

BRITTANY, PINKERTON B., PHD. The Exploration of TPSR Practitioners' Implementation of Culturally Relevant Pedagogies. (2021)  
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A large percentage of youth, 56%, engage in sport and physical activity (PA) programs after school therefore making sport and PA programs important to explore (National Survey of Children's Health, 2018). After school hours or out of school time are critical to youths' development, therefore it's important to emphasize quality and equity of afterschool programs. One of the sports-based youth development (SBYD) models used in after-school programming is Hellison's Teaching Personal and Social Responsibility (TPSR) Model. This model provides youth experiences of sport and PA while also fostering life skills that can be transferred to life (Hellison, 2011). An area that has not been addressed is how culturally relevant pedagogies (CRP) have been applied in TPSR programs. This seems important since the TPSR model values inclusivity of all youth. Therefore, the purpose of this study is to explore to what extent to TPSR practitioners incorporate CRP into their program. CRP is used in conjunction with the TPSR model (Hellison, 2011) to create and guide the SBYD practitioners' experiences.

Six TPSR practitioners were interviewed to explore their implementation of CRP. The Cultural Relevance Cycle (Flory & McGuaghtry, 2011) was used as a framework for the interview questions. The purpose of this study was to explore to what extent do TPSR practitioners implement CRP in their programs. Culture was informed by gender and ethnicity, and partitioners were asked about the challenges they encounter when being culturally relevant. A demographic questionnaire and archival data were also included in this study.

Data indicated that TPSR practitioners were conscious of their culture, the youths' culture, and the youths' community and educational experiences. How each practitioner came to understand the youths' community and educational process was slightly different. Cross-case commonalities consisted of (a) living in the same neighborhood as the youth they serve, (b) asking youth questions (c) general knowledge of barriers that the youth must overcome. Among community dynamics violence and underserved areas were two major focal points. As for educational experiences many practitioners reported low-quality education and school behavior informing their TPSR program and youth participation. The partitioners implemented strategies to be culturally relevant. These strategies aligned with the TPSR model: (a) relational time and (b) reflection. When discussing gender and ethnicity in relation to culture, practitioners reported

challenges of (a) stereotyping (b) language and (c) friction between ethnic groups. Practitioners reported TPSR being inclusive by offering (a) safe environment and (b) empowering youth. Challenges to being culturally relevant included (a) language, (b) community immersion, (c) location and time, and (d) parents. Lastly, TPSR partitioners were questioned about their critical consciousness. The two largest concerns to the partitioners were (a) low-quality education and (b) urban and low-income life factors. The practitioners utilized this knowledge to inform their program content.

THE EXPLORATION OF TPSR PRACTITIONERS' IMPLEMENTATION OF  
CULTURALLY RELEVANT PEDAGOGIES

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Brittany B. Pinkerton

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Approved by

---

Dr. Tom Martinek  
Committee Chair

## APPROVAL PAGE

This dissertation written by Brittany B. Pinkerton has been approved by the following committee of the Faculty of The Graduate School at The University of North Carolina at Greensboro.

Committee Chair

---

Dr. Tom Martinek

Committee Members

---

Dr. Michael Hemphill

---

Dr. Diane Gill

---

Dr. DeAnne Brooks

---

Dr. Craig Peck

6/23/2021

Date of Acceptance by Committee

6/10/2021

Date of Final Oral Examination

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## CHAPTER I: INTRODUCTION

After school hours or out of school time are critical to youths' development, therefore it's important to emphasize quality and equity of afterschool programs. Approximately 10.2 million youth engage in afterschool programming annually (Afterschool Alliance, 2014). Additionally, the Afterschool Alliance (2014) reports that 41% of youth would participate in an afterschool program if it was available to them, according to their parents. After school programs provide working parents a sense of ease particularly among African American parents and Hispanic parents (Afterschool Alliance, 2014). Out of school and afterschool programs serve youths' interests ranging from academic support, arts, sports, recreation, and more. The framework of positive youth development (PYD) has been applied to such after school programs.

Previous youth development ideologies have focused on deficit-based approaches, trying to solve problems or fix the child in whatever domains he or she is lacking (Benson, 1997). Youth development programs evolved over time and shifted their focus from deficit reduction to an asset enhancement approach thus creating an alternative approach known as PYD. Rather than serving the "social problems industry" (Pitter & Andrews, 1997) PYD programs aim to foster and enhance the positive characteristics youth possess and assist them to contribute to society. PYD typically comprises of three features: a) positive sustained relations with a competent and engaged adult, b) skill development opportunities, and c) opportunities to enact the skills in family, school, and or community settings (Ettekeal, Learner, Agans, Ferris, & Burkhard, 2016). PYD focuses on the child's resources and manifestation of their potentials (Damon, 2004). Not only does a PYD approach focus on a child's assets but also the community in relation to the child (Damon & Gregory, 2002). An important aspect of PYD is to encourage youth to be active agents in their own development as this is an essential aspect in the promotion of PYD (Turnnidge, Côté, Hancock, 2014).

The PYD framework has been applied to sports and physical activity (PA) programs also known as sports-based youth development (SBYD). Fraser-Thomas, Côté, and Deakin (2005) posits that sport has the potential to provide an optimal environment to foster youth development. Being that a large percentage of youth engage in sport and PA programs after school, 56% of youth, after school sport and PA programs are important to explore (National Survey of Children's Health, 2018). Specifically focusing on SBYD, Wiess (2016) differentiates

youth sport programs from youth development programs in that youth sport refers to a traditional teaching of sport skills, and SBYD programs use a deliberate curriculum of asset-building activities, a mastery climate, and intentional program evaluation.

There are various programs and models that promote SBYD ranging from physical skills and ability to life skills and an affective focus. These SBYD programs range from sport for development<sup>1</sup>, outdoor adventure education<sup>2</sup>, sport education<sup>3</sup>, and sport for peace<sup>4</sup>. What all these programs have in common are the principles of PYD such as having opportunities for challenges, supportive relationships, and meaningful involvement in a safe environment (Sibthorp, 2010). One of the common SBYD models is Hellison's Teaching Personal and Social Responsibility (TPSR) Model. This model provides youth experiences of sport and PA while also fostering skills that can be transferred to life (Hellison, 2011). The original purpose of the TPSR framework was to help kids take responsibility for their development and well-being and to contribute to society and help others (Hellison, 2011).

The TPSR model is a framework used in activity settings for youth that fits under the umbrella of PYD and therefore SBYD. This model focuses on five levels of responsibility (Hellison, 2011). Level I: Respecting the rights and feelings of others. Level II: Effort and cooperation. Level III: Self-direction. Level IV: Helping others and leadership. Level V: Transference outside sport setting. The TPSR model also focuses on fostering youth-agency by allowing youth to express their voices and make choices such as which activities they want to engage in, what life skills they want to learn and how they intend to use their life skills outside of the sport or activity settings. The core values of the TPSR model consists of: (a) putting kids first, (b) human decency, (c) holistic self-development, and (d) a way of being. By putting kids first this means that the model utilizes a youth-centered approach that fosters youth empowerment rather than putting an emphasis on physical skill and ability. In relation to cultural

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<sup>1</sup> Prolonged single sport engagement. Engaging in a singular sport year-round (Fraser-Thomas, Côté, & Deakin, 2008).

<sup>2</sup> Outdoor adventure education programs aim to provide youth with novel experiences that incorporate PYD principles such as having opportunities for challenges, supportive relationships, and meaningful involvement in a safe environment (Sibthorp, 2010). no winning or losing but rather cooperation, team building, problem solving and risk taking (Stiehl, 2001).

<sup>3</sup> The sport education model utilizes peer teaching, small group work, and puts responsibility and ownership on students (Siedentop, 1998). The units are made longer into seasons which gives the students more time to learn the culture of the sport and skills.

<sup>4</sup> This curriculum incorporates the principles of team affiliation, ownership, and roles to develop relationships along with element of conflict negotiation and care and concern for others (Ennis et al., 1999).

relevance, at the forefront of the TPSR model are values of empowerment of youth, acknowledgement of youth agency, the fostering youths' voices and choices, and provisions of an inclusive environment. The TPSR model also utilizes a format that fosters the core values of the model. This includes relational time with program participants to build connections, empowerment of youth through encouragement and provision of challenges, integration of the responsibility levels into the PA portion of the program, reflection of what the participants learned and how they expressed the responsibility levels, and lastly examples of explicit application of transference of the responsibility levels outside of the PA setting.

Previous research on the impact of TPSR programs have looked at transference of the TPSR levels outside of PA settings (Barker, Halsall, & Forneris, 2016; Walsh, Ozaeta, & Wright, 2009; Santos, Miguel, Wright, Sá, and Saravia, 2020). Other TPSR research has focused on the impact of TPSR programs on school performance and behavior in school (Martinek & Okseon, 2012). Many TPSR programs cater to underserved youth. Many of the programs serve African American youth and boys (Wright, & Burton, 2008; Cryan, 2013; Walsh, Ozaeta, & Wright, 2009). An area that has not been addressed is how culturally relevant pedagogies have been applied in TPSR programs. This seems important since the TPSR model values inclusivity of all youth. That, inclusivity honors the differences program participants have such as gender, race, class, religion, and geographic/environmental location.

For this study, culturally relevant pedagogy (CRP) will be used in conjunction with the TPSR model (Hellison, 2011) to create and guide the analysis of SBYD practitioners' experiences. CRP has been applied in an educational setting. Cultural relevance, specifically CRP can be understood as "effective means of meeting the social needs of culturally diverse students" (Gay, 2000.) CRP "Teaches to and through strengths of the students. It is culturally validating and affirming." CRP can be understood in various perspectives such as developing youth academically, enhancing youths' sociopolitical and critical consciousness and bridging the cultural gap between youth and program leaders.

CRP has been applied to physical education and utilized a framework termed as the cultural relevance cycle (CRC). The principles of the CRC include (1) understanding the youths' backgrounds (2) knowledge of the youths' community and educational processes and influences (3) strategies to connect to the youths' community (Flory & McCaughtry, 2011). It is important to note that the CRC does not include academic enhancement or critical consciousness therefore

the ideas of cultural relevance and CRP were also used. Additionally, cultural relevance can be understood as (1) developing students academically, (2) willingness to support and nurture cultural competence and (3) developing sociopolitical or critical consciousness (Ladson-Billings, 1995). It appears that the principles of CRP and TPSR model align with one another.

### **Cultural Relevancy, Ethnicity, and Gender**

Unfortunately, Benson, Scales, Hamilton, & Sesma (2006) posited that culture, immigration and ethnicity are missing from PYD frameworks. Being that PYD frameworks and theories are largely used in out-of-school and after school literature it is important to include such characteristics of youth. The present study intends to focus on youth sport and PA program providers and practitioners. Adults, in this case program leaders, serve a unique role in SBYD programs, adults provide opportunities for youth to experience challenges, provide youth with opportunities to develop relationships with a positive adult role models, and set the climate of the program (Larson, 2006; Holt, Neely, Slater et al. 2017; Perkins & Noam, 2006). Adult-driven programming is based off the idea that ‘adults know best’ inflicting adult perspectives on youth. While this may be beneficial in some settings it can lead to youth dissociation from program ownership (Larson, Walking & Pearce, 2005). Furthermore, shortcomings of sport for PYD consisted of poor program design and negative adult influence (Fraser-Thomas, Côté, and Deakin, 2005).

Gender is an important aspect to consider when engaging in youth sport and PA programming. Girls seem to enter sport at a later age than boys and withdrawal from sport at an earlier age than boys (Wiese-Bjornstal & LaVoi, 2007; Sabo & Veliz, 2008). The researchers of a TPSR program discovered that youth leaders and program leaders play an important role in getting girls to be active and participate (Wright, Whitley, & Sabolboro, 2011). Another study focusing on underserved girls’ engagement in a recreational basketball program discovered that adult organizers were a barrier to the girls’ participation in sport. Girls lacked support and resources, faced gender inequality when it came to court space, time for practice and games, and unequal allocation of resources (Cooky, 2009). In a physical education (PE) setting Scraton (1985) revealed that the activities offered were perceived to be male and masculine oriented, and that girls felt sexualized and objectified in their PE classes. These two studies, Cooky (2009) and Scraton (1985) demonstrate how various physical activity settings can be exclusive pertaining to cultural relevance relating to gender. Previous research has shown that girl’s ability to express

themselves and to voice their opinion can influence sport and activity programming. This will enhance their participation in programs (Wright, Whitley, & Sabolboro, 2011; Whitley, 2012; Gordon, 2011).

When focusing on ethnicity, one study unfolded that African immigrants felt as though they had to allocate time for exercise, perceived their neighborhood as unsafe, and parents expressed concerns about their child's interest in after school physical activities (Adekeye, Kimbrough, Obafemi, & Strack, 2014). While there's limited research on ethnic populations and ethnic sub-populations, a study conducted by Simpkins, O'Donnell, Delgado, and Becnel (2011) found that there was great variability of participation in organized PYD programs among Latinx ethnic groups based on markers of cultural orientation (Mexican, Cuban, Puerto Rican, Central/South American). Furthermore, Allison and Hibbler (2010) explored recreational settings, management, practices of the organization and interaction between marginalized individuals and the agency itself. The five themes identified by Allison and Hibbler (2010), encompassed various ways recreation facilities were not culturally responsive to their programming, staffing, language, and has stereotypical attitudes toward ethnically diverse patrons. Therefore, it is imperative that program leaders and staff are culturally aware of the youth they are serving and understand how gender and ethnicity informs youths interest in sport and PA. Program leaders have a position of power that enables them to create the program policy, contents, curriculum, format, and overall feel of the program. Accordingly, it is important for program providers to gain knowledge and understanding of how to best support their youth participants, understand what barriers the population they serve faces, and empower youth to overcome and question the social constructs they face. A particular concern is the practitioners and program providers knowledge of the youths' culture and how their culture is shaped by their gender and ethnicity.

Walsh & Wright (2016) concluded that minimal work has been done in implementing TPSR programs in a way that addresses exclusions due to race, ethnicity, gender, and social inequalities. Previous research has shown that girls' ability to express themselves and to voice their opinion can influence sport and activity programming therefore enhancing their participation in programs (Wright, Whitley, & Sabolboro, 2011; Whitley, 2012; Gordon, 2011). Fredricks & Simpkins (2011) suggest that future studies should include culture, immigration, and ethnicity into PYD theories and theoretical framework. To the researcher's knowledge no

previous work has explored after school or out-of-school TPSR practitioners' experiences with culturally relevant programming and pedagogy. By using a CRP approach as a guiding framework for evaluating the semi-structured individual interviews with TPSR practitioners this research need can be met.

Tom Martinek, and Don Hellison (2016) were featured in a special edition in the Journal of Physical Education, Recreation & Dance discussing the past, present, and future of the TPSR. In this dialogue an important point was made that the future of TPSR relies on leaders constantly addressing new challenges that youth face. The youth participants most likely have different cultural backgrounds than the leaders and practitioners serving them. Therefore, it is important to collect information about how TPSR practitioner's bridge cultural gaps between leaders and participants. How TPSR practitioners create and implement programs that are inclusive to all genders and ethnicities is of interest. In a systematic review about TPSR modeled programs in a PE setting from Pozo, Grao-Cruces and Pérez-Ordás (2016) suggested that future research include the implementation of the TPSR model outside of the PE contexts. Furthermore, little is written about TPSR based programs for girls (Wright, Whitley, & Sabolboro, 2011). Being that the TPSR model has been applied in programs that serve "at-risk" youth, this can also be why much research is focused on males. Due to this at-risk and underserved population focus the CRP also offers a lens to explore what sociopolitical and systemic inequalities youth face, and how these inequalities are addressed in programming. This study addressed those gaps by interviewing TPSR practitioners and their perspectives of cultural relevance regarding youths' ethnicity and gender.

### **Purpose of Study**

The primary purpose of this study was to explore to what extent do TPSR practitioners use CRP in their programming. The TPSR model promotes inclusivity and empowerment of participants, therefore a culturally relevant lens seems like a viable frame to take when exploring TPSR programming. This study also investigated what challenges TPSR programmers face when creating and implementing inclusive programming. This study aims to address the following research questions:

- 1) To what extent is cultural relevance reflected in TPSR according to practitioners?
  - a. How do the practitioners gain knowledge of community dynamics of those that they serve?

- b. How do the TPSR practitioners gain understanding about youths' community and educational processes?
  - c. How the TPSR practitioners interpret youths' community dynamics and education pertaining to the youths' physical activity program engagement?
  - d. What strategies do the TPSR practitioners implement that reflect cultural relevance?
- 2) In what ways did the TPSR practitioners implement inclusiveness in their TPSR modeled program pertaining to gender and ethnicity and what are challenges faced?
  - 3) To what magnitude do the TPSR practitioners develop students academically in their sports-based program?
  - 4) To what degree do the TPSR practitioners promote critical consciousness or socio-political consciousness of the youth in their sports-based program?

### **Limitations**

Being that participants recalled their experiences as a sport and PA program leader, recall effect or inaccuracies due to imperfect memory may act as a threat to validity (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). As the researcher of this study and a TPSR practitioner herself, the findings of this study may be biased. Culture was limited to gender and ethnicity and did not take into account history or traditions. The conduction of case-studies typically means a small sample size and due to the focus on TPSR practitioners the findings of this research may not be applicable to all SBYD programs.

### **Assumptions**

1. During interviews it is assumed that participants will understand the questions and will elaborate on their responses in a truthful way.
2. It is assumed that the researcher will be able to obtain rich and meaningful information from the interviews.
3. It is assumed that the interview participants will have a deep understanding and utilization of the TPSR model and its principles.
4. It is assumed that the TPSR model and practitioners come from an assets-based approach.

## Definitions

*Culture* – customary beliefs, traits of a racial, religious or social group. Characteristic features shared by a group of people. Set of share attitudes, value, and social practices (Mirriam-Webster). Culture will pertain to youths’ beliefs associated with their gender and ethnicity.

*Ethnicity* – representation of one’s cultural heritage (Coakley, 2007; Haney Lopez, 2000). “Quality or affiliation” (Mirriam-Webster, 2020).

*Gender* – characteristics related to the categories of male, female, or combination. Influenced by societal, environmental, and biological factors (Psychology Today, 2020).

*Underserved and At Risk* –have been used synonymously

*At-risk* - understood as youth that have behavior problems and a combination of factors that put them at-risk to fail in life or lack participation in society. Examples include at-risk of dropping out of school and at-risk of engaging in deviant or undesirable behaviors.

*Underserved* – low income, lacking access to public and private services.

## Significance of Study

Okseon & Martinek (2009) suggested that future research should consider youth program participants’ family and peer cultures to understand diverse developmental contexts of youth. The proposed study intends to bridge the gap suggested by Thul and LaVoi (2010) that “further insight into the relationship between PYD with other diverse populations is needed to understand what conditions in PYD frameworks is culturally sensitive.” “Culture, immigration, and ethnicity are largely absent from theories of PYD, the theoretical framework most common in the out-of-school literature” (Benson, Scales, Hamilton, & Sesma, 2006). This study will extend upon the use and impact of the TPSR model by evaluating practitioners and program leaders’ thoughts on CRP and inclusion in relation to the TPSR model. The contribution of this study will provide insight about implementing culturally responsive programming. To the researcher’s knowledge there are no empirical studies that evaluate TPSR practitioners’ implementation of CRP.

## CHAPTER II: REVIEW OF LITERATURE

There is considerable research on PYD and SBYD practices and programs. However, more is needed (National Research Council and Institute of Medicine, 2002). Much of the previous research has been conducted on sports and physical skill ability. Additional research has shown that a disproportionate number of boys engage in sport over girls and even more minimal is the number of girls of color in sport and activity settings (Kimm, Glynn, Kriska, Barton, Krönsberg, Daniels, et al., 2002). While these previous studies about youth in sport settings are important to consider, there is limited knowledge regarding specific models that can be used to enhance youth and girls of color engagement in PA programs and their experiences in such programs. PA and sport programs can range from school related sports, club and intramural activities to out of school club, sport and recreational leagues.

This literature review is a summary of the history and the current stance about culturally relevant programming regarding youths' gender and ethnicity. SBYD models used in sport, PA, and PE contexts where underserved youth participate in activity will also be explored. This retrospective multi-case study intends to gain insight into SBYD TPSR practitioners' understanding, implementation and challenges of providing inclusive programming for youth of all genders and ethnicities.

The review of literature is divided into four main areas. The first section will describe PYD and the evolution of PYD and its expansion to sports and PA contexts, which places importance of youth empowerment. The second section includes an explanation of sports-based youth development (SBYD) and various physical SBYD models. The third section will describe the TPSR model and research related to Hellison's (2011) TPRS model. The fourth section will explain cultural relevance pedagogy (CRP). The goal is to link CRP and the TPSR model in practice. This approach will guide the current study in exploring TPSR practitioners' experiences of cultural relevance pertaining to gender and ethnicity.

### **Positive Youth Development (PYD)**

Historically youth development utilized a treatment or deficits reduction approach when working with youth. Three common themes in these programs consisted of a focus on treatment, prevention of at-risk youth from engaging in undesirable activities or behavior modification and providing programming for youth who have not reached the at-risk stage yet (Pittman, Irby,

Tolman, Yohalem, & Ferber, 2003). In the field of youth development, a ‘deficit reduction’ approach was taken to address youth behavior problems (Benson, 1997). Youth development was a key feature in the “social problems industry” (Pitter, & Andrews, 1997). Youth development programs were created to solve the problem that youth were perceived to be to society. The at-risk label of youth differs depending on the program the youth are in. For instance, at-risk has been insinuated that the youth is at-risk of not completing middle school (Gordon, Jacobs, & Wright, 2016). Those at-risk of dropping out of school or having low self-efficacy (Escartí, Gutiérrez, Pascual, & Marín, 2010). Additionally, at-risk has been used to describe youth that may be bored after school, be deviant or disruptive, and a targeted population that can be changed into healthy productive citizens (Coakley, 2011). The term at-risk has also been used synonymously with the term underserved. Underserved has been described in various ways such as youth from low-income households, have limited access to public services, and cannot afford private services (Pitter & Andrews, 1997). Additional considerations when categorizing youth as underserved are systemic and structural factors that are in place. For instance, “urban communities and schools have long been plagued with a myriad of sociocultural factors that prohibit adequate physical activity for students during the school day” (Whalen, McCaughtry, Garn, Kulik, Centeio, et al., 2016 p 640). Furthermore, Hamilton, Hamilton, and Pitman (2004 p 11) concluded that “Emphasizing the problem of children or labeling them affects them and enhances the self-fulfilling prophecy. Their ‘at risk’ selection confirms their identity as troubled and stigmatizes them which may unintentionally reinforce undesirable behavior”.

Youth development programs have shifted their focus from deficit reduction to an asset enhancement approach. Rather than serving the “social problems industry” PYD programs aim to foster and enhance the positive characteristics youth possess and assist them to contribute to society. However, it is important to critically question what are these programs “developing” in youth and who has access to this “development”. The PYD framework consists of principles that were designed to focus on the assets of youth, particularly of youth that were deemed as at-risk. Fortunately, the PYD framework or ‘asset building paradigm’ has been shown to be as effective as a ‘deficit reduction program’ in promoting youth development and reducing youth behavior problems (Benson, 1997). Not only does a PYD approach focus on a child’s assets but also the community in relation to the child (Damon & Gregory, 2002). This means that PYD

programming takes a whole child approach. PYD typically comprises of three features: (a) positive sustain relations with a competent and engaged adult, (b) skill development opportunities, and (c) opportunities to enact the skills in family, school, and or community settings (Ettekeal, Learner, Agans, Ferris, & Burkhard, 2016). An important aspect of PYD is to encourage youth to be active agents in their own development as this is an essential aspect in the promotion of PYD (Turnnidge, Côté, Hancock, 2014). When applying this shift in viewing youth agency, perceiving children as fully able, explorative, and competent, it is believed that children can make a difference in society (Damon, 2004). PYD programs develop youth that can engage in a civil society.

### **Youth Development Frameworks and Theories**

PYD has taken on many frameworks, theories, and applications. One of these is the Five C's model of PYD developed by Lerner et al. (20012) in a study on 4-H programs. This approach helps youth thrive using youths' strengths regarding competence, confidence, character, caring, and connection (Lerner et al., 2012). When these 5 components are strengthened a sixth C emerges in the form of contribution to the community. Within this framework there are specific practices that can foster the 5 C's such as providing opportunities to build supportive relationships with adults, leadership opportunities, and to practice life skills (Lerner et al., 2012).

The National Research Council and Institute of Medicine (NRCIM) (2002) also noted a wholistic development approach to PYD specifically focusing on physical development, intellectual development, and psychological and emotional development, and social development. Further the NRCIM (2002) created a list of recommendations for community youth programs consisting of: (a) physical and psychological safety, (b) appropriate structure, (c) supportive relationships, (d) opportunities for belonging, (e) positive social norms, (f) support for efficacy and mattering, (g) opportunities for skill building, and (h) integration of family, school, and community. While research was provided by the NRCIM to support their claims they also recommend that more comprehensive research is needed and an inclusion of a wider range of populations from children and adolescents to adulthood and older (2002).

Fraser-Thomas et al. (2005), and Petitpas, Cornelius, Van Raalte, and Jones (2005) proposed that PYD is enhanced when (a) youth acquire developmental outcomes, (b) activities are conducted within appropriate contexts, and (c) when youth are surrounded by positive

external assets (positive relationships). Petitpas, Cornelius, Van Raalte, & Jones (2005) found that these PYD principles applied to SBYD must also be explicit in nature and show youth how they can be transferred to their daily life.

Another PYD framework is the 40 Development Assets Model originally developed by Benson (1997). The Search Institute (2003) built programs and age-based approaches based upon 40 developmental assets. These assets consist of 20 internal and 20 external components. External assets focus on support, empowerment, boundaries and expectations, and constructive use of time. Internal assets are comprised of commitment to learning, positive values, social competencies, and positive identity (Search Institute, 2003). Unfortunately, Wiese-Bjornstal & LaVoi (2007) discovered that girls fail to accrue these 40 developmental assets due to limited engagement and a decline in PA and sporting activities.

It is also important to consider how the program leaders and staff may impact PYD programs. When implementing PYD programs there may be differentiating program principles based off adult-driven program implementation and youth-driven implementation. Larson, Walker & Pearce (2005) conducted a study analyzing the strengths and differences of adult driven and youth-driven programs. Adult-driven programming is based off the idea that ‘adults know best’ inflicting adult perspectives on youth. While this may be beneficial in some settings it can lead to youth dissociation from program ownership (Larson, Walker & Pearce, 2005). On the other hand, youth-driven programming allow youth to create their own experiences. This approach too has its shortcomings such as lack of direction and lack of experience (Larson, Walker, & Pearce, 2005). Ultimately, PYD programming should take on a youth-centered approach that honors youths’ opinions and ownership over the program (Larson, Walker, & Pearce, 2005). PYD frameworks and theories can be applied to many types of youth programs such as mentoring, art, and more. However, SBYD programs offer a unique setting that also has a dynamic of performance, and inherent properties of team experiences and opportunities for competition.

### **Sports-based Youth Development**

Under the umbrella of PYD is the application of PYD principles to sport. It has been assumed that sport has an inherent way to develop youth (Coakley, 2011). Sport for youth labeled as at-risk or underserved has been thought to provide social interventions, crime prevention, and risk reduction (Hartmann & Kwauk, 2011). The values of athletics are widely

accepted even though they have not been shown to positively or negatively impact character (Rees, 1997). Strachan, Fraser-Thomas, and Nelson-Ferguson (2016) found both positive and negative outcomes associated with organized youth sports. Positive findings consisted of youth possessing positive developmental outcomes and contributed within their community (Strachan, Fraser-Thomas, and Nelson-Ferguson, 2016). Additionally, Fraser-Thomas, Côté, and Deakin (2005) proposed that sport has the potential to provide an optimal environment to foster youth development. Negative findings concluded that peer pressure, burnout, and drop out of sport may happen if the coaches, parents, and peers do not take on a PYD strengths-based approach (Strachan, Fraser-Thomas, & Nelson-Ferguson, 2016). The demands of higher performance in youth sport could disrupt PYD (Strachan, Fraser-Thomas & Nelson-Ferguson, 2016). Furthermore, shortcomings of sport for PYD consisted of poor program design and negative adult influence (Fraser-Thomas, Côté, and Deakin, 2005). Fraser-Thomas, Côté, and Deakin (2005) suggests that for SBYD programs to be positively developmental, programs should provide an environment that nurtures a sense of belonging, takes on a child-centered approach, promotes autonomy, empowerment, and provides opportunities to experience challenges. Figure 1 illustrates a physical activity curricula model showing the range of focus of models from specificity of fitness and motor skills to those zeroing in on youth development principles and affective life skills.

