has an ontological view that the world has multiple realities with a subjectivist epistemological view that truth and meaning are sharable among people (Urcia, 2021). *Constructivism* has the same relativist ontological view that there are multiple realities in the world but has a different epistemological view that reality is co-constructed socially by the researchers and participants, which view is interchangeably used with the interpretive paradigm (Urcia, 2021). Over the years, there have been paradigm shifts in phenomenology and grounded theory (Urcia, 2021). Grounded Theory shifted from *post-positivism* to *constructivism* where knowledge is co-constructed by the researcher and participants (Charmaz, 2014; Strauss & Corbin, 2015).

Like grounded theory, overtime the paradigms and assumptions of phenomenology shifted from *positivism* (Dowling, 2007, as cited in Urcia, 2021) to *post-positivism* (Koch, 1999; Moran, 2000; Racher & Robinson, 2003, as cited in Urcia, 2021). Similarly, phenomenology has different assumptions as grounded theory (Urcia, 2021). *Husserlian phenomenologists* posit that the source of knowledge is based on the "essence of the lived experiences of the individuals" (Dowling, 2007; Husserl, 1913/2012; Kock, 1999, as cited in Urcia, 2021). Using a modified objective view, Husserlian phenomenologists believe that the principle of intentionality provides a solid description of what reality is as it relates to the phenomenon (Urcia, 2021). Husserlians assert that this source of knowledge about what knowledge is as it relates to the phenomenon can only be achieved through the "reduction," "epoche," or "bracketing" process where all

preconceived perceptions, assumptions and biases about the phenomenon can be suspended (Urcia, 2021).

Descriptive Phenomenological Psychological Methodologists (DPPM) have the same assumptions and paradigms as the Husserlians (Urcia, 2021). Heideggerian phenomenologists have a worldview that multiple realities exist and that "meanings are constructed by day-to-day individual lived experiences of objects, space, time, embodiment, and interaction with other human beings" (Heidegger, 1992/2019; Moran, 2000, as cited in Urcia, 2021). The Heideggerians also believe that all descriptions are interpretations and vice versa (Burns & Peacock, 2019; Carman, 2006, as cited in Urcia, 2021). Hermeneutic Phenomenologists interpret meaning based on the "lived existential life world concepts of spatiality, corporeality, temporality, and relationality" (Munhall, 2012; Van Manen, 2017, as cited in Urcia, 2021).

Hermeneutic Phenomenologists also interpret the meaning of the phenomenon (Dowling, 2007, as cited in Urcia, 2021). In Hermeneutic Phenomenology, without "bracket" the researchers and participants can reflect on their preconceptions to find meanings and contextual elements to shape the phenomenon (Urcia, 2021). Another type of phenomenology, Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA) which focuses on the micro-analytical nature of lived experiences (diversity and Variability) that "develop an interpretive structure of the phenomenon," (Van Manen, 2017, as cited in Urcia, 2021) aligns with the views of the Heideggerians (Urcia, 2021). Descriptive Phenomenological Psychological Methodologists (DPPM) which tries to understand the relationships and differences of the lived experiences of the participants to construct a descriptive understanding of the phenomenon aligned with the Husserlians (Urcia, 2021).

According to Urcia (2021), determining which qualitative methods can be synthesized together without violating the ontological and epistemological standards is crucial in research. Due to the fact that grounded theory relates to the symbolic interactions of people and focuses on the social processes of people, it is one of the few research methods that can "most easily" be synthesized with most qualitative methods, including phenomenology (Glaser & Strauss, 1967; Baker et al., 1992; Morse & Field, 1995, as cited in Zimmer, 2006). Grounded theory is most compatible with transcendental phenomenology because it focuses on describing the individual experience of participants with the use of a "bracket" of an objective epistemological position, taken by the researcher (Zimmer, 2006). Because Transcendental Phenomenology entails a structured and thematic description process, it easily aligns with Grounded Theory (Van Manen, 1990; Thompson, 1990; Baker et al., 1992; Schwandt, 1994; Spiegelberg, 1994, as cited in Zimmer, 2006). Grounded Theory can also be synthesized with Hermeneutic Phenomenology (Zimmer, 2006). Hermeneutic Phenomenology aims at understanding the experience of the participant from an ontological position of "being-in-the world of shared contexts and meanings as they become revealed in different themes detailing the lived experiences of the participants through the Grounded Theory process (Zimmer, 2006).

I have chosen to use grounded theory as the data collecting and data analyzing method in this phenomenological case study because phenomenology and grounded theory have a lot in common: a) they both are "highly complex approaches and have similar overlapping features" (Baker et al., 1992, as cited in Urcia, 2021), b) they both are relatively similar in data gathering and design (Urcia, 2021), c) they both use purposive sampling (Urcia, 2021), d) they both use a coding system to answer the research question (s) (Urcia, 2021), e) they both have the same constructivist approaches in research (Urcia, 2021; Zimmer, 2006), f) reflexivity, positionality,

and bracket can be used in both methods (Urcia, 2021; Zimmer, 2006), g) in the Interpretive Phenomenological Analysis process of the hermeneutic circle of an ongoing process of reading and rereading to compare and analyze data is similar to the constant comparative process of grounded theory (Urcia, 2021), and h) while phenomenology examines meanings to formulate descriptive outcomes to understand the essence of the lived experiences of the participants, grounded theory goes beyond the descriptive nature by exploring the social processes to come up with a "substantive" theory about a particular context (Urcia, 2021; Zimmer, 2006). As previously mentioned, Singh (2023) affirms that both phenomenology and grounded theory can be used together in the same research for rigor, quality, and compatibility purposes. Singh speaks from experience. He has written 118 publications, has had 3,001,383 reads, and 418 citations and most of his work focuses on enhancing education (Singh, 2023).

Though this study draws on the work of Geneva Gay on Culturally Responsive Pedagogy (CRP), I anticipate adding to the literature as well. During the data gathering process I will seek answers to unanswered questions relating to limitations and gaps in culturally responsive pedagogical practices as well as answers to my research questions. If answers are gleaned that can fill existing gaps in CRP, then these new concepts can serve as theories to CRP. If no new information is generated that can add to the original concepts of CRP then only themes will be used to answer the research questions. However, if new information is generated that can fill original gaps in CRP then that suffices the use of grounded theory; a rigorous process capable of generating themes as well as theories (Charmaz, 2014; Mertens, 2021; Ravitch & Carl, 2021; Urcia, 2021, Zimmer, 2006). If there is no need to formulate a theory, then only themes will be generated to answer my research questions. Instead of distinctly using the term Transcendental Phenomenology, Hermeneutic Phenomenology, Interpretative Phenomenology, or Constructivist

Phenomenology as being compatible with Constructivist Grounded Theory, the term "phenomenological," or "phenomenology" is used and "grounded theory" is used in the place of "constructivist grounded theory" as well.

Data are segmentally arranged and each segment is coded. Coding is one of the channels through which data are analyzed in qualitative research, it consists of words or phrases that represent relevant themes and concepts in the research (Saldana, 2021; Corbin & Strauss, 2015, as cited in Ravitch & Carl, 2021). Coding methods used in this study are: a) *open coding, initial coding*, or *free coding*; can be used in all constructivist studies, it is the first phase of coding where words or phrases are organized to form concepts or themes (Williams & Moser, 2019; Charmaz, 2014; Corbin & Strauss, 2015; Glaser, 1978; Glaser & Strauss, 1967; Strauss, 1987; Strauss & Corbin, 1998, as cited in Saldana, 2021), b) *axial coding;* is the second phase of coding where themes concepts of the first phase are arranged in segments or reassembled (Williams & Moser, 2019; Boeije, 2010; Charmaz, 2014; Glaser, 1978; Glaser & Strauss, 1967; Strauss, 1987; Strauss & Corbin, 1998, as cited in Saldana, 2021) c) *selective coding*, *focused coding*, or *intermediate coding*; is the third phase of the coding process where segments of important themes or data from the second phase are put together to form a meaningful expression to formulate a theory (Williams & Moser, 2019; Charmaz, 2014, as cited in Saldana, 2021), d) *theoretical coding*; culminates all codes, incorporates and synthesizes codes categorically to create or delineate a theory (Charmaz, 2014; Corbin & Strauss, 2015; Glaser, 1978, 2005; Stern & Porr, 2011; Strauss, 1987; Strauss & Corbin 1998, as cited in Saldana, 2021), e) *concept coding*; or *analytic coding* assigns meaning to micro or macro segments of the data or represents a broader idea of a culture or social phenomenon(Mihas, 2014; Saldana, 2015, as cited in Saldana, 2021), f) *quantizing the qualitative*; is a coding method through which alphanumeric

data are quantified numerically and vice versa (Sandelowski, Voils, & Knafl, 2009; Bazeley, 2018; Creamer, 2018; Creswell & Plano Clark,2018; Tashakkori & Teddlie, 2010; Vogt et al., 2014, as cited in Saldana, 2021), g) *magnitude coding*; is a supplemental part of the coding process by which a subcategory can alphanumerically be coded to describe intensity, frequency, percentage, proportionality, or direction (Miles et al., 2020; Weston et al., 2001; Salmona, Lieber, & Kaczynski, 2020, as cited in Saldana, 2021), and h) *theming the data*: categorically; is a coding method that gives detail descriptions of observable patterns and themes in the data (Brinkmann & Kvale, 2015; Green & Thorogood, 0018; Auerback & Silverstein, 2003; Bernard et al., 2017; Braun & Clark, 2006; King & Brooks, 2017; Rubin & Rubin, 2012; Ryan & Bernard, 2003; Thomas, 2019, as cited in Saldana, 2021).

3.3: Positionality Epistemology

Positionality in research relates to the researcher's role and stance in the study as they relate to the research topic, research participants, research setting, and the research design (Ravitch & Carl, 2021, p. 68; Mertens, 2020, p. 285). My research focus is to find a teaching method that can improve the way marginalized students learn, perform, and are taught. As an educator, I am a proponent of social justice for educational equity and equality. As an African immigrant and a minority, I am an affiliate of an ethnic group in the United States that is adversely impacted by educational inequity and inequality. I have lived in marginalized urban communities and I have experienced some of the socioeconomic challenges marginalized community members encounter.

As a professional, I have taught and continue to teach students from marginalized communities. I have worked in underserved school districts where students lacked equal access to the tools necessary to make them succeed. I select this research topic because I want: a) to bring awareness to the crises that exist in education for minority students, b) change to take place in educational policies and practices, c) all students, especially the marginalized to be able to have equal access to education and have the chance to succeed, and d) share that I have implemented culturally responsive practices in my classrooms and have gotten good results.

My selection of the educational concept and theoretical framework to guide this study is strategic in that it addresses the academic concerns of education for minority and other students who are marginalized. The educational concept (culturally responsive pedagogy) and theoretical framework (critical race theory) are praxes for change, equity, and equality, not only for the educational sector of the United States, rather, the social, political, and economic institutions sectors as well.

Culturally responsive pedagogy provides a remedy for meeting the academic needs of students in diverse learning settings, and contains strategies and practices that can improve the way students learn and perform (Gay, 2002). In as much as I want change to take place in the education system of the United States for all students, especially the marginalized, I will not allow my affiliation and experiences as a member of a minority group influence my assumptions, research design, analytical process, and results of this study. I am obliged to be professional, ethical, and trustworthy in my axiological, ontological, and epistemological applications, interpretations, implications, and recommendations throughout the research. Peer-review is one of the measures to be implemented to safeguard against any form of biases.

3.4: Participants

A *purposive* or *purposeful case sampling* method is used to select participants for the study. Purposive sampling allows the selection of individuals purposely for specific reasons, such as but not limited to their experience, knowledge of a particular phenomenon, they live or work in a specific location, and they are familiar with a certain population of students and instructional practice (Mertens 2020; Ravitch & Carl, 2021). Purposive sampling is chosen because it is the medium through which rich information that is significant to the research can be ascertained (Patton, 2002, as cited in Rudstam & Newton, 2015; Ravitch & Carl, 221). On the other hand, *case sampling* has criteria that the sample must meet to be eligible to participate, and the type of case sampling used in this study is *instrumental case study* which is about gaining understanding of a certain phenomenon (Stake, 2006, as cited in Mertens, 2021).

In qualitative research, the *unit of analysis* is pivotal in the sampling process (Ravitch & Carl, 2021). The *unit of analysis* can be programs, perspectives, or people in the sampling process (Ravitch & Carl, 2021, p. 83). The *unit of analysis* in this study is a sample size of three

(N = 2) sharing their lived experiences of culturally responsive pedagogy and its effect on students. *Sample size* is relevant in any research and it depends on the type of study and method (s) used (Mertens, 2020; Ravitch & Carl, 2021; Rudstam & Newton, 2015). However, in qualitative research there are no set rules in place mandating the number of participants a sample has to have in order to successfully carry out the study (Ravitch & Carl, 2021, p. 83), especially when using an inductive method as grounded theory which changes as data are collected and analyzed (Rudstam & Newton, 2015, p. 125). Moreover, sample size is dependent on the quantity and quality of the data the researcher has or anticipates having which determines the number of participants needed to provide the adequate data and analyses for the study (Mertens, 2020, pp. 360-361; Rudstam & Newton, 2015, pp. 123-124). Illustratively, a researcher can carry out a phenomenological study using only one participant and be able to ascertain rich data from the study (Charmaz, 2014, p. 108; Metens, 2020, p. 255; Yin, 2017 as cited in Quintao, Andrade, & Almeida, 2020).

Unlike quantitative research which warrants specific sample sizes to prove statistically significant results, variability, and validity (Mertens, 2020, p. 362), a small sample size in qualitative research is capable of providing rich data, in-depth and quality results depending the nature of the study and methods used (Charmaz, 2014, p. 108). In terms of *recruitment*, the selection of potential participants were carried out formally or informally. Potential interviewees were contacted in person, via electronic mail, text, and phone call (see Appendices M and O) for the interview protocol and recruiting scripts). Each potential candidate was screened based on their responses to the following questions:

1. What is culturally responsive teaching and how do you define it?
2. How did you become exposed to culturally responsive teaching?

3. Was culturally responsive practices covered or addressed in your teacher preparation program?
4. Do you use culturally responsive teaching in your classroom?

The *criteria of eligibility* for participants were as follows: a) the candidate must be an adult who is 18 years old or older, b) must have been or is a licensed (k-12) educator, c) must be a North Carolina urban school teacher, c) must have taught (k-12) for more than three (3) years, d) is familiar with the characteristics of culturally responsive pedagogy, and e) must have effectively used culturally responsive pedagogical practices in the classroom. Meeting the criteria to participate is crucial because it allows the lived experiences and expertise of the participants to contribute invaluably to the research (Emerson et al., 1995, as cited in Ravitch & Carl, 2021). Two participants were used in the study and they met the criteria to participate. Each participant completed and signed an informed consent form approved by my Institutional Review Board (IRB). Also, the safety and confidentiality of the participants and their personal information were ensured. The participants in this study are experts in the field of education and implementers of the phenomenon of the study which is culturally responsive pedagogy. Their lived experiences and interactions with (k-12) students, especially marginalized urban students are anticipated to contribute immensely to the study.