### **Sports-based Youth Development Models**

SBYD models vary from being sport focused with little to no intentions to teach life skills or transference of skill from sport to life, while other programs focus on life skill transference and less on motor skill development. However, Wiess (2016) differentiates youth sport programs from youth development programs in that youth sport refers to a traditional teaching of sport skills, and SBYD programs use a deliberate curriculum of skill-building activities, a mastery climate, and typically program evaluation. Petitpas, Cornelius, Van Raalte, & Jones (2005) suggest that for SBYD programs to effectively promote PYD they should foster psychosocial development by providing youth with an appropriate environment, caring and positive adults and community, and opportunities for skill acquisition. Other factors that influence the youths' development in a SBYD program includes program design, promotion of autonomy for youth, allowing youth to be engaged participants rather than recipients, and providing opportunities to challenge themselves. Coakley (2016) brings attention to the

differentiation between *plus sports* and *sports plus* programs. A plus sports program is a program that uses PYD principles and then adds sport, conversely a sport plus program adds some PYD to an already existing sport-based program. Coakley (2016) critiques SBYD programs indicating that youth ought to be empowered. Empowerment in PYD is supposed to help youth realize how to critically assess and transform structures that unfairly disadvantage some people and advantage others; however, this approach is rarely used especially in sports via coaching. Sports settings have interesting findings, athletes appear to use lower stages of reasoning in sport situations than real-life predicaments (Wandzilak, 1985). In an intramural sport setting youth experienced enjoyment, but also negative outcomes due to lack of sportsmanship, aggression, cursing and not listening to the referee (Holt, Sehn, Spence, Newton, & Ball 2012). For a program to be SBYD the principles of PYD must be applied. This can be produced by coach, parent, and peer who have knowledge on youth-centered approaches to programming and curriculum.

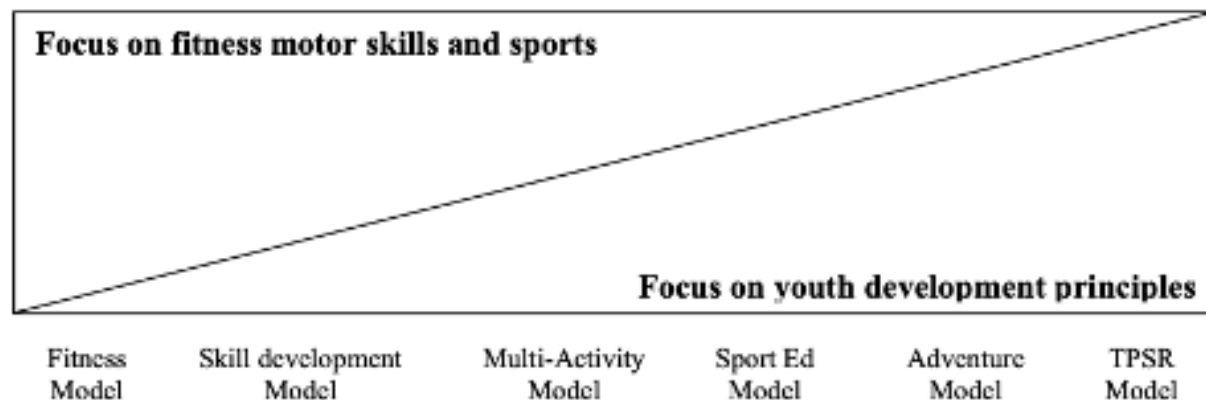


Figure 1: Physical Activity Curricula Model

As indicated in Figure 1 above, the left shows fitness and motor skill focused curricula. When youth are placed in a skill development focused program there may be some shortcomings. One shortcoming can be that the program is a sport plus program attempting to add some PYD ideas. Youth sport programs that do not align with the SBYD principles focus on motor and sport skill attainment, which can have negative effects on youth participants such as injuries, eating disorders, burnout and withdrawal (Fraser-Thomas, Côté, & Deakin, 2005). Fraser-Thomas, Côté, & Deakin (2008) used a developmental lens to examine the impact that prolonged single sport engagement has. They (2008) found that youth who are invested in a

single sport year-round had higher dropout rates from sport than peer that did not invest in a single year-round sport. Coaches and parents influence youths' participation in sport. Coaches can provide support and encourage sport diversification, parents can provide support and understand their changing roles to limit sport dropout (Fraser-Thomas, Côté, & Deakin, 2008). Other extra-curricular activities, and fun and motivational climates should be provided for youth in sport (Fraser-Thomas, Côté, & Deakin, 2008).

In the middle of the figure lies the Multi-Activity model this model is typically used in PE settings. The dominant PE model is multi-sport has been characterized by Locke (1992) as requiring attendance, class assignment without the consideration of the students' needs, short classes with time wasted by managerial rituals, short units therefore only a brief introduction to each sport, evaluation based on rule-compliance and participation, and program content is based on the teacher's interest and convenience. Some negative findings of the multi-activity model as it is used in PE contexts have been that there is limited time and therefore limited instruction for each sport, students are not placed in a position to gain responsibility, and those considered to be unskilled remain behind (Ennis, 1999). However, some preservice-teachers in PE enjoyed the multi-sport model, it was easier to teach, allowed the pre-service teachers to have more control over their class, easier to plan lessons, and feel as though they have more time to dedicate to teaching skills (Curtner-Smith & Sofo, 2004). The multi-activity model as used in PE classes provides a physical or skill component as well as an educational component. While the intent is for both skills and education to be balanced and even, as indicated above grading seems to be skills based and time constraints may limit the amount of education youth receive.

Sport education curriculum also lies in the middle of the physical activity curricula spectrum. The sport education curriculum was discovered by Siedentop (1994). This model is also used in a PE settings and focuses on different sports; however, this model has a different dynamic than the traditional multi-activity model. The sport education model utilizes peer teaching, small group work, and puts responsibility and ownership on students (Siedentop, 1998). The units are made longer into seasons which gives the students more time to learn the culture of the sport and skills. Further the sport education model teaches youth other roles in sports such as statistics keeping, officiating, and managing (Siedentop, 1998). In this model youth are also matched based on ability and rules are modified to incorporate more students therefore aligning more with PYD practices.

Towards the right of the physical curricular model Figure 1 lies adventure-based programs. Curricula that utilize PA but in a different setting such as outdoors are typically referred to as adventure-based programs. Adventure-based programs and outdoor education programs can also fall under the umbrella of SBYD. Outdoor adventure education programs aim to provide youth with novel experiences that incorporate PYD principles such as having opportunities for challenges, supportive relationships, and meaningful involvement in a safe environment (Sibthorp, 2010). Unique to outdoor and adventure models is that there is no winning or losing but rather cooperation, team building, problem solving and risk taking (Stiehl, 2001). Outdoor adventure programs can offer distinctive experiences due to the outdoor multi week expeditions that provide youth the opportunity to try new behaviors and leadership positions in a small group setting (Sibthorp & Morgan, 2011). A short-coming of adventure-based programs is that it is difficult to make a community and family connection due to experiences offered in remote settings (Sibthorp & Morgan, 2011).

Some SBYD activity models focus less on physical skill and ability but more on values and life skills. While the Sport for peace is a curriculum, it is not included in figure 1, this curriculum also lies towards the right of the physical activity curricula spectrum. The sport for peace curriculum was coined by Ennis et al., (1999) through combining Siedentop's (1994) sport education model with multiple elements of peace education theories but specifically Carson's (1992) peace education theory. This curriculum incorporates the principles of team affiliation, ownership, and roles to develop relationships along with an element of conflict negotiation and care and concern for others (Ennis et al., 1999). Some positive outcomes have been found in PE classes that use the sport for peace curriculum. Such findings include diminishing disruptions to the behaviors of dominance and aggressiveness, students develop an affiliation with their 'team' and low-skill students were more included and encouraged (Ennis et al., 1999). However, some low-skilled players did not connect with their classmates and did not participate, therefore the sport for peace curriculum was not able to provide a mechanism to get all students engaged equally (Ennis et al., 1999). Ennis and colleagues (1999) did conclude that the sport for peace curriculum did build care and concern for others in their class which is essential to create trusting and respectful relationships. There has been one program in particular that combines the sport for peace curriculum with a life skills-based curriculum, the TPSR model. This program is called

Beyond the Ball, a basketball program that brings youth and rival gang members together in a safe space.

SBYD models also vary to the other end of the spectrum focusing on life skill development such as leadership, goal setting, and personal and social responsibility with a lesser emphasis on motor skill development. Some of these programs may fall under that category of plus sport. Rather than being a sport plus program, TPSR modeled programs typically take on a life skill-based program plus sport or PA. Thus, utilizing sport as a hook to draw youth into the responsibility-based program. Don Hellison had developed this framework throughout his years as a PE teacher and program leader in various settings involving at-risk and underserved youth. This model provides youth experiences of sport and PA while also fostering skills that can be transferred to life (Hellison, 2011).

The current study intends to relate the TPSR model to CRP and inclusive practices. The TPSR model is a framework used in activity settings for youth that fits under the umbrella of PYD. The TPSR model focuses on life skills and values and disseminates the life skills through sport and activity. The original purpose of the TPSR framework was to help kids take responsibility for their development and well-being and to contribute to society and help others (Hellison, 2011). Historically, the TPSR model was developed in a PE setting at an alternative high school. This model initially was designed for at-risk and underserved youth – those with behavior problems. This model focuses on five levels of responsibility (Hellison, 2011). Level I: Respecting the rights and feelings of others; self-control, peaceful conflict resolution, and inclusion and cooperation. Level II: Effort and cooperation; self-motivation, exploration and attempt of new tasks, and getting along well with others. Level III: Self-direction; On-task and ability to be independent, goal setting, courage to resist peer pressure. Level IV: Helping others and leadership; showing care and compassion, being sensitive and responsive, inner strength and perseverance. Level V: Transference outside sport setting; attempting the ideas in other aspects of life and being a positive role model for others. The TPSR model also focuses on fostering youth-agency by allowing youth to express their voices and make choices such as which activities they want to engage in, and how to use their life skills outside of the sport or other activity settings.

Inherent in sports, PA and PE programs lies values not only belonging to the model being used but also values held by the program leader, stakeholders, and the program's participants.

The core values of the TPSR model consists of: (a) putting kids first, (b) human decency, (c) holistic self-development, and (d) a way of being. By putting kids first this means that the model utilizes a youth-centered approach that fosters youth empowerment rather than putting an emphasis on physical skill and ability. Additionally, by putting kids first, the youths' culture can be accounted for when developing programs. Hellison (2011) believed that human decency is formed from the dynamics of positive relationships. The idea of holistic self-development incorporates physical, mental, social, and emotional development. These concepts are all to be addressed in TPSR programs. TPSR is also a way of being or a spirit, that goes beyond behavior and application to the youth. Leaders and program providers are also to live out the values of the TPSR model. Beyond the four core values of TPSR lies hidden beliefs or assumptions. One specific assumption of this model includes the belief that sport contexts can provide a unique setting and opportunity for youth to grow, and personal and social development through strategies and teacher understanding is required. Another assumption is that for a program to be developmental and holistic there must be guidelines or a focus of the program. If PA and sport are central to the program the teacher or leader ought to be competent and able to incorporate the TPSR ideas into knowledge and pedagogical practices. Lastly, a holistic development of the child means the program leader must provide culturally relevant pedagogical practices. This creates a logical relationship between the TPSR model and CRP as this connection has been explored once before. Shiver, Richards, & Hemphill (2020) linked Flory and McCaughtry's Cultural Relevant Physical Education (CRPE) framework to the TPSR model and pre-service teachers' occupational socialization. The cultural relevance cycle and CRP may be used to explore if and how TPSR practitioners implement culturally relevant pedagogies.

### **TPSR and Inclusivity**

Inclusivity has been a key component of PYD and can be understood as being accommodating to those who qualify (Hamilton, Hamilton, & Pittman, 2004). Inclusion can also be understood as being treated with respect (Ennis, Solmon, Santina, Loftus, Mensch, & McCauley, 1999; Wlodkowski & Ginsberg, 1995). Additionally, Culp (2010) interpreted an inclusive atmosphere as being welcoming to a myriad of learners. For the purpose of this study inclusion can be described as providing a welcoming atmosphere to all youth that are invited to take part of the sport or physical activity-based program. Inclusion extends beyond a welcoming atmosphere, it is also intentional in how youth are included, and how peers treat one another to

ensure respect of one another. Specifically, inclusivity focuses on cultural constructs such as gender and ethnicity of youth.

The TPSR model is widely used in SBYD contexts, however few programs have focused on girls' engagement in TPSR modeled program. Much previous TPSR work has been conducted with males such as Jacobs, Wright, & Condon's (2014) program "Project leadership", Wright's (2012) partnership program with the YMCA Community Action Program in Memphis that serves young males, Cheryl Coulson and colleagues' recreational therapy program that served boys 14-16 years of age, and Wright, Dyson, & Moten (2012) TPSR research on four case studies involved African American Males. While this is a short list the dominant theme is for TPSR programs to be male-centered, leaving girl's experiences in TPSR programs to be unheard. This male-centered approach can be attributed to the idea that historically the TPSR model served at-risk youth, assumed to be male youth of color.

However, some findings concluded how the TPSR principles helped enhance girls' participation. For instance, Whitley (2012) who traveled to South African and contributed to the Ikhaya sport program that served both boys and girls noticed that girls were not participating in the PA provided due to girl's lack of interest in fútbol. Through empowerment of voice and selection Whitley allowed the girls to select to play netball instead. In another TPSR modeled program study (Gordon, 2011), Sally, a PE teacher in New Zealand used the TPSR model in place of the standard PE curriculum. By using the TPSR model she was able to allow the class to choose what physical activities and sports they wanted to do. Interestingly, by permitting youth to choose their activity boys selected rugby and soccer while girls selected netball and unsure options which turned into Tae Kwon Do. By allowing youth to have options Sally was able to cater to the needs of both boys and girls.

In another TPSR modeled program that focused on girls, Wright, Whitley, & Sabolboro (2011) conducted a TPSR modeled summer camp, *Let's Move it!*, for underserved girls at a women's shelter in Detroit, Michigan. The researchers discovered that youth leaders and program leaders play an important role in getting girls to play. Additionally, the researchers found that allowing girls to express their voice and choose which sports are to be incorporated into the program enhanced participation.

Mowling, Brock, & Hastie (2011) explored the importance of culturally relevant pedagogy in a TPSR initiative applied to a physical education curriculum among African

American youth. The purpose of this study was to examine African American children's attitudes and beliefs regarding personal and social responsibility issues in PE. From that study the researchers noticed that youth divided into groups by gender and race. Furthermore, that study gave voice to African American and Hispanic students. The perceptions of responsibility varied according to racial differences, for instance African American girls viewed responsibility as speaking the truth no matter what, however Hispanic girls viewed responsibility as also being polite and making sure the truth is not harmful toward others. Ultimately, cultural differences impacted youths' interpretations of personal and social responsibility, and programmers need to get to know each child individually to understand their cultural background (Mowling, Brock, & Hastie, 2011).

### **Gender and Culture**

While PYD and SBYD practices have a plethora of positive attributes, cultural relevance pertaining to gender and ethnicity may still be a cause of concern. "Only the term culturally responsive appears to refer to a more dynamic of synergistic relationship between home/community culture and school culture" (Ladson-Billings, 1995). A cultural relevant framework will be used to learn how the TPSR model and TPSR practitioners use the TPSR principles to enhance girls and ethnic minority youths' participation in PA programs. According to Gay (2013) when practicing culturally responsive teaching "the first step is to acknowledge and understand its causes, manifestations, and consequences" of achievement gaps between white Eurocentric cultures and non-Eurocentric cultures. By focusing on inclusivity and cultural responsiveness there's a potential to disrupt the homogeneity grouping youth by gender and ethnicity and allow for the analysis of girls' and varying ethnicities inclusion in a SBYD program.

Gender and culture inform and impact one another. Sport as a culture in and of itself is gendered to empower and embrace male participants (Birrell, 2000). The majority of youth programs and drop-in centers for children and adolescents have male-oriented cultures (The Women's Sport Foundation Report, 2004). Cooky (2009) in an earlier study utilized a feminist lens when evaluating a community basketball program for minority girls. Cooky found that girls faced barriers of adult organizers lacking support and resources, gender inequality when it came to court space, time for practice and games, and unequal allocation of resources. Furthermore, some coaches believed that 'girls just aren't interested'. Girls in immigrant families report lower

rates of athletic participation than males within the same families (Sabo & Veliz, 2008). This is due to the perceived lack of upward mobility has for girls in sport and PA settings versus boys in sport and PA settings (Coakley, 2009). In recreational settings Allison and Hibbler (2004) found that staff lacking cultural sensitivity and understanding of diversity were major barriers for girls of color to engage in sport. In a physical education settings Ennis (1999) found that the utilization of culturally relevant pedagogy (CRP) was meaningful and nurturing to girls in PE. By utilizing a culturally relevant approach it acknowledges that the identities that youth hold, may impact their ability to access sport and activity, and influence their experiences in sport and PA settings.

The utilization of CRP can offer insightful information when researching underserved youth and girls in sport and PA settings. Sport and PA are part of our culture and therefore have socially constructed and culturally constructed beliefs attached to them. Women, girls, and populations that are othered in sport and PA settings must navigate these constructs in a way that is culturally acceptable. According to The Women's Sport Foundation (2004) the preventative health message is clear; girls deserve and need access to opportunities for participation in sport and PA. Specifically using a culturally responsive approach, youths' cultural practices of gender and ethnicity will help minimize the placing of girls and youth of color into one homogeneous group. By understanding youths' differing cultures and values, sport and PA providers can create better programs tailored toward the youth they serve and keep girls and oppressed population in sport and activity. This could help counteract the findings of Allison and Hibbler (2004), who found that recreation managers that displayed stereotypical and prejudicial attitudes as well as lack of cultural sensitivity were reported to be major barriers for underserved minority youth.

### **Ethnicity and Culture**

CRP has been explored and applied in educational settings. For instance, Howard (2003) suggested that teachers must utilize pedagogies that are culturally relevant to their students. "Teachers must construct pedagogical practices in ways that are culturally relevant, racially affirming, and socially meaningful for their students" (Howard, 2003 p 197). "It is common for cultural competency to be used in reference to groups besides race such as women and girls, elderly, gays and lesbians, people with disabilities, and religious minorities" (Brach & Fraserirector, 2000 p 183). Culture is associated with ethnicity and can impact what sports and PA children value and have access to. Important to note is that many studies have focused on

broad racial-ethnic groups rather than ethnic sub-groups and used race and ethnicity interchangeably therefore making it hard to tease out racial and ethnic differences. One study that focused on race and gender was by Hannon, Soohoo, Reel, & Ratliffe (2009) found that White boys and Black boys had differing perspective on sports. White boys believed that wrestling and hockey was for boys and that aerobic and gymnastics are more suitable for girls, while Black boys believed that football and boxing were most appropriate for boys and gymnastics for girls. In another study focusing on broad racial-ethnic groups comparing African American youths' interest in middle school scholastic sport versus a middle school that only offers intramural sport, the researchers found that volleyball was the only intramural sport that was near equal proportions based on gender and race (Edwards, Bocarro, Kanters, & Casper, 2011). Nearly the same amount of youth engaged about equally in their school's sport-based activities. Additional findings consist of White boys and Black boys and girls participated in more intramural sports than White girls, who were found participating in more interscholastic sports. Black boys predominately participated in basketball, football, and ultimate frisbee, Black girls made up the entire cheerleading team, and white girls were predominately participating in soccer and softball (Edwards, Bocarro, Kanters, & Casper, 2011). These findings indicate that broad racial-ethnic and culture impact what sports youth are interested in. Howard (2003) relates ethnicity to culture and how they are important concepts in teaching and learning. Some pre-service teachers noted race as being an obstruction and that race influenced different cultures. Furthermore, pre-service teachers journaled about having utopian thoughts when dealing with cultural differences such as 'why can't we all get along' or 'race should not play a role in sports' (Culp, Chepyator-Thomson, & Hsu, 2009).

As indicated above previous research has not focused on ethnic subgroups and only general racial-ethnic groups. As Thul, LaVoi, and Wasend (2018) critiqued of previous immigrant studies, the focus has only been on broad racial-ethnic immigrant groups rather than include ethnic immigrant sub-populations. While still a broad grouping, Adekeye, Kimbrough, Obafemi, and Strack (2014), explored African immigrants views on health, access, resources, and perceived barriers. Their study unfolded that African immigrants felt as though they had to allocate time for exercise, perceived their neighborhood as unsafe, and parents expressed concerns about their child's interest in after school physical activities. Moreover, immigrant African youth experienced belittling from classmates due to their accent and traditional clothing

(Adekeye, Kimbrough, Obafemi, & Strack, 2014). However, on a positive note African immigrant youth felt as though their teachers did a good job at representing all culture through small group assignments (Adekeye, Kimbrough, Obafemi, & Strack, 2014).

While there are limited studies on ethnic subpopulations Thul and LaVoi (2010) explored Muslim East African girls' barriers and facilitators to PA. Facilitators to the girls' engagement in PA included culturally relevant programming, fun, and a good instructor, one that is a female, culturally sensitive, respectful, and understanding of religious beliefs, and for the girls to have a say in the creation of the program. Perceived barriers to PA for the East African Muslim girls consisted of male-dominated spaces, lack of parental support and understanding, and resources such as a girl-only facility, locker room, and uniforms. Fredricks and Simpkin (2012) used the ecodevelopmental theory to inform their research on after-school PYD program impact on ethnic minority youth. There was some inconsistency in the outcomes of the findings due to placing youth with the same racial/ethnic affiliation into a single group rather than accounting for subpopulations causing two groups, African Americans, and Latinx. Ultimately, Fredricks and Simpkins (2012) concluded that various types of organized PYD programs are associated with positive academic impact, psychological impact, and social adjustment with the caveat that outcomes associated with participation may vary among subgroups within broad racial/ethnic groups and that the macro factor of ethnicity impacts youth participation and therefore the related outcomes. For instance, a study conducted by Simpkins, O'Donnell, Delgado, and Becnel (2011) found that there was great variability of participation in organized PYD programs among Latinx ethnic groups based on markers of cultural orientation (Mexican, Cuban, Puerto Rican, Central/South American).

One previous study utilized a co-cultural theory as a lens to explore recreational settings regarding staff behaviors and management, policies and practices and interactions between marginalized individuals and the agency itself (Allison & Hibbler, 2010). The concern of the study was on how recreation professionals of color perceive barriers within their recreational agency rather than ethnically diverse youth. Participants of color categorized themselves as African American, Hispanic, and Native American. A pitfall that the recreational professionals felt was that their facility had an inability to recognize and respond appropriately to their changing local community. These changes in community included cultural shifts, societal traditions, and different language and communication patterns. Allison and Hibbler (2010)

further discovered that staff composition needs to change to reflect the ethnic diversity that they are sharing, but without hindering staff's ability to move to a different position. Furthermore, recreational facilities must be mindful to not make the ethnically diverse staff member be the 'spokesperson' for a particular ethnic group. Similarly, the ethnic minority staff was also placed the responsibility of programming for ethnically diverse youth. Allison and Hibbler (2010) concluded that recreational management and staff must be aware of who they are serving and how they can bridge the cultural gaps between the recreation center, policies, and outreach, with whom they serve.

Some proponents of PYD and SBYD programs may utilize aspects of culturally relevant ideologies and are further explained in the following section. Examples of cultural relevance found in SBYD programs consist of striving to understand how youth communicate, being responsive to ethnic and gender differences, and gaining knowledge of youths' community dynamics. Program leaders have a position of power that enables them to create the program contents, curriculum, format, and overall feel of the program. Giles & Darroch (2014) argued that culturally safe PA programs must be offered to address health inequalities between indigenous and non-indigenous populations. The researchers also concluded that programmers have the potential to decrease health inequalities between indigenous and non-indigenous peoples. In America, Lavoie, Thul, & Wasend (2018) discovered that immigrant youth are less likely to engage in after-school activities compared to native-born youth. Within PE contexts, pre-service PE teachers discovered noticeable differences between youths' varying forms of communication, language, and non-verbal behaviors, based on cultural groups (Culp, Chepyator-Thomson, & Hsu, 2009). Flory & McCaughtry (2011) also engaged in research involving culturally relevant PE and discovered that teachers that demonstrated cultural relevance used bilanguage students to serve as translators, used demonstrations to communicate, and learned common key phrases in the youths' native language. Allison and Hibbler (2010 p 268), advocate that "there is a need for greater diversity in programming, greater cross-cultural knowledge and sensitivity to staff, and greater willingness to be responsive in multiple ways to these diverse communities."

### **Cultural Relevance**

Cultural relevance, cultural responsiveness, culturally relevant pedagogies are all terms that have been used to describe how teachers navigate and provide strengths based and culturally

affirming pedagogical practices for youth that may have a different cultural background than the teacher. Gay (2000 p 29) describes CRP as “the cultural knowledge, prior experiences, frames of reference, and performance styles of ethnically diverse students to make learning more relevant and effective. Teaching to and through strengths of these students and is culturally validating and affirming.” According to Ladson-Billings (1995 p 469) culturally relevant pedagogy is critical it “not only addresses student achievement but also helps students to accept and affirm their cultural identity while developing critical perspectives that challenges inequalities.” To Ladson-Billings (1995) cultural relevance can be understood as (1) developing students academically, (2) willingness to support and nurture cultural competence, and (3) developing sociopolitical or critical consciousness.

Flory & McCaughtry (2011) relate culturally responsive and cultural relevance by noting three common themes between the two; (1) having sophisticated knowledge of community dynamics, (2) know how community dynamics influence educational processes, and (3) implement strategies reflecting cultural knowledge of the community. Thus, creating the Cultural Relevant Cycle shown below in Figure 2.



Figure 2: Cultural Relevance Cycle

The first step means that the teacher should be knowledgeable of the youths’ community such as family structures, ethnicity, language, socio-economic state, religion, immigration issues, familial norms, and cultural practices (Flory & McCaughtry, 2011). Secondly, understanding community influences on education means knowledge about parental support, religious

observations and practices, communication languages between child and parents, and family responsibility as well as possible traumatic family events (Flory & McCaughtry, 2011). The third principle means that teachers need to adapt their class to the student's needs and provide culturally relevant instruction (Flory & McCaughtry, 2011). Further Flory and McCaughtry utilized the cultural relevance cycle to explore if PE teachers create culturally responsive classes, how they implement their cultural knowledge and bridge the cultural gap between teacher and student as well as between classmates.

The cultural relevance cycle can be used to address the TPSR model's framework of inclusivity and assist in combating sport and PA programs that lack cultural relevance. The cultural relevance cycle framework consists of knowing the public or population being served, acknowledge the cultural distance between the researcher and youth participants, and lastly bridging the cultural distance by using the youths' cultural strengths to implement the program (Flory & McCaughtry, 2011). Additionally, a broader CRP framework offers a sociopolitical or critical consciousness component as well as academic development of youth.

Sociopolitical or critical consciousness can be thought of assisting youth with identifying and challenging inequities in settings such as schools and other institutions (Ladson-Billings, 1995). Critical in CRP also refers to the engagement of practitioners, teachers, and leaders with larger social structural issues and to teach students and youth to identify and understand the present social order. This implies that practitioners, teachers, and leaders can identify and recognize social inequalities and inequities that are within the youths' community, education, and other systems.

When the cultural relevance cycle was applied to PE teachers, teachers need to understand youths' community dynamics (Flory and McCaughtry, 2011). Therefore, TPSR practitioners must understand the youths' culture that they serve such as how their community dynamics of family structure including ethnicity, socioeconomic background, level of violence, immigration status, and current events. Regarding PE teachers, they need to know how community dynamics influence youths' educational process (Flory and McCaughtry, 2011).

CRP incorporates academic development of youth. While TPSR programs traditionally are applied to sports and PA. Life skills are also part of TPSR and a focal point of all programs. Being that TPSR is applied in a sport and PA setting, physical literacy would ideally be enhanced. In TPSR programming there is an awareness talk at this point in the program youth

are given the opportunity to create their own meanings of life skills. The life skills are then embedded into the program therefore offering youth an opportunity to demonstrate the skill. At the conclusion of the program youth are given the chance to reflect on their life skills and demonstrate their concept of the skill and other ways they can apply the skill.

Additionally, in the present study TPSR practitioners must understand how community dynamics influence youths' educational process, in this case, how the youths' community influences their PA involvement and engagement. Such as how much parental support do the youth receive, what religious observations and practices that may interfere with programs, methods used for communication and language, and youths' responsibilities at home. Lastly, the provision of culturally relevant programming means the TPSR practitioner needs to reflect on their own cultural knowledge to accommodate to student's needs. An example of this is having a bilingual student assist with language barriers and the provision of transportation. Furthermore, by using cultural knowledge to bridge the cultural distance between youth and TPSR practitioners, program providers must be mindful of their cultural values and how they impact or are projected on to youth whose family may have differing values.

A CRP lens incorporates a critical component. This aspect of the framework also takes on a sociopolitical aspect such as youth empowerment, the teaching of 'white' values as a means to increase at-risk and underserved youths' ability to navigate the dominant culture. Previous research has noted that Schools tend to be structured around the most dominant norms, ideas, languages, and social practices of a society; if a student does not maintain or is not familiar with these concepts then they tend to be unsuccessful in their educational endeavors (Howard 2003). When teachers do not share physical or cultural traits with their students, it is likely to lead to the student being identified as remedial and may ultimately result in a distaste for education, failure, and/or dropping out (Gay 2010). In this case the CRP framework is being applied to sport and PA, which have been used for social interventions and crime prevention (Hartmann & Kwauk, 2011). Moreover, Hartmann and Kwauk (2011) suggests that the sport can serve two purposes, the dominant idea is that sport functions to maintain and reproduce established inequalities, or a radical interventionist approach views sport as a way to transform and change social life. In relation to TPSR that has a component focusing on youth empowerment, sport and PA can be used as a liberatory action that empower youth to make sense of their life and also teach the values of the dominant culture.

In a previous study Gordon, Jacobs, and Wright (2016) linked the TPSR instructional model with social emotional learning (SEL) outcomes. They found that TPSR format of relational time, awareness talk, physical activity time, and group discussion and reflection time makes the TPSR model viable in supporting SEL outcomes (2016). The current study intends to link the TPSR model's core values of: (a) putting kids first, (b) human decency, (c) holistic self-development, (d) a way of being, with the cultural relevance cycle and the broader understanding of CRP.

As noted by McCullick, Lux, Belcher, and Davies (2012) teachers involved in PE teacher education tend to be white and of middle class. Therefore, their demographic background of race and class plays a role in their beliefs and how they teach (Howard, 2003). Flory & McCaughtry (2011) studied PE teacher's cultural relevant practices and discovered that some teachers kept their deficit perspective and blamed the community dynamics for the student's failure. Some aspects of culture that teachers either saw as a barrier or overcame utilizing the cultural relevance cycle (Flory & McCaughtry, 2011). Furthermore, this notion of race and class impacting teacher's ability to teach cross culturally was noted by preservice teachers, the differences preservice teachers noted between themselves and the youth they taught was class, race, and family structure (Shiver, Richards, & Hemphill, 2020).

Flory & McCaughtry (2011) identified four themes relating to their cultural relevance cycle that PE teachers enacted. The four features were care, respect, language and communication, and lastly, curricular content. Caring was shown through having concern for the youths' well-being physically and mentally, and for mastery of content and success. As (Gay, 2000; Howard, 2001; and Valenzuela, 1999) all found, care is a critical component of effective teaching. This notion of care provides a foundation and reason for engaging in CRP. Secondly, PE teachers enacted respect, such as flattening hierarchies by implementing policies to minimize social hierarchies and created a sense of community among the students. Third, language and communication such as learning key phrases in the youths' native language and used pop culture expressions. Lastly, PE teachers made curricular content more relative and enjoyable for youth.

Howard (2003) explored culturally relevant pedagogy and why race and cultural are important concepts in teaching and learning. This means that culturally relevance is also racially affirming. Additionally, a central component of culturally relevant teaching is to reject deficit-based thinking, in line with PYD practices. A conclusion Howard (2003) made was to avoid

reductive notions of culture. In line with Howard's conclusion is Fredrick & Simpkins (2011 p 283) suggestion that scholars "design theoretically grounded studies that account for the needs and backgrounds of youth from specific ethnic groups defined by race, ethnicity, cultural orientation, SES and immigration." Howard (2003) and Fredricks & Simpkins (2012) conclusions relate back to the underlying argument that Lavoie, N., Thul, C., Wasend, M. (2018) asserted; girls are not a monolithic group. This thought can be extrapolated to suggest that youth of color are also not a monolithic group. Furthermore, they assert that attention needs to be paid to the activity type, quality of program, and age of participants. Fredricks & Simpkins (2012 p 284) went on to say, "indicators of quality, such as an environment that is respectful of diverse backgrounds, may be particularly important depending on youths' background" and "lastly, culture, immigration and ethnicity are largely absent from theories of PYD." Howard (2003) and Fredrick & Simpkins (2012) future suggestions support the need for the intended research. Additionally, Fredrick & Simpkins (2012) posit that research on community-based programs that have an established record of retaining ethnic minority youth can be informative to understanding ideal practices for youth from ethnic backgrounds. The application of broad culturally responsive practices will inform the semi-structured interviews and interpretation of interviews with SBYD practitioners. In this study a CRP framework and cultural relevance cycle will be used to address culture in terms of gender and ethnicity. This study intends to explore if and how TPSR practitioners bridge the cultural gap that exists between themselves and the youth that they serve by engaging in the cultural relevance cycle and CRP practices.

### CHAPTER III: METHODOLOGY

The purpose of this research study was to describe and interpret if TPSR practitioners' implement culturally relevant programming, how they implement CRP, and what challenges TPSR practitioners face when offering culturally relevant programming pertaining to youths' gender and ethnicity. Specifically, the practitioners and leaders were those of in school, after school or out-of-school sports and PA programs. TPSR practitioners are those that are part of the TPSR alliance or known to be TPSR practitioners or researchers. CRP and inclusiveness will inform the interpretation of the semi-structured interview questions to search how and if the TPSR model promotes cultural relevant practices and inclusion pertaining to youths' gender and ethnicity. A multi-case retrospective study was conducted (Mills, Durepos & Wiebe, 2010). The study utilized semi-structured individual interviews with TPSR practitioners and TPSR model program leaders to address the following research questions and aims.

- 1) To what extent is cultural relevance reflected in TPSR according to practitioners?
  - a. How do the practitioners gain knowledge of community dynamics of those that they serve?
  - b. How do the TPSR practitioners gain understanding about youths' community and educational processes?
  - c. How the TPSR practitioners interpret youths' community dynamics and education pertaining to the youths' physical activity program engagement?
  - d. What strategies do the TPSR practitioners implement that reflect cultural relevance?
- 2) In what ways did the TPSR practitioners implement inclusiveness in their TPSR modeled program and what are challenges they faced?
- 3) To what magnitude do the TPSR practitioners develop students academically in their sports-based program?
- 4) To what degree do the TPSR practitioners promote critical consciousness or socio-political consciousness of the youth in their sports-based program?

#### **Positionality**

As a white female that has always enjoyed sport and has had the privilege to be able to participate and access sport and physical activity, I have come to love and understand how sport

and physical activity can benefit a person's life. Mentally, physically, psychologically and life skill development; sport and physical activity has offered me with leadership opportunities, friendships, educational experiences and influenced my career.

While in sports in high school I was granted leadership opportunities to be a team captain and to assist with booster club basketball, volleyball clinics for youth, and the Special Olympics. These opportunities spurred my interests in sport's ability to serve others while also promoting positive healthy habits. Throughout college I continued to engage in sports and shared my knowledge and passion for health with elderly Immaculate Heart of Mary Sister's at their Mother House by providing physical activity guidance. After moving to North Carolina to pursue my Master's degree I had the opportunity to work with "at-risk" adolescents in an outdoor adventure program called Mountain Alliance for two years. This volunteer position greatly influenced my future and passion to use my love of exercise and physical activity to help youth learn life skills and provide them a safe environment for them to express themselves.

Based off my experiences assisting with youth physical activity and sport programs I searched for ways to further my education in PA and sport programs for at-risk and underserved youth. I knew after working with adolescents at Mountain Alliance that I wanted to impact children's lives in a greater capacity and not work in a clinical setting. I stumbled upon a YouTube video of Dr. Martinek's program Project Effort and knew this is what I was to pursue. This brought me to University of North Carolina at Greensboro pursuing a PhD under the supervision of Dr. Martinek. At UNCG I've had the opportunity to assist with the implementation of a program for underserved youth in the local community for over three years. I've also gained education and insight into systemic inequalities and barriers that underserved youth face in PA and sport settings. Furthermore, I learned about PYD and the TPSR model which have greatly shaped my values and beliefs. However, while PYD, SBYD, and TPSR practitioners have the best intentions in place I want to learn more about how program leaders can better serve their youth participants and be more inclusive and culturally responsive to the cultural gap between adult program leaders and youth participants.

### **Subjectivity**

In qualitative research, researchers attempt to understand how people interpret their experiences the meaning they give to their experiences, and how their worlds are constructed (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). When performing qualitative research the epistemology should be

considered. In this dissertation an interpretive approach is being taken and the individual's meanings are being negotiated socially and historically. Being that the researcher is also the research instrument collecting data, subjectivities that the researcher holds must be monitored and biases need to be examined (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). As a TPSR practitioner I believe that the TPSR model promotes inclusiveness since it was designed with the intention to do so. Additionally, TPSR practitioners believe that all youth can thrive and therefore programming should support that. The TPSR model focuses on providing youth a platform to express their voice and make choices in what activities they would like to engage in or what challenge level they want to pursue (Hellison, 2011). By allowing youth to express agency logically, cultural relevance can be implemented when giving youth the chance to choose their activity. Moreover, built into the TPSR format is reflection time, as in the cultural relevance cycle reflection is also used. Therefore, this research explored to what extent do TPSR practitioners enact the cultural relevance cycle, engage in CRP, how TPSR practitioners employ culturally relevant practices and what challenges they face when employing culturally relevant programming pertaining to youths' gender and ethnicity.

### **Pilot Study**

The purpose of conducting a pilot study was to ensure that the interview questions were clear and applicable to the research questions and purpose of the study (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). The pilot study gave the researcher an opportunity to practice interview skills and follow up questions as they relate to this specific study. The pilot study allowed for considerations to be made, recording methods and equipment to be practiced, and revisions to be made. The following section explains changes and revisions that were made to the protocol to enhance trustworthiness and validation of data for the proposed study.

### **Participant Selection**

Two participants were purposefully selected to participate in the pilot study. One participant is a TPSR practitioner and the other participant was a youth leader in a TPSR modeled youth leadership program known as Youth Leadership Corp. Table 3.1 below explains the demographics of the pilot participants.

	TPSR Practitioner	YLC Leader
Years involved	10	2
Ethnicity	Caucasian	African - Congolese
Gender	Female	Female
Age Group being Served	5-18	5-14
Targeted Program Audience	Refugee and Immigrant low - income youth	Refugee and Immigrant youth, youth from the 'ghetto'
Program location/time	Out-of-school and after school. Depends on are partnerships.	After school or out-of-school

Table 3.1 Pilot Participant's Demographics

### Brief Summary of Findings

The findings of the pilot study expressed that both the TPSR practitioner and YLC leader viewed culture as being commonalities that groups of people have such as norms, food, language, clothing, and values or how someone lives their day-to-day life. The TPSR practitioner went on to say that culture is two-fold, culture norms of the child being served and culture norms of the TPSR soccer program she leads. Interestingly, the TPSR practitioner and YLC leader had different opinions about how they incorporate culture and cultural relevance pertaining to gender and ethnicity into their TPSR modeled program. The YLC leader does not believe that culture relevance is applicable in the program she is part of because she shares the same background as the youth she serves. Conversely, the TPSR practitioner being a white female differs in culture from the youth she serves thus indicating that she tries to be very cognizant of kids' differing backgrounds. She went on to say that her community foundation started a separate program for girls to empower girls and provide them a program they can be more successful and comfortable in. Additionally, she tries to be culturally competent by utilizing the TPSR value of fostering relationships by learning about the child's background including their experiences, meeting family members, and religion. The YLC leader uses cultural competence through language,

using the child's native language (Kiswakili, Embembe, and Lingala – all Congolese), and offering youth either sports she knows they will like such as soccer, basketball, and dance and also incorporating new activities that she wants to introduce to the youth that she feels are American such as Yoga. Some of the challenges that the YLC leader faces would be that girls and boys prefer different activities, yet boys and girls are in co-ed groups, to combat this the YLC leader uses the TPSR value of allowing youth to express voices and choices to select their physical activity to please the majority. The TPSR practitioner faces barriers when attempting to be culturally relevant such as language, communication, pride of parents, understanding parental involvement or lack thereof, religion and religious practices and holidays. To combat this the TPSR practitioner tries her best to gain knowledge about the youths' culture, utilizes the TPSR model approach of relational time, and tries not to assimilate the child to the dominate society, but rather help them navigate it. Both the YLC leader and TPSR practitioner stated that the TPSR model aids in creating culturally relevant programming pertaining to gender and ethnicity due to the first two responsibility levels: Respect and Effort. According to the YLC leader respect and effort are common values across different cultures, and the TPSR practitioner believes respect and effort are universal concepts. Additionally, the TPSR practitioner also indicated that the TPSR guiding principles of using kids as resources and allowing them to express their voices and choices, to be leaders, and help form the program aids in creating a culturally relevant program to those being served.

### **Methodological Revisions for Pilot Study**

For the pilot study, the researcher purposefully selected two participants (N=2) that met the inclusion criteria for the study. Prior to conducting pilot interviews the researcher consulted with her advisor about the demographic questionnaire and interview questions. Upon completion of the pilot study, the researcher modified the demographic questionnaire and interview questions to eliminate overlapping questions between the two questionnaires. An additional adjustment is to have the cultural relevance cycle influence the interview questions more. Therefore, the present study explored the TPSR practitioner's application of the cultural relevance cycle to their programs and also explored TPSR practitioner's impressions of youths' gender and ethnicity influence youths' engagement and participation in TPSR programs. The researcher revised the interview protocol to ensure data was being collected and recorded appropriately. The demographic questionnaire and interview protocol can be found in the

Appendix section (Appendix B – Demographic Questionnaire, Appendix C - Interview Protocol). Furthermore, due to the limited application of the TPSR model and lack of depth in the interview, YLC leaders will not be interviewed for this study.

### **Research Design**

A qualitative case study research design was used for this study. Individual cases with descriptive profiles of each TPSR practitioners was created. The constructivist paradigm was used to investigate the research questions. A qualitative study is designed to understand how people interpret their experiences and construct their worlds (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). Being that this qualitative research is interpretive the researcher acknowledges that there is not one single reality, and that knowledge is created thus following a constructivist paradigm. Furthermore, constructivist researchers focus on meanings that individuals hold about the phenomenon being studied (Holstein & Gubrium, 2007). Individual and personal experiences with the intent of creating a common theme may be explored using the constructivist paradigm through a conceptual framework. The researcher was interested in gaining TPSR practitioners' perspectives and if the TPSR model is culturally responsive and inclusive pertaining to youths' gender and ethnicity.

A qualitative case study that provides an in-depth description and analysis focusing on how people interpret their experiences was utilized (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). A qualitative approach allows for the researcher to emerge into the study, be flexible, and responsive to changing conditions as the study progresses (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). In line with typical qualitative methods and PYD approaches this case study was utilized a small purposeful sample size (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016; Hellison & Cutforth, 1997). In combination with the qualitative case the claim that TPSR is culturally relevant and inclusive influenced the data analysis. This stance assumes that power dynamics are everywhere and analyzes the data in light of the theoretical framework (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016).

### **Context of Study**

This study intended to collect and analyze the experiences and viewpoint of TPSR practitioners have on cultural relevance pertaining to youths' gender and ethnicity. Sport and PA leaders and practitioners are an important population to inquire. Adults in this case study are program leaders who have served a unique role in SBYD programs. They provide opportunities for youth to experiences challenges, provide youth with opportunities to develop relationships

with a positive adult role model, and set the climate of the program (Larson, 2006; Holt et al. 2017; Perkins & Noam, 2006). Recently Shiver, Richards, & Hemphill (2020) studied how preservice teacher's lived experiences impacted their learning of culturally relevant practices through the TPSR model. Furthermore, the researchers found that the TPSR model promoted relationship building with the youth therefore limiting the original deficit approach the preservice teachers took, acknowledged the cultural difference gap, and used methods to bridge the cultural gap. Therefore, this study intends to recruit PA and sport program providers and leaders that practice the TPSR model with youth of diverse backgrounds.

### **TPSR Model Program Format**

The format for each TPSR modeled program may vary but the general agenda consists of relational time, awareness talk, physical or sport activity, group meeting, then self-reflection time. Each component is to support the goals and values of the TPSR model. Relational time is an opportunity for youth to socialize with their peers and for leaders to check-in with youth about their day, goals, and provide reminders. The second component is the awareness talk which, sets the stage for the day's goals and expectations. This part consists of a brief discussion about the responsibility level focus for that session. Next, the longest portion of the program is the physical or sport activity times. This third component provides youth the opportunity to practice and experience the responsibility levels in sport and physical activity. Following, is the group discussion or meeting. This time allows youth to voice their thoughts about the experience and provide advice for the leader. Lastly, self-reflection time. This portion of the program may be personal for the youth to check-in with themselves and their responsibility level attainment. Reflection may also take place for the TPSR practitioner about how the program went.

### **Participants**

The participants of this study are TPSR practitioners. The practitioners were recruited via email. The TPSR practitioners were volunteer research participants. To be eligible to participate the TPSR practitioners had to have met the following criteria. Be implementors of a TPSR modeled sports or physical activity-based program that serves youth (those ages 6-17) and have been practicing the TPSR model for at least three years. Additionally, being an academic that teaches courses on SBYD and engages with the TPSR model were eligible to participate. The academics also facilitated their own TPSR program for at least three years. The participants were considered experts at utilizing the TPSR and entrenched in the model. Meaning the TPSR

practitioners live by the principles the model promotes; (a) putting kids first, (b) human decency, (c) holistic self-development, and (d) a way of being.

The TPSR practitioners that were recruited for this study were either members of the TPSR Alliance or have had their TPSR program featured in published articles and websites. The TPSR Alliance is an organization of TPSR practitioners and educators that hold annual conferences and has a website. Not all TPSR practitioners are members of the TPSR Alliance therefore the researcher explored for more TPSR programs and contacted those TPSR practitioners. The researcher asked the TPSR practitioners that participated in the study if they know of anyone else that utilizes the TPSR model in physical activity programs for youth and would be willing to participate in the research study.

Six cases were explored in this study. Examples of desired participants include the program developers of Beyond the Ball, a Chicago based TPSR program, will be a desirable interview participant. Beyond the Ball has been around formally since 2005. Other sought-after participants hold academic positions where they teach about the TPSR model in higher education and host their own programs such as a boxing club for adolescent females and a kinesiology club for high schoolers to learn more about exercise science. Further TPSR practitioners that were asked to participate in the study used the model for cross-age mentoring in a sport and physical activity program. Additionally, practitioners that have been trained by Don Hellison, the creator of TPSR, were sought out.

## **Procedures**

The researcher first obtained approval from the UNCG Institutional Review Board. After obtaining approval from UNCG the researcher sent a recruitment email (Appendix A) to select TPSR practitioners. Upon receipt of emails of interest from volunteer participants the researcher scheduled individual interviews with the research participants and shared a demographic questionnaire. The researcher sent a virtual Qualtrics informed consent form to the volunteer participants prior to conducting the interviews. The researcher conducted semi-structured individual interviews via online platform Zoom with the study participants. The Zoom individual interviews were recorded for audio. The researcher allowed the participants to elect to conduct a phone interview that would have been audio recorded rather than Zoom. All of the participants selected to conduct their interview on Zoom. The recorded Zoom interviews were transcribed

utilizing the online program Scribie.com. The researcher listened to the recorded audio and reviewed each Scribie transcription for accuracy. The transcribed interviews were then analyzed.

### **Data Collection**

The case-study data was collected using semi-structured individual interview methods with TPSR practitioners. Data sources consisted of a demographic questionnaire, an audio recording of the Zoom interview and additional information provided by interviewee about their TPSR program that they are part of such as the mission/vision/values of their program or website about their program. These data were triangulated to promote internal validity (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). See Table 3.2 for an overview of data sources and rationale.

Data Source	Rationale
Demographics	Gather basic information from each participant.
Interviews	Obtain in-depth and rich data to gain perspective about cultural relevance in the TPSR programs.
Archival program information	To match interviews to mission/visions/values of their TPSR programs.

Table 3.2 Data Sources

### **Interviews and Protocol**

Upon receipt of UNCG Institution Review Board approval, the researcher recruited select TPSR practitioners that met the inclusion criteria. After receiving interested reply emails the researcher informed each volunteer participant individually about the purpose of the study, their role in the study, and ethical practices that protect identity and trustworthiness. All research participants of this study were 18 or older.

After receiving potential participant's interest in the study, the researcher sent each potential participant a virtual consent form via email (Appendix B), upon receipt of the consent form the researcher sent a demographic questionnaire (Appendix C) and set up a time and date to conduct the individual semi-structured interview (Appendix D). Each interview lasted about 45 minutes to 1 hour and was audio recorded. The audio recording method used was through Zoom

record option. During the interview note taking on the researcher's personal laptop was also collected.

Rubin and Rubin (2012) suggest that researchers should build a rapport with participants prior to asking primary interview questions. In the current study, rapport-building questions were used to begin each interview. The rapport building questions will reflect the demographic questionnaire such as "What TPSR programs have you been involved with and are currently involved with?" This broad question allows the participant to share their general background in regard to TPSR programming.

Member checks were conducted prior to the completion of the data analysis and submission of research study to dissertation committee. The participants' interview transcriptions were sent to each interviewee to authenticate and clarify any information collected during the study. Member checks allow for the reduction of bias from the researcher by allowing respondents to validate their responses (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). After conclusion of data collection and member checks, the researcher used the CRP framework and cultural relevance cycle to interpret the data results.

### **Data Analysis**

In the current study qualitative data was collected to create individual cases and conduct cross-case study analysis. A cross-case analysis allowed for more generalizations to be made about best practices (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). Marshall and Rossman (2011) suggest that qualitative analysis becomes more rigorous after the data has been collected. Further, Gerring (2007) posits that investigative data in case studies describes parts to bring understanding to the whole.

The data collected was analyzed using thematic analysis. Thematic analysis implies that the researcher focuses on "searching through the data for themes and patterns" (Glesne, 2016, p. 187). The researcher analyzed each data source and coded all pieces of information from data collection to address the research questions for the study. Specially, inductive analysis was used. Inductive analysis described by Patton (2002) is the discovering patterns and themes. Moreover Hatch (2002) describes inductive analysis as categories emerging from the analysis of the data set as a whole.

After individual case studies were coded, themes were developed then a cross-case comparison was conducted to investigate common themes among the TPSR practitioners. See

table 2.3 for data analysis process. Patton (2002) describes content analysis as the searching for recurring words or themes creating consistencies and meanings. Following the creation of categories and themes, deductive qualitative analysis was used to interpret the categories and themes in relation to the research questions. Deductive analysis occurs when data is analyzed according to a framework (Patton, 2002). The Cultural Relevance Cycle informed the first research questions and therefore the data analysis of the first research question. The last three research questions were informed by CRP as explained by Gay (2000) and Ladson-Billings (1995), including programming that is more relevant and effective, the development of youth academically, and developing sociopolitical or critical consciousness.

<b>Individual Case Analysis</b>	
◇	Read individual participant interview, demographic questionnaire, and archival information to create a case biography
◇	Read interviews and record open codes
◇	Compare open codes to demographic questionnaire and archival information
◇	Perform previous steps with all cases
◇	Interpret codes and create common categories informed by research questions
<b>Cross-case Analysis</b>	
◇	Compare codes and categories across all interviews
◇	Interpret overall findings informed by research questions

Table 3.3 Data Analysis Process

## Individual Interviews

Each interview was audio recorded and transcribed verbatim utilizing the software *Scribie*. After utilizing *Scribie* software the researcher listened to each interview and read each transcription to check for transcription errors. The researcher shared a copy of the interview transcription with the participant for a member check and asked for clarification of interview content. Conducting a member check allows for audit of the interview to verify information and maximize accuracy (Patton, 2002). Once the member check was completed the researcher analyzed the interview content for thematic analysis. The thematic analysis was done solely by the researcher and not with the research participant.

## Threats to Trustworthiness

As a TPSR practitioner and belief in the importance of using a student-centered approach, the researcher's personal biases were possible threatened to the trustworthiness of this study.

Although a constructivist approach was taken, the researcher's prior knowledge and interest must not be overlooked. These threats will be addressed by using multiple data sources to triangulate the data and finding. In addition, member checks will be used to enhance credibility of data.

## CHAPTER IV: INDIVIUDAL CASE FINDINGS

The purpose of this qualitative case study was to explore if TPSR practitioners utilize culturally relevant pedagogies and, if so, to what extent. By utilizing a cross case study design, the researcher was able to investigate each practitioner's (N=6) thoughts, enactment of cultural relevance cycles, and utilization of CRP within their TPSR modeled PA programs. Specifically, focusing on youths' culture in relation to gender and ethnicity. Each participant further addressed how youths' community dynamics, educational processes and practitioners' critical consciousness influenced their programs dynamics and youths' experiences and participation.

This chapter is organized using the six distinct cases and individual findings related to the four research questions. Each case is introduced with a quote pertaining to the practitioner's valued opinion about TPSR. Following is a demographic table to show the TPSR practitioners' demographics in relation to who their program serves. Then the section is separated into three subsections. The first subsection is about the cultural relevance cycle in TPSR Programs, this explains to what extent do the TPSR practitioners enact the cultural relevance cycle. Specially, each case will explore the TPSR practitioner's knowledge of the youth they serve, how the youths' community and educational processes impact the youths' engagement in the program, and how the TPSR practitioner addresses the processes or bridges the cultural gap. In the first subsection strategies that the TPSR practitioners utilize to be culturally relevant are also provided. The second subsection, Inclusivity and Challenges in Relation to Gender, Ethnicity, and Culture, gives insight into the inclusivity of the TPSR model and challenges they faced when being inclusive. Inclusivity will focus on the TPSR practitioner's perception of program inclusivity to all, cultural inclusivity, gender inclusivity and ethnicity inclusivity. The last subsection, Critical Consciousness, discusses TPSR practitioners' incorporation of critical and sociopolitical awareness in their TPSR based program. This may relate back to what extent the TPSR practitioners bridge the cultural gap between practitioner and youth participants. Ultimately these questions address to what extent do TPSR practitioners enact CRP.

## Case 1 – Mr. Black

It's [TPSR model] all about the relationships. It's about having effective relationships with kids, knowing them, listening to them, and hearing their voice. It's [TPSR model] all about the whole idea of being holistic, it's life skills with activities. It's always asking their opinions, having awareness talks in the group meetings or reflection time. It's [TPSR model] all about empowering them.

<b>Ethnicity</b>	White/Caucasian
<b>Gender Identity</b>	Male
<b>Role in TPSR Program</b>	Facilitator & Creator
<b>Physical Activity Background</b>	Weight training, martial arts, softball, yoga, and non-competitive sports
<b>Time Practicing TPSR</b>	25 Years
<b>Learned TPSR from</b>	Don Hellison
<b>Youth Served</b>	Inner city high school youth; ethnically varying, socioeconomic status varying

Table 4.1 Mr. Black Demographics Program's Participants

### Practitioner 1 Background

At the time of this interview, Mr. Black had been practicing the TPSR model for 25 years. Mr. Black reported learning the TPSR model from the person who created the model, Don Hellison. Mr. Black was involved in many TPSR based programs prior to his current program and has worked with multi-racial, multi-ethnic, and varying socio-economic status youth but always inner-city youth. Currently, Mr. Black is a professor at a University along the West coast where he teaches college students. Specifically, one of his classes is a community partnership service-learning based course where university students go to a local high school to teach inner city youth and envision possible futures. This service-learning course utilizes the TPSR model while teaching the inner-city youth about physical activity and alternative career pathways. His program takes place during second period, for about 10-12 weeks during both the fall and spring semester and serves freshmen and sophomore high school students. Mr. Black has a strong physical activity background from participating in high school weight training, non-competitive sport, and martial arts. Later Mr. Black played competitive softball and developed a yoga

practice. His dynamic athletic background is incorporated into his TPSR based program and will be discussed further in a later section.