The first participant, Dr. Kweeta is a female in her eighties, an African American and retired teacher who has been teaching for more than forty (40) years. She also is familiar with the theory and practices of culturally responsive pedagogy and has applied them in K-12 classrooms. Dr. Flomo is also a female in her forties, an African American who has taught for more than three (3) years in K-12 public urban classrooms. She is familiar with the theory and practices of culturally responsive pedagogy and is applying them in her classroom.

3.5: Instrumentation

This section of the research identifies instruments used to measure data and ensure quality in the research, and articulates why the selected methods are appropriate for the study (Patten, 2009; Rudestam & Newton, 2015, p. 108). One of the key instruments recommended to be used in qualitative research to be the appropriate choice of measurement is observation conducted by a human observer (Rudestam & Newton, 2015). Interview is another instrument of measure that is used in qualitative research to collect data (Mertens, 2021; Ravitch & Carl, 2020; Rudestam & Newton, 2015, p. 127). The participants in this study are experts in the field of education and implementers of the phenomenon of the study which is culturally responsive pedagogy. Their lived experiences and interactions with (k-12) students, especially marginalized urban students are anticipated to contribute immensely to the study. Phenomenological case study strategically aligns with the nature of the study and the role of the participants. Grounded Theory as the collection and analytical method of the study, is most appropriate, especially for answering the research questions.

In qualitative research, quality is defined by *dependability* audits as the processes by which quality in the inquiry or data collection process can be verified and validated ensuring the display of consistency in the way data are collected and processed (Mertens, 2020, p. 284). Quality in qualitative research is also defined by *confirmability* (Guba & Lincoln, 1989, as cited in Mertens, 2020). *Confirmability* assures: a) the minimization of the researcher's influence in the research, b) data and their interpretations are not imaginative, c) data are traceable to their original sources and are logically explicit, and d) that the process by which data are taken apart and put together are confirmable (Mertens, 2020, p. 284). *Credibility* is vital in qualitative research (Mertens, 2021). *Member checks* (checking with participants consistently during the

process), *peer debriefing* (connecting with other researchers*)*, *progressive subjectivity* (monitoring my biases), and *triangulation* (checking information from different sources for consistency) are all elements that will be employed in the current study (Mertens, 2021, p. 280). Exemplars of culturally responsive assignments of the participants were a part of the triangulation process (see Appendices Q and R).

Rigor can also be shown in specific types of triangulation (Quintao, Andrade, & Almeida). According to Yin (2017, as cited in Quintao, Andrade, & Almeida, 2020), the four ways in which methodological rigor is possible are as follows: a) data triangulation is when multiple data sources are used, b) researcher triangulation is when different evaluators are involved in the research, c) theory triangulation is when multiple views on the same data set are adopted, and d) methodological triangulation is when different complementary methods are used. Additionally, Tracy (2010) lists eight criteria by which quality in qualitative research can be ascertained: a) the *worthiness of the topic*, b) the *richness of the rigor*, c) the *sincerity of the researcher*, d) the *credibility of the research and researcher*, e) the *resonance of the research*, f) the *importance of the contribution the research* makes, g) the *ethical standards of the research*, and h) the *coherency of the elements of the research*. In terms of the *worthiness of the research topic*, Tracy (2010) notates that the topic has to be educationally authentic in that it addresses a key issue in education and raises awareness. As relating to a *rich rigor*, she advises that descriptions and explanations are to be saturated with lots of theories and data, and interview practices and other procedures are to be done properly. Regarding the *sincerity of the researcher*, she says the researcher has to be self-reflexive and transparent, especially in the transcription process. In relation to research *credibility*, she wants the research to contain detailed descriptions that are built with multiple types of data, methods, frameworks, voices, elaborate interactions

with the participants, share data and dialogue with the participants about the study's findings, and provide feedback whenever necessary. In terms of *resonance*, she wants researchers to use this time to be skillful in appealing to the audience by being empathetic, emotional, and imaginative. Also, being resonant allows the audience to relate to the study and make choices based on their own understanding of the subject matter (Tracy, 2010).

Relating to the *contribution of the research* to the research community and stakeholders, Tracy (2010) encourages researchers to ask themselves whether the study improves current knowledge or practice, expands knowledge, liberates, or empowers others. She explains that *being ethical* requires going through the Institutional Review Board (IRB) for the necessary approval for the study, being moral in one's judgment and decision making, and being respectful. In order for the research to be coherently meaningful, the purpose of the research has to be achieved, a connectivity between the methods, literature review, and findings has to be visible, and the coherency is to be seen in the eloquence of the researcher in showing how the research design, data collection, and analysis align with the theoretical framework (Tracy, 2010).

3.6: Data Collection Process

In this phenomenological case study, grounded theory is used to both collect and analyze data. Grounded Theory (GT) has a dual functionality (Merterns, 2021). It can be used to collect and analyze data (Charmaz, 2014, as cited in Mertens, 2021). According to Mertens (2021), Ground Theory (GT) was created by Glaser and Strauss (1965) and amended by Corbin and Strauss (2008). Going against the hegemony of quantitative research and the research method of positivism, Glaser and Strauss (1967) came up with the constructivist approach for qualitative research by developing grounded theory as a method of inquiry and analyzing data. They produced the following elements of grounded theory: a) it is simultaneously involved in

collecting and analyzing data, b) it constructs analytical codes from data, not from preconceived data that are logically deduced, c) it is a constant comparison method which makes comparison during each phase of the analytical process, d) it advances theory development during each phase of collecting and analyzing data, e) using memo-writing to expand categories, specify the properties of the categories, define the categories, and to identify existing gaps, f) using sampling to construct theory or theoretical sampling, and g) doing the literature review following the development of an independent analysis (Charmaz, 2014). Grounded Theory is selected because of the rigor it provides in its data collection and analysis procedures (Charmaz, 2014).

The instrument used to collect data in this study is an interview. "An interview is literally an interview, an interchange of views between two persons conversing about a theme of mutual interest" Brinkmann & Kvale, 2015, p. 4). As "everyday knowing" and "systematic test knowledge" are shared between the interviewer and interviewee, much can be accomplished in collecting and analyzing data (Brinkmann& Kvale, 2015, p. 4). Interview is a "mode of inquiry (Brinkmann & Kvale, 2015, p. 22)," and the method of "understanding themes of the lived daily world" from the perspectives of the participants (Brinkmann & Kvale, 2015, 27). As a process of sharing knowledge, interview knowledge can be broken into seven traits: 1) produced knowledge, 2) relational knowledge, 3) conversational knowledge, 4) contextual knowledge, 5) linguistic knowledge, 6) narrative knowledge, and 7) pragmatic knowledge (Brinkmann & Kvale, 2015, p. 63). 1) *Produced knowledge* is knowledge that is generated from questions and answers between the interviewer and interviewee, 2) *Relational knowledge* is when new relations is established from knowledge produced between the interviewer and interviewee that connects to the human experience and situation, 3) *Conversational knowledge* is the means by which conversations between the interviewer and interviewee that bring out the truth, good, and beauty

of details relating to day-to-day experiences, 4) *Contextual knowledge* is gained as interview is conducted in an interpersonal context in which meaning is also found, 5) *Linguistic knowledge* is ascertained through the language the interviewer and interviewee use to share and process information both orally and by text, 6) *Narrative knowledge* is the means by which meanings of lived experiences are uncovered, and 7) *Pragmatic knowledge* is when the knowledge gleaned from the interview that relates to human reality leads to action (Brinkmann & Kvale, 2015, pp. 63-64). In preparation for the interview an *interview portfolio* is prepared. The *interview protocol* is a guide of directions, standards, and pre-written questions for the interview (Patten, 2009, p. 153). The *interview protocol* for this study contains two leading questions which are the research questions along with twelve subsequent questions, which are the combination of open-ended and closed-ended questions. Six of the subsequent questions are attached to the first research question and the other six are attached to the second research question. (see Appendix I) for the *interview protocol*. The type of interview used in this study to collect data is *semi-structured*. *Semi-structured Interview* is the most used instrument in qualitative research to collect data (Patten, 2009, p. 153). A *semi-structured interview* is an instrument that is organized and guided by preformatted questions, including follow-up questions that are particularly designed for the participant (Ravitch & Carl, 2021, p. 134). *Semi-structured interview* is a conversational exchange between the interviewer and interviewee in which the interviewee describes in detail his or her "life world" experience (Brinkmann & Kvale, 2015, p. 150). *Semi-structured interviews* allow the interviewee and interviewer to engage in a dialog, be open with each other, be conversational, and are tailored to the experiences of each participant (Ravitch& Carl, 2021; Vagle, 2018;). An interview guide or portfolio is used to contain areas of interest, relevant topics to discuss, and a few questions for guidance (Charmaz, 2014). The interviews are to be

conducted via Zoom, Google Meet, or other electronic means. The allotted time for the interview is thirty (30) minutes. There may be a second round of interviews. The interviews are recorded and transcribed to be coded. Member checks were carried out for verification and follow-up purposes (Mertens, 2021).

3.7: Data Analysis Process

"Qualitative data analysis is the intentional, systematic scrutiny of data at various stages and moments throughout the research process" which involves "data organization and management," immersive engagement with data," and "writing and representation" (Ravitch & Carl, 2021, p. 234). In the "data organization and management" process, a plan is put in place to organize and manage the data, data sources are constantly named and labeled, a rationale is formulated for usages and decisions pertaining to the transcription process, and setting a timeline as data are being pre-coded (Ravitch & Carl, 2021, p. 255); In the "immersive engagement with data" process, multiple readings of the data are done, data analysis, coding, and interpersonal strategies are implemented (Ravitch & Carl, 2021, p. 255); In the "writing and representation" process, writing is constantly carried out throughout the process as a means of making sense of the data and systematically interpret them (Ravitch & Carl, 2021, p. 255). As data driven as Grounded Theory is, it symmetrically aligns with the primary objectives of qualitative data analysis in that as an inductive process, data are constantly compared as theories are created (Ravitch & Carl, 2021, p. 239).

Grounded Theory does not only function as a data collection method, it also functions as a data analysis method (Mertens, 2020). Grounded theory method is selected to collect and analyze data for this study because it is unique for qualitative research and can accommodate other qualitative data analysis methods as well (Charmaz, 2014, p. 16). Another unique attribute

of Grounded Theory is that it is a method that can create theories out of non-existent theories (Ravitch & Carl, 2021, p. 99). Grounded Theory can ensure credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability of its results (Truong & Museus, 2012, p. 236, as cited in Ravitch & Carl, 2021, p. 99).

The methodological processes of Grounded Theory are prone to setting the path for rich data gathering which produces "thick description," an element of quality and rigor (Geertz, 1973, as cited in Charmaz, 2014, p. 23; Tracy, 2010; Yin, 2017). In this study, Grounded Theory is used to answer the following research questions: RQ1: How do urban school teachers (k-12) define and identify with culturally responsive pedagogical practices? RQ2: How do the culturally responsive practices of urban school teachers (k-12) impact the achievement and outcomes of their students?

The transcript of the interviews are coded and processed through the various phases of the coding methods to create themes and theories to answer the research questions. This process is done by me manually without the employment of any coding software. Post-interview iterative steps are: 1) following the interview, the computer hard drive is checked to make sure that the entire interviewed is securely saved, 2) the recorded interview in its entirety is listened to, assess, and evaluate for quality purposes, and if any part of the participant's response is not clear, the participant is immediately contacted for clarity purposes, 3) after verifying the quality of the recording, the recording is transcribed, 4) on the transcript, each line of my questions and the responses of the interviewee is numbered, 5) after the transcript in its entirety is numbered, key words and phrases are identified or highlighted, 6) following the identifying and highlighting of key words and phrases, each key word or phrase is categorically transferred or placed in a certain location, 7) key words and phrases go through another phase of creating themes, 8) these themes

develop concepts that eventually form theories, and 9) these themes and theories are used to answer the research questions and are subsequently used to be compared and contrasted with the characteristics of culturally responsive pedagogy (the main theory of the research) and critical race theory (the theoretical framework of the research). Overall, data are segmentally arranged and each segment is coded. Coding is one of the channels through which data are analyzed in a qualitative research, it consists of words or phrases that represent relevant themes and concepts in the research (Corbin & Strauss, 2015, as cited in Ravitch & Carl, 2021; Saldana, 2021). Coding methods used in this study are: a) *open coding, initial coding*, or *free coding*; can be used in all constructivist studies, it is the first phase of coding where words or phrases are organized to form concepts or themes (Charmaz, 2014; Corbin & Strauss, 2015; Glaser, 1978; Glaser & Strauss, 1967; Strauss, 1987; Strauss & Corbin, 1998, as cited in Saldana, 2021; Williams & Moser, 2019;), b) *axial coding;* is the second phase of coding where themes concepts of the first phase are arranged in segments or reassembled (Boeije, 2010; Charmaz, 2014; Glaser, 1978; Glaser & Strauss, 1967; Strauss, 1987; Strauss & Corbin, 1998, as cited in Saldana, 2021; Williams & Moser, 2019;) c) *selective coding*, *focused coding*, or *intermediate coding*; is the third phase of the coding process where segments of important themes or data from the second phase are put together to form a meaningful expression to formulate a theory (Charmaz, 2014, as cited in Saldana, 2021; Williams & Moser, 2019), d) *theoretical coding*; culminates all codes, incorporates and synthesizes codes categorically to create or delineate a theory (Charmaz, 2014; Corbin & Strauss, 2015; Glaser, 1978, 2005; Stern & Porr, 2011; Strauss, 1987; Strauss & Corbin 1998, as cited in Saldana, 2021), e) *concept coding*; or *analytic coding* assigns meaning to micro or macro segments of the data or represents a broader idea of a culture or social phenomenon(Mihas, 2014; Saldana, 2015, as cited in Saldana, 2021), f) *quantizing the*

qualitative; is a coding method through which alphanumeric data are quantified numerically and vice versa (Bazeley, 2018; Clark,2018; Creamer, 2018; Sandelowski, Voils, & Knafl, 2009; Tashakkori & Teddlie, 2010; Vogt et al., 2014, as cited in Saldana, 2021), g) *magnitude coding*; is a supplemental part of the coding process by which a subcategory can alphanumerically be coded to describe intensity, frequency, percentage, proportionality, or direction (Miles et al., 2020; Salmona, Lieber, & Kaczynski, 2020, as cited in Saldana, 2021; Weston et al., 2001), and h) *theming the data*: categorically; is a coding method that gives detail descriptions of observable patterns and themes in the data (Auerback & Silverstein, 2003; Bernard et al., 2017; Braun & Clark, 2006; Brinkmann & Kvale, 2015; Green & Thorogood, 2018; King & Brooks, 2017; Rubin & Rubin, 2012; Ryan & Bernard, 2003; Thomas, 2019, as cited in Saldana, 2021).

3.8: Quality and Rigor of the Study

One of the key instruments recommended to be used in qualitative research to be the appropriate choice of measurement is observation conducted by a human observer (Rudestam & Newton, 2015). Interview is another instrument of measure that is used in qualitative research to collect data (Mertens, 2021; Ravitch & Carl, 2020; Rudestam & Newton, 2015, p. 127). Instead of observation, a semi-structured interview platform was used for this study. Two interviews were conducted. The participants in this study are experts in the field of education and implementers of the phenomenon of the study which is culturally responsive pedagogy. Their lived experiences and interactions with (k-12) students, especially marginalized urban students, immensely contributed to the study. Phenomenological case study strategically aligns with the nature of the study and the role of the participants. Grounded Theory as the collection and analytical method of the study, was most appropriate, especially for answering the research questions.