One major focus that reoccurred throughout Mr. Black's interview was the idea of relationships. His focus is not just on his connection and relationship with the youth but also with his undergraduate students and the relationships the undergraduate students build with the youth.

The ones [youth] that they mentor, they know better than me and I try to honor that. This is your private time with them, so they all have one or two kids that they work with that they're helping fill out there TPSR workbook and helping them learn about different careers or different college ideas and the application process.

After a few weeks into the program Mr. Black assigns undergraduate mentors with one to two children. The mentors are not assigned right at the beginning of the program as to ensure the mentor and youth made a connection.

### **Cultural Relevance Cycle in TPSR Programs**

When asked about what being culturally relevant meant to, Mr. Black stated: "It's [cultural relevance] not just a bunch of buzzwords it's not just the proper thing to say, and it's a lifetime of growth."

### ***Understanding Youths' Backgrounds***

Mr. Black utilizes multiple methods to get to know and understand the youths' background, that he serves.

I keep the number small, so there'll be 12 kids in the program. With me I'll have six other university students, so it's like two kids to one adult. The first thing we talk about; you got to know everyone's name. That's just like 101. I high five every kid every day. We're always probing them with questions, and we offer ourselves what we're up to too. I'll take notes, try to remember little things that they share with you.

Beyond utilizing small group setting, Mr. Black focuses on relationships and gets to know each child by asking questions such as "How are you doing? How school going? Do you have any siblings?"

Mr. Black stated the following about relationships:

I think if you saw a variety of people who are doing TPSR really know, it's all about the relationships, it's about having effective relationships with kids and knowing them and listening to them, and hearing their voice... It's all about the whole idea of being holistic.

By asking questions the practitioner tries to gain understanding about the youths' community and background. Additionally, Mr. Black knows the youths' community because he lives in the same community "I actually live in the community where my kids live, and that might sound extreme, but it was important for me." Furthermore, Mr. Black is an active participant in the local community "I think people who are working in these communities, they need to spend time, go to the coffee shop in the neighborhood, go to a restaurant that's around there, just try to spend some time." In Mr. Black's PA and career program he is also concerned about the undergraduate mentors understanding of the youths' backgrounds. To do this as part of Mr. Black's program the undergraduate mentors journal about the youth they are mentoring and include information that is important to the youth such as their interests and hobbies.

### ***Knowledge of Youths' Community & Educational Processes***

Due to where the youth and Mr. Black lives, their environment and community dynamics influences their engagement in Mr. Black's TPSR program. To him they are inner-city plights that maybe are associated with other inner-city youth such as living in a dangerous environment, having a lack resources, career choices, life experiences, academic preparedness, sleep, and food. All of these aspects about the youths' environment influence their involvement in the TPSR program. "A lot of them come into the program, they haven't eaten breakfast and affects their ability of focus and the participate in physical activity." Another example of an inner-city youth according to Mr. Black is that "They [the youth] don't have as many role models that obtain different careers or value school or doing really well." While Mr. Black lives in the same community his living situation is drastically different from the high schoolers he works with. "I know the kids. They talk about where they live, I'm like, you're literally three blocks away from me... But a lot of times, those three blocks away from me, they live in a house of 15 people."

Furthermore, Mr. Black suggests that kids are in school because they legally have to be not necessarily because they want to be. Mr. Black does not think that the youths' educational process plays a large role in his program engagement since he has them at second period, the

start of their day. “I get them in second period, so they haven’t had time to get a bad experience...they bring their community with them, they talk about how dangerous it is at times.” The youths’ community dynamics plays a significant role and their engagement in his program.

### ***Strategies Implemented***

Mr. Black utilizes various strategies to connect to the youths’ community. He lives in the community and actively engages in the community by attending local sporting events, graduations, and buying or shopping local. Within the TPSR program due to the multi-ethnic population of youth at the local high school sometimes language barriers appear. To overcome these language barriers Mr. Black tries to recruit university students into his class that speak another language such as Spanish and Tagalog. When he is able to get these multi-language college students, he informs the school to make connections between non-speaking English youth and college students to assist the child. Additionally, Mr. Black’s TPSR program happens during the school day in a local high school, so his program is also embedded within the youths’ educational experience and setting.

As for Mr. Black’s TPSR program he selected specific activities that seem to be gender-neutral and activities that youth may not be well versed in such as martial arts, weight training, dance, and yoga. By offering multiple activities Mr. Black is able to recruit dynamic undergraduate students with various expertise therefore not forcing the undergraduate students to pick a sport they don’t like or haven’t participated in before. “For my own university students, I didn’t want to pick a sport that all my university students had to participate in. When I recruit them, they have to talk about their own expertise.”

Mr. Black uses his genuine curiosity to get to know the youth he serves by asking them questions about their thoughts and experiences, hobbies, and future aspirations. He also has his undergraduate mentors enact a similar disposition. The undergraduate mentors get to know the youth and select who they feel connected to and mentor those youth for the remaining duration of the college semester. During this time the mentors journal about their mentees and record pertinent information about their mentees. The mentors help the youth fill out their TPSR workbook and learn about different careers, and the college application process.

When it comes to strategies to be culturally relevant Mr. Black acknowledges that there’s no three-step process, but a dynamic self-realization of what makes you feel uncomfortable and

what are you going to do address your discomfort. “I think it's been a life-long journey for me and learning more about all that stuff [gender and ethnicity etc.], including not just LGBTQ issues, but also cultural relevance . . . A lot of it is just beginning to have the conversation and addressing your own biases and your own discomfort with that topic.”

### ***Academic and Physical Skill Development***

Within the practice of culturally relevant pedagogies there's an emphasis on academically developing youth. While the program discussed in this case has an educational aspect being they are sport or activity-based programs physical skill development will also be explored. For Mr. Black, youths' academic development is part of his program. His program focuses on helping inner-city youth envision possible futures and learn about other careers with an emphasis on exercise science. His program tries to motivate youth to “value in school and to help get them where they want to be in their life”. Furthermore, Mr. Black's program focuses on what choices the youth have and what steps the youth have to take to get from where they are now to where they want to be. “They [youth] can learn to push through that stuff and have a tenacity that they can achieve. . . anything”. In this program high school youth also learn about college, the application process, and different college majors. Mr. Black also has the undergraduate mentors assist the high school students with filling out a TPSR journal. This journal provides prompts for the mentors and high school students to respond to regarding possible futures and the TPSR levels.

Based off archival material; the goal of Mr. Black's TPSR program is to:

Maximize motivation to improve in, stay in, and find relevance in school. (2) Enhance connection between the TPSR goals of respect, effort, goal setting, and leadership skills and the important they play in youths' futures. (3) Chart the necessary steps to first become a professional in kinesiology, which provides practical experience in a specific career. (4) Chart the necessary steps for their own careers of choice and developing strategies for matriculating and graduating from college (Walsh, 2013).

Mr. Black combines PA with education being that this program takes place two times a week during PE “we talk about getting yoga certification so they can teach yoga to the summer high school kids, what it's like to be a personal trainer and talk about those certifications.” Physically, Mr. Black incorporates various PA into his program, specifically, martial arts, weight

training, dance, and yoga. “There seems to be enough variety of activity that it's attractive to both boys and girls, or at least gender-neutral maybe that way, and that has been a really good thing.”

### **Inclusivity and Challenges Related to Gender Ethnicity and Culture**

Being that culture is a dynamic word with a broad definition. Culture and cultural relevance for inclusive programming and challenges to address, focused on youths’ gender and ethnicity. Gender and ethnicity were specifically explored as to what extent does the TPSR program provider feel their program is inclusive or exclusive to youths’ varying genders and ethnicities. The idea of youths’ sexuality was also brought up. As many of these TPSR programs are sports based and sport has a historical homophobic undertone.

After asking Mr. Black about his thoughts on how various genders of youth respond to his TPSR programs he mentioned that “When I did more team sport stuff in [location] doing basketball programs, I think it resonated more at the boys and the girls.” He went onto say further “I think if you want to stereotype of those things, there seems to be enough variety of activity that it's attractive to both boys and girls, or at least gender-neutral, and that has been a really good thing.” Mr. Black suggests the following about gender “It's all about empowering them, and I think that is what it is about the model that helps it be inclusive for all genders”. To Mr. Black content of the program is important “you could do all those things [TPSR elements], and if you want to do a basketball program, it might be a turn-off to some kids who don't have that background.” By selecting a dynamic range of PA that youth may not have a lot of experience they may perceive the activities at gender-neutral and therefore more appealing to all.

While diversity of language, ethnicity and socio-economic status is common in his program both with the youth he serves and undergraduate students that assist as mentors, language seems to be a barrier. When discussing how ethnicity impacts his program language such as Spanish and Tagalog are spoken among the youth in his program. Therefore, when Mr. Black recruits undergraduate students to be part of his TPSR program he asks them about other languages they speak. Another way ethnicity informs the youths’ engagement in his program is that “this is a stereotype, but maybe a lot of the Latinx kids, their families really don't support a lot of them going to college, that I have had in the program.” This informs Mr. Black’s program in that some students do not see value in education and his program is about showing youth other career options and paths outside of the youths’ family-owned businesses. This may also cause

some friction between youth and family due to lack of support to pursue higher education. Additionally, he realizes that being a white man comes with privilege. Mr. Black referred to a book he was reading at the time of the interview that was about our political and societal structure as being a hierarchy of skin color with white people at the top and Black people at the bottom. This impacts Mr. Black's understanding of ethnicity being that he serves multi-ethnic youth he feels as though they "are part of a society that is... It's an uphill battle for a lot of them." Mr. Black insists that the following is how he utilizes the TPSR model and programming to be inclusive to youths' gender and ethnicities: "Listening to kids. Being responsive to them. Letting them voice their own opinions. Giving them choices. Letting them take on leadership roles and setting goals for what they want to work on and do."

Ways that Mr. Black practices inclusivity in his program is by letting youth be experts and share their culture. An example of this is during the dance section of his TPSR program he allows kids to bring dances/choreographies from that culture and family. Other examples of how Mr. Black allow youth to express their voice and be inclusive are to allow kids to lead the warm-ups for activities, or lead boxing or martial arts activities. It would depend on what activity their family had them in growing up, and what activity the child's family values. When talking about the TPSR model itself, "the empowerment nature, the holistic part of it all, I think that helps make the content of going to much more inclusive for everyone. It's not perfect by any means, but I think that's all part of it."

Mr. Black also faces challenges when programming to be culturally relevant and inclusive. Challenges when being inclusive to Mr. Black meant understanding who you are and who you are not. For instance, Mr. Black identifies as a white male therefore he understands that he does not know what it's like to be a girl growing up. Below is an excerpt of his explanation of the challenges he faces when trying to be inclusive.

I'm always aware that they have a very different lens of how they see the world. How their families are raising them are different from what I currently see and could think about. So that's a big deal. For African American kids or Latinx kids or girls, what their struggles are and what they can accomplish and what they deal with on a daily basis.

He had a personal experience with a prior program he hosted at a YMCA where the Asian American girls stated that his program did not address their culture at all. This had made

him more aware as to how he can be inclusive by practicing good communication and having the youth feel comfortable being themselves in front of him. He tries to overcome such challenges by “learning from them [youth] is a big one”. Having the youth teach Mr. Black about them and their culture aids him to be more culturally relevant and aware. Mr. Black brought up another aspect of youth culture that is not thoroughly addressed, sexuality. “It’s [sexuality] something that people are very uncomfortable with”. Moreover, Mr. Black brought up the point that “the homophobia in physical activity and in sport has been rampant”. Therefore, he is mindful of creating an environment that is safe and open to accepting others no matter than race, gender, ethnicity, or sexuality.

### **Critical Consciousness**

Within CRP there’s a critical consciousness or sociopolitical consciousness component. The way Mr. Black practices sociopolitical consciousness and sharing that information with youth is by sharing his personal experience and encouraging his undergraduate mentors to share their experiences with youth in the program. Mr. Black tries to help the youth value school and education by:

Helping them realize that if they put the time in and they gain good study habits and get good grades, even if they don't like the classes, even if it's a subject they hate or a teacher they don't like, they can learn to push through that stuff and have a tenacity that they can achieve.

Mr. Black understands that the youth he serves are considered to be inner city kids and therefore they lack resources. “I think that systemic obstacles are coming from dangerous neighborhoods, a lot of talk about violence, talk about the difficulties that they didn't sleep very well, and a lot haven’t eaten breakfast.” He understands that many of the youth in his program may be first generation college students and therefore the youth he serves are not aware of their career options. “I think that being a first-generation college student myself, I know most of them when I've talked to them, their families are not college educated, so I think that just limits them.” Mr. Black feels as though his program is all about addressing inequities. “So, to me, that's [TPSR program] all about trying to deal with the inequities or the inequalities”. Being that some of the youth in Mr. Black’s TPSR program may also come from affluent families those students bring to class their family experiences and parent’s professions to share with other students. While his

program may not explicitly address the barriers or plights associated with being an inner-city child Mr. Black tries to have these youth envision possible futures and show them options.

## Case 2 – Hugo

I think one of the important things is that, sometimes I forget what I have edited into my TPSR anyways, I think it encourages participation over winning and cooperation over a single-minded victory. I think that, that channels to kind of inclusive bits of sport and kind of pushes out the part of sports that are problematic or isolating or cause harm. – Hugo

<b>Ethnicity</b>	White
<b>Gender Identity</b>	Male
<b>Role in TPSR Program</b>	Executive Director
<b>Physical Activity Background</b>	Rugby
<b>Time Practicing TPSR</b>	3 Years
<b>Learned TPSR from</b>	The TPSR Book – Don Hellison
<b>Youth Served</b>	Boys & girls of low-fee government schools

Table 4.2. Hugo’s Demographics & Program’s Participants

### Hugo’s Background

At the time of this interview Hugo had been practicing the TPSR model for 3 years. His sports background consisted of playing rugby all his life. He has participated in rugby at various competitive and recreational levels. The specific program Hugo is executive director of is a rugby-based program for boys and girls in South Africa that serves a low-fee government schools. This program is a non-profit sport development program that is considered to be a mental health charity that utilizes psycho-social counseling. Specifically, the program serves under-resourced youth especially those that have experienced or are experiencing on-going trauma. This program takes place during school hours and lasts 28 weeks. The rugby coaches of this program utilize the TPSR model when teaching rugby. A social worker is also incorporated into the program that assists families with intervention plans to increase family coping skills with traumatic events and violence.

One focus area of Hugo’s interview was that the TPSR model is “not too prescriptive, it’s a philosophy that it’s quite universal.” This idea along with the TPSR model being considered to follow social-emotional learning approach “allows you enough movement to then localize it through the practitioner.” By hiring coaches that live in the community where the youth are from

and paying the coaches a living wage, Hugo feels as though their program is successful because of the coaches. “I think it's all about the practitioners. You can have the best model in the world, but you've got to have a person that's willing and able to understand it and then interpret it for young people.” An emphasis of Hugo’s beyond finding funding for their non-profit is also coach education. Further embracing TPSR’s idea of inclusivity, Hugo has the coaches go through gender and youth development training informed by a local university. The coaches then incorporate gender inclusion into the TPSR rugby program four sessions per year.

### **Cultural Relevance Cycle in TPSR Programs**

After discussing cultural relevance in Hugo’s program his first response indicates that he relies heavily on his coaches.

I just sit in my bedroom all day and type proposals up. The skeleton of the TPSR is the same but the content is codesigned by coaches. Although they get guidance from a child development specialist, they have been included in the design process. I think at the end of the day, the session plan is a piece of A4 paper now. But they [the coaches] must bring it to life over 60 minutes, 70 minutes. We do the basics, but really it comes to life through their actions and words, and we just put trust that they know the child better than I do.

As the Executive director of the rugby program his effort is hiring great coaches that will connect with the youth and securing funding for the program. While he may not work closely with the youth, he is the person that organized the program, finds funding, hires coaches and structures coach’s education.

### ***Understanding the Youths’ Background***

When exploring cultural relevance with Hugo regarding understanding the youths’ background, Hugo explained that the youths’ lives are riddled with violence.

I think one of the biggest problems our children face is violence and the experience of violence at home domestically or in the community on the way to school... I think 76% of our students have seen a stabbing or shooting in the last six months, and that was terrible... I think about 44% have seen it in the last three months. Which obviously has a traumatic effect.

Due to this violence that the youth experience and the impact it has on the youths' lives, Hugo's program uses sport along with counseling to address this trauma.

As part of funding and appeasing stakeholders Hugo and his colleagues conduct a survey and interviews at the end of each year. The survey and interviews help Hugo and his team determine what the youth need and how their program can morph to provide what the youth want. He said the largest request is food. While food was not brought up in other aspects of the interview, poverty was, specifically a child that phased out of the rugby program and was the star of the program's videos asked for money. Hugo feels as though hand-over or aging out of the current program is a systemic issue in many youth programs.

While Hugo has a general knowledge of youths' backgrounds, he relies on his coaches to get to truly know the youth. "They [coaches] just follow the typical TPSR or support for typical guidelines of; remember their names, recognize them, remember something about them, show them that you notice and build a relationship from there." Being that Hugo is responsible for coach education, he receives guidance from a child development specialist in his coaching program design process.

### ***Knowledge of Youths' Community Dynamics and Educational Processes***

The youths' educational process and behavior in school is what gets youth into the rugby program. Hugo's program partners with local schools. These local schools refer youth to his program, and he pitches the program to about 40 kids per a school. The youth are referred based on displaying behavioral symptoms in school related to traumatic experiences. An additional hook of Hugo's program is that the youth get to miss a little bit of class time to attend the rugby program. The youths' educational process influences the program another way, division based off ethnicity. "Our schools are divided along those lines, that you would see the friendship groups divided along those lines." The lines Hugo is referring to would be white, Black African, Eastern Asian, and black colored Indian.

As previously, mentioned Hugo is the executive director of the rugby program, he is not always interacting with the youth his program serves. Hugo further explained that the coaches and youth relationships really informs the program.

You know, all the money that we are given and all the money we spend, all comes down to one thing, the child needs to be noticed by someone that they respect... It's so simple. So really, the entire program is aimed at

recognizing something special about each individual person and we repeat that over a long period of time.

Beyond striving to know each child individually Hugo and his team “Hire very specifically. We have a Human Resources process to go through, that maybe makes it seem more complicated than it is. We get people from the community, leaders from the community from which the children are from and so they understand the child's circumstances.” When advised by a stakeholder and donor to hire a health counselor with a certification rather than stick with their current lay counselor Hugo took into consider how important the lay counselor’s relationships were in their rugby program. “Children and their relationships are way more important than a piece of paper or qualification or certification... If we let her go... If we replaced her, we would lose the trust of hundreds of girls.” He continued to say “we might hire someone who's got all the qualifications, but if they don't connect with the kids, then they're not going to achieve anything. Needless to say, we lost that funder.” This demonstrates how much Hugo appreciates and relishes his coaches and the positive impact they have on their rugby program.

### ***Strategies Implemented***

Hugo’s program was specifically built to meet the needs of the youth in the community. To connect with youth and their community and give youth the tools they need to overcome and handle the barriers they face. Such barriers consisted of violence, low education, and single parent households. While his program does not offer a tutoring or an academic piece, they educate youth on mental health and provide youth tools and recourses to overcome these pitfalls. Another strategy that Hugo employs is to seek assistance when designing his coach education process and gender responsive lessons. He has consulted with a child development specialist and local university gender institute to inform his programming. After consulting with experts, he relays the information to his rugby coaches and incorporates the new knowledge into programming with youth. Other strategies Hugo implements are basic principles that can be found during the relational time of TPSR programming: remembering youths’ names, remember something specific or special about the child, and show that you notice the youth. Hugo is also mindful of the community and violence found within the community. “We try to avoid after school because there's a risk to women traveling home outside of normal hours and also expectations the chores at home, so we might lose girls by operating outside of school hours.”

This dictates what time his program takes place at, for instance after school hours can be a heightened time of violence so his program takes place during the end of the school day.

### ***Academic and Physical Skill Development***

This program does not explicitly teach youth academic school-based information, but it does teach young people how “to be able to cope better with stress, well, to regulate their emotions so that they don't react in a violent manner to violence.” This teaching of how to handle stress and trauma is extended to the family not just the child. Unfortunately, Hugo brought up academics as being a systemic or structural inequality.

You get really poor infrastructure in schools; very low quality of teaching and teacher training is...outdated it. I think maybe it's akin to a lot of it is you get some systems are not preparing young people for work, just stick the Victorian era. Yes, like extremely under equip schools, but it's really low-quality teaching.

Physically, Hugo's program offers youth a safe space to learn and engage in rugby. The program has both men and women coaching both boys and girls. While rugby may be perceived as a male-dominated sport, this program does it's best to invite and include boys and girls evenly. Hugo's program also takes one session per quarter to focus on equity issues pertaining to gender and intends to incorporate sexuality once coaches are comfortable with gender equity.

### **Inclusivity and Challenges Related to Gender Ethnicity and Culture**

Being that some sports are gendered Hugo understands rugby is a masculine sport and engages in certain practices to overcome that bias. Additionally, Hugo is a white middle class man and serves youth that have a different ethnicity than him. These two constructs are explored further below. When talking about inclusivity of programming pertaining to youths' gender right off the bat Hugo stated:

I think it's pretty obvious that rugby as a sport is a pretty male dominated with perhaps a bit of an image problem. We do work against the stigma; we work against some problematic association with rugby and masculinity in South Africa. Especially, that may put some girls off, but having said that, even at some point last year we had more girls playing.

Hugo has both men and women coaching boys and girls equally and no matter the gender of the participants they receive the same care and program content. When talking about the

TPSR model itself Hugo does not remember what components he mutated into his program but overall, he believes that “it [TPSR model] encourages participation over winning and cooperation over a single-minded victory” and that it “channels the kind of inclusive bits of sport and kind of pushes out the part of sports that are problematic or isolating or cause harm.” Gender is explicitly covered in Hugo’s program. “Yeah, the synopsis of our approach is that we put aside one session every term, so four sessions in a year, to specifically to talk about gender. We use the TPSR layout, and we have academics assisting us and making sure we get it right.” Hugo shared a quote from one coach that identifies as Christian and had trouble with navigating gender and gender roles. The coach stated:

Walking away from that training I was way more aware of gender. I've learnt that each gender has its own struggles and benefits to it. All genders are equal and deserve the same opportunities. People shouldn't be judged on how they carry their gender; people don't do it out of choice. It's how they were born. Letting kids know about this at a young age will make better adults more socially aware adults. – Coach

Sexuality is also brought up in Hugo’s program, this is brought up through the responsibility of level of respect. While sexuality is not explicitly covered the way gender is, it is dependent upon how comfortable the coach or team is with addressing the situation.

When you think about TPSR, the easiest one to remember is respecting others as a level, and I think that any kind of behavior or actions that are derogatory or exclude people would be covered under that kind of length, you respect other people's rights and interests and they're freedom of expression and so in a way.

Sexuality is still a component of the program they are working on addressing. By partnering with the local University Hugo can access training for his coaches to learn more about how to address gender and sexuality within their program.

In regard to ethnicity Hugo’s program predominately serves Black African and colored communities. However, in his location those two broad categorizations are broken down into subpopulations that serve as boundaries.

We primarily only work with Black African and colored community, quite distinct to each other, and sometimes their teams and our schools are divided along those lines. You would see the friendship groups divided

along those lines, but that's sort of the predominant delineation and our groups between Black Africans, South Africans and colored South Africans.

As previously mentioned, the varying ethnicities can be seen divided in school and friendship groups. There's also a religious component that Hugo and his team have to navigate when creating an inclusive environment and breaking down boundaries between groups. As some of those that he serves are Islamic and Christian. There's also a tribe component among each subpopulation. Hugo does not perceive any of these ethnic and religious differences as playing a role in his program. When discussing the TPSR model, Hugo does not feel as though the model and ethnicity have an impact or effect on one other. Additionally, being that the schools he works with are public or government schools, religion does not play a role in the school. Overall, Hugo perceived cultural aspects related to ethnicity and religion to not play a role in his program.

When asked about challenges that Hugo faces when being inclusive or culturally relevant Hugo being stated that

We try to avoid after school because there's a risk to women traveling home outside of normal hours and also expectations the chores at home. So, we might lose girls by operating outside of school hours. I'm afraid to say we have experienced the worst that one can. We've had children die in our program every year and, even staff, some sexually assaulted.

Moreover, being that youth are recruited or referred into the program yearly based on their behavior in school, youth that do not display symptoms of experiencing trauma at the referral time point may not be sought after.

### **Critical Consciousness**

A component of cultural relevance is for program leaders and providers to be critically or socio-politically conscious. This was addressed by asking Hugo about his knowledge of the youths' systemic and structural inequalities or inequities, and how his program addresses those inequities. The three major barriers the youth he serves faces include education, or lack thereof, violence, and single parent household. Hugo considered the education of the youth to be poor and lack quality teachers and resources or funding. While Hugo's program does not address school quality Hugo understands that schooling is an important component of a child's success

“We don't improve the quality of schooling although there is a lot we touch on.” As previously mentioned, violence and crime are significant in the community Hugo works with. His program does address that concern by offering mental health assistance and coping strategies. Lastly, single parent households are prevalent due to men traveling to work.

When expanding on what the ruby program does touch on Hugo stated “I think we can't solve the problems but what we do is we allow kids to cope better. I think that TPSR is an on-field curricula but with [rugby program] I work in homes with families to try and teach coping strategies to get in the homes with the parents.” The major way Hugo's program addresses systemic barriers by “giving them a solid foundation to learn...Complete school and do something after they finish school. So, in a way, we're trying to give them the tools they need to break the cycle of poverty.” Furthermore, Hugo realizes that awareness of youths' gender and sexuality is important in his program. Thus, he consults with experts and local universities to incorporate awareness of such issues into the rugby program.

### Case 3 – Mariah

I think the TPSR format creates an environment which perpetuates the values in a sense, some sort of logic model there. I think since we set the foundation of circle time, everything goes, everything is safe, and we build that up. That creates the space both for people to express what they already feel, and then also explore what they're not sure they feel yet and say it in that space.

<b>Ethnicity</b>	White
<b>Gender Identity</b>	Female
<b>Role in TPSR Program</b>	Assistant Professor and Program Facilitator
<b>Physical Activity Background</b>	30+ years of basketball and tennis. Currently interested in boxing, pickleball, yoga, running and fitness.
<b>Time Practicing TPSR</b>	10 years
<b>Learned TPSR from</b>	Don Hellison's Book and Advisor Paul Wright
<b>Youth Served</b>	Incarcerated youth, multi-ethnic youth and girls

Table 4.3. Mariah's Demographics & Program's Participants

Mariah is involved with various TPSR programs. She has experience with international TPSR programs but did not touch on those in this interview. At the time of the interview Mariah has been practicing TPSR for about 10 years and learned TPSR through her doctoral advisor, Don Hellison's book, and personal development programs. Three programs she has focused on throughout this interview consist of one that takes place in a prison and serves incarcerated youth, another after school girl's boxing program, and third, is a summer camp. Specifically, the prison program serves young adults, the boxing program serves middle school girls, and the summer camp ranges from k-12 youth. These programs all take place in a large city in Mid-East United States. Mariah's athletic background is woven into one of the TPSR programs she facilitates. Mariah has coached basketball and boxing; she incorporates her boxing knowledge into her girl's boxing program. Each program she facilitates utilizes the TPSR model, but with different modifications. The girl's boxing program follows the TPSR model and format the most.

A few aspects about TPSR that kept reoccurring throughout Mariah's interview is the nature of reflection, communication, and expression of voices. When talking about TPSR Mariah stated "the element of reflection, I think since reflection is so intentionally built into it, in each phase, but then also just in the values. We're giving youth a chance to think about things that they have just sort of kept stored and not so much reflected on." Referring to reflection in her prison program. She commented; "So it's definitely a lot of reflection, possibly first in the sense of individual self-reflection, and then establishing that safe space to integrate it into our group meetings or one-on-one time." Reflection is important in Mariah's programs but also creating a safe place for youth to openly express and reflect without judgement from others. When talking about comfort level when addressing ethnicity, gender, and sexuality in her programs Mariah stated: "This is their experience and their exploration. We're just facilitating it. We're not putting a marker on it. So, any reflections and expressions are valued I think in TPSR's eyes." Within the summer camp program that Mariah facilitates, giving youth voices is a focus "It's very much a transfer focus in that camp setting and prompting action, but also giving autonomy and agency to the youth."