In qualitative research, quality is defined by *dependability* audits as the processes by which quality in the inquiry or data collection process can be verified and validated ensuring the display of consistency in the way data are collected and processed (Mertens, 2020, p. 284). *Illustratively, when I was not too sure of some of the words or phrases in the responses of Dr. Kweeta, I sent her the transcript to verify those words and phrases. She had to email me the correct words and phrases.* Quality in qualitative research is also defined by *confirmability* (Guba & Lincoln, 1989, as cited in Mertens, 2020). *Confirmability* assures: a) the minimization of the researcher's influence in the research, b) data and their interpretations are not imaginative, c) data are traceable to their original sources and are logically explicit, and d) that the process by which data are taken apart and put together are confirmable (Mertens, 2020, p. 284). *Credibility* is vital in qualitative research (Mertens, 2021). *Member checks* (checking with participants consistently during the process), *peer debriefing* (connecting with other researchers*)*, *progressive subjectivity* (monitoring my biases), and *triangulation* (checking information from different sources for consistency) are all elements that will be employed in the current study (Mertens, 2021, p. 280). *I tried to minimize my influence in the research by having post-interview interactions with the participants. Another way I tried not to have my influence impact the research was to make sure I use the identical words and statements of the participants in the text of the research.* Exemplars of class assignments of the participants were a part of the triangulation process (see Appendices Q and R).

Rigor can also be shown in specific types of triangulation (Quintao, Andrade, & Almeida). According to Yin (2017, as cited in Quintao, Andrade, & Almeida, 2020), the four ways in which methodological rigor is possible are as follows: a) data triangulation is when multiple data sources are used, b) researcher triangulation is when different evaluators are

involved in the research, c) theory triangulation is when multiple views on the same data set are adopted, and d) methodological triangulation is when different complementary methods are used. Additionally, Tracy (2010) lists eight criteria by which quality in qualitative research can be ascertained: a) the *worthiness of the topic*, b) the *richness of the rigor*, c) the *sincerity of the researcher*, d) the *credibility of the research and researcher*, e) the *resonance of the research*, f) the *importance of the contribution the research* makes, g) the *ethical standards of the research*, and h) the *coherency of the elements of the research*. In terms of the *worthiness of the research topic*, Tracy (2010) notates that the topic has to be educationally authentic in that it addresses a key issue in education and raises awareness. *My research topic "Culturally Responsive Pedagogy and its Impact on the Academic Outcomes of Marginalized Students (K-12) in the Pedagogical Spaces of Urban Schools" meets the "worthiness of the topic" criterion of Tracy because it relates to education and it is for a relevant cause of finding a teaching method that can improve the achievement and outcomes of marginalized urban students.*

As relating to a *rich rigor*, she advises that descriptions and explanations are to be saturated with lots of theories and data, and interview practices and other procedures are to be done properly. The "rich rigor" criterion is also met by this study. The skills, intelligence, and overall, the expertise of the participants provided invaluable information. For example, Dr. Kweeta provided some answers to lingering questions of existing studies on culturally responsive pedagogy: a) the insufficiency of data in circulation about organized and effective ways Culturally Responsive Pedagogy practices can be implemented and successfully evaluated, b) how Culturally Responsive Pedagogy can operate for different ethnic groups (Gay, 2000), c) how Culturally Responsive Pedagogy differs in mono-racial and multiracial learning practices (Gay, 2000), d) implementing culturally responsive practices as being a challenge, time-

consuming, and tedious (Samuels, Samuels, & Cook, 2017; Skelley et al., 2022), e) teacher competency in fully implementing the model as a challenge, and results cannot be generalized with other populations (Khalifa et al., 2016; Rianawaty et al., 2020).

Their suggestions are rich sources of information that can help in utilizing and implementing culturally responsive practices in schools and classrooms. Throughout the study, I show how Culturally Responsive Pedagogy (CRP) as a theory, aligns with Critical Race Theory (CRT); the theoretical framework of the study, and the findings of the study through the collection and analyzing method; Grounded Theory. Regarding the *sincerity of the researcher*, she says the researcher has to be self-reflexive and transparent, especially in the transcription process. *This study also meets the "sincerity of the researcher" criterion. I share my self-reflexivity in my "positionality epistemology" where I state my role as a minority teacher with experience in urban classrooms and a victim of marginalization. I also was transparent with my participants by contacting them to verify data.* In relation to research *credibility*, she wants the research to contain detailed descriptions that are built with multiple types of data, methods, frameworks, voices, elaborate interactions with the participants, share data and dialogue with the participants about the study's findings, and provide feedback whenever necessary. In terms of *resonance*, she wants researchers to use this time to be skillful in appealing to the audience by being empathetic, emotional, and imaginative. Also, being resonant allows the audience to relate to the study and make choices based on their own understanding of the subject matter (Tracy, 2010).

Relating to the *contribution of the research* to the research community and stakeholders, Tracy (2010) encourages researchers to ask themselves whether the study improves current knowledge or practice, expands knowledge, liberates, or empowers others. She explains that

being ethical requires going through the Institutional Review Board (IRB) for the necessary approval for the study, being moral in one's judgment and decision making, and being respectful. *This study meets the "ethical" criterion because I had to get clearance from the Institutional Review Board of the University of North Carolina at Charlotte to conduct the study.* In order for the research to be coherently meaningful, the purpose of the research has to be achieved, a connectivity between the methods, literature review, and findings has to be visible, and the coherency is to be seen in the eloquence of the researcher in showing how the research design, data collection, and analysis align with the theoretical framework (Tracy, 2010).

3.9: Chapter Summary

In this section I detail the research design of the study, showcase my positionality epistemology, quantify information about the participants, give a summative perspective of the research instrumentation protocols, highlight the determinants of research quality, articulate how data are collected and analyzed, and describe the type of sampling method used in the study. The next section contains information on the findings of the data analytical processes.

CHAPTER 4: FINDINGS

This qualitative phenomenological case study examines the concepts and pedagogical practices of culturally responsive teaching through the shared experiences of two educators and implementers of culturally responsive pedagogy to find out how effective those concepts and practices are in improving the academic outcomes of marginalized students (K-12) in urban classrooms.

Education inequality continues to affect the academic outcomes of marginalized students (k-12) in the United States (Darling-Hammond, 2017; Gay, 2000; Volckman, 2017). Inadequate funding (Darling-Hammond, 2017; Hesbol et al, 2020), inaccessibility to equal educational resources (Darling-Hammond, 2017), high-stakes testing (Darling-Hammond, 2017; Milner & Lomotey, 2014;), and lack of access to quality education (Darling-Hammond, 2017; Gay, 2002), are few of the leading causes of the opportunity gap that is exponentially widening as the U. S population and schools become more diverse (Flores, 2007; Gay, 2000: Ladson-Billings, 2007; U, S. Census Bureau, 2021).

Grounded Theory (GT) was used to collect and analyze data in the study. A semi-structured interview method was used to collect data and a coding system was used to analyze the data. The following codes were instrumental in generating themes to answer the research questions: a) *open coding, initial coding*, or *free coding*; can be used in all constructivist studies, it is the first phase of coding where words or phrases are organized to form concepts or themes (Charmaz, 2014; Corbin & Strauss, 2015; Glaser, 1978; Glaser & Strauss, 1967; Strauss, 1987; Strauss & Corbin, 1998, as cited in Saldana, 2021; Williams & Moser, 2019), b) *axial coding;* is the second phase of coding where themes concepts of the first phase are arranged in segments or reassembled (Boeije, 2010; Charmaz, 2014; Glaser, 1978; Glaser & Strauss, 1967; Strauss, 1987;

Strauss & Corbin, 1998, as cited in Saldana, 2021; Williams & Moser, 2019), c) *selective coding*, *focused coding*, or *intermediate coding*; is the third phase of the coding process where segments of important themes or data from the second phase are put together to form a meaningful expression to formulate a theory (Charmaz, 2014, as cited in Saldana, 2021; Williams & Moser, 2019), d) *theoretical coding*; culminates all codes, incorporates and synthesizes codes categorically to create or delineate a theory (Charmaz, 2014; Corbin & Strauss, 2015; Glaser, 1978, 2005; Stern & Porr, 2011; Strauss, 1987; Strauss & Corbin 1998, as cited in Saldana, 2021), e) *concept coding*; or *analytic coding* assigns meaning to micro or macro segments of the data or represents a broader idea of a culture or social phenomenon(Mihas, 2014; Saldana, 2015, as cited in Saldana, 2021), f) *quantizing the qualitative*; is a coding method through which alphanumeric data are quantified numerically and vice versa (Bazeley, 2018; Clark,2018; Creamer, 2018; Sandelowski, Voils, & Knafl, 2009; Tashakkori & Teddlie, 2010; Vogt et al., 2014, as cited in Saldana, 2021), g) *magnitude coding*; is a supplemental part of the coding process by which a subcategory can alphanumerically be coded to describe intensity, frequency, percentage, proportionality, or direction (Miles et al., 2020; Salmona, Lieber, & Kaczynski, 2020, as cited in Saldana, 2021; Weston et al., 2001), and h) *themeing the data*: categorically; is a coding method that gives detail descriptions of observable patterns and themes in the data (Auerback & Silverstein, 2003; Bernard et al., 2017; Braun & Clark, 2006; Brinkmann & Kvale, 2015; Green & Thorogood, 2018; King & Brooks, 2017; Rubin & Rubin, 2012; Ryan & Bernard, 2003; Thomas, 2019, as cited in Saldana, 2021). Findings were based on the following research questions:

RQ1: How do urban school teachers (k-12) define and identify with culturally responsive pedagogical practices?

RQ2: How do the culturally responsive practices of urban school teachers (k-12) impact the achievement and outcomes of their students? Figure 6 shows a graphic diagram of the various coding steps used to gather and analyze the data.

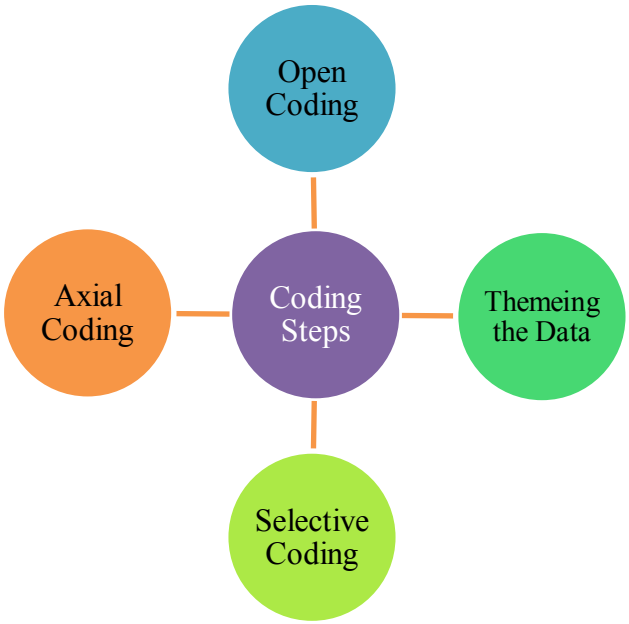

Figure 6: *The Coding Steps;* these are the steps through which the main themes emerged.

This segment of the research is divided into two parts. The first part shares light on the participants' backgrounds, professional experiences, and experiences with using culturally responsive pedagogical practices in their classrooms. Also, this section contains data from the transcripts of Zoom-platform interviews conducted with the participants. The second part of this chapter reveals four main themes that were generated from the data of the interviews. The theoretical framework of this study is Critical Race Theory (CRT). This study aimed at examining the concepts and pedagogical practices of culturally responsive teaching through the shared experiences of two educators and implementers of culturally responsive pedagogy to find out how effective those concepts and practices are in improving the academic outcomes of marginalized students (K-12) in urban classrooms. Data were arranged sequentially in line with

the research questions and grouped into main themes. The themes are the reflections of the lived experiences of the participants as culturally responsive pedagogical educators and practitioners.

The four main themes generated from the data of the two participants were as follows: 1.) Main Theme 1: Collaborative Learning: *Culturally responsive* p*ractices provide pedagogical equality, educational equity, and instructional competency and quality through the creation of learning communities and collaboration with stakeholders,*

2.) Main Theme 2: Culture-Centered Learning: *Culturally Responsive Pedagogy (CPR) enhances competency in educational diversity through cultural inclusivity, holistic education, and social justice,*

3.) Main Theme 3*:* Student-Centered Learning*: Culturally Responsive Pedagogy promotes self-efficacy, instructional rigor, differentiation, educational equity, compliance, social justice, and learning diversity through student-centered learning*, and 4.) Main Theme 4: Performance: *Culturally Responsive Pedagogy (CRP) impacts student achievement and outcomes through educational partnership, instructional rigor, culture-centered learning, holistic learning, and professional development.*

To protect the identity of the participants, pseudonyms are used. There were two participants used in the study. They both volunteered to participate. They have taught in urban public schools. The first participant, Dr. Kweeta is a female in her eighties, an African American and retired teacher who has been teaching for more than forty (40) years. She also is familiar with the theory and practices of culturally responsive pedagogy and has applied them in K-12 classrooms. Dr. Flomo is also a female, in her forties, an African American who has taught for more than sixteen (16) years in K-12 urban public classrooms. She is familiar with the theory

and practices of culturally responsive pedagogy and is applying them in her classroom. Figure 5 displays the backgrounds of the participants.

4.1: Part One

Comprehensive View of Participants

Table 5

Backgrounds of Participants

Pseudonym	Profession	Tenure	School	Age Range
Dr. Kweeta	Retired teacher and curriculum specialist	40+ years	Haywood Urban High School and Gboveh High School	Eighties
Dr. Flomo	Teacher and curriculum specialist	16+ years	Gbarnga Urban Academy	Forties

Note. Participants' names and schools are pseudonyms

4.2: Part Two

Main Themes

This part of the chapter presents themes that emerged from the interviews of the participants. The participants shared their lived experiences in their respective roles as urban school teachers and curriculum specialists as they relate to the interview protocol questions (see Appendix M). The participants shared what they perceive culturally responsive practices to be and how they relate to them in theory and practice. They also provided suggestions about ways they believe culturally responsive pedagogical practices can successfully be utilized and

implemented in urban schools and classrooms. It is from these lived experiences and responses of the participants, relevant data were garnered and analyzed as primary sources from which themes were developed.

The duration of each interview was thirty minutes. We were able to address every question as anticipated. Following the interview, the audio and video recordings were manually listened to and transcribed. The transcribing process took a couple of days after which I shared the transcripts with the participants to verify the accuracy of the transcribed responses. After the verification process, I began the coding process. The initial stage of the coding process was open coding. During the open coding process, I transferred key words and phrases of each numbered line of the transcript into one column of a data spreadsheet with the heading "open coding." After transferring all the keywords into the "open-code" column, I began connecting those key words to form phrases that made sense. These phrases that made sense were transferred into the column with the heading "axial" coding. The next step was to categorize these axial codes according to their iterative and recursive patterns. Using the selective coding approach, elements of iterative and recurring data were grouped based on their similarities and differences. Next, the themeing of data commenced where data or coded themes were aligned with the questions of the interview protocol and the research questions. In order to provide clarity, clustered data were refined. According to Saldana (2021), it is likely for some categories of the coding system to be broken into subcategories to reduce data when there are too many of the same words or phrases. Table 6 shows the emerging themes, their descriptions, and the research question they relate to.

Table 6

Themes, sub-themes, and descriptions as they relate to RQ1 and RQ2

Theme	Theme Description	Research Question
Collaborative Learning	*Including all stakeholders in the learning process.*	**1**
Culture-Centered Learning	*The inclusion of other cultures in the learning process.*	**1**
Student-Centered Learning	*Letting students be a part of the learning process.*	**2**
Performance	*The outcome of the learning process.*	**2**

Note. Four main emerging themes from participants' data

4.3: Symmetry of Themes and Research Questions

The guarding questions of this study are:

RQ1: How do urban school teachers (k-12) define and identify with culturally responsive pedagogical practices?

RQ2: How do the culturally responsive practices of urban school teachers (k-12) impact the achievement and outcomes of their students?

4.4: RQ1 and Main Themes 1 & 2

RQ1: How do urban school teachers (k-12) define and identify with culturally responsive pedagogical practices? (See figure 7)

Main Themes 1 & 2

- Main Theme 1: Collaborative Learning: *Culturally responsive* p*ractices provide pedagogical equality, educational equity, and instructional competency and quality through the creation of learning communities and collaboration with stakeholders.*

- Main Theme 2: Culture-Centered Learning: *Culturally Responsive Pedagogy (CPR) enhances competency in educational diversity through cultural inclusivity, holistic education, and social justice,*

4.5: RQ2 and Main Themes 3 & 4

RQ2: How do the culturally responsive practices of urban school teachers (k-12) impact the achievement and outcomes of their students? (See figure 8).

Main Themes 3 & 4

- Main Theme 3: Student-Centered Learning*: Culturally Responsive Pedagogy promotes self-efficacy, instructional rigor, differentiation, educational equity, compliance, social justice, and learning diversity through student-centered learning*,
- Main Theme 4: Performance: *Culturally Responsive Pedagogy (CRP) impacts student achievement and outcomes through educational partnership, instructional rigor, culture-centered learning, holistic learning, and professional development.*

This research aimed at understanding how urban school teachers (k-12) define and identify with culturally responsive pedagogical practices. Figure 7 and figure 8 give a graphic view of each main theme and show how each connects to the research questions. Data relating to the lived experiences of each participant and how they utilized and implemented culturally responsive pedagogical practices in their schools and classrooms invariably contributed to the research with detailed descriptions.

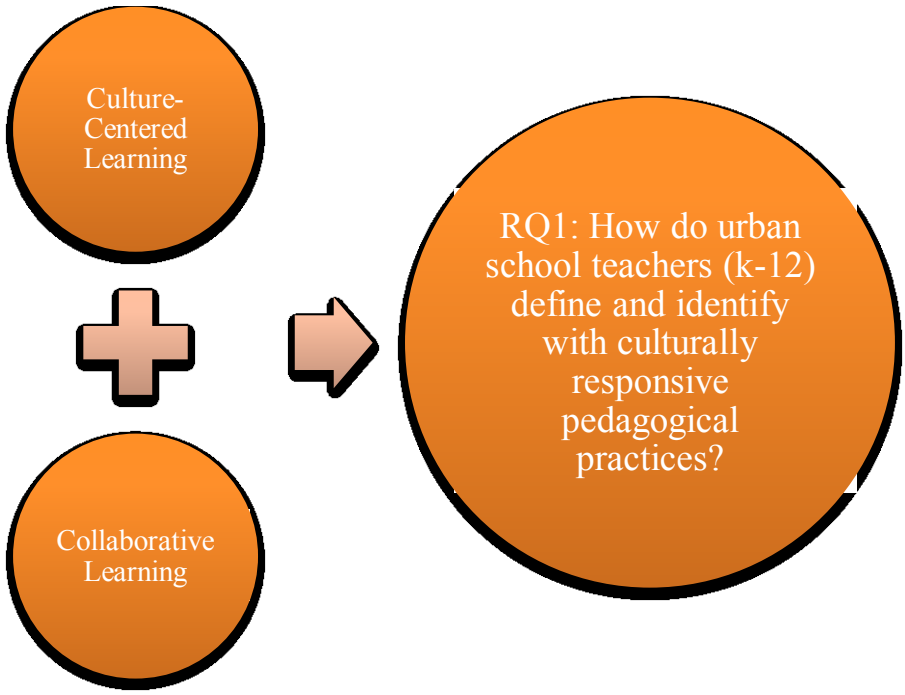

Figure 7: *Themes and sub-themes (RQ1):* themes generated from Research Question 1

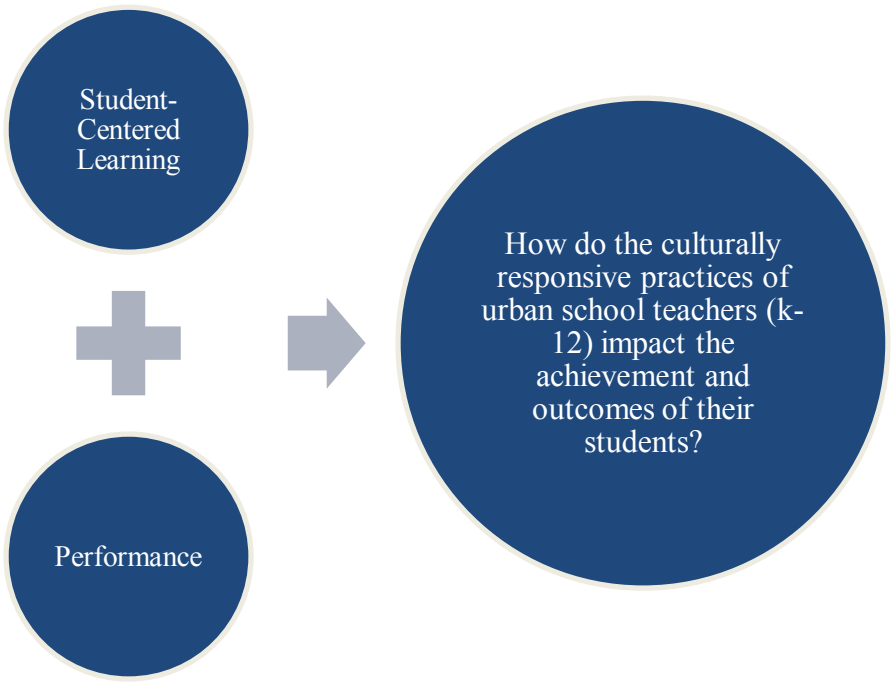

Figure 8: *Themes and sub-themes (RQ2);* themes generated from Research Question 2

These semi-structured interview questions had open-ended as well as closed-ended questions. These were subsequent questions to the research questions. Also, some subsequent questions had follow-up questions to allow the participants to understand the questions and be able to quantify their responses as they relate to the subject matter in those questions. Table 7 shows the alignment of the themes with the research questions. There are two main themes for RQ1 and two main themes for RQ2.

Table 7

Research Questions and Aligned Themes

Research Question	Main Category	Themes
How do urban school teachers (k-12) define and identify with culturally responsive pedagogical practices?	Cultural Inclusivity	Main Theme 1: Collaborative Learning: *Cultural responsive practices provide pedagogical equality, educational equity, and instructional competency and quality through the creation of learning communities and collaboration with stakeholders.* Main Theme 2: Culture-Centered Learning: *Culturally Responsive Pedagogy (CPR) enhances competency in educational diversity through cultural inclusivity, holistic education, and social justice,*
How do the culturally responsive practices of urban school teachers (k-12) impact the achievement and outcomes of their students?	Academic Competency	Main Theme 3: Student-Centered Learning*: Culturally Responsive Pedagogy promotes self-efficacy, instructional rigor, differentiation, educational equity, compliance, social justice, and learning diversity through student-centered learning*, Main Theme 4: Performance: *Culturally Responsive Pedagogy (CRP) impacts student achievement and outcomes through educational partnership, instructional rigor, culture-centered learning, holistic learning, and professional development.*

Note. Research questions and main themes

4.6: Themes for Research Question 1

The first two themes were instrumental in answering RQ1: How do urban school teachers (k-12) define and identify with culturally responsive pedagogical practices? Two main themes emerged from the interview data of the participants. Both participants define and share how they identify with culturally responsive pedagogical practices as teaching strategies that are culture-centered and entail collaboration. In the next section, I give a detailed analysis of each theme.

- Main Theme 1: Collaborative Learning: *Culturally responsive* p*ractices provide pedagogical equality, educational equity, and instructional competency and quality through the creation of learning communities and collaboration with stakeholders.*

Responding to the question, "how would you define culturally responsive teaching and how do you relate to it?"

Dr. Kweeta, the retired educator, shares how she would define culturally responsive teaching and how she relates to it in the following manner:

> I define culturally responsive teaching as a pedagogy where teachers are keenly aware of the different cultures represented by the different students in class. Students are allowed to incorporate their cultures and languages in their presentations. It is essential that culturally responsive teaching involves the parents; being available to parents in all situations because

> of the students having needs. The teacher should learn along with the students by having a culture-centered classroom. Also, it allowed me to be able to make sure to include my students in my curriculum, allowing them to use their languages plus English in their presentations, as a result, it was a learning exercise for all. When possible, I invited guest speakers from many different cultures, had celebrations with food from each culture, and also involved their parents.

Dr. Flomo shares her response to how she would define culturally responsive teaching and how she relates to it in this manner:

> I would define culturally responsive teaching as a form of teaching based on the centering of the students in the lesson. Centering my students in the lesson means allow students of different cultures to be included in the lesson. I allow multicultural and multilingual students to express themselves in their writing assignments and include events and holidays that relate to their cultures in their assignments. It allows me to be able to connect with my students. I do speak with my students. Sometimes they come to me to talk

> about their academic and personal goals because I listen to them. I also call parents most of the time to let them know what is going on in the class.

- Main Theme 2: Culture-Centered Learning: *Culturally Responsive Pedagogy (CPR) enhances competency in educational diversity through cultural inclusivity, holistic education, and social justice,*

Responding to the question, "what are few ways culturally responsive pedagogy can effectively be organized and implemented in schools and classrooms and what activities and strategies do you use to make learning efficient?"

Dr. Kweeta, the retired teacher and curriculum specialist, shares few ways she believes culturally responsive pedagogy can effectively be organized and implemented in schools and classrooms, and activities and strategies she used to make learning efficient in the following manner:

> The school should have multilingual staff members and utilize parents that are educationally able to perform. The school board should take an active part in making sure that the school that they represent has what they need for successful outcomes. Professional development is one of the keys to successful and fulfilling teaching. Professional development opportunities should include professionals already experienced in culturally responsive teaching and the sharing of research and available recent publications. My students were engaged because

I provided a climate of cultural inclusion. Dividing classes into groups was one way. When possible, I would have English Speaking and non-English speaking students to sit beside each other, I used formative assessments and oral questions as strategies for better understanding, and I allowed five to ten minutes breaks for students to process what they have learned from each other and discuss among themselves. I had a visible representation display in class. I displayed a welcome sign in each language, allowed students to make oral presentations in their native languages, and then I translated them to the class and created interactive games involving different cultures for the entire class. I had diverse lesson plans, included parents, celebrated diversity and holidays, and invited diverse citizens to have conversations about their experiences and make sure that I had translations going on at all times for each group; the different ethnic groups in your class. I allowed them to utilize or use their language but at the same time allowed English to be their standard so that they can learn it, but the more they practice speaking English with each other, they will have a comfortable non-threatening classroom and it will be successful.

Dr. Flomo, teacher and curriculum specialist, shares few ways she believes culturally responsive pedagogy can effectively be organized and implemented in schools and classrooms, and activities and strategies she uses to make learning efficient in the following manner:

> Professional development can be used to help teachers get trained in culturally responsive pedagogical practices but it should be done after school or apart from regular school days. It will be good to be done on a non-school day. I do not include culturally responsive teaching in my lesson, but in my formative and non-formative assignments. I cannot include it in the curriculum because it is district designed. I allow kids to write about their cultures and events, such as holidays. I do share care by helping my kids understand things about school and how valuable it is. I talk to them about life in general, about how they should work hard to succeed by making the right decisions. They also come to me to ask me academic and non-academic questions. Using writing exercises, I allow students to know more about their cultures, let them know about what is going on in society, such as civil rights issues, black lives matter issue, and celebrate diversity and important events of

other cultures. Including other cultures in the lesson and allowing students to write and share things about their cultures are other ways.

I allow students to do projects, and do free writes.

I Teach students about their culture, I teach American History, I teach my students about the civil rights, and let other students know about their cultures as well.

4.7: Themes for Research Question 2

The next themes were instrumental in answering RQ2: How do the culturally responsive practices of urban school teachers (k-12) impact the achievement and outcomes of their students? Two more themes emerged from the interview data of the participants. Those themes relate to student-centered learning and students' and teacher's performances in the classroom. Participants shared their views on how student-centered learning has a lot to do with the performance of students and the teacher. They shared how and why student-centered learning and performance are key components of culturally responsive pedagogical practices.

- Main Theme 3: Student-Centered Learning*: Culturally Responsive Pedagogy promotes self-efficacy, instructional rigor, differentiation, educational equity, compliance, social justice, and learning diversity through student-centered learning*,

Responding to the question, "how does student-centered learning impact the achievements and outcomes of students and how is it efficient in mono-cultural and multicultural classrooms?" Dr. Kweeta, the retired teacher and curriculum specialist, responds in this manner:

I will allow five to ten minutes breaks for students

to process what they have learned from each other and discussed among themselves. Allowing them to use their languages plus English in their presentations worked. I made them feel a part of the learning experience, it increased their self-esteem and their confidence. Preparing for a diverse class begins on the first day that school opens; by assessing the students that you are going to have in your class. You cannot wait until they all are in your room, otherwise it will be very difficult because it will take extra work and extra time before school actually starts.

I allowed students to present the lesson objectives in student groups, I allowed them to pair-share, I allowed students to develop assessments in their own language and also in English. Both groups should be aware that other groups exist, They have to understand that this is how it is going to be in their schooling for the rest of their lives even if they are in the twelve grade, they have to know it even when they go to college, it is going to be there so they have to become aware of other cultures and be willing to go that extra way to learn what they need to be successful. They have to enjoy the friends that they might make

who speak different languages, so having a
friend of a different language is a good learning
experience where the two of them can exchange
their languages and learn from each other. We
don't have the old telephone book that they had
long time ago but I taught the Asian children
from the old telephone book because
they had the translations of different languages in the
telephone book, so we had a very good time using
the telephone book. Any method you can have
where you get a translation and English is good.
Well I think we actually cover that, but I can say it
basically the same way. When the teacher knows that
he or she is going to have multicultural classroom,
it is up to the teacher to prepare and up to the school
to have professional development trainings that
can strengthen the teacher, and it is also good
if the school can hire teachers that are able to speak
both English and another language. That may not
always be possible but if possible, let that happen,
especially with those that are already proficient
in English. Also, trying to hire ethnic teachers is good.
They are out there. Though it might take a little

bit to find them, they are out there and that's
what it is going to take because we know that
our classes are going to be diverse, so we have to
prepare with professional development trainings, using
community resources, libraries, other media, and
all the resources we have to use.