### **Cultural Relevance Cycle in TPSR Programs**

When asked how Mariah engages in culturally relevant programming her response was:

I think there's so much opportunity to just use current events and whatever is going on in the world in the program, like the whole idea of the program extends beyond the classroom walls or the gym walls... I think in that sense, it feels culturally relevant. Using what's going on in the real world to further sort of reflection on life skills and what they mean. How do we connect or how do we keep agency and some of the challenging things that are going on and not just the bad stuff.

### ***Understanding Youth' Backgrounds***

The way that Mariah gets to know the youths' background is to "make them the experts of their own lives. Or of their own something." By asking youth questions about their experiences Mariah gets a better grasp on what the child's family and living situation is like. Another option she said is to do research, but she claims that's not always the best resource. "I've never used that because their backgrounds aren't necessarily what's on paper." Due to one of Mariah's programs taking place in a high security prison she understands their situation of what crimes they committed and what sentence they face. While not all the incarcerated youth have

the same background in general many were involved in gang violence. Mariah explained that many committed Title I crimes; “mostly gun violent crimes, so on the farther end of the spectrum, some have been convicted of murder, and then a lot of them have just been involved in gang violence, so they come from pretty underserved areas in the city and throughout the state to where gang culture is very much a part of their everyday life.” Mariah elaborated that when it comes to the prison program, she learned a lot about gang culture from the youth.

### ***Knowledge of Youths’ Community and Educational Processes***

When it comes to her knowledge of the youths’ backgrounds, Mariah grew up in the community that the summer camp program serves, therefore Mariah knows and understands that specific community well. “I grew up in that neighborhood. I knew the sort of magic of it and wanted to explore TPSR in that setting, because it's just so perfect.” When further defining the summer camp population Mariah explained:

What’s really cool about the context of that is that the youth come from this neighborhood in [city] that's extremely diverse. Real diversity, not just the in the sense of Black and Brown people but more than that. There are very highly affluent all the way to very lower class. There are over 80 different cultures found in this little neighborhood, this 3-mile square radius, and kids come from public school and private school in the summer camp. There’s also a really high population of same-sex parents in the area, and super cool opportunities for us to talk about with young kids.

Not only does Mariah know the youths’ community from experience but she also embraces the youths’ knowledge of their own community. “For understanding their community dynamics, we adapt to the approach of... Make them experts of their own lives.” By asking the youth questions about their lives and learning about what was lifelike for the child growing up Mariah and her undergraduate students that assist her can gain knowledge about the youths’ community and how it influences them. Mariah went on to say [by allowing kids to be the expert] “It kind of serves a dual purpose because you get the answers you need, but you also make the youth feel like an expert, which makes the world go around and empower them.” As for community dynamics and its influence on youth, kids of the prison program had experienced the strongest negative consequence. Mariah made the following comment:

Some of the youth I've worked with said that they... As early as three years old can remember just that it was normal that family members were part of gangs and that they knew that was what their future was, and so even things like knowing where to walk and knowing what colors to wear, and knowing what signals to throw at age five, six.

When explaining how the youths' community dynamics and educational processes influences the youth engagement in her TPSR program Mariah spoke about engagement.

I think any day we're making our youth feel heard or seen or empowered, they're going to be more engaged. When we have people on the side not participating, that's usually a signal that they need some connection or attention. I think there's definitely a close relationship between those two factors.

Being that the prison program and summer camp program do not have a school component or school time involved, Mariah was not able to speak as to how their educational processes influence, their program engagement. When it came to the girl's boxing program due to the program being right after school the school day drama drags into the boxing program. An example of how school or changes to the program impacts the program's dynamics includes

If Spring Break is near, or if we meet twice a week and it's our Thursday meeting when the weekend is coming that absolutely messes with things. If the location of the program has changed from our normal room somewhere else, I would say that it could be very disruptive.

### ***Strategies Implemented***

As mentioned above one strategy that Mariah implements is to use current events. The events she uses are tailored to meet the program's participants. Two examples she listed were "We talk about current events in the prison setting, we talked about George Floyd and Black Lives Matter and all of those things. In boxing club, President Trump's derogatory comments would come up all the time. And how do we process that?" Current events there seem to pertain to the youth of the specific program is how she connects to the youths' community. In the prison program Mariah also utilizes examples of local community members to show youth that they have options in their future besides gang violence. In the boxing program Mariah has the girls talk about female accomplishments and female athletes.

Mariah believes in making youth the experts of their lives or of owning something. Through this strategy of empowerment Mariah learns about the child and gives the child an opportunity to express their voice. Mariah also fosters youth empowerment by ensuring that her program leaders facilitate conversations and allow youth to share their experiences and exploration in a safe space.

Another spin Mariah attempts to take is to use language that fits the context better.

As soon as I say leadership or respect, kids turn into school mode, responding like robots, 'I'm respectful to my parents'. That kind of stuff. So, something we've been doing with our prison program recently is sexifying life skills. We'll do 'helping my homies' or 'staying true' or more colloquial things.

Mariah tries to make the language and phrases of the TPSR responsibility levels more appealing to the youth. By using language that is common to the youth it also limits the 'school mode' responses.

### ***Academic and Physical Skill Development***

Academic development is interwoven into two of the TPSR programs Mariah spoke about in her interview. In the summer camp program and prison program:

We do science projects and arts and crafts type things sometimes, but it's very, very loose. Again, it's a less of an emphasis on any academics and more of an emphasis on engagement in the life skills. With the prison program, we integrate academic exposure. College exposure rather, and some of these youth get their GED inside [prison] or are even taking college classes. We do sort of a spin-off program from the sport setting of bringing the youth to campus for a day.

The summer camp program offers some educational or academic development, but the focus is on life skills. As for the prison program, academic development is not an explicit focus, but youth are offered an educational experience to visit a college campus and learn about what college life is like, an alternative path compared to the current one they are on. The prison program has a fitness and leadership component. Physically, the youth are able to engage in different types of activities such as basketball and weight training. The third program Mariah has spoken about is the girl's boxing program. Besides learning the physical skill of boxing the

program does not have an academic or educational component embedded within TPSR programming.

### **Inclusivity and Challenges Related to Gender Ethnicity and Culture**

As indicated in the demographic table Mariah is a white woman that serves ethnically diverse and varying socio-economic status youth. While culture is broader than gender and ethnicity another aspect of culture that comes up throughout this interview is youths' sexuality.

Regarding gender and ethnic inclusive programming her response referred to program evaluation.

I think I really respect and appreciate the TARE. The role and assessment aspect of TPSR. We're giving kids the chance to be evaluators and have agency over decisions, and I think that is one of my favorite parts to integrate into the cultural relevancy of; what do you think should have happened in this event? How would you assess how so and so handled it?

This aspect of having the youth be evaluators of the program gives them the ability to express their voice which is a key component of the TPSR model. When it comes to gender Mariah explained that her programs look a little different when serving boys only or girls only.

I'll talk about all three, male female in gender nonconforming. Our female program has a lot less movement and activity in it because they love to talk, and they love awareness talk, they love group meetings, and they still really do love the movement part of the physical activity time. It looks like an opposite image of what our boys' programs look like. The boys' programs, I usually do awareness talks during stretches or even it looks like two sentences.

One of Mariah's programs that has "girls" in the title (Girls Boxing Club). This program surprisingly is more inclusive than what the title leads on.

For gender non-conforming youth, we've had a couple of those in our [program], which is interesting because girls is literally in the title. We've sort of tried to figure out how to make that more inclusive, but I haven't figured that out yet. I've never specifically interviewed them or ask this, but my perception is that they really like TPSR and feel safe in that setting, being a gender non-conforming person, because it's so much about sharing feelings and background and inclusivity and acceptance

Since Mariah has knowledge of the community dynamics of whom she serves she understands that to create inclusive programming that does not alienate others she has to respect

surface level responses – especially in the prison program in the prison program. “...It's so hyper-masculine and without a doubt it is a weakness to show emotion.” When talking about the all-girls program that she hosts, it's just about the opposite “it's so much about sharing feelings and background and inclusivity and acceptance.”

One of the challenges Mariah had mentioned was expressed above when utilizing language that is more relevant to the youth. Another challenge that Mariah faces when being inclusive is that when talking about deeply personal things there is a risk of alienating a child.

I think when you venture into the realm of talking about really deep personal stuff, you do risk alienating someone who might feel like they don't fit with the groups' normative beliefs. Because you're always going to have louder people in the group express their background, or interests.

Another challenge that many program facilitators must work around would be the other leader they bring into their programs (e.g., as coaches, undergraduate students). Mariah had brought this up when explaining comfort levels when addressing and handling situations involving gender ethnicity and sexuality.

I can't assume my leaders have the same values. So, for example, with the [program], I've had a Christian leader before, who's like, ‘Yeah, I don't really love how we're just totally like, yeah, you can be a wolf and you can be a whatever and you can identify as that.’ I kind of use the company line of returning it to, this is their experience in their exploration, and we're just facilitating it.

Mariah suggests that fostering a sense of individual reflection helps with establishing a safe space for the youths' group meetings. Extending upon reflexivity Mariah mentioned “I've sort of thought about how some of the TPSR structures that exist might further benefit more of the dominant groups. Am I asking questions that alienate people of color, or are some of the structures that are built into TPSR more of the dominant pedagogy in schools?” Personal reflection and encouraging her leaders and youth to be reflective serves as a way for Mariah to overcome these challenges.

### **Critical Consciousness**

A component of cultural relevance is for program leaders and providers to be critically or socio-politically conscious. This was addressed by exploring how Mariah gains knowledge of the

youths' systemic and structural inequities, and to what extent does she use this knowledge in her TPSR program.

I would say this isn't necessarily a best practice, but it's what works really well for me. I belong to a very dominant and powerful class in our society, and so for me, the way I cope with that when I work with people that are different than me, is I put everything on the table. I say, right up front, I'm a white female who comes from a privileged background who has this and that. I'm putting that out there, and so I think that kind of sets the stage to integrate it into the program as well.

For Mariah by being open and conscious of her place in society she feels as though it creates an open dialogue for the youth. She questions them about their past experiences. In her boxing program the female life experience is spoken about and explored more explicitly. In Mariah's words "we're constantly addressing sexism and life and sport and empowerment, and just ingrained in the female experience." Shifting from talking the girl's boxing program to the youth summer camp program. In the summer camp, Mariah invited a police officer to be a guest speaker for the seventh-ninth graders in her summer camp program. However, the youth were uncomfortable with this and decided to not have the officer speak to them. This situation set up a moment for her and the youth to debrief and talk about their discomforts. Mariah's discussion of inequities or enhancement of socio-political and critical consciousness among youth depends on the youth program and what the youth ultimately want to discuss.

Mariah is part of more TPSR inspired programs than the three covered in her interview. She has played a role in promoting TPSR and its usage internationally with coaches and sport administrators. Mariah overall believes that TPSR is a great guiding principle, but each program is going to need a different approach whether that be due to the youths' values, the coaches' values, or partner initiatives.

It [cultural relevance] reminds me how important it is to not assume best practices are best practice. I know that sounds really counter-intuitive, but almost nothing works the way it should in prison, which sort of returns me to my former point that... It's just much more of a stark difference in that setting, but that might be more subtly happening in after school clubs and community-based programs as well.

Ultimately, to be culturally relevant best practices are not always best practices, and the program leader must be responsive to the youths' needs.

#### Case 4 – Angela

I think inclusivity is a part of it because the way that the TPSR model is set up it is so reflective, and discussions are always happening. The point of the start of it [awareness talk] is talking about one of the goals [TPSR level] and talking about how it can be applied. That's for everybody, so coming up with ways and examples of the way that wouldn't be applied versus way it would be applied and that could pull in concepts of diversity.

<b>Ethnicity</b>	Caucasian/White
<b>Gender Identity</b>	Female
<b>Role in TPSR Program</b>	Visiting Assistant Professor/Program coordinator
<b>Physical Activity Background</b>	Recreational youth sport, competitive high school sport, physically active and CrossFit.
<b>Time Practicing TPSR</b>	About 5 years
<b>Learned TPSR from</b>	Textbook, experts (Jacobs, Hellison & Hemphill) and experience
<b>Youth Served</b>	Racial and ethnically varying elementary youth and middle school girls.

Table 4.4. Angela's Demographics & Program's Participants

As explained in Angela's demographic Table 4.4., she is an assistant professor at a university in northern middle America and currently the program coordinator of a yoga based TPSR program for girls. However, throughout her interview she spoke about a program she was part of for a longer period of time that took place in southern middle America where she worked with multi-ethnic elementary aged youth. Angela has a strong background in physical education teacher education and is a fitness enthusiast. While her specific fitness endeavors have not been the center activity of her TPSR programs, her knowledge of positive youth development, physical activity and physical education has been. Angela has been practicing the TPSR model for about 5 years at the time of this interview and has learned it through various methods such as the TPSR textbook, experience, and experts in the field.

It is important to note that Angela has engaged in utilizing the cultural relevance cycle in the past. Specifically, Angela utilized the Culturally Relevant Physical Education Model<sup>1</sup>. Her responses throughout the interview reflected her knowledge and experience with the model. Angela's interview focused on how ingrained she was in the local middle school where her one TPSR program took place. She not only taught P.E. classes but also sat in on other classes to immerse herself in the youths' educational process and school environment. One focus of Angela's was building relationships with the youth she worked with.

### **Cultural Relevance Cycle in TPSR Programs**

After questioning Angela about the TPSR model and enacting the cultural relevance cycle Angela said the following:

I think that the number one thing is that reflective component and the open discussion component. Cultural Relevant Physical Education, for example... It's constant reflection. Sarah Flory is repeating the concept of thinking about where you're coming from, thinking about your actions, reflecting on those actions, and if they were the best ones to do. TPSR does that exact same frame.

Angela feels as though cultural relevance pedagogies and TPSR has other similarities, while cultural relevant teaching doesn't necessarily focus on the same values that TPSR promotes, the values can be used across settings and cultures.

### ***Understanding Youths' Backgrounds***

Angela had time in her favor, she worked with one elementary school for three years. Where she provided youth physical education courses, assisted pre-service teacher with their physical education courses, and conducted an ethnography at the elementary school. That amount of time spent in the school allowed Angela to get to know the youth, the school environment and youths' community. Besides time, Angela looked to literature to learn about the community and reached out to other physical educators who had more experience working with African American youth. Below illustrates Angela's thought process and steps when trying to gain understanding of the youths' backgrounds.

Starting off with getting to know the environment that I was in, beyond just getting to know the kids, I was starting to truly understand and get to

know the classroom teachers. Getting to know the school structure itself, getting to know parents, families, to whatever degree that I could. Then I would compare my own lived experiences to their lived experiences were, and how those were similar or different. How I could connect with them in our similarities and how I could understand their differences and try to support them.

Angela connected with social workers to get further into the youths' community and learn about it. The university Angela was attending at the time also had a program in a low-income housing area where some of her students resided, so she would attend the program to get to know the youth and their families more.

In my second year, I started to actually connect with the social workers and started to go out to their community. We had so many students that live in that environment with assisted housing, so they had a community center out there. There was another project going on, so I started to go with them, and I got to meet some of the kids' families through that process and actually see where they live and talk to them about what their expectations were of their kids.

Even though Angela tried to get to know the community well she stated "I still feel like I could have gone a lot more in-depth and getting to know the community. I would alter that moving forward." Explained further in the next section, Angela had a general understanding of the barriers that the youth faced such as low socioeconomic status and the plights that come with it, environmental barriers, and Title I school inequities.

### ***Knowledge of Youths' Community and Educational Processes***

When first asking Angela about the youth her TPSR program served she was able to list and explain what barriers she believed the youth experienced. Poverty and attending a low-income school were first on the list. In addition to poverty, she explained that the environment was also an issue such as no sidewalk walks and untrustworthy public transportation. The community she worked with also suffered high crime rates and high patrol. Additionally, Angela believed that many of the children lived in unsteady households such as being bounced around from family member to family member and having social services intervene.

When discussing Angela's knowledge of the youths' community dynamics and educational processes Angela was able to speak to both community and education. The TPSR

modeled physical education courses that Angela promoted served primarily Black (95%), White (3%) and other (2%). The middle school Angela assisted at was a low income and Title I school.

In terms of within the school structure itself, the school was considered a Title 1 school, so already having that label, a lot of individuals came into the school expecting under their performance, so I would say that the level at which they wanted their students to perform was lower than other schools when, in my opinion, the students could have achieved much higher expectations and had more success than they were expected to.

Since Angela didn't work for the school but was in a partnership with the school, she noticed that the school's environment impacted youths' full participation in her TPSR modeled physical education courses.

They're able to raise hands, ask questions, challenge us in ways that are positive and effective. If they had a suggestion for the program or wanted to discuss something, they were all allowed to do that. If they did that during the regular physical education session, they just wouldn't be allowed to. That would not be an option in any way, so having the opportunity was incredibly difficult for the children.

This led to the youth needing to code-switch from TPSR based physical education class to the rest of their school day. Angela has to build a trusting and safe space for the youth to actively and comfortably participate in her program. Angela felt as though they were working against the school.

### ***Strategies Implemented***

As mentioned previously Angela has utilized the cultural relevant physical education model so she was able to consciously implement changes to her teaching strategies to reflect her knowledge of the youth. One example of this is that Angela modified content to cater to what the youth wanted to learn.

It was talking to the students about what they wanted to learn and giving them some input, once you get into some units that we did have to teach an experience, but still allowing the kids to have a say, so for example, with things like dances they are able to pick the songs, pick the dances that they wanted to learn.

While as a physical education course there's a set of objectives such as playing a net ball sport, the youth were able to pick which net ball sport they preferred. Their choice typically reflected what they had access to at home. Additionally, Angela and her colleagues would incorporate Social Emotional Learning (SEL) concepts into class such as locational and social settings that movement can be incorporated into or who can be invited to join and how. Angela stated that she utilizes the Collaborative for Academic, Social and Emotional Learning (CASEL) framework to promote SEL. Five components of SEL consist of self-management, self-awareness, social awareness, responsible decision making and relationship skills. The CASEL framework also consists of application of the SEL concepts to classrooms, schools, families, and communities through equitable learning environments and empowering youth (CASEL, 2021). Another strategy Angela took on was to read literature and talk to other people that had similar experiences as her. Angela put a focus on her relationships with youth and tried to get to know the youth as well as learn about what's going on in the school and their family life. Angela enacted the cultural relevance cycle: tried to grasp an understanding of the teachers, parents, families, compare her experiences to the youths, and then third modify her lessons and interactions to better meet the youths' desires. Reflection was also part of the cultural relevant cycle; Angela would practice self-reflection as well as reflect with her pre-service teachers as a group.

### ***Academic and Physical Skill Development***

Academically, Angela promoted transference of TPSR levels, utilized social emotional learning concepts, and as a physical educator, enhanced youths' physical literacy. Since her program was physical education based there was an academic portion, but it was focused on sport and activity knowledge. "In terms of physical movement, knowing what they had available at home and knowing what they were interested in, trying to make sure that we are meeting those needs first instead of just being siloed our own experiences." Angela tried her best to allow youth to express their voice and make choices as to what activity they want to engage in or what music they wanted to dance to. Another approach Angela used was to foster youths' ability to ask questions and challenge her and other program leaders in a positive and effective way. Besides a physical focus the idea of transference of concepts from SEL as well as TPSR were promoted and incorporated into the youths' daily lives. When discussing transference of TPSR skills

Angela said “For example, talking about the concept of transfer, we were able to discuss how are you using this skill in the program and how can you use it in school, how could you use it at home?” Ultimately Angela’s program enhanced youths’ physical literacy and increased their knowledge of what activities they can do where and with whom.

### **Inclusivity and Challenges Related to Gender Ethnicity and Culture**

When discussing inclusivity or exclusivity of her TPSR program regarding gender and ethnicity Angela did not have too much to say. Specifically focusing on gender, she felt as though there was not a large difference in how boys and girls responded to her TPSR program. At first when there is relational time and youth can pick what activity they would like to engage in. Their relational time was at the beginning of the physical education period that looked like open gym time where youth were able to pick whatever activities they wanted. During that time Angela noted:

Boys would pick a lot of the football or more team-based activities when we had our open gym time or relational time. At the beginning [of class] the equipment was just out, and they could choose what they wanted, they would do that, and a lot of the girls do things like jump rope hula-hoop and dance.

She used this noticeable difference as a moment for the youth to reflect if they are choosing the activities, they personally want to engage in and are interested in or if it is what they feel comfortable with or what their friends are doing. Other than the youths’ choice of activity during relational time she did not notice any differences. Angela currently has a virtual TPSR-based yoga program for girls. Due to COVID-19 the in-person TPSR activity program had to take a break, and Angela transitioned the program to virtual yoga with social and emotional learning focus. When questioned why yoga and why girls Angela replied, “I felt like it was really important to do something SEL focused on the virtual space because we have not been addressing that quite as much in the K through 12 setting, and I felt like now is this good a time as any.” Furthermore, Angela went on to explain why girls: “It’s always been an interest to me, working with girls, specifically related to confidence and body image and empowerment. It aligned, everything lined up the way I had hoped to it and then we applied for a grant, and we got some funding for equipment.” When questioned about The TPSR model itself and gender Angela thought that TPSR is not gendered, and her excerpt below explains why.

It [TPSR] does focus on trying to be all-encompassing for everyone, when we talk about the different components within the respect or teamwork or caring for others, you can talk about those concepts with your students and make them feel more comfortable in those spaces, so it's not gendered by any means, because everyone can show those concepts.

After shifting our conversation to ethnicity, the concept of race and stereotyping activities by race has come up in her classes.

There was a lot of name calling across races or even little comments or things like 'Well, course I go to basketball you're black.' Those types of comments that were said opened up the floor for conversation, so we would take those teachable moments and talk about why we can't label someone in that way.

Another part of programing that stood out to Angela was that the Black or African American youth were drawn to Black or African American identifying pre-service teachers and were more willing to have conversations with those pre-service teachers. Overall, Angela believes that the TPSR model itself is inclusive to all ethnicities.

Inclusivity is a part of it because the way that the TPSR model is set up and is so reflective and discussions are always happening, so the point of... The start of it is talking about one of the goals and talking about how it can be applied, and that's for everybody.

An interesting point Angela brought up when talking about inclusivity verse exclusivity she mentioned that because her program fostered such a sense of community it was not exactly welcoming to outsiders. Outsiders were considered to be any students not in her TPSR based physical education class. "We've created such a sense of community within the program, which is a real positive, but then that almost became a negative to a degree and that outsiders weren't a part of the program. So, then it was like an us versus them mentality." However, she felt positive about creating such a positive environment and identity for her students.

When asked about challenges Angela faced with TPSR programming she felt that truly getting to know the community and not making assumptions was challenging. "A lot of assumptions are made, and we all have internal biases that we come to the table with, so being able to address those and then also making sure that my actions aren't just making assumptions."

A reoccurring topic in Angela's interview was how the school's interpretation and modification to promote Social and Emotional Learning (SEL), did not align with her TPSR P.E. class. The way the school promoted SEL was written in school policy but not displayed by values of behaviors. The way Angela explained this was that:

Our [TPSR] program was espousing all of these SEL components, and we were practicing them as they're written in the castle framework or in the TPSR textbook. That's what we were focusing on and consistently repeating, but during the school day, the definitions of those things were very different. Even though they said they [the school] were focusing on SEL, and that was a primary component of the school. Even though they were saying they were doing those things, obviously their approaches were very different.

This led to youth code-switching in school since the youths' school version of SEL differed from what TPSR promotes. For instance, "If you were walking down a hall in a school that was discussing TPSR and actively utilizing it, you wouldn't hear teachers screaming at children that they needed to get in line or else." Angela's example illustrates that the school utilized authority while TPSR promotes SEL components through reciprocity. Another example of school versus TPSR program was "Being able to see those experiences that the kids were having in a school day just even more so solidified the fact that when they come to the program, they're getting such mixed messages and our program was in the school." Expanding on how much of a challenge it was working within the school

We also had school personnel always in the gym. We had to combat a lot of the, what I would perceive as poor practice, SEL concepts and just general interactions with the students at the school staff or trade. We didn't feel like, (A), the kids would be comfortable talking about some of those things, or (B) it would be providing them a safe space to open up because those teachers would be there, and we don't know what the consequence would be for that.

Because of that environment it seemed as though some aspects of TPSR suffered such as truly having youth express their voice and make decisions. Additionally, TPSR utilizes discussion to address behavioral issue, but at this program the school personal would step in and address behavioral issues in an authoritarian style. When working in a school that doesn't promote the same values and tactics for teaching values make employing TPSR practices challenging and makes the youth must code-switch.

## Critical Consciousness

A component of cultural relevance is for program leaders and providers to be critically or socio-politically conscious. This was addressed by exploring how Angela gains knowledge of the youths' systemic and structural inequities, and to what extent does she use this knowledge in her TPSR program. Angela has had experience working through the cultural relevant cycle. Her thoughts about utilizing the steps included:

I just needed to talk to my students, and they needed to talk about what the kids wanted out of the program. Now my first step is always going to be talk to the kids, ask them what they want to experience, ask them what they're bringing to the table already. Then being very open and vulnerable myself, I think is the other step, which can be very tough to have. Especially starting out admitting to a whole room of fourth graders that you have no idea what just happened.

As explained above, Angela did gain knowledge of the youths' community including the systemic and structural inequities they face. The youth Angela worked with were from a Title I school meaning low income. Therefore, the local community was also impacted by poverty, low-income housing, environmental barriers, and untrustworthy public transportation. Due to the label of a Title I school Angela felt as though the school had low expectations for the youth. Angela gave an example of how students were treated and policies the youth had to overcome.

Tough love was utilized a lot more by administration and in the way the school's bylaws were even written to a degree and that they wanted children to listen when adults were talking, that's the number one rule, or immediate suspension for misbehavior or absences up to truancy.

Angela tried to learn about the youths' community and tried to incorporate her knowledge about the youths' community into her P.E. courses. By talking to the youth. Building relationships and being there consistently she tried to be what she thought they needed. She tried to get to know the youths' teachers, their environment, school structure, and family. When asked about whether or not she explicitly discussed the youths' inequities she said: "kind of certainly not to the degree that I would have liked to, but there were some challenges, first and foremost, my own comfort level talking about that subject was challenging initially." Angela went on to say that it took her a while to get comfortable and build trusting relationships with the youth. "We were communicating about this concept slightly, but not in-depth, not talking about societal

or structural step-backs that they'd be experiencing beyond just really surface level things.” While not explicit in nature she did address transference of TPSR values in different settings with the youth and how in each setting their actions of the values might be different.

## Case 5 – Will

In the ever-changing world, you never know where you're going to end up teaching and who you're going to end up teaching. The basic stuff that I learned through TPSR has helped me in each one of these situations [programming in different countries]. It's getting to know the students, getting to know the people that you're working with. I know their situations, their parents, the school district, the area, all that kind of stuff.

<b>Ethnicity</b>	Irish American
<b>Gender Identity</b>	Male
<b>Role in TPSR Program</b>	Professor and Program Director
<b>Physical Activity Background</b>	Recreational and competitive team and individual sport, coached and competed in fencing
<b>Time Practicing TPSR</b>	About 25 years
<b>Learned TPSR from</b>	Experts (Tom Martinek) and Experience in TPSR programming
<b>Youth Served</b>	Ethnically diverse 6 <sup>th</sup> -8 <sup>th</sup> grade in the U.S. & in Ireland elementary age girls

Table 4.5 Will's Demographic Information & Program Participants

At the time of the interview Will has reported engaging with TPSR programming for 25 years. He went on to state “Everything that I do [is TPSR], I think it's hard-wired into me to be TPSR. I have a self-determination spin on the idea that I'll talk to competence and relatedness.” Will incorporates the principles of TPSR in addition to the ideas of self-determination theory in his programs. Specifically, Will's programs follow the TPSR daily format of an awareness talk, activity time, and closing or reflection time. There's always an affective domain piece incorporated into the activity, such as TPSR levels. He has had diverse experiences within his programming from working in a physical education setting, teaching per-service teachers to facilitating programs in Guam and Ireland.

Due to Will's interest in service-learning, particularly internationally, he has already taken on a cultural competence approach or ideology. This was reflected in his responses about

cultural competence and his programming intercontinentally. A reoccurring idea that promoted his stance was to talk to the youth, conversation helped lead to cultural competence. For example, he would allow youth to negotiate and talk about rules for their games “one of the things we do in early on is to have the students help us to construct the rules.” Another way communication as important was that they would talk about TPSR related goals within the program. Additionally, talk or conversation as a form of conflict resolution “we have a conflict, you have talk about it” While talking was important due to the nature of international programming Will was mindful of language. This is a limitation of where Will tries to offer values-based physical education programming. Even though his current program is in Ireland he stressed the importance of listening since accents vary and words has different meanings. “You really have to stop and listen because the accents... You'll miss a bunch unless you're paying attention, and I find that focus, it's kind of cool when you're looking at kids because you don't want to assume that kids are just like you were when you were their age.” This idea of both talking and listening plays into the importance of communication and building reciprocity.

### **Cultural Relevance Cycle in TPSR Programs**

When talking with Will about being culturally relevant while creating programs his response was yes and that he focuses on cultural competence.

Cultural competency is one of the reasons that I've liked working overseas. I want students to get outside their own culture and their own comfort level... You're going to be able to see a lot of different things, and so understanding what's going on with the situation, being able to in your own mind assess it and figure out who you are is the first step... Everybody sees the world from their own lens. Being aware of the lens that you see through might color your vision about what's actually happening.

Will enjoys service-learning programs and providing opportunities for U.S. based students to explore new locations and cultures. This also provides the youth in other countries an opportunity to learn about American culture and customs as well as physical activity programming.

## *Understanding Youths' Backgrounds*

Part of the TPSR format is having relational time at the beginning of each session. Will and his pre-service teachers utilize that time to get to know the youth better prior to the program's awareness talk. Another time Will utilizes as relationship building is by eating lunch with the kids.

I try to not do really short and sweet things. I've tried to do programs for at least a year, rather than say, if I'm going to do a month... If you're going to have an affective goal, you want to make sure that you put the time and effort in to get to know the students. One of the things that we do that I've done in both of my programs is that we eat lunch with the kids. At least we try to go and just get to know them.

Lunch offers a way for the pre-service teachers and youth to get to know one another and learn about each other's culture through food. While this may not be a method, Will promotes the idea of being deliberate and valuing connections.

You have to deliberate to make that push to be relational, to find those connections and to take the time out of every lesson, to make sure you're doing that. Go out, play with the students, eat lunch with the students, whatever... It's not just business when you're going in there, and I'm going to teach you this, you're going to have to learn this, and then I'm going to assess you and you go on...It's more organic and more of the making connections and teaching them how to make connections each other.

By engaging with youth for extended periods of time, spending time together outside of the program, and being deliberate about making connections are behaviors that Will engages in to get to understand the youths' backgrounds.

Prior to immersing himself into a community Will mentioned that he usually has an in. "Usually, I have an in, so I like every program I've ever started, I knew somebody who was in an area... Again, I was looking for that connection." His connection or person who was in the community was able to always give Will and his program assistants a rundown of the local community, curriculum used for physical education and general information.

### ***Knowledge of Youths' Community and Educational Processes***

Beyond understanding the youths' background Will tries to learn more about the community and geographical location. He takes into consideration environmental barriers such as weather, access to green space, and touring each location where Will and his pre-service teachers will be programming at. Additionally, Will utilized the Youth Behavior Risk Survey<sup>1</sup> to analyze data about the community, has his pre-service teachers meet with local people to learn about the community and even have a historian walk them through the city.

1 Youth Risk Behavior Survey – a survey administered to adolescents about school health by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

As for educational process Will took on a more holistic approach, he spoke about youths' socialization instead. Since one placement for his program is in a refugee center it is hard to get a good grasp on the youths' educational backgrounds. Plus, the youth at the refugee and immigrant center are only there for a year not even, then seek asylum somewhere else in the country. Due to the high turnover of youth in the program at the refugee and immigrant center, Will tries to get to know each child as they currently are.

Will's practice of cultural competence aids him in engaging in the cultural relevance cycle. Starting with understanding the youths' backgrounds, Will gains this knowledge in various avenues. "By doing your homework, but actually talking to them [kids] and spending time getting to know them [kids], it can be really, really crucial aspect, it's a good life skill for anybody who's an educator." Will takes on a positive youth develop approach when getting to know the youths' background and community.

One of the things we try to talk to my students is to understand kind of the atmosphere that's going on, but also the background of the students. Where they were and where the students are at... Not looking at them as things that are broken or problems that need to be fixed, but rather what assets do each of these students have that you can utilize, and you can help the students realize that they have.

### ***Strategies Implemented***

Based off Will's knowledge and understanding of the youths' background, community and educational processes he employs a few strategies to be culturally relevant when programming. Negotiation with the youth is a key strategy Will uses to be culturally relevant and give the youth responsibility or autonomy over their program.

We have goals. They have goals. We come together. We all want to have a good time. We want to leave you with some skills. You want to get some skills... We want to play with you. You want play with us. It kind of works out. So typically, again, it's that negotiation piece in the beginning that I think works well... We negotiate things with the students so that when there is a little violation or something, we can be like, okay, we made the rules, what's going on here.

In regard to addressing harmful language and derogatory remarks pertaining to sexuality Will said he implements is the 'ouch rule', this means that when one kid says something that might be mean or offensive to another the child would say 'ouch' indicating something harmful happened. Fortunately, Will said that within his program this issue does not come up, but kids bring their issues outside of the program with them. Another reason why Will does not have to implement strategies regarding youths' different cultures based on gender and ethnicity is that he works with very young kids, so they may not have been socialized or conditioned to think about gender and ethnicity yet.

Being that Will identifies as Irish American and brings American pre-service teachers to his physical activity program that works at a refugee center, understanding of self and others must happen.

You want to be aware of the people that you work with and who they are. You don't blow it off and say, 'Oh, I'm color blind', I don't care what you are. But more of the point of understanding who they are and letting them learn who you are. I look at it from a perspective of getting to know people on an individual basis and allowing them to sort of share.

Will tries his best to spend time with the youth and program for long terms. As explained below creating continuity and building a trusting relationship with youth allows them to open more. This aids in helping the program leader create culturally relevant programming.

Continuity is very important for these kids. They don't need another adult to come into her life and leave, not that they have that before, but it's just that they grow attached very quickly...If you've gotten students close enough to trust you and you know that you can talk to about ethnicity or gender, sexual orientation or whatever, and then have a brand-new person come back in, you go, almost go back to square one.

### ***Academic and Physical Skill Development***

Due to the nature of Will's academic background and profession, Physical Education, he takes on a physical literacy approach. Physical literacy is the academic component in his programming, he does not focus or incorporate traditional academic education such as math or reading.

We're coming at it from the physical literacy aspect of it. What could the students do in their lives to be responsible for their own health and their own physical activity? What types of things could they do? To me, if they had a goal, what is your kind of goal setting aspect? What is your goal? What can they do to get there? What barriers are there in their lives?

The program Will offers internationally is providing physical education opportunities to girls who would otherwise not have access to such a program. This is because the location does not require physical education in school and girls in that area have limited opportunities for sport compared to boys.

They just don't have access to different types of sports or physical literacy programs. It's not offered in the [location] system. It's sports not part of the school program. So, they don't have a physical education teacher, they have a classroom teacher who may or may not do the 30 minutes they're close to get a week.

Because Will works with school systems he is granted access to resources. He uses his relationships with schools to supply youth resources. "We found scholarships and different things ... if they needed help with tutoring, or we talked about work... We find the resources they need to get some of the stuff that may or may not be as easily accessible to them."

### **Inclusivity and Challenges Related to Gender Ethnicity and Culture**

"When we come in, we become we... If you're going to be here in my program, you are part of this program, it doesn't matter when you are outside, here we are all we and we all work together and go for the same goals." Will takes on an inclusive approach to his programming. This goes back to the idea of negotiation; he allows the youth to express their voices and negotiate the group's goals and rules. "We have the meeting in the beginning, we all negotiate the rules, we all negotiate where we are, we negotiate what we want and our goals and stuff like that. I try to think that, at that point, we want to be inclusive of everything." If a conflict does

arise it is addressed through discussion. One aspect of TPSR programming that Will uses to be inclusive is the relational piece. “I think the core values of it [TPSR] and the basic inclusivity of it [TPSR]. Because you go in understanding that you need to get to know each other and form that relational piece. Then if you can maintain the relationship, you can overcome most of the rest of the obstacles.” Moreover, Will stated that the TPSR model offers a flexible approach to meet the needs of multiple people and groups.

It [TPSR] is not rigid. It [TPSR] is good at meeting the needs of both the groups that come together. All the constituents and the stakeholders, if you will, come together and negotiate what it is they want to do. Again, most of them have obviously the main denominator sport or physical activity of some sort because that's kind of why they're there, but yeah, I would think that it [TPSR] is designed to be inclusive.

When inquiring about how Will practices cultural inclusivity, focusing on gender and ethnicity, his responses imply that neither seem to be too challenging to overcome. When it comes to gender Will's response was about how he promotes inclusivity. Being that he works with young youth, Will does not feel as though gender comes out in his program. One program that he does direct is for girls only, but this program is to fill the void of programming for girls at that location. “I try to let the students self-identify and same thing with gender issues or especially these days, where you want to be very sensitive to who they are.” Even though Will directs a program for girls, he doesn't feel as though there's anything specifically different that he offers them compared to boys. After probing more about youths' gender and sexuality Will brought up that there was a young pregnant teenager in one of his programs. He and his pre-service teachers had to address the situation and have conversations about reproductive health with the youth. Overall gender roles or gendered socialization does not play a role in his programs.

I teach young kids. The male-female thing is probably not as big a deal as the culture, where they come from. Especially when you work in different areas like... And there's a bit of a divide here in town between some of the more rural kids and some of the more city kids... Not tremendous, but it's there.

While discussing how culture plays a role in Will's programs pertaining to ethnicity, the middle school where Will did some programming for 4 years did have a divide. “We have a large

Latino population in town, and so they may have friction with some other groups for reasons that don't have anything to do with the kids, but maybe what their parents are telling them or what's going on there.” Furthermore, Will said that there’s friction between the Latino or Latinx population and Caucasians, specifically they are not accustomed to hanging out together. This influenced the curriculum he used for the program and what they did at the beginning of each program session. In the other program Will runs he has had to address ethnicity at a refugee center. “When I go to the refugee center, a lot of that is just really getting to know the kids. They come from literally... eight different countries, and they're only in this refugee center for maybe for less of the year. Then they're seeking us Asylum somewhere else.” Will claimed to not take on a color-blind approach but tried to get to understand who the youth are and let the youth get to know him. “I look at it from a perspective of getting to know people on an individual basis and allowing them to sort of share what they consider their ethnicity.” Once again Will’s approach to navigating ethnicity differences comes back to fostering relationships.

Will’s first response when asked about challenges to inclusivity was parents. Will has brought up parents earlier, as they inflict their thoughts on youth and promoted friction among differing ethnicities. The example Will gave was that he allowed kids to bring culturally important dances and choreographies to his program. Some youth he worked with were Jewish and wanted to share the Hora with their peers, unfortunately Islamic parents did not allow their children to engage in the dance and did not want to share their Islamic culture with others. “We had to break our curriculum up... We had students go do something else while the students were doing that [dance]... Because we did have some students who are Jewish who were basically like we want to share.” Will went on to say how this discrepancy in messages from parents clashed with the program. “You're trying to get the kids to be accepting of each other, but they're getting a different message from outside.” Beyond parents, mixed messaging, and friction among groups, Will did not expend on any other challenges when being culturally relevant with programming.

### **Critical Consciousness**

Will utilizes his connections to build and offer values-based activity programs for youth. Through his connections he has filled voids that youth face, such as lack of physical activity programs and physical education. Will ran a physical education program at an alternative underserved middle school where they did not have physical education in the curriculum. Will

wound up at that middle school program because he knew the principal and was able to offer a service the school did not have. The program ended since the school dissolved, and Will's university did not have the space for him to offer an after-school activity program for the youth. Once that program ended Will shifted gears to a girls-only program in another country. This program too was built to address youths' lack of access to physical activity. Specifically, this program served young girls. Although Will understands what inequities the youth he serves must overcome, he does not explicitly address them in his programs. Will stresses to his pre-service teachers that they must try their best to understand the background of the youth and "not looking at them as things that are broken or problems that need to be fixed, but rather what assets do each of these situations have that you can utilize, and you can help the students realize that they have." Will went on to say that he and his pre-service teachers address inequities in a subtle way by identifying the barriers the youth face and consider ways they can work around those barriers. Will explained more that he does not relay inequities and inequalities to the youth overtly but rather tries to make the youth take on a positive mind set. Overall, Will seems to skim the surface of socio-political and critical consciousness in his programs, whether that is because he takes on an assets-based approach and chooses to not address deficits that youth face in their life or because he works with elementary youth where cultural differences, specifically gender and ethnicity, are absent.

## Case 6 – Julia

Definitely the values itself of the [TPSR] model, I think are in line with creating an inclusive environment. I think just the intentionality of peer relationships to not just coach to youth relationships, but the giving student's choice in who they work with, but also helping them work with students that they wouldn't necessarily choose, helps foster just awareness and inclusiveness as well. So, I think the explicit values in the model, but also just like good TPSR teaching strategies contribute to creating culturally relevant programming.

<b>Ethnicity</b>	White non-Hispanic/Latino
<b>Gender Identity</b>	Female
<b>Role in TPSR Program</b>	Doctoral Student and Program Coach
<b>Physical Activity Background</b>	High School Athlete & Athletic Trainer
<b>Time Practicing TPSR</b>	4 years
<b>Learned TPSR from</b>	Experts (Jenn Jacobs) and Experience
<b>Youth Served</b>	Middle school girls and [location] coaches/Sport administrators

Table 4.6 Julia's Demographic Information & Program Participants

Julia is currently a graduate student at a university in north central United States. At the time of this interview Julia reported practicing the TPSR model for about four years. Julia used the TPSR model in a boxing program for girls, that is currently on pause due to COVID-19. Julia has taken over Mariah's boxing club and has been the recent lead program provider. Julia also uses the TPSR principles in courses that she teaches and has her students learn about and experience the TPSR model and daily format. Additionally, Julia has been part of a program in another country that taught coaches and sport administrators about the TPSR model and how to implement it in their programs. Julia's athletic background includes engaging in high school sports and holding a certification in athletic training.

When discussing the TPSR model itself she consistently mentioned two aspects of TPSR: inclusivity and relational time. "I would receive it as an inclusive model, and I think the emphasis on relationship building is a big contributor to that, and I think the emphasis on authenticity and sharing perspectives, reflection, I think all of those contribute to students feeling

like they can share.” Another excerpt from Julia’s interview explains more about how TPSR fosters an inclusive environment and relationship building at various levels.

I think just the intentionality of peer relationships to not just coach to youth relationships, but the giving student’s choice in who they work with, but also helping them work with students that they wouldn't necessarily choose, helps foster just awareness and inclusiveness.

### **Cultural Relevance Cycle in TPSR Programs**

Definitely the values itself of the model [TPSR], I think are in line with creating an inclusive environment.... I think the explicit values in the model [TPSR], but also just like good TPSR teaching strategies contribute to that as well.

### ***Understanding Youths’ Backgrounds***

Julia sounded confident in her understanding of the youth that participating in the TPSR modeled boxing program that she coached. During her time coaching the boxing program she lived in the same community as her program participants. Besides living in the community Julia also knows why and how girls get into the TPSR boxing program.

The way that our students were recruited for the program was through the school counselor. She was noticing a subset of females in the school that weren't plugged into sports that weren't participating really in any after school activities, and so lack of involvement, but also, we're commonly experiencing bullying and... Or body image issues.

Julia therefore understood the delicate situation that the girl participants were in and was mindful of language she used in her program. This approach will be explained more “strategies implemented”. Moreover, when questioning Julia about the youths’ backgrounds she stated that many of the youth face socio-economic barriers and potential lack of support of exploring gender and sexuality.

### ***Knowledge of Youths’ Community and Educational Processes***

When inquiring about Julia’s knowledge of the youths’ community and their education she explained that starting at the school community level she had an insider assist her. Julia’s connection to the school gave her the opportunity to meet with the school counselor and principal to she could better understand the school environment.

Fortunately, [advisor] who had helped start the boxing program had a long-standing relationship with the school, so that was kind of my resource for getting to know about the school environment. She [advisor] also connected me with the school counselor, we had a couple of meetings with the principal, so I would say those were the kind of the ways that I got to know the school environment.

Additionally, Julie lived in the same community or city as some of the youth she worked with. “I would say part of it is just personal experience being in the community the middle school that we worked at is like five minutes from [university], and so a lot of things that are characteristic of my experience living in [location].”

The way Julia gained knowledge about the girl’s family was through relational time, asking questions, and interviews that she conducted as part of another project she was working on.

I think they were pretty open to talk about their family situations or just what their home environment is like. Part of that came out in the interviews. When they were describing like, ‘how do I feel about my body at home’, there was a lot of family description that helped inform what their environment is like. They did some journaling and story writing, and so I think that informed me about the environment that they live in, but also just even during reflection, ‘how we’re going to use this [skill] at school or at home.’

As for educational processes, as alluded to earlier the way youth were recruited into the program is that they were referred by the school counselor due to their lack of involvement and engagement in school activities. The program was designed in collaboration with middle school administrators to contribute to a school-wide initiative of student engagement, measured by students’ participation in afterschool activities (Fuerniss & Jacobs, 2019). Indicators of lack of strong connections included lack of extracurricular participation and frequent visits to the school counselor to address bullying (Fuerniss & Jacobs, 2019). Julia went on to say that the youths’ struggles is what brought them together. “We’re connecting because we all get each other, we all have the same struggles, and now we’re feeling empowered, so I think the challenge they came from contributed to like we all want to overcome this together.” Ironically, Julia elaborated more on how school-related things may have been a disruption to program engagement.

Some of them ended up joining school sports after they participated in the program. Which is kind of ironic because that's why they came to the program in the first place, is because they weren't involved in the sports. We are speculating that maybe they have a little bit more confidence than they had or something along those lines. We're like, well, not great for our program attendance and for sustained relationships with them, but great for the students.

### ***Strategies Implemented***

After asking Julia about her thoughts on cultural relevance and if it is applied to her programming, she went on to say she is mindful of language.

I think knowing specifically their backgrounds and not being involved and struggling with body image-related issues totally defined the content of our program. All of our awareness talk words were somehow strength, not directly body image-related, but with that framing in mind of focusing on being strong and those sorts of things. It informed the angle that we played with our life skills.

Provision of a safe space for youth to discuss their feelings and address issues of gender, sexuality, and bullying were important for this TPSR boxing program. A strategy Julia used to promote and foster conversation was a question box.

One of the components of our program was a question box, and the girls just wrote anonymous questions about whatever they wanted about body, kind of the framing was that it would be about body image related things, but it was also open to what questions do you have about life for school or whatever, and so that was a place that just provided a safe space for open discussion about whatever the topic might be.

It was Julia's and the other coach's responsibility to allow youth to discuss these topics without placing judgement on others. Julia and the other coaches provided an open floor without guiding the girls to conclusions.

The boxing program being part of an after-school activity also meant that the school provided transportation and snacks for the girls. The snack time was taken advantage of by Julia and other boxing coaches as an opportunity for relational time for the coaches to get to know the girls better. Additionally, being that Julia had another project going on involving the boxing program she had the opportunity to interview the girls by giving her more time to know the girls

better. Another tactic that helped enhance relationships was to ‘flip the script’. “Coaches partnering up with students or being coached by students, that was something that they really loved. We would flip the script a little bit and they would coach us, or there'd be like peer coaching essentially, which I think was good for relationship building.” Building relationships, being mindful of language and providing a space where the girls felt safe to discuss their feelings were core strategies Julia implemented.

### ***Academic and Physical Skill Development***

Despite the boxing program taking place at the middle school during after-school hours, the program did not have an explicit academic component in the traditional sense of math, literature, science etc. It was educational in that they discussed sensitive topics and components of physical activity or a healthy lifestyle, but the focus was on physical literacy and activity exploration. For the physical skill aspect Julia and the coaches were mindful of how physically rigorous their program was.

I think being okay with prioritizing physical activity and helping them engage in that in, in a way that would challenge them, but not overwhelm them. Being okay with spending a longer amount of time on a reflective body image activity and a little bit less time boxing was one way that we adapted the program.

She and the coaches provided the girls with knowledge of boxing technique and a healthful lifestyle. Their approach also involved educating girls on different types of physical activity, warm up development, and overall taking care of their bodies.

I think our two focuses were the technique of boxing, so they all know offensive and defensive moves, and it was non-contact boxing. It really was focused on individual skill development, so I would say they absolutely grew in their knowledge of technical sports skill, but also just an emphasis on general health wellness, nutrition, that sort of thing too.

### ***Inclusivity and Challenges Related to Gender Ethnicity and Culture***

Julia works primarily with girls, but she has also utilized TPSR in classes she teaches. When asking Julia about her perspective on boys, girls, and non-identifying youths’ reaction to TPSR program she said everyone thinks it is fun and that she hasn’t noticed a huge discrepancy. “I guess my bias would be a little bit towards some of the males being less interested in the

reflective components, maybe not being as descriptive or detailed in examples that they give.” Being that Julia’s program is for those that identify as girls (she/her/hers pronouns) she also is mindful of their activity levels and abilities. In the boxing program she noticed that they lean towards less rigorous physical activity to ensure they do not discourage anyone from the program. The reason why Julia and her colleagues offer a single gendered program is because the school they partner with noticed that there was a need for a girl’s program. Overall, Julia feels as though gender does not greatly impact youths’ reception of TPSR. She went on to say “I think it's the relationships and reflection that really make that a safe environment... I would receive it as an inclusive model”

As for ethnicity Julia’s program serves three ethnic groups: white, Black and Hispanic. Being that body image is discussed in the boxing TPSR program Julia feels as though the youths’ ethnic backgrounds may influence the girls’ perceptions of body image and ideals. While she did not explore this ideal greatly, she said “Absolutely, I think this is not a very technical word, but ethnic body image and ideals are totally relevant.” Julia said she did not notice too much difference in body desires across the girl’s ethnic backgrounds.

When we were interviewing students, the most prominent thing of ‘What do you want to change about your body?’ regardless of their ethnic background, was ‘I want to be smaller. I want to weigh less.’ All of those size-related things are relevant for our students.

Julia feels as though her past experiences have provided her comfort to handle ethnicity related conversations. However, when it comes to gender and sexuality Julia does not feel as experienced or equipped.

I feel more equipped to handle ethnicity-related conversations than I do Gender and Sexuality conversations, and I think that's probably a lot of where I'm at personally wrestling with what I think about various issues, and I guess I'm just in my own life had less conversations about gender and sexuality that I had about racial and ethnic related things.

One challenge that Julia faces is her personal beliefs. While she tries her best to foster a safe place and create a caring environment, internally she battles her biases. Julia mentioned that “at times I struggle with the cultural idea that whatever everyone thinks is like fine... I guess like my personal convictions about what's right, maybe can almost mentally provide a challenge for

me, but maybe not in practice program.” She related this internal challenge back to a prior question in the interview “What are some of the tools and resources you have accessible to address gender, ethnicity, and sexuality?” Her response was that while the school she partners with has an emphasis on social emotional learning, Julia herself “can't think of anything particularly impactful, like some of the obvious Title IX training and stuff like that, but that's not particularly... It's not something I directly apply as a practitioner necessarily, so I don't know if I've had great resourcing in those specific areas.” Julia explained that her education discussed relevant topics of gender, ethnicity, and sexuality within sport. However, she doesn't feel as though direct training has taken place to well equip her for these tough conversations with youth. In the future Julia plans to attend and take advantage of opportunities her university has to offer to expand her comfort with tough conversations.

### **Critical Consciousness**

The program was built to fit a need indicated by the school. While the boxing program did not explicitly address systemic issues such as socio-economic status and the plights that come with low income, she thought something was missing: “I would say socioeconomic status, sorts of things, we didn't necessarily discuss with the youth, but were considered in the structure of the program.” To address economic issues the school provided snack for the program participants after school and transportation on the after-school activity bus. The sport selection of boxing was how the program overcame economic barriers. Solo boxing does not require equipment.

With the sport of boxing, the part of the reason how we selected that sport for our program is because you can do it with no equipment, and so they can do it at home with no equipment. The sport selection was really intentional so that they could practice at home and equipment wouldn't be a barrier. There wasn't a cost in the program.

The program did address the struggles that the program participants faced such as body image issue, bullying, and gender and sexuality exploration. “The essence of the program is that it was designed to target a social issue, essentially the issue of body image and gender identity exploration, so in that sense, like the core of the program is, we want to talk about these sorts of things.” As noted above in challenges that Julia has included aspects that would enhance the program's critical and socio-political consciousness such as obtaining tools and resources to

better equip Julia for conversation involving gender and sexuality. Additionally, bringing up socio-economic impact and other community issues outside of school would be relevant to the boxing program.

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## CHAPTER V: CROSS-CASE ANALYSIS

The purpose of this study was to explore to what extent do TPSR practitioners enact the cultural relevance cycle regarding youths' culture informed by their gender and ethnicity. Specific questions that guided the research were: (a) To what extent is cultural relevance reflected in TPSR according to practitioners? (b) In what ways did the TPSR practitioners implement inclusiveness in their TPSR modeled program pertaining to gender and ethnicity and what are challenges faced? (c) To what magnitude do the TPSR practitioners develop students academically in their sports-based program? (d) To what degree do the TPSR practitioners promote critical consciousness or socio-political consciousness of the youth in their sports-based program? The cross-case analysis and discussion regarding the four research questions are presented in this chapter. Themes and focus points that emerged from each case are presented in each section. The cross-case analysis is organized into three sections similar to chapter four, focusing on the Cultural Relevance Cycle, inclusivity in regard to gender and ethnicity and challenges, and social-political and critical consciousness of the TPSR practitioner. Table 5.1 below summarized each practitioner, their TPSR program, and the youth the program served. Many of the programs served 'diverse' youth. Diverse in this case can be understood differently case by case. For instance, Mariah's summer camp program served all different ages, incomes, genders, and ethnicities. "Diverse" in the boxing club and boxing program meant ethnicity, income, gender, and sexuality.

Case – Name	TPSR program	Youth Served
Case 1 - Mr. Black	Career Club	Urban intensive & ethnically diverse
Case 2 - Hugo	Rugby	Low-income
Case 3 - Mariah	Prison Program Summer Camp Boxing Club	Incarcerated Ethnically diverse Ethnically diverse; middle school girls
Case 4 - Angela	P.E. course Yoga – for girls	Ethnically diverse & socio-economically varying Ethnically diverse; middle school girls
Case 5 - Will	Summer P.E. internationally Summer P.E.	Ethnically diverse Ethnically diverse; middle school girls
Case 6 - Julia	Boxing program	Ethnically and socio-economically diverse; middle school girls

Table 5.1 TPSR Practitioners Programs

### **Cultural Relevance Cycle in TPSR Programs**

Each practitioner had a reason as to why they felt the TPSR model aids them in creating inclusive program and therefore culturally relevant ideologies. One reoccurring focal point about TPSR was relationship building. Intentionally building relationships was highlighted by five of the six TPSR practitioners. As part of the TPSR daily format there is time set aside explicitly for relationship building called relational time (Hellison, 2011). Each practitioner incorporated relational time into their TPSR program. Having a focus on relationships allowed the practitioners to get to know the youth better and therefore learn about the youths' culture. Mr. Black's thought on TPSR was that it all about effective relationships with youth, being wholistic, providing reflection, and empowering youth. Similarly, Mariah believes that the promotion

through reflection, communication, and expression of voices creates a safe environment that allows youth to express what and how they feel. In line with Mariah was Angela's beliefs on how the reflective component and discussion-based practices within TPSR allows youth to express their voices and therefore allows diversity to come through. Julia also mentioned the importance of relationship building, intentional relationships, and the values of TPSR. These aided Julia to foster an inclusive environment. Will also indicated that relationship building was an important aspect of TPSR. Being intentional with creating connections and relationships helps him create responsive programs. Hugo being the only non-academic practitioner interviewed had a different take. He focused on the TPSR model's adaptability and how encouragement participation in sport to be valued over winning. This also pushes out other problematic aspects of sport. Explained in the following section is a continuation of how or to what extent each TPSR practitioner enacted the cultural relevance cycle while utilizing the TPSR program.