Dr. Flomo shares how she feels student-centered learning impacts students' achievements and outcomes and how it is efficient in mono-cultural and multi-cultural classrooms?"

I have not been fortunate to have a mono-racial class.
I have always had a multi-racial class. My class is
diverse. I have more African Americans, a large
portion of Latinx, a handful of Pacific Islander
students, a few Caucasian students. I allow kids to write
about their cultures and events, such as holidays.
Teaching students about their culture is important.
Most writing exercises are to help them to be
good writers, being able to express themselves in
writing and to be able to advocate for themselves.
I allow students to know more about their cultures. I
let them know about what is going on in society, such
as civil rights issues, black lives matter issue, and
celebrate diversity and important events of other
cultures. To allow students to know about their

cultures and include their cultures in the lesson is relevant.

- Main Theme 4: Performance: *Culturally Responsive Pedagogy (CRP) impacts student achievement and outcomes through educational partnership, instructional rigor, culture-centered learning, holistic learning, and professional development.*

In response to the question, "how do culturally responsive practices impact the achievement and outcomes of students and teachers?"

Dr. Kweeta narrates:

> In every class teachers are going to have to begin
> with knowing the cognitive levels of their students.
> The presentation or lesson will not be any
> different, but you have to know the level of the
> students so that you can meet them where they are
> and take them to where they can be through differentiation,
> not making the lesson easy, instead, making it
> understandable for them. But we are not going to
> be able to teach the advanced students the same way
> we are going to be able to teach the basic students,
> we have to come up with different strategies
> but in the end they both should attain the same
> level of the knowledge of the languages or lessons
> we are teaching. Formative and summative
> assessments are strategies that fit each level.
> You got to make sure that you know the level of each

student because you just cannot assume that all students comprehend and learn at the same level, so it is up to the teacher to find out what those levels are without exposing it to the class at large. The teacher should learn along with the students by creating a culture-center classroom. Okay, since there is always time for improvement I will always say above average and will fit it somewhere between 80 to 90 percent because I believe that I always had success with my students. I was patient, I was understanding, and I was willing to work hard to make sure that they got what they needed. I made them feel a part of their learning experience, increased their self-esteem and their confidence. We developed a system of communication. I had them write sentences in their languages and under their sentences I will gave them the English translations. They learned and so did I. It is necessary to show empathy, patience using resources, media, parents, and professional development trainings. I was able to use exemplars, and to some extent, limited language that we have learned from the lessons and presentations. Professional development is one of the keys to a

successful and fulfilling teaching. Professional development opportunities should include professionals already experienced in culturally responsive teaching by sharing research and available recent publications. It is very possible to gain competency in culturally responsive practices by using many different resources.

Dr. Flomo responds to how she feels culturally responsive practices impact the achievement and outcomes of students and teachers?"

I always do lessons that have my students engaged, we do engaging writing exercise where students can write about themselves and their culture.

I do share care by helping my kids understand things about school and how valuable it is. I talk to them about life in general, about how they should work hard to succeed by making the right decisions.

They also come to me to ask me academic and non-academic questions. I have had students to come up with good reports academically and non-academically. If a student showed growth, that is an impact, If a student behaves better than he or she used to behave when he or she first started, that is an impact, students are impacted academically and behaviorally as well. I do speak with my students,

> sometimes they come to me to talk about their educational and or personal goals because I listen to them. I also call parents sometimes to let them know about what is going on in the classroom. I allow kids to write about their cultures and events, such as holidays. Professional development can be used to help teachers but it should be done after school or apart from regular school days. It will be good to be done on a non-school day.

. Figure 9 is a graphic diagram depicting the axiological, epistemological, and ontological relationships between three theoretical frameworks in the study.

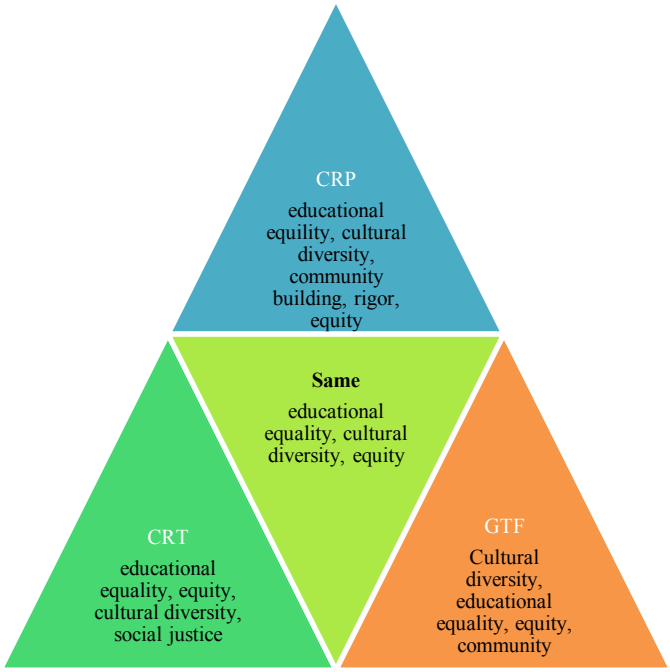

Figure 9: *Thematic and Theoretical conceptualization of coded elements of Culturally Responsive Pedagogy (CRP), Critical Race Theory (CRT), and the Grounded Theory Findings (GTF);* cultural diversity is common in all three theories, though the word inclusivity is coded in the Grounded Theory Findings, educational equality is also common in all three concepts. Community building is another common element in both CRP and the findings of this Grounded Theory process or GTF for Grounded Theory Findings.

4.8: Chapter Summary

The four main themes RQ1 and RQ2 as they relate to examining the concepts and pedagogical practices of culturally responsive teaching to find out how effective those concepts and practices are in improving the academic outcomes of marginalized students (K-12) in urban classrooms were presented in this chapter. The first part of this chapter gave the backgrounds of the participants. The second part gave the main themes that were generated from the interview data of the participants. The next chapter which is five (5) discusses the findings as they relate to the theoretical framework of the study and the concepts of culturally responsive pedagogy.

CHAPTER 5: DISCUSSION

This qualitative phenomenological case study examines the concepts and pedagogical practices of culturally responsive teaching through the shared experiences of two educators and implementers of culturally responsive pedagogy to find out how effective those concepts and practices are in improving the academic outcomes of marginalized students (K-12) in urban classrooms.

In this chapter, I address some of the existing limitations of culturally responsive pedagogy that have been lingering in current and past studies on culturally responsive pedagogical practices. I included those existing limitation questions in my interview protocol to get answers from my participants.

Existing limitations to culturally responsive pedagogy have always been the following: a) the insufficiency of data in circulation about organized and effective ways Culturally Responsive Pedagogy practices can be implemented and successfully evaluated, b) how Culturally Responsive Pedagogy can operate for different ethnic groups (Gay, 2000), c) how Culturally Responsive Pedagogy differs in mono-racial and multiracial learning practices (Gay, 2000), d) implementing culturally responsive practices as being a challenge, time-consuming, and tedious (Samuels, Samuels, & Cook, 2017; Skelley et al., 2022), e) teacher competency in fully implementing the model is a challenge, and results cannot be generalized with other populations (Khalifa et al., 2016; Rianawaty et al., 2020).

The research questions of this study are as follows: RQ1: How do urban school teachers (k-12) define and identify with culturally responsive pedagogical practices? RQ2: How do the culturally responsive practices of urban school teachers (k-12) impact the achievement and outcomes of their students? However, some studies reveal that implementation of the CRP model

is less of a challenge if the practitioner of culturally responsive practices is properly trained to use those strategies (Hollie, 2009; Nelson, Maloney, & Hodges, 2017).

Trying to understand how culturally responsive practices can impact the achievement and outcomes of marginalized students is the main purpose of this qualitative phenomenological case study. Two semi-structured interviews were used to gather data. Data were coded and analyzed through the grounded theory method.

5.1: Review of the Study

This chapter summarizes the findings and other salient elements of the research, (Rudestam & Newton, 2015). In it, inferences are drawn, explicative approaches are used to compare and contrast variables, concepts, processes, and data (Rudestam & Newton, 2015). In this segment of the research, I examine and infer on the themes and findings of the study. I compare and contrast the views and narratives of the participants of the study as they relate to the literature and reflect on the research questions and findings. I reveal some of the limitations of the study, provide implications for the utilization of culturally responsive practices in diverse urban learning spaces, highlight some suggestions, and provide some recommendations.

In the preceding chapter, I revealed four (4) main themes that were generated from the data of the interviews of the two participants. The themes were as follows:

1.) Main Theme 1: Collaborative Learning: *Culturally responsive* p*ractices provide pedagogical equality, educational equity, and instructional competency and quality through the creation of learning communities and collaboration with stakeholders,*

2.) Main Theme 2: Culture-Centered Learning: *Culturally Responsive Pedagogy (CPR) enhances competency in educational diversity through cultural inclusivity, holistic education, and social justice,*

3.) Main Theme 3*:* Student-Centered Learning*: Culturally Responsive Pedagogy promotes self-efficacy, instructional rigor, differentiation, educational equity, compliance, social justice, and learning diversity through student-centered learning*, and 4.) Main Theme 4: Performance: *Culturally Responsive Pedagogy (CRP) impacts student achievement and outcomes through educational partnership, instructional rigor, culture-centered learning, holistic learning, and professional development.*

Two of those themes related to RQ1. Those two (2) themes were:

1.) Main Theme 1: Collaborative Learning: *Culturally responsive* p*ractices provide pedagogical equality, educational equity, and instructional competency and quality through the creation of learning communities and collaboration with stakeholders,*

2.) Main Theme 2: Culture-Centered Learning: *Culturally Responsive Pedagogy (CPR) enhances competency in educational diversity through cultural inclusivity, holistic education, and social justice,*

The other two (2) themes related to RQ2 which were:

3.) Main Theme 3*:* Student-Centered Learning*: Culturally Responsive Pedagogy promotes self-efficacy, instructional rigor, differentiation, educational equity, compliance, social justice, and learning diversity through student-centered learning*, and 4.) Main Theme 4: Performance: *Culturally Responsive Pedagogy (CRP) impacts student achievement and outcomes through educational partnership, instructional rigor, culture-centered learning, holistic learning, and professional development.*

In this chapter, I discuss and analyze the findings through the theoretical frameworks of Critical Race Theory (CRT) and Culturally Responsive Pedagogy (CRP). Additionally, suggestions for future research are provided as well.

5.2: Research Question 1

Data from the interviews of the participants generated two (2) themes. The two themes are: 1.) Main Theme 1: Collaborative Learning: *Culturally responsive* p*ractices provide pedagogical equality, educational equity, and instructional competency and quality through the creation of learning communities and collaboration with stakeholders.*

Dr. Kweeta views culturally responsive pedagogical practices as strategies that enable teachers to keenly be aware of the different cultures of students in their classrooms and provide equal access to learning to make those students succeed academically. In creating learning communities, Dr. Kweeta invited multicultural guests to speak to her students while Dr. Flomo constantly kept a line of communication between her and the parents of her students. The participants believe that meeting each student where he or she is academically and giving him or her the necessary tools to make him or her successful is important. The participants believe that every child deserves the right to quality education. Both participants share that having students collaborate with their peers in class is healthy, safe, and productive. They also encourage teachers to collaborate with other teachers, members of the school leadership team, parents, and other stakeholders to make teaching and learning promising for students. Communication is a vital component of Gay's (2002) culturally responsive pedagogy. Creating a learning community is also one of the tenets of Gay's concept. Critical Race Theory (CRT), on the other end, promotes the inclusion of the cultures of culturally diverse students in the learning process. CRT endorses the practices of culturally responsive pedagogy (Hatcher et al., 2022; Reed et al., 2022).

2.) Main Theme 2: Culture-Centered Learning: *Culturally Responsive Pedagogy (CPR) enhances competency in educational diversity through cultural inclusivity, holistic education, and social justice,*

The participants agree that teachers should embrace the different cultures in their classes and be able to include those cultures and languages of those students in their lessons. They believe that by doing so those students can become as competitive as their peers. The participants believe that utilizing care, one of the elements of the tenets of CRP (Gay, 2002) students might get motivated to work harder and better. They believe that through CRP, students are given the opportunity to know about their culture, history, life, and society. The participants say they identify with CRP because it does not leave any student out of the teaching and learning process. They say CRP can be more impactful if it is used to transform lessons and curricula. Dr. Flomo uses writing assignments to have her students share things about themselves, and their cultures. Dr Kweeta also encouraged her students to include their cultures and languages in their assignments or presentations. She also often allowed her multilingual and multicultural students to create their own assessments. It is the acceptance of the cultures of all students and maintenance of a line of communication among stakeholders within a learning community that makes CRP meaningful (Gay, 2002). Critical Race Theory does not only endorse the practices of culturally responsive pedagogy, it also promotes cultural inclusivity (Hatcher et al., 2022; Reed et al., 2022).

In response to RQ1: How do urban school teachers (k-12) define and identify with culturally responsive pedagogical practices? Main Theme 1 reveals that urban school teachers define culturally responsive pedagogical practices as teaching strategies that promote pedagogical equality, create learning communities, provide educational equity, and require

instructional competency and quality. In terms of how urban teachers identify with culturally responsive pedagogical practices, Main Theme 2 uncovers that teachers relate to Culturally Responsive Pedagogy (CRP) as a practice that requires competency in educational diversity, cultural inclusivity, educational equity, holistic education, social justice, and collaboration with stakeholders.

5.3: Research Questions 2

Data from the interviews of the participants generated two (2) themes. The two themes are:

3.) Main Theme 3*:* Student-Centered Learning*: Culturally Responsive Pedagogy promotes self-efficacy, instructional rigor, differentiation, educational equity, compliance, social justice, and learning diversity through student-centered learning*.

Dr. Kweeta states that teachers should do away with the mindset that all students learn and comprehend the same way. She says teachers should get to know the cognitive levels of their students by using formative assessments, benchmarks, placement assessments, or diagnostic assessments. She says by doing that, teachers will get to know the academic strengths and weaknesses of their students. She states that with that information, teachers may be able to meet the needs of their students. Dr. Flomo shares how she has one-on-one conversations with her students to know about other non-academic needs they may have. With expertise in both mono-cultural and multicultural classrooms, Dr. Kweeta states that getting to know the cognitive level of students by means of those various assessments and being able to differentiate the lessons based on the learning ability level of each student, is a strategy she says can be applied in both mono-cultural and multicultural classrooms. In fact, this information of Dr. Kweeta is very significant to the study because it is the answer to a lingering limitation question in existing literature about how CRP can be successfully implemented in mono-cultural classrooms (Gay,

2000; Milner & Lomotey, 2014, pp. 368-369). Dr. Kweeta believes that urban teachers identify with CRP because its training and practices add to their instructional repertoire as a benefit which she says benefits not only teachers but the students as well. She says every teacher wants to see his or her student succeed, and most teachers will do what it takes to make a child succeed. She says that enthusiasm shared by teachers is a part of the passion that most teachers have for the profession and their students. Both participants believe urban teachers may be attracted to CRP because it allows teachers to collaborate with stakeholders to help teach their students which creates promising results on student achievement and outcomes.