### **Understanding Youths' Backgrounds**

Each TPSR practitioner was able to provide general information about the youth they work with and their program. Their understanding of the youths' background, community dynamics and educational processes were all different and how they came to that understanding. Three themes emerged; living in the same neighborhood as the youth, asking questions, and general knowledge of barriers that the youth must overcome. Two of the TPSR practitioners; Mr. Black and Mariah lived in the same neighborhood as the youth they work with. Another approach that all of the practitioners utilized to get to know the youth better was to ask questions. Lastly, all of the practitioners were able to list general barriers that the youth must overcome therefore indicating the practitioners has some understanding of the youths' backgrounds.

### ***Living in the same neighborhood***

By living in the same neighborhood as the youth Mr. Black and Mariah were able to understand the environmental barriers and plights that come with being low-income and urban. Mr. Black stated: "I actually live in the community where my kids live, and that might sound extreme, but it was important for me." Mr. Black is also an active participant of his community such shopping and buying locally and attending high school sporting events. At the time of this interview Mariah hosted three TPSR programs all in the same northern central city but worked within different neighborhoods. She stated: "I grew up in that neighborhood. I knew the sort of magic of it and wanted to explore TPSR in that setting, because it's just so perfect." While Hugo

who is the director of the rugby program does not live in the community where the youth participants of his program do, he ensures that the coaches he hires does live in the same community as the youth.

### ***Ask questions***

All the TPSR practitioners asked the youth questions or make them experts of their lives to understand the youths' background. Mr. Black focuses on relationships and gets to know each child by asking questions such as "How are you doing? How school going? Do you have any siblings?" Hugo asks youth questions in a survey format and interviews to determine the needs of the youth and to appease stakeholders. Hugo relies on his rugby coaches to truly know and understand the youths' community. Mariah asks the youth questions and "makes them the experts of their own lives. Or of their own something." Angela asked youth questions about what equipment or fields they have access too, to inform her as to which sport and activity to incorporate into physical education class. Will uses his dedicated relational time and lunch time as a way for youth and program leaders to get to know one another and ask about each other's lives. Food served as an icebreaker. Lastly Julia like Hugo conducted interviews with the youth she worked with thus utilizing questions as a way to get to know the youth better. Questioning as a tool was used at different times throughout the program for each partitioner. For Hugo and Julia questioning or interviewing youth to learn about their experiences was conducted towards the end of the program. As for Mr. Black questions were incorporated into his daily program format because his program assistants filled out TPSR journals with the youth that had questions for prompts. Additionally, Mr. Black would follow up with youth asking them questions about their hobbies to indicate his interest in their life. Mariah, Angela, and Will used questions throughout their program and homed in on relational time and closing reflection talk as a time to learn more about the youth and how they intend to transfer the life skills learned and with whom their skills with be practiced.

### ***General Barriers***

Other ways the TPSR practitioners demonstrated that they knew the youths' backgrounds was by listing the general barriers and struggles of the youth in their programs. Many of the practitioners worked with youth that would be categorized as low-income and therefore the dilemmas that are associated with low income such as food insecurity, environmental barriers, high crime neighborhoods, transportation, and school districts or schools that have low funding.

Not all of the TPSR practitioners interviewed served low-income youth. Some worked with varied income youth, youth exploring their gender and sexuality, urban or inner city located youth, and rural youth. All of the programs except two were created to combat some of the inequities or obstacles that the youth face. Two of the programs; Mariah's summer camp and Will's international P.E. were not explicitly created to assist youth to overcome barriers or systemic issues. While those two programs did use sport as a vehicle to bring different populations together, the initial start of the program was not to break down structural barriers.

### **Knowledge of Youths' Community and Educational Processes**

Each TPSR practitioner shared knowledge they possess in regard to the youths' community dynamics and educational process and experience. Shown in Table 5.1 is a list of disparities that some of the youth had to overcome in each TPSR program. From those disparities many are connected to the youths' community dynamics, educational process and engagement in the TPSR program. A common theme as to the way the community influenced the youth was violence and underserved areas. The practitioners also reported the youths' educational experiences as playing a role in their TPSR program. A few themes across the practitioners were that they reported youth as not valuing school or receiving low-quality education, school behavior referred youth into the program, and school can serve as a distraction from the program.

### ***Community dynamics***

**Violence** riddled many of the communities. Mr. Black described the youth he worked with as inner-city and facing plights associated with that such as dangerous environment, lack of sleep, food, and education. Inner-city in this case can be synonymous with Milner's (2012) description of urban intensive school contexts. The youths' community dynamics greatly influences their engagement in Mr. Black's program. Mr. Black stated: "They bring their community with them; they talk about how dangerous it is at times." In line with Mr. Black's program and youths' disparities is Hugo's rugby program. Hugo's youth face violence in the community, lack resources, and have low quality education. Hugo stated: "I think 76% of our students have seen a stabbing or shooting in the last six months, and that was terrible... Which obviously has a traumatic effect." The community violence that youth face also leads the youth to experiencing trauma and therefore impacting their behavior in school. Hugo also offers his program at the end of the school day during school hours as a means for girls in the program to avoid violence during after school hours. "We try to avoid after school because there's a risk to

women traveling home outside of normal hours and also expectations the chores at home, so we might lose girls by operating outside of school hours.” Hugo knows that the community that the youth live in is unsafe: “I’m afraid to say we have experienced the worst that one can... We’ve had children die in our program then every year and even staff stuff. Some sexually assaulted.” The youths’ community dynamics greatly influences their involvement in Hugo’s program as well as when he offers his program and who the program is offered too. Similar to Hugo, the youth that Angela worked with had to overcome community barriers such as high crime neighborhoods, environmental disparities (no sidewalks), and unstable households. Lastly, Mariah mentioned that the youth of her prison program were greatly influenced by their community and faced violent crimes. The community dynamics and pressures are what lead them to being incarcerated.

Some have been convicted of murder, and then a lot of them have been involved in gang violence. They come from pretty underserved areas in the city and throughout the state, where gang culture is very much a part of their everyday life. Some of the youth I’ve worked with said that they... As early as three years old can remember that it was normal that family members were part of gangs and that they knew that was what their future was. Even things like knowing where to walk and knowing what colors to wear, and knowing what signals to throw at age five, six. – Mariah

**Underserved areas** were another common topic across the practitioners as impacting their program. While not all the youth were underserved in the same way, low-income, lack of sleep and food, accessibility, and experiences were all listed as community factors that influence the youth. In Mr. Black’s TPSR program: “A lot of them come into the program, they haven’t eaten breakfast and affects their ability of focus and their ability to participate in physical activity.” Mr. Black also believes that due to the youth being inner-city they may also lack resources and knowledge about career opportunities and educational programs in general. In line with Mr. Black’s thought on inner-city plights, Angela’s P.E. course was in a Title I school. Title I school indicates that a large portion of the children attending the school are of low socioeconomic status. The youths’ community being low-income meant that the youth had limited access to sport and physical activity equipment and fields. In Will’s summer P.E. programs, he considered similar environmental factors like Angela. Will considered what the youth have access to in order to be physically active.

### *Educational experiences*

**Low-quality education** and youth not valuing school were concerns of some practitioners. Low quality education can be linked to CRP in that it informs the culture of the school, teacher expectations, and therefore students (Milner, 2012). For Mr. Black believes that many of the youth he delivers his program to does not have supportive adult figures that value education or can offer diverse career experience. “I mean I have a lot of kids who would just say, I’m only here because I have to be legally as soon as I am of age I want to go to work.” Moreover, many of the youth he works with would-be first-generation college students - if they choose to go to college. This indicates that the families educational process influences the youths’ choice to go to college. “I think that being a first-generation college student, I know a lot of these kids, most of them when I’ve talked to them, their families are not college educated, so I think that just limits them.” Mr. Black suggests that the youth he works with do not value school and are also not academically prepared for college. In line with Mr. Black’s concerns, Hugo and Angela perceived low-quality education as impactful for the youth they work with. Hugo brought up academics as being a systemic or structural inequality.

You get really poor infrastructure in schools; very low quality of teaching and teacher training is...outdated it. I think maybe it's akin to a lot of it is you get some systems are not preparing young people for work, just stick the Victorian era. Yes, like extremely under equip schools, but it's really low-quality teaching. – Hugo

Angela worked with had to overcome community barriers such as high crime neighborhoods, environmental disparities (no sidewalks), and unstable households. Angela’s P.E. course that took place during school hours was located in a Title I school. Title I school indicates that a large portion of the children attending the school are of low socioeconomic status.

In terms of within the school structure itself, the school was considered a Title 1 school, so already having that label, a lot of individuals came into the school expecting under their performance, so I would say that the level at which they wanted their students to perform was lower than other schools when, in my opinion, the students could have achieved much higher expectations and had more success than they were expected to. – Angela

In Will's program the youth he facilitated summer P.E. for did not have access to P.E. or sport. Focusing on the program Will offers for girls only, he mentioned that due to their education system P.E. is not a requirement and may only happen for 30 minutes a week depending on whether their teacher wants to incorporate physical activity into the school day. Outside of school, girls in general are not offered sport and activity options as much as boys.

They just don't have access to different types of sports or physical literacy programs. It's not offered in the [location] system. Sports are not part of the school program. So, they don't have a physical education teacher, they have a classroom teacher who may or may not do the 30 minutes they're close to get a week. – Will

**School behavior** was used as a referral method for many of the TPSR program. Youths' behavior in school was also linked to their experiences outside of school time or their community dynamics. In Hugo's program the violence youth endure cause the youth to experience trauma and therefore impacts their behavior in school. Ultimately the youths' community dynamics and educational process grant them the opportunity to get involved with Hugo's rugby program. Hugo partners with the school, parents, and counselors to figure out what youth and families can benefit from the rugby program. While his program serves primarily youth participants, he and his partners provide services to families by teaching coping strategies in the home setting.

The youth participants of Mariah's boxing club, Angela's virtual yoga program, and Julia's boxing program were referred to the program by the school. This school partnership meant that the youths' educational process and school engagement is what got them into the TPSR based program. Additionally, the programs offered by Mariah, Angela, and Julia were all for girls or at least targeted girls. The girls and transgender identifying youth that took part in the after school TPSR programs were referred into the program due to being bullied, lacking engagement in school and after school activities, and having negative body image or low self-esteem.

The youths' educational process influenced them the most in Angel's TPSR P.E. program. Due to the school's values and strict code of conduct the youths' educational processes impacted their engagement in the TPSR modeled P.E. class. The youth had to code-switch from school standards to TPSR inspired P.E. culture of empowerment and expression of voices. The

excerpt below explains more about how the school did not allow youth to ask questions or vocal their opinions, thus mismatching the empowerment aspect that TPSR promotes.

If they had a suggestion for the program or they wanted to discuss something, they were all allowed to do that. If they did that during the regular physical education session, they just wouldn't be allowed to. That would not be an option in any way, so having the opportunity was incredibly difficult for the children. – Angela

**Distraction** was another factor the youths' education played in the TPSR programs. In Mariah's boxing club she felt that school sometimes impacted the girl's ability to focus on the activity program especially when there was a holiday coming up or the room had to be changed due to other events happening. As for Angela's virtual TPSR yoga program this was still in its infancy at the time of the interview therefore Angela did not go into detail about how the youths' educational process influences their engagement. Angela did mention that since this program was going on during COVID-19 restrictions, it was all virtual. Angela perceived the virtual atmosphere to be causing the middle school girls a lot of stress. That stress was the only factor that Angela mentioned as being carried from school into the yoga program. To Julia explained that school can serve as a distraction or hinderance to her program. Julia elaborated more on how school-related things may have been a disruption to program engagement.

Some of them ended up joining school sports after they participated in the program. Which is kind of ironic because that's why they came to the program in the first place, is because they weren't involved in the sports. We are speculating that maybe they have a little bit more confidence than they had or something along those lines. We're like, well, not great for our program attendance and for sustained relationships with them, but great for the students. – Julia

The youths' community dynamics and educational process influenced their involvement in each of the TPSR programs. Educational processes and experiences tended to impact youth in program that took place during school and after school time. Practitioners that facilitated programs during school and after school hours reported issues associated with low-income, low quality education, behavior and violence as impacting the youths' engagement in the TPSR programs. In the two out of school programs, Will's summer P.E. programs and Mariah's prison program they both noted the community dynamics had a greater influence on the youths'

engagement than their school experiences. Additionally, the community dynamics of the youth also influenced their educational process. The TPSR practitioner's knowledge of the youths' community dynamics and educational processes played a role in the program's timing, resource's, and youths' reason for being part of the program. One way the practitioners overcame those influences was by understanding where the youth are coming from and living in the same community as the youth. The practitioners that did not live in the same community as the youth tried their best to learn about the youths' community through various avenues and is expanded upon in the strategies implemented section.

### **Strategies Implemented**

Each practitioner utilized various strategies to bridge the cultural gap between the practitioner's understand and knowledge of the youths' culture and community. Relational time, program content, reflection and immersion into the community were four strategies implemented by practitioners to be culturally relevant. One strategy used by all practitioners that is inherent in the TPSR model is relational time. Another common strategy used by all the practitioners was adjusting the program's content to meet the needs of the youth participants. An additional strategy was for the practitioner to reflect on commonalities and difference between their self and the youth they work with. Many but not all practitioners mentioned that they had biases and try to be mindful of their preconceptions and overcome their biases. However, those that did not discuss biases did talk about self-reflection. Some practitioners did their best to immerse themselves into the youths' community. Lastly, a few strategies were unique to the practitioner and their program.

### ***Relational Time***

Built into every TPSR program is relational time. Relational time is part of the TPSR daily format and typically occurs at the beginning of every program session. This is an opportune time for practitioners, program leaders, and youth to get to know one another, conduct check-ins, and engage in relational time. Each practitioner interviewed did note that they have relational time in their program. While the amount of relational time varies from program to program, especially when there are time constraints, each practitioner used this time to learn each child's name and something special or unique about the child. Julia illustrates below combined idea of TPSR being about relationship building as well as reflection thus creating a safe environment for youth.

I would receive it as an inclusive model, and I think the emphasis on relationship building is a big contributor to that, and I think the emphasis on authenticity and sharing perspectives, reflection, I think all of those contribute to students feeling like they can share whether they're male or female or not identifying with a specific gender, I think it's the relationships and reflection that really make that a safe environment. – Julia

The focus on relationship building and creating a safe space was also offered by Mr. Black, Mariah, and Angela. To Mr. Black it's all about "listening to kids, being responsive to them, voicing their own opinions, giving them choices, letting them take on leadership roles, setting goals for what they want to work on and do."

### ***Program content***

Each practitioner utilized the strategy of adjusting program content to meet the needs of the youth. In Mr. Black's kinesiology career club, he is intentionally having his students become mentors. He noted that language can sometimes be a barrier, therefore seeks undergraduates that know Spanish and Tagalog. When Mr. Black can recruit a university student that does speak Tagalog, he notifies the school to connect non-speaking English youth with the student. Additionally, Mr. Black works at a university that is culturally diverse and his undergraduate mentors' diversity reflects the local school's diversity well. Mr. Black also offers the youth opportunities to bring their culture with them to the program and lead dances, warmups, and other activities they feel comfortable with.

As for Hugo's rugby program, Hugo consults with a youth development specialist and the local university's gender institute to assist him with coach education development which trickles down to the youths' program development. Hugo's rugby program also assists families with the provision of coping strategies and family plans that are unique to each family.

Mariah utilizes current events in her prison program and boxing club to relate current events and program content to the youths' interests. Mariah stated: "We talk about current events in the prison setting, we talked about George Floyd and Black Lives Matter and all of those things. In boxing club, President Trump's derogatory comments would come up all the time. And how do we process that?" Another strategy Mariah implements especially in the prison setting, is to adjust her language when discussing the TPSR levels and associated transference. Angela stated: "In terms of physical movement, knowing what they had available at home and knowing

what they were interested in, trying to make sure that we are meeting those needs first instead of just being siloed our own experiences.” As for Will’s summer P.E. program he utilizes the idea of negotiation and empowerment as a means to adjust content.

In the P.E. setting Angela would utilize sports that she knew the kids had access to outside of the TPSR P.E. program.

It's that negotiation piece in the beginning that I think works well... We negotiate things with the students so that when there is a little violation or something, we can be like, okay, we made the rules, what's going on here.  
– Will

Lastly, Julia too adjusts program content to meet the needs of the youth. To do this she has a question box where youth submit their questions or a topic, they wish to discuss in that day’s TPSR session. Julia, similar to Mariah, is also mindful of language. Being that Julia’s program caters to girls that may have body image issues she focuses on words that describe strength and power rather than body shape and size.

### ***Reflection***

Reflection, Self-awareness, and acknowledgement of biases was noted by almost all of the practitioners interviewed. Reflection is used in both the Cultural Relevance Cycle and in the TPSR daily format. Mr. Black suggested that he is challenged to be uncomfortable and acknowledged why a situation makes him uncomfortable and how he can address those biases. To illustrate his message is an excerpt below.

I think it's been a life-long journey for me and learning more about all that stuff [gender and ethnicity etc.], including not just LGBTQ issues, but also cultural relevance . . . A lot of it is just beginning to have the conversation and addressing your own biases and your own discomfort with that topic.  
– Mr. Black

Mariah also indicated that she is self-critical and tries to be aware of her biases if race and class are playing a role. “I'm highly trained in sociology, Sports Sociology, so I have to remind myself, nobody thinks about race in class more than I do. It's just always a part of what I'm thinking all the time.” While Mariah’s educational background has her thinking about race and class, she is also reflective of how she implements the TPSR values and concepts of transference.

In my deeper reflective moments, I've sort of thought about how some of the TPSR structures that exist might further benefit the more dominant groups. Am I asking questions that alienate people of color, or are some of the structures that are built into TPSR more of the dominant pedagogy in schools? – Mariah

Angela closely aligns with Mariah's thought process. Angela has engagement with culturally relevance physical education. Angela quote below illustrates how important reflection is to her.

I think that the number one thing is that reflective component and the open discussion component, because the CRPE, for example... It's constant reflection. Sarah Flory is repeating the concept of thinking about where you're coming from, thinking about your actions, reflecting on those actions, and if they were the best ones to do... TPSR does that exact same frame, you introduce something, you think you act it out, and then you reflect on how you perform and how are you going to moving forward. – Angela

Will too practices self-awareness rather than reflection but his description of self-awareness was very similar to how Angela and Mariah explained their reflection. Will stated: "You want to be aware of the people that you work with and who they are. You don't blow it off and say, 'Oh, I'm color blind.' I don't care what you are. But more of the point of understanding who they are and letting them learn who you are."

### ***Immersion into the community***

Another strategy that a few of the practitioners implemented was to immerse themselves into the community that the youth live in. Mr. Black has been very involved in the community he serves. He has attended elementary and middle school graduations, local high school sporting events, eats and shops locally. The excerpt below from Mr. Black's interview illustrates how important it was for him to be in the same community.

Yeah, I am at the high school but that's not enough. That's one perspective of it. Another one, it was really important for me to live in the city where my kids come from. It's very common in [location] that faculty don't live in the city. I live in the [county] that's very urban. I actually live in the community where my kids live, and that might sound extreme, but it was important for me. – Mr. Black

By living in the community Mr. Black can relate to the youth more. When they talk about where they live or go in the community he knows exactly where they are talking about.

Julia also lived in the same community as some of the youth that she served but has moved out of that community at the time of the interview.

I would say part of it is just personal experience being in the community, the middle school that we worked at is like five minutes from [University], and so a lot of things that are characteristic of my experience living in [city], I think informed maybe my perceptions of the community that the girls were living in. – Julia

Julia met with school officials such as the school counselor and principal to get a better grasp on the youths' educational process and school community.

As mentioned earlier Mariah has lived in the community that has the TPSR summer camp. Having knowledge of the community and its unique dynamics are what sparked Mariah to offer the TPSR summer camp in that neighborhood. Mariah no longer lives in that community, nor does she live in the community that serves the boxing club girls or the incarcerated youth. Mariah does her best to learn about gang culture without submerging herself into that community, but rather through talking to the incarcerated youth.

While Hugo does not live in the community, he does hire rugby coaches from the youths' community. To him it was important to hire staff that knows and understand the youths' circumstances. Like Hugo and Mariah, Angela did not live in the community. However, Angela did meet with social workers to explore the local community and visit low-income housing areas where many of the youth lived.

I connected with the social workers and started to go out to their community. We had so many students that live in that environment with assisted housing, so they had a community center out there. There was another project going on, so I started to go with them, and I got to meet some of the kids and families through that process and actually see where they live and talk to them about what their expectations were. – Angela

Angela tried to immerse herself into the youths' community, but after self-reflecting she stated: "I still feel like I could have gone a lot more in-depth and getting to know the community, and I think I would alter that and moving forward."

Will too does not live in the same community as the youth he serves. This is because Will enjoys international service-learning and lives on the West coast of the U.S. but works with youth in a European country. He and his pre-service teachers travel to another country. They meet there with local community members to learn about the community more and tour the community.

### ***Unique Strategies***

Some of the strategies that the practitioners implemented were unique to them and consisted of choice of physical activities that are novel for most, mindful of program timing, serving as a facilitator, implementing the ‘ouch rule’ and utilizing the ‘flip the script’ method. Mr. Black choose gender neutral physical activities that both undergraduate and youth may not be experts in. These novel activity of martial arts, dance, yoga, and weight training allowed both youth and undergraduate mentors become knowledgeable of knew physical activities that did not have a competitive component or great physical skill. Hugo’s main strategy to be relevant towards the youth is being mindful of the time of day the program is at. As stated earlier the location where Hugo’s program takes place is riddled with violence especially during the evening. Both Mariah and Julia utilize the strategy of being a facilitator of discussions and conversions around sensitive topics. This involves Mariah and Julia being mindful to not reflect their personal values of the youth, but to allow the youth to have constructive conversations. Will’s unique strategy is to addresses harmful language using the ‘ouch rule’. If a child says something mean or hurtful to another child, the one hurt is supposed to say ‘ouch’ indicating that the comment was hurtful and not to be said again. Julia’s unique method is to ‘flip the script’. This means the youth become the boxing coaches for either the coaches or for their peers.

### **Academic and Physical Skill Development**

None of the TPSR programs explicitly incorporated traditional academic programming. One program did offer academic related guidance or an educational focus about career options and the paths necessary to obtain that career. Most of the programs educated youth on life skills and enhanced physical literacy.

### ***Academic development***

Mr. Black’s kinesiology career club was the most academic oriented TPSR program. The academic focus was on how to get youth where they want to be to obtain their ideal career and for them to envision possible futures. Being that many of the youth Mr. Black works with are

urban and potential first-generation college students, their families do not have as diverse careers as other more affluent and higher educated families. Youth in Mr. Black's program also learn about different certifications based around health and fitness. In the kinesiology career club, the youth also learn physical literacy and the life skills traditionally promoted in TPSR; respect, effort, goal setting, helping others, and transference of skills.

Out of Mariah's programs the summer camp does have some academic portions including science, arts and crafts. However, the emphasis is on life skills, those associated with the TPSR model. In Mariah's prison program college exposure happens such as taking college classes or completing the GED. Neither of those components are exclusive to Mariah's prison program, but it is brought up in the relational time that the incarcerated youth have with Mariah and other mentors. Mariah does offer the incarcerated youth an opportunity to spend a day on a college campus to learn about college life. This serves a dual purpose as being an educational trip for the youth on the day they are allowed to go out of prison and as a motivation or glimpse of an alternate future besides gang activity.

In the past Hugo's rugby program did have a tutoring component to it, but that has ceased. Hugo's program focuses primarily on teaching youth how to cope with stress and trauma and regulate emotions. The rugby program does offer some educational programming the includes systemic issues, four sessions per year to go over gender and sexual equality. Like Hugo, Julia does not incorporate traditional academic components into her girls boxing program. However, they do discuss sensitive topics such as gender and sexuality. Additionally, Julia promotes a healthy lifestyle and teaches the girls about healthful living including nutrition and discusses other forms of physical activity the girls can engage in.

### ***Physical development***

In the kinesiology career club, the youth also learn physical literacy and the life skills traditionally promoted in TPSR; respect, effort, goal setting, helping others, and transference of skills. The physical skills in Mr. Black's program consisted of martial arts, dance, yoga, and strength training. In Mariah's prison program and girl's boxing club physical literacy also occurs. The most physical skill development for Mariah happens in her girls boxing club. Girls are provided hand wraps and taught solo boxing movements with a focus on strength and positive body image. Julia has taken over as the leader of the boxing club that Mariah had

started. Julia elaborated that the program promotes individual or solo boxing therefore the girls can practice the sport at home with not equipment necessary.

Will utilizes P.E. to deliver their TPSR programming and they each focus on physical literacy. While Will does not have an explicit academic aspect to his program he did say that “we're coming at it from the physical literacy aspect of it, what could the students do in their lives to be responsible for their own... Their own health and their own physical activity.” Like Julia Will incorporates healthful living education. Angela who also uses P.E. as her way to implement TPSR focuses on physical literacy and particularly sport and activity knowledge that can be applicable for the youth in their current community. Angela makes sure that the sport taught in class is also able to be done at home if the child wanted. Angela also promoted the SEL concepts and TPSR levels into her program as well as the concept of transference. Majority of the TPSR program and practitioners promote physical literacy and life skill development rather than traditional academics such as language, math and reading.

### **Inclusivity and Challenges Related to Gender Ethnicity and Culture**

Gender and ethnicity were specifically explored as to what extent does the TPSR program directors feel their program is inclusive or exclusive to youths’ varying genders and ethnicities. The idea of youths’ sexuality was also brought up. Many of these TPSR programs are sports based and sport has a historical homophobic undertone. Stereotypical ideas as to what sports interest boys and what sports interest girls was brought up by many of the practitioners. Within this section tools and resources that the practitioners either possess or have access address gender, ethnicity, and sexuality was also explored during the interviews.

#### ***Culture informed by gender***

With sport historically being male dominated and male centric and TPSR typically using sport as a hook to draw in participants, addressing how the practitioner’s program is gender inclusive was explored. One research question focused on what role gender plays in the TPSR practitioner’s program and the practitioner’s perception of TPSR being inclusive to all genders. The themes of stereotyping and youth having a gender-neutral response to TPSR stood out in the interviews. A few of the practitioners responded that while it is stereotypical, boys and girls have different sport interests. Fortunately, all practitioners felt as though both boys and girls appreciate TPSR and did not notice a difference in their responses to TPSR programming. Lastly, all practitioner’s felt as though TPSR offers an inclusive environment.

**Stereotyping** was brought up by many of the practitioners. While they did not want to stereotype, they noticed traditional stereotyping and gendering of sport coming out in their program. Some sports are viewed as being masculine or feminine or gender neutral. Some of the TPSR practitioners utilize fewer sports and were cognizant of the sport they selected as how it may be received by youth. Other practitioners utilized TPSR in a P.E. setting and therefore offered various sport and activity, but also noted that boys and girls migrated toward certain sports. The practitioners that focused on fewer sports included Mr. Black with the kinesiology career club, Hugo with rugby, Mariah's boxing club, and Julia's boxing club.

Mr. Black noted that while this may be a stereotype, he thought that boys seem more interested in team sport, so his program offered a variety of sport that was more individual based and perceived to be gender neutral. The specific sport and activities Mr. Black's program offered was dance, yoga, strength training and martial arts. As for Hugo his sport of choice is rugby. Hugo acknowledged that rugby has an image problem and is perceived to be a masculine sport, but he works against the stigma and at one point had more girls' participants than boys. Being that Hugo also does the employing and education of coaches he hires both men and women to coach the youth. In fact, Hugo has four sessions per year that addresses gender and respect for women in sport and other spaces. Mariah facilitates various TPSR modeled programs and offered some general thoughts some of which also can be thought of as stereotypical. In Mariah's boxing program for girls, she noted that girls like to talk more so there's more relational time and reflection. "Our female program has a lot less movement and activity in it because they love to talk, and they love awareness talk, they love group meetings, and they still really do love the movement part of the physical activity time, but it looks like an opposite image of what our boys' programs look like." As for her programs with boys she noted:

There's the common sediment that if a boy is going to open up, he's got to have a ball in his hand, and we definitely adapt that approach, and that's not always the case, there are plenty of boys in the program who like to talk and stuff, but there's something... Especially the prison setting, it's so hyper-masculine and without a doubt it is a weakness to show emotion, so we're just fighting an uphill battle to talk about deep stuff.