4.) Main Theme 4: Performance: *Culturally Responsive Pedagogy (CRP) impacts student achievement and outcomes through educational partnership, instructional rigor, culture-centered learning, holistic learning, and professional development.*

Dr. Flomo attaches her performance with her students. She says it is her goal for all her students to succeed. She says if any student does not do well in her class it sends a message that she did not do well in teaching them. She focuses on growth. She values the growth of every student. She says she feels successful when each of her students shows some form of growth. She says such growth can be academic or behavioral. She says it is why she keeps her students engaged and uses writing to improve their skills and proficiency. Dr. Kweeta on the other end, says she always had her students doing engaging activities. She states how she used to use the telephone book many years ago to teach her multilingual students because the telephone book at that time had the translations of different languages. Therefore, she used that approach to provide educational equity to her culturally different students. She says that is why it is important for teachers to know the cognitive levels of their students so that they can be able to differentiate their lessons to meet the academic needs of all their students. Additionally, Dr. Kweeta says that

her differentiating method did not necessarily make the lesson easier, rather, she did it to make the lesson understandable for all students to allow them to be able to succeed.

Dr. Kweeta believes that urban teachers identify with CRP because its training and practices add to their instructional repertoire as a benefit which she says benefits not only teachers but the students as well. She says every teacher wants to see his or her student succeed, and most teachers will do what it takes to make a child succeed. She says that enthusiasm shared by teachers is a part of the passion that most teachers have for the profession and their students. Both participants believe urban teachers may be attracted to CRP because it allows teachers to collaborate with stakeholders to help teach their students and that there are promising results on student achievement and outcomes. Dr. Flomo believes that it is when students are allowed to write about themselves, their culture, and history they become motivated to learn and perform better.

Therefore, it is why she allows her students to do just that. Dr. Kweeta also allowed her students to include their languages and cultures in their presentations. Dr. Kweeta states that when teachers know the cognitive levels of their students, they are able to differentiate their lessons appropriately to meet the needs of their students. She adds that though there may be students at advanced levels and others at basic levels, teachers should differentiate to be able to bring those students from the basic level up to the advanced level as well.

Dr. Kweeta believes that one reason culturally responsive pedagogical practices are unique for positively impacting the achievement and outcomes of students is that they create a learning community of stakeholders and tools that can make students succeed. According to Dr. Kweeta, using strategies that can appeal to the cognitive, affective, kinesthetic, and emotional needs of a child exemplifies equity and equality in education.

Dr. Kweeta and Dr. Flomo believe that students are motivated to achieve and perform better when they feel that they are a part of the lesson. Including the cultures and languages of students in the lesson, according to Dr. Kweeta, can have a positive effect on the student's learning. The participants believe that when teachers value their instructional role and provide quality learning to address the needs of the whole child, the achievement and outcomes of students can positively be impacted.

In response to research question 2: How do the culturally responsive practices of urban school teachers (k-12) impact the achievement and outcomes of their students? Main Theme 4 reveals that Culturally Responsive Pedagogy (CRP) impacts student achievement and outcomes through educational partnership, instructional rigor, culture-centered learning, and holistic learning. Additionally, Main Theme 3 shows that Culturally Responsive Pedagogy enhances self-efficacy, provides instructional rigor, differentiation, educational equity, ensures compliance, and promotes social justice, and learning diversity.

5.4: Limitations

The sample size may have limited the study from exposure to more data from which conclusions could be drawn (Mertens, 2020, pp. 260-274) and the issue of generalizability is another concern, especially in the case of a case-study research (Stake, 2005, as cited in Mertens, 2020, pp. 252-255). Sample size: two participants were used for the study. Generalizability: In the case of a case-study research which is intrinsic in nature is based on the personal experiences of an individual or individuals that relate to understanding a particular phenomenon which cannot be generalized (Stake, 2005, as cited in Brinkmann & Kvale, 2015, pp. 295-296).

5.5: Implications

The participants reveal that urban school teachers define culturally responsive pedagogical practices as teaching strategies that promote pedagogical equality, create learning communities, provide educational equity, and require instructional competency and quality. They also state that teachers relate to Culturally Responsive Pedagogy (CRP) as a practice that requires competency in educational diversity, cultural inclusivity, educational equity, holistic education, social justice, and collaboration with stakeholders. They note that Culturally Responsive Pedagogy (CRP) impacts student achievement and outcomes through educational partnership, instructional rigor, culture-centered learning, and holistic learning. Additionally, they believe that CRP enhances self-efficacy, provides instructional rigor, differentiation, educational equity, ensures compliance, and promotes social justice, and learning diversity. The utilization and implementation of the elements of the aforementioned findings are ways the achievement and outcomes of students can positively be impacted. Also, those are organized ways CRP can be modeled by district and school leaders and teachers in schools and classrooms.

5.6: Suggestions

In this section, I include suggestions gleaned from my interviews with the participants. Some of the responses I got from the participants were answers to lingering limitation questions of existing studies about the utilization and successful implementation of culturally responsive pedagogical practices in schools and classrooms. Some of these lingering questions relate to: a) the insufficiency of data in circulation about organized and effective ways Culturally Responsive Pedagogy practices can be implemented and successfully evaluated, b) how Culturally Responsive Pedagogy can operate for different ethnic groups (Gay, 2000), c) how Culturally

Responsive Pedagogy differs in mono-racial and multiracial learning practices (Gay, 2000), d) implementing culturally responsive practices as being a challenge, time-consuming, and tedious (Samuels, Samuels, & Cook, 2017; Skelley et al., 2022), e) teacher competency in fully implementing the model as a challenge, and results cannot be generalized with other populations (Khalifa et al., 2016; Rianawaty et al., 2020).

In response to: a) *the insufficiency of data in circulation about organized and effective ways Culturally Responsive Pedagogy practices can be implemented and successfully evaluated,* Dr. Kweeta suggests that pre-service and in-service teachers and school leaders should be trained to know how to use culturally responsive pedagogical practices in urban schools as a requirement, and school district leaders should support and encourage school leaders and teachers to utilize and implement CRP. In response to b) *how Culturally Responsive Pedagogy can operate for different ethnic groups (Gay, 2000)*, Drs. Kweeta and Flomo suggest that teachers should keenly be aware of the different cultural groups represented in the class and include the cultures and languages of those students in the lessons. Also, they suggest that teachers should encourage students to include their cultures and languages in their activities and share them with the class. In terms of: c) *how Culturally Responsive Pedagogy differs in mono-racial and multiracial learning practices (Gay, 2000)*, Dr. Kweeta suggests that teachers should get to know the cognitive level of each of their students by using formative assessments, benchmarks, placement assessments, or diagnostic assessments. She says by doing this, teachers may get to know the academic strengths and weaknesses of their students. She states that with that information, teachers can differentiate their lessons to accommodate the needs of their students, and that, she says, is the recipe for dealing with students of both mono-cultural and multicultural classrooms. Also, students should learn about not only their culture in mono-

cultural settings, she says they should learn about other cultures as well, and the same applies to multicultural classrooms. Regarding: d) *implementing culturally responsive practices as being a challenge, time-consuming, and tedious (Samuels, Samuels, & Cook, 2017; Skelley et al., 2022)*, Dr. Kweeta suggests that teachers should always exhibit the virtues of patience, empathy, passion, and care when dealing with children and do what is necessary to improve the achievement and outcomes of students.

The contributions of the participants were invaluable. They both were familiar with culturally responsive practices, they have utilized them in their classrooms, and have seen how impacting those strategies are. They both are also curriculum and instruction specialists. Dr. Flomo, who still teaches, was able to use her expertise to share the experiences she has on a daily basis applying those strategies to make all her students feel important and valuable in her class. (See Appendix Q) for an exemplar of one of Dr. Flomo's culturally responsive class assignments. Dr. Kweeta, who is a retired teacher, brought a wealth of information to the study. (See Appendix R) for an exemplar of Dr. Kweeta's class assignment. Factually, she provided most of the answers to lingering questions that researchers of existing studies have as limitations. Dr. Kweeta has lived and experienced school segregation, she has taught in mono-racial Caucasian and African American urban schools and classrooms, she has taught in multi-racial and multicultural urban classrooms, and has served as a curriculum specialist in predominantly Caucasian and African American urban schools and multi-racial and multicultural urban schools as well. She also has lived through and utilized many past educational policies of the United States in urban classrooms.

5.7: Recommendations

The recommendations in this chapter are based on the analyses of the participants and the analyzed data. The three recommendations relate to the following themes: a) educational partnership, b) educational competency, and c) cultural inclusivity.

a. Educational Partnership: One of the themes that emerged from the data was "collaboration." According to the participants, collaboration is the learning thread in the learning process that keeps students, teachers, parents or guardians, school leadership team, school district leaders, and other stakeholders in education together and well connected. When collaboration exists in a classroom or school many things get done and great things happen in the learning community. School district leaders have to support principles who want to implement culturally responsive pedagogical practices in the classroom. Principles have to support teachers who want to try culturally responsive practices in their classrooms as well.

b. Educational Competency: This was one of the themes that emerged during the preliminary phases of the coding process. Institutions of higher learning that provide teacher training programs have to include culturally responsive pedagogy courses in their programs and make it a required course for students who are majoring in education or enrolled in a licensure program to teach. School district leaders can provide professional development training for in-services teachers. Due to the fact that schools are getting more diverse today (Flores, 2007; Gay, 2000: Ladson-Billings, 2007; U, S. Census Bureau, 2021), it is expedient for school district leaders to encourage all teachers to be trained in culturally responsive pedagogical practices. It will be to the advantage of the school district because the more teachers are trained in culturally responsive practices, the better the achievement and outcomes of students will be. Teaching

competency in culturally responsive pedagogy also enhances the academic competency of students enabling them to excel and have good performance results.

c. Cultural Inclusivity: This is another theme that emerged from the data analytical process. Placing students in the center of the lesson is one of the best ways to motivate students to learn. Including the languages and cultures of students in the lesson makes those students feel that they are special. Allowing students to do activities that allow them to express themselves makes them feel safer and freer in the learning environment, which can motivate them to learn better. Recognizing cultural events and holidays for multicultural and multilingual students raises their confidence and self-efficacy levels. When the confidence and self-efficacy levels of students are enhanced, they may begin to be more optimistic and excited to learn. Culturally responsive pedagogy can be practiced in multiple ways. As Dr. Kweeta says, teachers can use a welcoming sign that is written in the languages of the students in the class, which can make students feel that they are a part of the learning process. Playing music that relates to the cultures of students in your class can be meaningful, they feel that they belong in that learning environment. They feel important. By translating class assignments in the languages of culturally different students in the class is another way of being culturally responsive in the teaching and learning process. On both federal and state levels funding can be allocated to urban or Title I schools, mainly to provide special services in terms of technology, electronic platforms, computer applications and software accessibility for language translation and multilingual programs to help teachers and students gain competency in the classroom. Also, from such funding, teachers can be given a stipend or voucher to enroll in a culturally responsive pedagogy training program, or be reimbursed for enrolling in that program which is for teaching competency in the classroom.

5.8: Chapter Summary

In this segment of the research, I examined the themes and findings of the study. I compared and contrasted the views and narratives of the participants of the study as they related to the literature. I also reflected on the research questions and their findings. I revealed some of the limitations of the study, provided implications for the utilization of culturally responsive practices in diverse urban learning spaces, and highlighted some suggestions from the participants regarding the application of culturally responsive strategies in the classrooms. I also provided some recommendations. During the analytical processes, four (4) main themes emerged out of the coding processes and data. The four (4) themes were:

1.) Main Theme 1: Collaborative Learning: *Culturally responsive* p*ractices provide pedagogical equality, educational equity, and instructional competency and quality through the creation of learning communities and collaboration with stakeholders,*

2.) Main Theme 2: Culture-Centered Learning: *Culturally Responsive Pedagogy (CPR) enhances competency in educational diversity through cultural inclusivity, holistic education, and social justice,*

3.) Main Theme 3*:* Student-Centered Learning*: Culturally Responsive Pedagogy promotes self-efficacy, instructional rigor, differentiation, educational equity, compliance, social justice, and learning diversity through student-centered learning*, and 4.) Main Theme 4: Performance: *Culturally Responsive Pedagogy (CRP) impacts student achievement and outcomes through educational partnership, instructional rigor, culture-centered learning, holistic learning, and professional development.*

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APPENDIX A: 5 TENETS OF CULTURALLY RESPONSIVE PEDAGOGY (CRP)

(Gay, 2002)

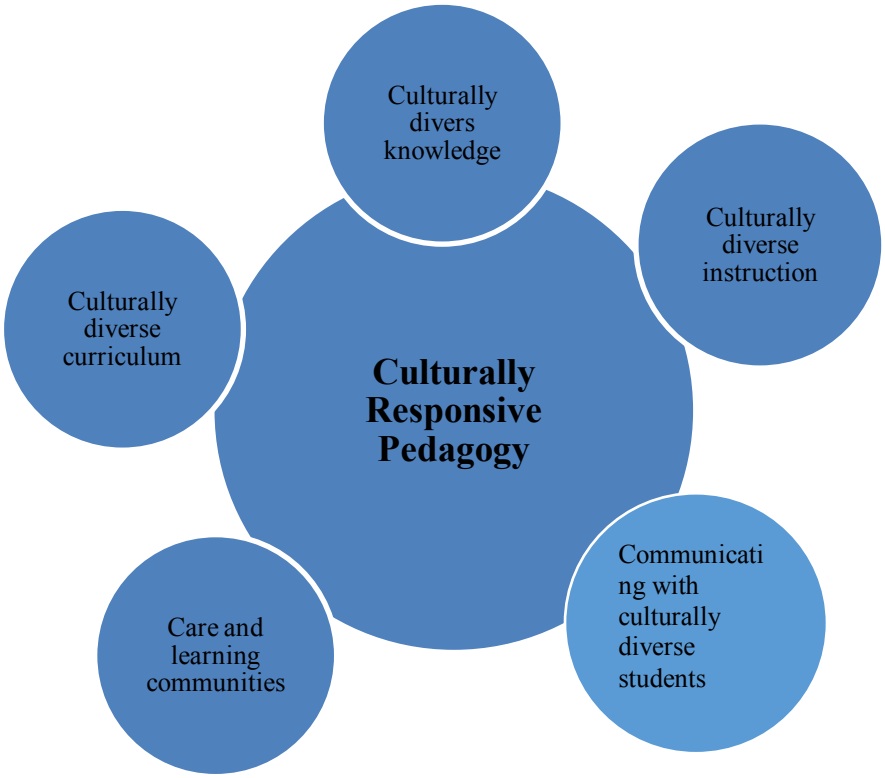

Figure 1: *5 Tenets of Culturally Responsive Pedagogy (CRP) (Gay, 2002)*

APPENDIX B: CULTURALLY RESPONSIVE PEDAGOGY IN EDUCATION

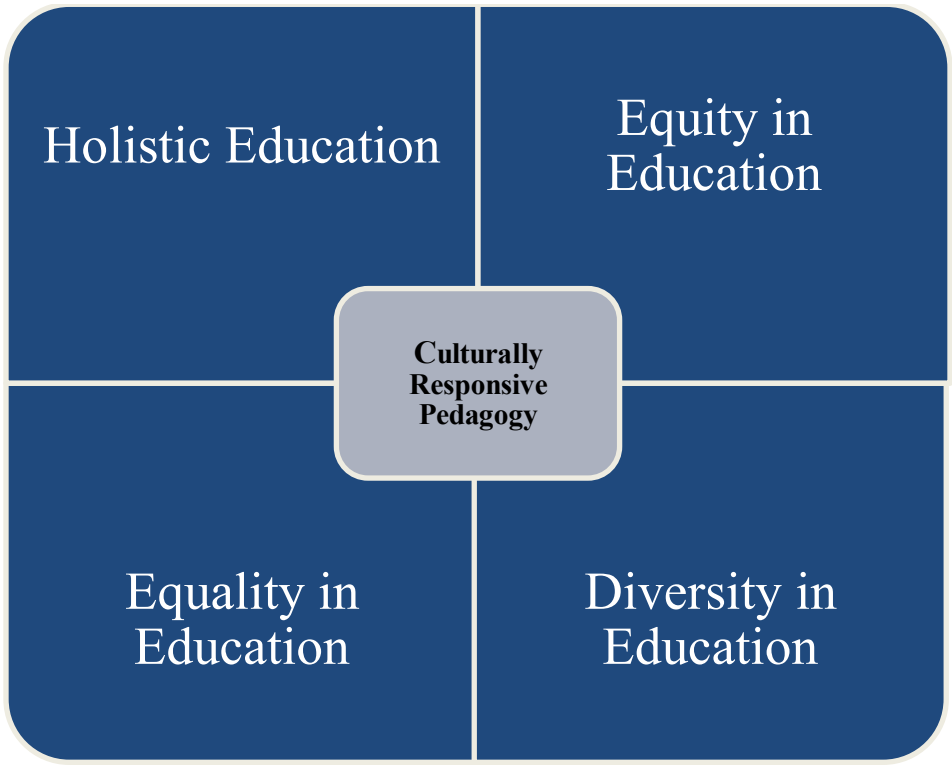

Figure 2: *Culturally Responsive Pedagogy in Education;* educational concepts interwoven in culturally responsive pedagogy

APPENDIX C: CRITICAL RACE THEORY AS IT RELATES TO EDUCATION

(Hatcher et al., 2022; Reed et al., 2022)

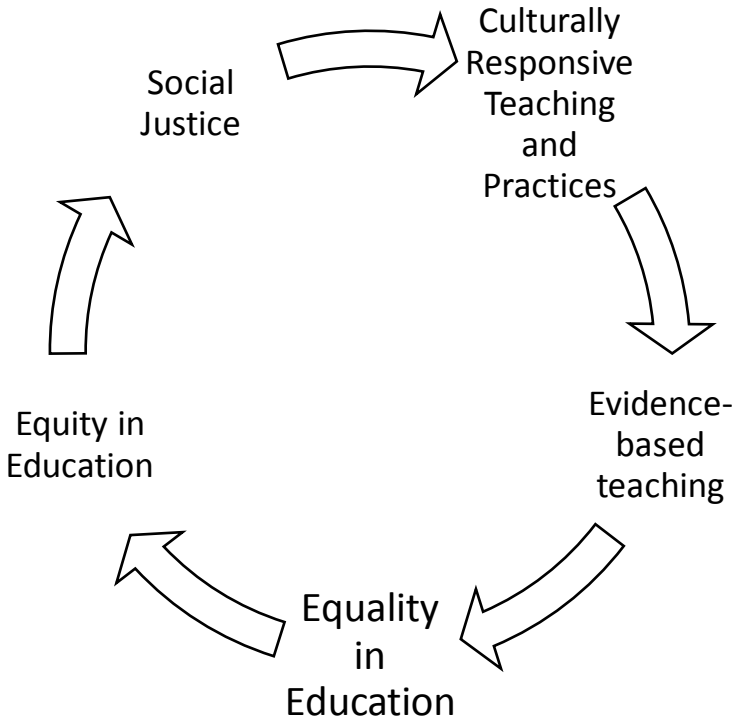

Figure 3: *Critical Race Theory as it relates to Education (Hatcher et al., 2022; Reed et al., 2022);* concepts that are interwoven in Critical Race Theory

APPENDIX D: 6 TENETS OF CRITICAL RACE THEORY

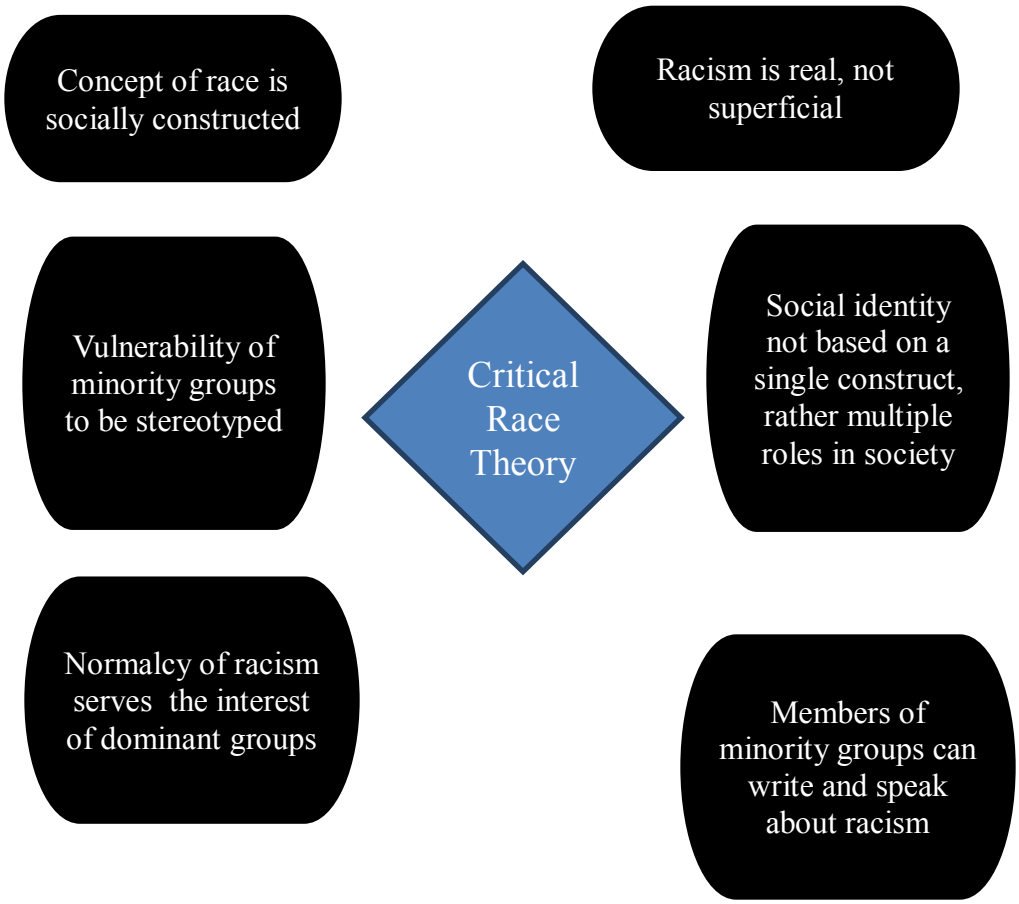

Figure 4: *6 Tenets of Critical Race Theory*

APPENDIX E: PERCENTAGES OF TEACHERS IN ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY PUBLIC SCHOOLS

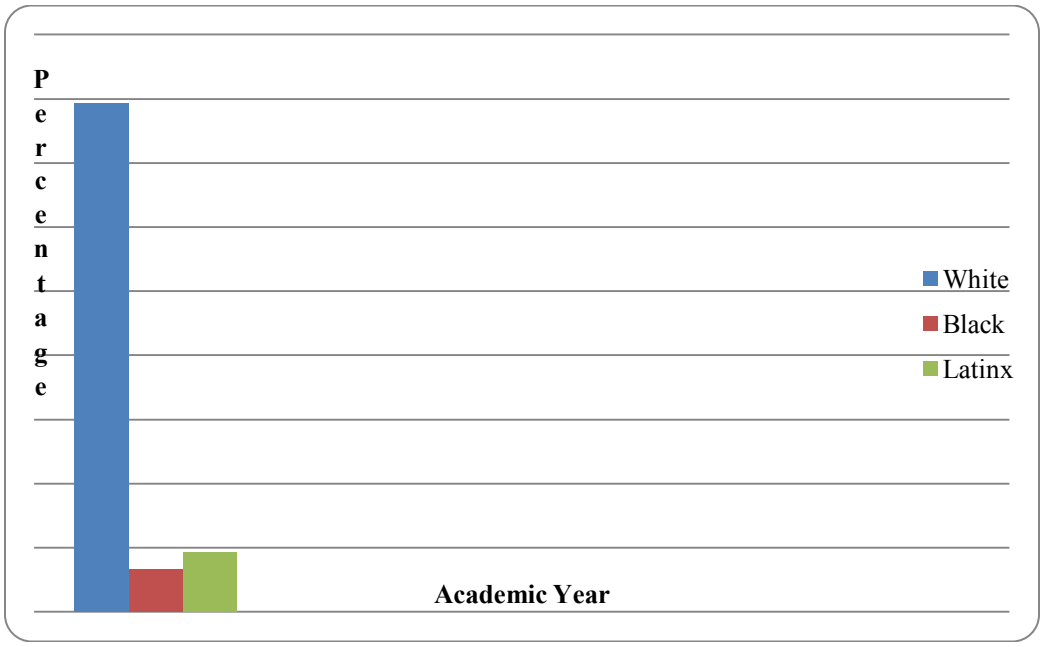

Figure 5: *Percentages of teachers in elementary and secondary Public Schools;* percentages of teachers by ethnic groups in public elementary and secondary schools for the 2017 – 2018 school year. The blue bar represents White teachers, the red bar represents Black teachers, and the green bar represents Latinx teachers.

National Center for Education Statistics (NCES), 2020, *Digest of Education Statistics*. Retrieved from https://nces.ed.gov/programs/digest/d20/tables/dt20_209.23.asp

APPENDIX F: THE CODING STEPS

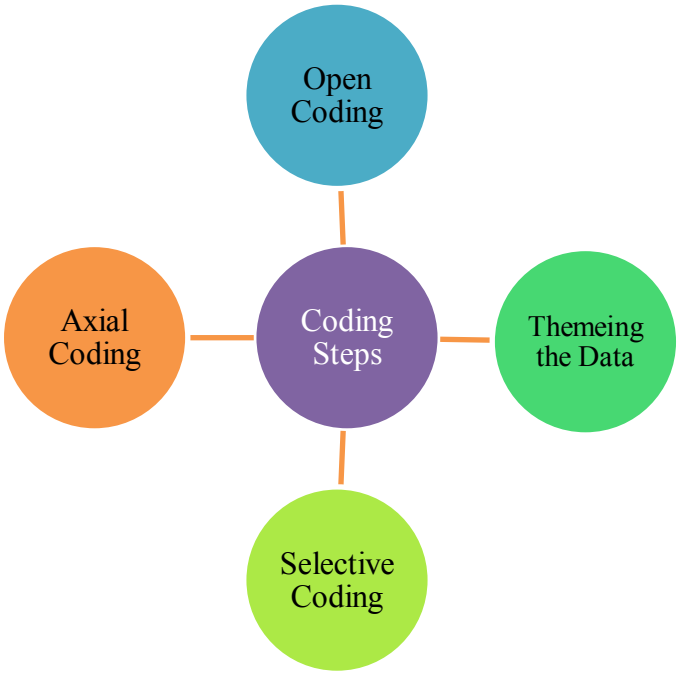

Figure 6: *The Coding Steps;* these are the steps through which the main themes emerged.

APPENDIX G: THEMES AND SUB-THEMES OF RQ1

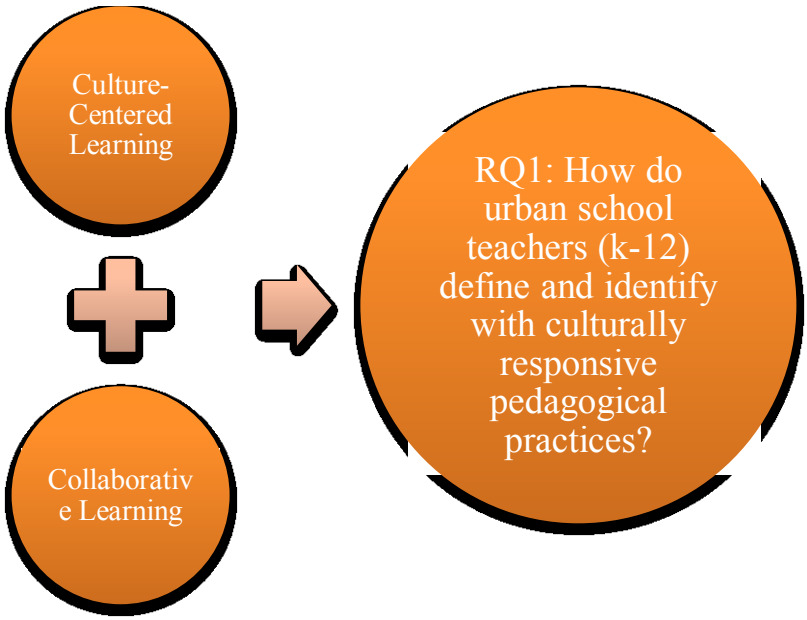

Figure 7: *Themes and sub-themes (RQ1);* themes generated from Research Question 1

APPENDIX H: THEMES AND SUB-THEMES OF RQ2

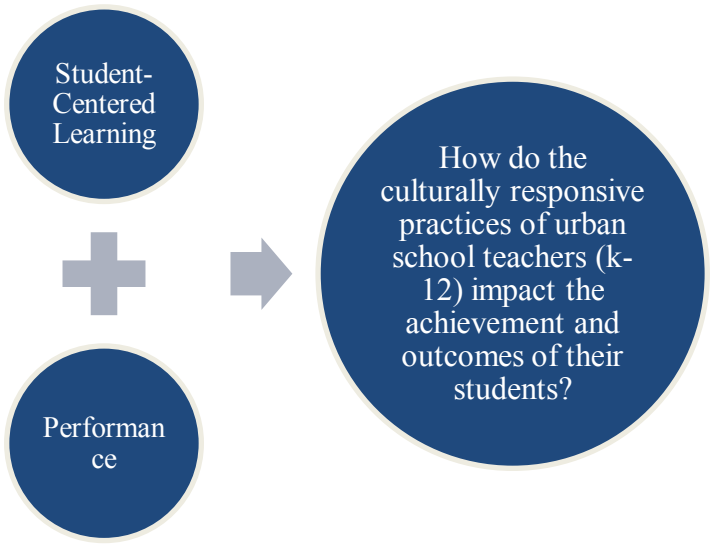

Figure 8: *Themes and sub-themes (RQ2);* themes generated from Research Question 2

APPENDIX I: THEMATIC AND THEORETICAL CONCEPTUALIZATION OF CODED ELEMENTS OF CULTURALLY RESPONSIVE PEDAGOGY (CRP), CRITICAL RACE THEORY (CRT), AND THE GROUNDED THEORY FINDINGS (GTF)

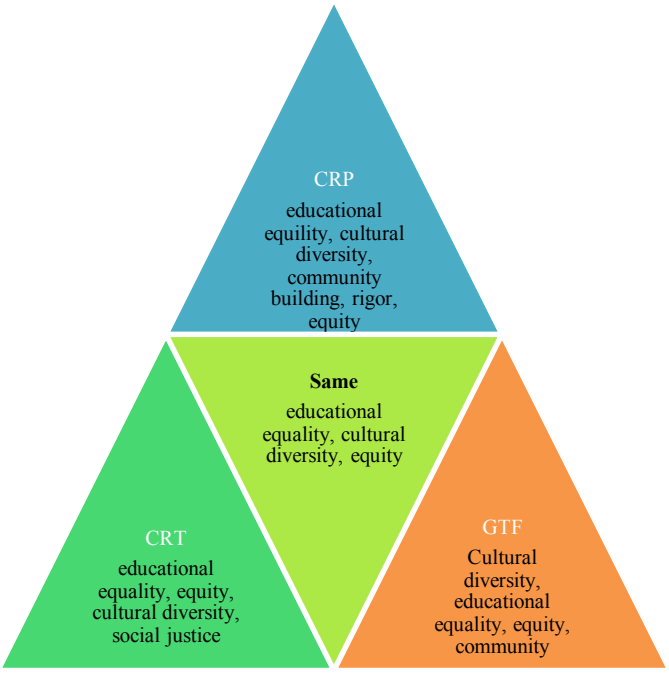

Figure 9: *Thematic and Theoretical conceptualization of coded elements of Culturally Responsive Pedagogy (CRP), Critical Race Theory (CRT), and the Grounded Theory Findings (GTF);* cultural diversity is common in all three theories, though the word inclusivity is coded in the Grounded Theory Findings, educational equality is also common in all three concepts. Equity is another common element. Community building is another common element in both CRP and the findings of this Grounded Theory process or GTF for Grounded Theory Findings.

APPENDIX J: 2022 4th - GRADE MATHEMATICS ASSESSMENT RESULTS BY RACE/ ETHNICITY

Table 1

2022 4th - Grade Mathematics Assessment Results by race/ ethnicity

Race/ Ethnicity	Score	Differential Point (s) of scores between Caucasian and other students
Caucasian Students	246	
African American Students	217	**29** points between Caucasian and African American students
Latinx Students	224	**22** points between Caucasian and Latinx students
American Indian/ Alaska Native Students	221	**25** points between Caucasian and American Indian/ Alaska Native students
Pacific Island Students	*224*	***22** points between Caucasian and Pacific Island students*

Note. 1st differential points = 29 (246 – 217), 2nd differential points = 22 (246 – 224), 3rd differential points = 25 (246 – 221), and 4th differential points = 22 (246 – 224).

APPENDIX K: 2022 8th - GRADE MATHEMATICS ASSESSMENT RESULTS BY RACE/ ETHNICITY

Table 2

2022 8th - Grade Mathematics Assessment Results by race/ ethnicity

Race/ Ethnicity	Score	Differential Point (s) of scores between Caucasian and other students
Caucasian Students	285	
African American Students	253	**32** points between Caucasian and African American students
Latinx Students	261	**24** points between Caucasian and Latinx students
American Indian/ Alaska Native Students	258	**27** points between Caucasian and American Indian/ Alaska Native students
Pacific Island Students	264	**21** points between Caucasian and Pacific Island students

Note. 1st differential points = 32 (285 – 253), 2nd differential points = 24 (285 – 261), 3rd differential points = 27 (285 – 258), and 4th differential points = 21 (285 – 264).

APPENDIX L: 2022 4th - GRADE READING ASSESSMENT RESULTS BY RACE/ ETHNICITY

Table 3

2022 4th - Grade Reading Assessment Results by race/ ethnicity

Race/ Ethnicity	Score	Differential Point (s) of scores between Caucasian and other students
Caucasian Students	227	
African American Students	199	**28** points between Caucasian and African American students
Latinx Students	205	**22** points between Caucasian and Latinx students
American Indian/ Alaska Native Students	197	**30** points between Caucasian and American Indian/ Alaska Native students
Pacific Island Students	207	**20** points between Caucasian and Pacific Island students

Note. 1st differential points = 28 (227 – 199), 2nd differential points = 22 (227 – 205), 3rd differential points = 30 (227 – 197), and 4th differential points = 20 (227 – 207).

APPENDIX M: 2022 8th - GRADE READING ASSESSMENT RESULTS BY RACE/ ETHNICITY

Table 4

2022 8th - Grade Reading Assessment Results by race/ ethnicity

Race/ Ethnicity	Score	Differential Point (s) of scores between Caucasian and other students
Caucasian Students	268	
African American Students	244	**24** points between Caucasian and African American students
Latinx Students	251	**17** points between Caucasian and Latinx students
American Indian/ Alaska Native Students	246	**22** points between Caucasian and American Indian/ Alaska Native students
Pacific Island Students	254	**14** points between Caucasian and Pacific Island students

Note. 1st differential points = 28 (268 – 244), 2nd differential points = 17 (268 – 251), 3rd differential points = 22 (268 – 246), and 4th differential points = 14 (268 – 254).

APPENDIX N: BACKGROUNDS OF PARTICIPANTS

Table 5

Backgrounds of Participants

Pseudonym	Profession	Tenure	School	Age Range
Dr. Kweeta	Retired teacher and curriculum specialist	40+ years	Haywood Urban High School and Gboveh High School	Eighties
Dr. Flomo	Teacher and curriculum specialist	16+ years	Gbarnga Urban Academy	Forties

Note. Participants' names and schools are pseudonyms

APPENDIX O: INTERVIEW PROTOCOL

Table 6

Interview Protocol

INTERVIEW PROTOCOL
RQ1: How do urban school teachers (k-12) define and identify with culturally responsive pedagogical practices? **Introductory Questions (a – c)** a. What is your name? b. How long have you been a teacher? c. What urban schools have you taught? 1. How would you define Culturally Responsive Teaching? 2. From your point of view, is it possible for teachers to gain competency in culturally responsive practices? If yes, how? 3. Based on your experience, how can professional development opportunities for teachers be maximized and efficient? 4. How was culturally responsive teaching reflected in your lesson and curriculum? 5. Were you able to use culturally responsive teaching as part of your assessment of students? If so, explain and let us talk about it. 6. How did the school leadership respond to your use of culturally responsive teaching? Did you have full support from the administration? 7. One tenet of culturally responsive pedagogy is that the line of communication must exist between teachers and their diverse students. How did you maintain communication between you and your diverse students?

8. Another tenet of culturally responsive pedagogy is that care be used in the teaching and learning process. How did you implement care in your teaching and learning process?
9. How can the school connect the community with the teaching and learning process?

RQ2: How do the culturally responsive practices of urban school teachers (k-12) impact the achievement and outcomes of their students?

1. How did culturally responsive teaching impact your students?
2. Were students more or less engaged in your class?
3. How diverse was your class?
4. Have you had a mono-racial or mono-cultural class? If so, how mono-racial or mono-cultural was it?
5. What specific strategies and activities did you use in your classroom to incorporate culturally responsive teaching and enhance learning?
6. How did you check for understanding to make sure that those strategies were effective and efficient?
7. Did you differentiate your lesson to accommodate the needs of each student?
8. How did you differentiate? What differentiation method did you use?
9. What are few culturally responsive pedagogical student-centered activities you implemented in the class?
10. One tenet of culturally responsive pedagogy is to make knowledge culturally diverse. How did you make knowledge culturally diverse in your classroom?
11. What are few organized ways culturally responsive pedagogy can be effectively implemented in schools and the classrooms?
12. How can culturally responsive practices be used efficiently with students of mono-

racial or mono-cultural groups?

13. How can culturally responsive practices be used efficiently with students of multi-racial or multi-cultural groups?
14. How do the strategies and practices of culturally responsive pedagogy differ or similar in mono-racial and multi-racial classrooms?
15. What are ways you measure and identify the achievement and outcome of a student?
16. How can you rate yourself on the scale of: Below Average (less than 70%), Average (Between 70% – 79%), and Above Average (80% - 100%) of being successful in enabling students to achieve and perform better?

Note. The top three questions may or may not be used in the analytical process

APPENDIX P: RECRUITMENTC SCRIPTS

IN-PERSON SCRIPT

Hello,

How are you? May I have a few minutes of your time please? Thank you.
You may or may not know that I am a doctoral candidate at UNC Charlotte. I am looking for volunteers to participate in my dissertation research. The title of my research is Culturally Responsive Pedagogy and its Impact on the Academic Outcomes of Marginalized Students in the Pedagogical Spaces of Urban Schools: A Phenomenological Case Study. The purpose of the research is to examine the concepts and pedagogical practices of culturally responsive teaching to find out how effective and efficient they are in improving the academic outcomes of marginalized students (k-12) in urban schools. I seek to interview licensed K-12 teachers with three or more years of teaching experience who are familiar with culturally responsive pedagogy and have practiced it in their classrooms.

If you are interested in participating, may I ask you some questions to determine if you are eligible for my study?

EMAIL SCRIPT

Hello,

I hope this email finds you in good health. You may or may not know that I am a doctoral candidate at UNC Charlotte. I am looking for volunteers to participate in my dissertation research. The title of my research is Culturally Responsive Pedagogy and its Impact on the Academic Outcomes of Marginalized Students in the Pedagogical Spaces of Urban Schools: A Phenomenological Case Study. The purpose of the research is to examine the concepts and pedagogical practices of culturally responsive teaching to find out how effective and efficient they are in improving the academic outcomes of marginalized students (k-12) in urban schools. I seek to interview licensed K-12 teachers with three or more years of teaching experience who are familiar with culturally responsive pedagogy and have practiced it in their classrooms.

If you may be interested in participating, please respond to the following questions:

1. How long have you been teaching in public school?
2. Are you familiar with culturally responsive pedagogy?
3. Will you be willing to share your experiences about using culturally responsive pedagogy in the classroom in a zoom interview with me?

Thank you for your participation.

If you have any questions or wish to discuss any concerns, please contact Elijah Eddie Dunbar, the primary researcher at eddunbar@charlotte.edu or my faculty advisor, Dr. Greg Wiggan at gwiggan@charlotte.edu. ,

Regards,

Elijah Dunbar

APPENDIX Q: EXEMPLAR OF ONE Of DR. FLOMO'S CULTURALLY RESPONSIVE ASSINGMENTS

Unit 8 Civil Rights Movement Project

You will be researching leaders and events from the Civil Rights Movement in American History. You will create a TikTok with visual images embedded or Google slides/ PowerPoint presentation with a total of 6 slides- including a title slide. You must include 8 facts on your topic (be sure to include dates of major events, write your facts in complete sentences, and use proper grammar and punctuation). Cite your sources, do not copy and paste from sources (put information in your own words). Use color and images on your TikTok or Google slides, Canvas/ PowerPoint presentation.

You must address the following things in your presentation:

1) What leader or event are you researching (background info, birthdate, education, etc).
2) What was the significance of the person and/or the event in American history?
3) What factors guided the person /or what led the event to take place.
4) Give 1 example of a person or another movement that was similar to the event or person you are researching.
5) What was the contribution of the person /or event involved in the movement? And compare and contrast the successes and failures of the person / or event involved in the movement?
6) How successful was the Civil Rights movement for African Americans? How successful was the Civil Rights Movement in equality for all other groups?
7) Must include three review questions for class discussion

Pick 2 From The List Below:

1. Martin Luther King Jr
2. Malcom X
3. Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC)
4. James Meredith
5. Freedom Riders
6. Greensboro Sit-ins
7. Medgar Evers
8. Rosa Parks
9. Fannie Lou Hamer
10. Semptima Clark
11. Black Panther Party
12. Angela Davis
13. Bobby Seale
14. Huey P. Newton
15. Fred Hammond
16. Claudette Colvin
17. Thurgood Marshall

18. Ruby Bridges
19. Brown v. Board of Education
20. Civil Rights Act of 1964
21. Voting Rights Act 1965
22. Senator John Lewis
23. Montgomery Bus Boycott
24. Chicano Movement
25. Cesar Chavez
26. Dolores Huerta
27. Grape Growers Strike
28. Larry Itliong
29. Brown beret Chicano Leaders
30. Roe vs. Wade
31. Title IX
32. LGBTQ Rights
33. The Stonewall Uprising
34. Gay Activism
35. Harvey Milk
36. Marsha P Johnson
37. Barbara Gittings

Rubric

Category	Level 4 (A)	Level 3 (B)	Level 2 (C)	Level 1 (D)
Presentation & Completion	Project is neat, organized and easy to understand. All required sections have been included.	Project is mostly neat, organized and easy to understand. All required sections have been included.	Some of the project is neat and organized and only some is easy to understand. Only some required sections have been included.	The project is not neat or organized and it is difficult to understand. Many required sections are missing.
Creativity	Project demonstrates lots of creativity. Thought, time and care has been taken to create it.	Project demonstrates some creativity. Thought, time and care has been taken to create it.	Project demonstrates only some creativity. Some thought, time and care has been taken to create it.	Project demonstrates little creativity. Little thought, time and care has been taken to create it.
Information	Information is clear, accurate and demonstrates the student's understanding of the topic.	Most of the information is clear, accurate and demonstrates the student's understanding of the topic.	Only some of the information is clear, accurate and demonstrates the student's understanding of the topic.	The information is not clear or accurate and does not demonstrate the student's understanding of the topic.
Sharing with class	Uses loud voice and maintains eye contact with audience.	Sometimes uses a loud voice and maintains some eye contact with audience.	Uses a quiet voice and only occasionally looks at the audience.	Voice is too quiet and no eye contact is made with audience.

APPENDIX R: EXEMPLAR OF ONE OF DR. KWEETA'S CLASS ASSIGNMENTS

World History

Standards W.H.B.1.2; W.H.B.2.2; W.H.C.&G.1.3; W.H.E.1.1; W.H.E.1.2; W.H.G.1.1; W.H.G.2.2;W.H.H.1.1; 1.1.4

INSTRUCTIONS: Read each question in its entirety and conduct your research using media sources and/ or the textbook to answer each question. Some questions might have additional requirements to satisfactorily answer them.

1. What was the effect of the Industrial Revolution on the economy of the United States?
2. How did the economic impact of the Industrial Revolution lead to the creation of technological advancements, such TikTok and other media? (To satisfactorily answer this question, do the following:
    a) Do your research watching videos, reading, and exploring other sources on the Industrial Revolution.
    b) Prepare ten (10) Google slides to present to the class
    c) Conduct an interview with a TikTok representative to gather information about how TikTok started.
3. Based on your response in question #1, why did the economic impact of the Industrial Revolution on the economy of the United States turn out to have such impact?