Julia who also facilitates the girl's boxing club had a similar opinion as Mariah. Julia noted that while there's not a large discrepancy between how boys and girls receive TPSR, girls seem to like to engage in the talking components more than boys. Additionally, Julia mentioned

that the girl's activity time is less rigorous. This is to keep the program appealing to all fitness levels and not discourage anyone from the program.

**Gender neutral response** of how youth responded to TPSR was reported by many of the practitioners. The two TPSR practitioners that utilize the model in a P.E. setting offer a wide variety of sports and physical activities in their program. Angela said that she does not notice a large difference as to how boys and girls respond to TPSR programming. However, Angela did note that during relational time when the youth can engage in activity of their choice boys leaned toward team sports and girls engaged in jump rope, hula-hoop, and dance. Since Angela's program was a P.E. class, she offered sports and individual activities such as racket sports and dance, which appealed to both boys and girls. Angela was warned by other school staff that her gender would impact the program. She stated: "I was informed right away that the P.E. teacher in the gym was a white man, but then I went with my advisor, [name], and they [school administrators] were like, 'Just let him talk because they will listen to him more because he's a man.'" Angela's identity as a white female served to be a challenge for her when initially implementing her program.

As for Will's P.E. TPSR based program, he works with younger kids and simply said gender doesn't come up or impact his program in a noticeable way. Only one point in time did gender, puberty specifically, impact Will's program. Due to working with rural girls there was a wider age range that his program served. This caused Will and his pre-service teachers to have a health education moment when an older girl in the program was pregnant but grouped with younger girls that did not reach puberty yet.

While gender did not play a large role in shaping the TPSR practitioners sport and activity selection, the practitioners did indicate that they were aware that sport and activity selection could skew youths' interest. By selecting gender neutral sports and activities, being aware of youths' perceptions and interests in activities, and fostering an inclusive environment the practitioners were able to provide a program that was attractive to both boys and girls.

### ***Culture informed by ethnicity***

Ethnicity is another aspect of culture that this study has explored. The TPSR practitioners were asked about the population they serve, the role ethnicity plays when program planning, and how their program is ethnically inclusive. Many of the practitioners acknowledged that they serve youth that look different from them and therefore practice a lot of self-awareness and

reflection. All the practitioners interviewed identified as white or Caucasian and all work with youth that are ethnically varying (Refer to Table 5.1). Themes in the practitioners' responses included language, stereotyping, friction between ethnic groups, and self-awareness. One practitioner noted that language tends to be a barrier, two practitioners noted that stereotyping among race and ethnicity comes out in their program, and one practitioner found that there's friction between ethnic groups as well as self-segregation. However, by utilizing the TPSR model and having built in time for awareness talks and reflection they are able to overcome many of the obstacles.

**Language** impacted a few programs, but specifically Mr. Black's kinesiology career club. Being that he is in a West coast city both his university, city, and high school partner serves ethnically varying populations. With this diversity also comes different languages and non-English speaking students at the high school, Spanish and Tagalog are the two common languages of non-English speaking youth. Language therefore plays a role and serves as a barrier for Mr. Black's programming. Due to language barriers Mr. Black feels as though he is not able to develop a strong bond with the non-English speaking youth, but he is able to find undergraduate mentors that can foster a relationship with the youth. Fortunately, since he has access to a dynamic group of undergraduate students Mr. Black purposefully recruits undergraduate mentors that can speak Spanish and Tagalog to further assist the non-English speaking youth in the high school and gets them into his kinesiology career club.

**Stereotyping** among race was also brought up by practitioners. In Mr. Black's kinesiology career club and in Angela's TPSR based P.E. class, stereotyping by ethnicity and race came up in the practitioner's programs. Mr. Black noted one way ethnicity informs the youths' engagement in his program is that "this is a stereotype, but maybe a lot of the Latino kids, their families really don't support a lot of them going to college, that I have had in the program." Being that Mr. Black promotes career exploration in his program and creating paths for the youths' alternate futures Mr. Black notices that Latino youths may face push-back from their family when pursuing higher education. This impacts the youths' engagement in his program in that they may not want to engage in creating paths for their future outside of their family's ideas and desires. In Angela's P.E. program name calling and stereotyping among peers happened in her program. Angela capitalized on those times and turned them into teachable moments and utilized the values of TPSR to address the situations.

Well, course you go to basketball you're black, those types of comments that were said that did actually open up the floor for conversation, so we would take those teachable moments to come together and talk about why we can't label someone in that way, how race to indicate how a person is going to act or feel and that sort of thing. And I think it provided a lot of opportune moments for us to have conversations, although obviously someone did go through something painful to get to that conversation, which was disappointing... I guess it just prompted conversations. – Angela

When first questioning Hugo about his rugby program and if ethnicity plays a role, he said no. He did not believe ethnicity played a role in his program. However, he noted that friend groups in school and in his program are often segregated or divided by ethnic lines. This self-segregation of youth did not prove to be an issue in his program. In line with Hugo, Mariah who spoke about three different TPSR based programs that she facilitates, indicated that ethnicity did not seem to impact her program. Mariah did mention that she thinks that ethnicity impacts the way youth express themselves. However, being that Mariah is a trained in sociology she stated: “I'm highly trained in sociology, Sports Sociology, so I have to remind myself, nobody thinks about race in class more than I do. It's just always a part of what I'm thinking all the time. And so, I catch myself sometimes forcing it into conversations.”

**Friction between ethnic groups** was reported by Will. In both his international P.E. program and prior program in the United States he noticed that youth segregated by ethnicity and also had strained peer relationships. In the States there's migrant families due to their profession of being crop pickers. Those families were also traditionally Latino. Between their migrant tendencies and being different from the local youth that identified as white, Will noticed that all the kids would not get along well. He dedicated more time for awareness talks and conflict resolution was needed to sort out negative peer relationships. In Will's international program, specifically at the refugee center, he has noticed similar incidences among youth. Will does address ethnicity in his TPSR based program at the refugee center and dedicated more time to the relational and discussion components of his program. Will stated that he believes that parents are part of the friction between ethnic groups. While not necessarily causing friction, Hugo noted that in the rugby program youth tend to self-segregate based off ethnicity. This tends to happen in school Hugo stated: “Our schools are divided along those lines, that you would see the

friendship groups divided along those lines.” Fortunately, Hugo did not indicate that the self-segregation caused a negative impact on his program.

**Self-awareness** and reflection were the last two themes that emerged when discussing ethnicity with TPSR practitioners. The practitioners mentioned that they practice self-awareness and reflection when it comes to their own ethnicity and the youths’ ethnicity. This heightened sense of awareness and reflection can be from the methods TPSR practitioners use to bridge the cultural gap between their self and their program participants. For instance, Mr. Black acknowledges that he is a white male and therefore in a position of privilege in our society.

I'm always aware that I'm white, I'm always aware of that. It's on my mind all the time, and how I phrase things and talk to them about different life things, and so for me, or what I value, what I think is important, you might see it differently, you might get a different message from your family. –  
Mr. Black

Angela noted that she is reflective of her ethnicity and personal values as well as the youths’.

I think that the number one thing is that reflective component and the open discussion component, because the CRPE [culturally relevant physical education], for example... It's constant reflection. Sarah Flory is repeating the concept of thinking about where you're coming from, thinking about your actions, reflecting on those actions, and if they were the best ones to do... TPSR does that exact same frame.

Reflection is built into the TPSR daily format, both for the practitioners and the youth to do. This component of reflection is also a focal point when engaging in the cultural relevance cycle. As illustrated by Angela when being culturally relevant, it’s about reflecting on where the practitioner is in their beliefs and values, where the kids are at, and how to bridge any gaps via action.

### ***Inclusive approaches for gender and ethnicity***

The TPSR model has built in core values for all practitioners, key components to promote those values, and a daily format to follow that also assists in promoting the core values and key components. TPSR core values among practitioners are: (a) putting kids first, (b) human decency, (c) holistic self-development, and (d) a way of being (Hellison, 2011). Key components

that promote the core values are youth empowerment, acknowledging youth agency, allowing the expression of voices and choices, and cultivating an inclusive environment.

Themes emerged that represented the specific ways the practitioners were inclusive to all youth was through fostering a safe space for the youth and empowerment. The practitioners' approaches to inclusivity greatly reflect the core values and components of TPSR. Some of the actions the practitioners use to be inclusive may have been repeated above in the section of strategies implemented.

**Safe environment** was one way Mr. Black, Mariah, Angela, and Julia stated as a method that makes their program inclusive. The way this climate is made is different for each practitioner. For Mr. Black ensures that the environment is open and accepting to others. For this to happen he believes it is all about "listening to kids, being responsive to them, voicing their own opinions, giving them choices, letting them take on leadership roles, setting goals for what they want to work on and do." As for Mariah, she said it was about creating a safe place for the youth and playing the role of facilitator for conversation and making sure she does not inflict her personal values upon the participants. Mariah also shared a general thought about the application of TPSR to sport: "the focus is so much put on sport, it makes it an authentic experience for everyone to connect, and they say that sport is the universal language." Therefore, between utilizing sport and creating a safe environment Mariah's program is inclusive to many youths. Angela also focuses on creating a safe space for youth.

The TPSR model is set up and is so reflective and discussions are always happening, so the point of... The start of it is talking about one of the goals and talking about how it can be applied, and that's for everybody, so coming up with ways and examples of the way that wouldn't be applied versus way it would be applied and that could pull in concepts of diversity, if anything came up during the actual lesson that could be discussed during or that could be discussed at the end, I'm still addressing those concepts and inclusivity, if they came up, you can handle them in the moment or you can plan for them to have those conversations. – Angela

Julia too focused on nurturing a safe space for her participants. She believes that the relationship aspect and reflective components are what assist in cultivating a safe space. Will did not state that he fosters a safe space, but he does cultivate a sense of belonging. "I sort of model is the idea of when we go in, it's very, very inclusive. So we are a we."

**Empowerment** and allowing youth to express their voices are two other aspects that the practitioners noted about the TPSR model as assisting them with the promotion of inclusivity. For Mr. Black it is all about empowerment of youth. “It's all about empowering them, and I think that is what it is about the model that helps it be inclusive for all genders.” As for Hugo he made a point that TPSR is not too prescriptive and by focusing on the responsibility levels specifically of respect it opens the conversation up to acceptance and inclusivity. He also states that the idea of autonomy and giving authority to coaches to empower youth. The following excerpt from Hugo’s response illustrates this.

It's [TPSR] not too prescriptive. It's a philosophy that it's quite universal... The basics of social-emotional learning, is all there, but it allows you enough movement to then localize it through the practitioner... I mean, I think it's all about the practitioners. You can have the best model in the world, but you've got to have a person that's willing to be able to understand it and then interpret it for young people. I think that's... The biggest thing I learned is that you got to give them some authority or control over it. – Hugo

Mariah also prescribes to the idea of passing autonomy of the program over to the youth. She does this but allowing the youth to utilize the TARE assessment. The TARE is an assessment tool that allows youth and practitioners to indicate what they like about the program and what can be changed about the program and how to change it. By letting youth evaluate the program Mariah is giving them an opportunity to express their opinion and empowering the youth to use their voice.

Will also encourages youth to express their voice and opinion. The way Will does this is by allowing the youth to create the rules of their activities. “We have the meeting in the beginning, we first meet, we all negotiate the rules, we all negotiate where we are, we negotiate what we want and our goals and stuff like that.” By giving youth autonomy over the program Will engages in youth empowerment. When rules are broken Will can address the situation and remind the kids that they created the rules and have the ability to adjust the rules as a group further putting the responsibility of the program development on the youth.

### ***Challenges to being inclusive and culturally relevant***

Each practitioner did mention a challenge that they must overcome when programming to be culturally relevant and inclusive. Themes consisting of barriers that the practitioners indicated were language, immersion into the community, location and time of program, and parents.

**Language** was brought up by two practitioners. They felt as though language was a challenge in their program. Mr. Black who works with ethnically and economically varying students and sometimes non-English speaking youth found that it is harder to build relationships with youth who speak a different language. However, he tries his best to recruit undergraduate students that are bi-lingual or multi-lingual to mentor the child. Mariah also mentioned language as being a barrier. In the prison program she tries to adjust her language to make the TPSR levels of responsibility resonate more with the kids. Mariah called it “sexifying the responsibility levels” to make them more appealing and to get kids out of school mode when responding to transference of life skills. Another issue Mariah tries to address is having open and engaging conversation without alienating the child. For Mariah having open conversations or deep conversations in the prison program is extremely challenging due to the environment and pressure to not be emotional.

**Community immersion** is part of the cultural relevance cycle. Gaining knowledge and understanding about the youths’ community dynamics and educational process is critical. Additionally, bridging the gap between the youths’ culture and values and the practitioner’s personal values is essential to be enacting the cultural relevance cycle. A few practitioners noted that those two aspects of the cultural relevance cycle were hard for them to complete. Angela said that she would have liked to truly get to know the community better and not make assumptions. While Angela did try to get to know the youths’ backgrounds, she claimed that: “I still feel like I could have gone a lot more in-depth and getting to know the community, and I think I would alter that moving forward.” Angela also said that she is conscious of her internal biases and addressing them. Like Angela, Mariah is conscious and questions if she embraces the dominant pedagogy of the school which is culture of power. Mariah stated her concern: “Am I asking questions that alienate people of color, or are some of the structures that are built into TPSR more of the dominant pedagogy in schools?” Mariah tries to reflect and make sure she checks her personal biases when working with youth. Mariah is also aware that the coaches and leaders she brings to her youth programs also have their own biases and comfort levels when

address children with different genders, ethnicities, and sexuality. Mr. Black also mentioned this idea of understanding who he is and how he can better relate to the people he serves. Julia claimed to struggle the most with overcoming internal biases and values.

I guess like my personal convictions about what's right, maybe can almost mentally provide a challenge for me, but maybe not like in practice program. Yeah, yeah, yeah, it doesn't necessarily hinder... At least as far as I'm aware, hopefully it doesn't necessarily hinder how open I am to hear a different perspective or my ability to create a safe space to talk about those things. – Julia

Julia battles her own beliefs and tries her best to not show her personal values in the program, but instead tries to facilitate conversation. In line with her obstacle to be culturally relevant she also mentioned that not having training on addressing gender, ethnicity and sexuality in youth development programming makes overcoming her biases a challenge.

**Location & time** of programs were considered to be a potential barrier for practitioners. Angela's class took place at a local elementary school. The school did not promote the same values as Angela's program. One example was that youth are to be silent, listen to authority figures, and not ask questions. TPSR programming is a striking contrast to the school's values, with the promotion of youth empowerment, voices and choices, and open reflection. Hugo also faced barriers of location and time. Hugo's rugby program takes place in city that is very violent. Therefore, the time of day he offers the program impacts whether youth can attend the program due to safety concerns. Therefore, Hugo offers his program during the end of the school day. As for Mariah in the prison setting, just being in a prison changes the dynamics of the program greatly and can be a barrier to programming in general.

**Parents** was the last barrier listed. One practitioner, Will, noted that parents was his largest barrier when it came to providing culturally relevant and inclusive programming. For Will, parents inflict their thoughts on their children which then causes friction between peers with different ethnicities. "We're in a group with the students and the parents are rigid, oftentimes, or they don't want you to do certain things. . . So sometimes having that sort of rigidness, when you're trying to get the kids to be accepting of one another, they're getting a different message from outside of it." Will gave an example where he allowed kids to bring a dance to class including music and choreography that was significant to their culture. Jewish youth wanted to teach their peers how to perform the Horra, unfortunately parents that identified

as Islamic were against this. Will had to change what the Islamic kids did since the parents would not allow them to join in on the Jewish dance.

### ***Resources and tools***

One question that was part of the interview was inquiring about what tools or resources the TPSR practitioners must address “culture” when programming. Specifically, the question focused of tools and resources to address youths’ gender, ethnicity, and sexuality. Many of the practitioners stated personal experience and reflection as their resources. Unfortunately, many practitioners also said none and did not feel comfortable discussing topics such as gender or sexuality with youth.

**Personal experience & reflection** were tools or resources many practitioners referred to. Mr. Black stated that he goes off personal experience and uses reflection. While he feels comfortable discussing gender, ethnicity, and sexuality with youth, he knows that others do not. He would also like to have a more open and welcoming climate for such discussions in conference settings with other SBYD practitioners. Mariah also relies on reflection and experience. In line with Mr. Black, Mariah also feels comfortable discussing topics of youths’ gender, ethnicity, and sexuality.

I'm way too comfortable. In fact, I welcome it. I think I've just had so many practice runs through difficult stuff with programs, both where the program is in conflict, my leader is racist against me, like a kid would think that or something, I just feel so experienced and comfortable and navigating those and the thing you can just tell yourself as being present and being supportive of the kid is literally the most important thing. –  
Mariah

Mariah also referenced Midwest university for gender and racial tool kits and activities about those topics. She also utilizes the TARE for program evaluation, so the youth can express their voice and opinion about the TPSR based program. Angela stated that she is comfortable with discussing gender, ethnicity and sexuality with youth and has read literature on general inclusivity, but she is worried about ‘rocking the boat’ regarding sexuality due to working within schools. As for gender and ethnicity Angela utilizes other TPSR practitioners as her resources. Hugo being a “non-academic” practitioner partners with a local university and a youth development specialist to design his program.

**Lack of resources** was reported by many of the practitioners as being a barrier. As illustrated by Angela: “Not really any [resources] that I can think of. I honestly, think that's one thing we are really missing with TPSR as an alliance.” Will also felt as though he did not have resources that address gender or sexuality. However, Will does feel comfortable addressing gender and sexuality due to his personal trainings and experiences. While he does have resources to discuss ethnicity, specifically about Native Americans, it is not enough. Julia too stated that she does not have tools or resources to address gender, ethnicity, and sexuality with youth. She said she had generic trainings such as Title IX training. Julia is part of campus ministry, so she felt as though their staff development program provided her with opportunities to discuss race and ethnicity but not gender and sexuality. Having more resources and tools readily available for TPSR practitioners is needed.

### **Critical Consciousness**

As part of cultural relevant practices there's the idea of being socio-politically or critically conscious. Research question four explored critical consciousness among TPSR practitioners: To what degree do the TPSR practitioners promote critical consciousness or socio-political consciousness of the youth in their sports-based program? The TPSR practitioners were asked about the youth participants' systemic inequalities and barriers they face as well as how their program addresses those inequities. All of the practitioners were able to list inequities and barriers. Themes surfaced such as educational barriers or low-quality education, inner city living and low-income. Of all the programs listed in Table 5.1 only two were not created to address a social problem that the youth face. Mariah's summer program and Will's summer international program that did not serve girls, were the two programs that did not have an underlying systemic issue to address.

The practitioners took on a non-explicit nature of addressing the inequities but created the program with the intention to give youth the opportunity to experience sport and PA. that they otherwise did not have access. This non-explicit approach to addressing inequities may be because TPSR applies SBBYD qualities and takes on an assets-based approach. Therefore, practitioners are always seeking ways to strengthen the youths' positive attributes rather than addressing deficits.

### ***Low-quality education***

Mr. Black, Hugo, Angela and Will all have stated that school or education was an obstacle for youth. Mr. Black's program took place in a high school and focused on helping youth value school and develop good study habits to progress to higher education. Mr. Black feels as though his program is all about addressing inequities. "So, to me, that's [TPSR program] all about trying to deal with the inequities or the inequalities". While his program may not explicitly address the barriers or plights associated with being an inner-city child Mr. Black tries to have these youth envision possible futures and show them options.

In Hugo's program he surveys the youth participants asking them what more they need from the program and income was an issue as well as education. Hugo's program does not address the educational component, even though Hugo believes that low quality education is one of the largest inequities from which the youth suffer. Hugo's program also takes place in an area with a lot of violence. "I think we can't solve the problems but what we do is we allow kids to cope better. I think that TPSR is an on-field curricula but with [rugby program] I work in homes with families to try and teach coping strategies to get in the homes with the parents."

Angela's program like Mr. Black's takes place in a school during school time. Angela admitted to struggling at the start of her program to be culturally relevant. She tries to be reflective and continually adjusting her program content to meet the needs of the youth but "not talking about societal or structural step-backs that they'd be experiencing beyond just really surface level things." Specific steps Angela took was to talk to the kids, allow them to tell her what experiences they want out of the program and being vulnerable with herself and admitting that she must learn from the youth prior to creating and implementing a generic curriculum.

Lastly, Will has engaged in programming to fill voids that youth face such as lack of access to P.E. Will understands the inequities many of the youth he serves must overcome but he does not explicitly address them in his programs. Will stresses to his pre-service teachers that they must try their best to understand the background of the youth and "not looking at them as things that are broken or problems that need to be fixed, but rather what assets do each of these students have that you can utilize, and you can help the students realize that they have." Will and his preservice teachers use their knowledge of the youths' background to address their inequities in subtle ways. One focus of Will's is to have the youths embrace a positive mindset.

### ***Urban & low-income***

Inner-city living and low-income levels were two other barriers that the youth must overcome. Mr. Black stated that the youth in his program face “inner-city plights” and that living in such an urban area limits the youth in general. Mr. Black does not explicitly address those issues associated with inner-city living besides offering youths a safe place to talk and future options. Hugo stated that low-income living impacted his youth, but that he has no way to counter that problem and the issues associated with low-income such as food availability. Julia also noted low-income living as being problematic to the youth in her program. When structuring the girls boxing club, she and other program facilitators were aware of the low socio-economic status of the youth and used boxing to subtly address low-income issues. The youth did not need any equipment to engage in the boxing program and were able to perform the activity at home. Both Mariah and Julia took on facilitation roles in the girls boxing club at different points in time. Mariah’s belief about the girls boxing club was “we’re constantly addressing sexism and life and sport and empowerment, and just ingrain them in the female experience.” This program did offer youth the opportunity to address other concerns and issues such as body image, gender, and sexuality. Mariah feels as though it is her responsibility to be aware of what the youth need, and she can be a provider for them.

## CHAPTER VI: DISCUSSION, CONCLUSION & IMPLICATIONS

Previous research about the TPSR has been conducted before. Specifically, on TPSR's impact on youth in school (Martinek & Okseon, 2012), transference of life skill (Barker, Halsall, & Forneris, 2016; Walsh, Ozaeta, & Wright, 2009; Santos, Miguel, Wright, Sá, and Saravia, 2020), TPSR and its alignment with SEL (Gordon, Jacobs, & Wright, 2016), and a combination of TPSR with the Culturally Relevant Physical Education framework (Shiver, Richards, & Hemphill, 2020). The current research explored the magnitude of CRP that TPSR practitioners incorporate into their program. This was done by interviewing TPSR practitioners (N=6) and questioning them about their implementation of the cultural relevance cycle created by Flory & McCaughtry (2011). Culture, for the purpose of this study, was narrowed down to being informed by youths' gender and ethnicity. Additionally, TPSR practitioner's critical and social political consciousness was explored. This chapter is divided into four sections. The first section is the discussion. The second section is about implications for TPSR practitioners and application of cultural relevance and implications for methodology. The third section is the conclusion. Lastly, the fourth section focuses on recommendations for future research.

### **Discussion**

This analysis supports the idea that TPSR is a viable model to promote the cultural relevance cycle, however it falls short when promoting the broader concept of CRP. Many TPSR programs lack academic development and sociopolitical or critical consciousness sharing with youth. All practitioners were able to answer the interview questions that demonstrated certain aspects of TPSR as promoting the cultural relevance cycle. For instance, many practitioners suggested that TPSR is inclusive to all ethnicities and genders since an integral piece of TPSR is to give youth voices and choices and promoting the first level of responsibility; respect. By allowing youth to express their opinion the practitioner passes program responsibility onto the youth and gives them autonomy to shape the program to fit their desires to an extent. However, program providers still hold the power as to what the program truly looks like, what activities are offered, who is recruited into the program, what language is normalized, what is acceptable behavior and engagement, and what the practitioners perceive to be barriers to the youth.

Despite TPSR showing glimpse of CRP it fell short in this retrospective cross-case analysis. Of the practitioners interview minimal programs offered academic development despite

low-quality education being a concern of theirs. However, low-quality education has been understood as urban intensive education and informing the culture of the school, teacher expectations and therefore student outcomes. Unfortunately, the idea of urban classification of schools also implies deficits characteristics (Milner, 2012). Previous research has tried to link youth in TPSR programs with enhanced school behavior and grades and results indicated that behavior was positively influenced via less referrals and less reprimands, but grades did not change much (Martinek, McLaughlin, Schilling, 1999). Additionally, research as to whether TPSR programming assists in youths' academic literacy has not been conducted. Therefore, this is an area of research that can be expanded upon. Practitioners should consider how to add academic development into their programs. Moreover, TPSR has been applied to youth programming as a behavior modification tool. As indicated above TPSR has been used to enhance youths' negative behaviors, however some practitioners have used TPSR to control youths' behavior from a negative standpoint. For instance, Sánchez-Alcaraz, Gómez-Mármol, Valero-Valenzuela, & Courel-Ibáñez (2021) reported that the TPSR model applied in a PE setting served to be an efficient intervention to improve undesirable behaviors of youth, such as physical and verbal aggression and undisciplined behaviors. This idea of behavior modification and intention of TPSR programming requires reflection upon the programmer. Additionally, when attempting to be culturally relevant the practitioners must question are they assisting youth with the navigation of the dominant culture or trying to assimilate the youth. Since TPSR is supposed to be an empowering program, practitioners' intention of behavior change that will help the youth as opposed to behavior modification as a discipline method must be considered.

Critical consciousness or sociopolitical consciousness was explored as being part of CRP. While practitioners seemed to have demonstrated that they are critically conscious, all the practitioners identified as white and majority of the practitioners reported working with youth that identify as having a different ethnic identities from them, yet racial and ethnic differences between practitioner and youth was not addressed. In interviews racism and antiracism did not come up. A few practitioners mentioned that they are aware of their white privilege but did not expand on if the youth bring up race and ethnicity beyond generic stereotyping. This demonstrates that even though the practitioners are critically conscious of their position in society, they may not acknowledge how the youth feel about their position in society. This lack of explicit sociopolitical and critical consciousness in program discussion with youth may be a

critical component to add to TPSR practices that assist in the promotion of CRP. One-way practitioners can evolve their critical and socio-political consciousness is to engage in critical reflection. As suggested by Howard (2003) critical reflection can be used as a tool for creating culturally relevant practices. Furthermore, critical reflection involves reflection within moral, political, and ethnical contexts, pertaining to equity, access, and social justice. This type of reflection involves a rejection a deficit-based thinking in alignment with PYD, recognition of students' cultural capital as an asset and not detriment to the child's success, and mindfulness of how traditional practices reflect middle-class European American norms and values. Howard (2003), focused on culture being informed by race and ethnicity, therefore critical reflection takes on an antiracist pedagogy and combats racial discrimination. For practitioners to engage in this type of reflection the TPSR format offers reflection time. Practitioners can be more explicit about what they reflect on, acknowledge, and question. It is a never-ending cycle of reflection and modifying actions accordingly. Such questions as suggested by Howard (2003) include:

- (1) How frequently and what type of interaction did I have with individuals from racial backgrounds different from my own growing up?
- (2) Who were the primary persons that helped to shape my perspectives of individuals from different racial groups?
- (3) Have I ever harbored prejudiced thoughts towards people from different backgrounds?
- (4) If I do harbor prejudiced thoughts, what effects do such thoughts have on students who come from those backgrounds?
- (5) Do I create negative profiles of individuals who come from different racial backgrounds?

After critical reflection and change of action to echo a shift in thought. These actions may have the potential to assist practitioners to be agents of change and contribute to youths' development of emancipatory action from systemic barriers that are culturally relevant to the youth.

All the TPSR program providers in this study identified as white or Caucasian and stated that they work with youth who have varying racial and ethnic identities. Given Allison and Hibbler's findings; staff of the local recreation centers did not reflect the ethnic diversity of the community therefore was perceived as not being culturally responsive (2010), practitioners must be aware of their identity and what the volunteers or other program leaders identify as racially and ethnically. As noted by one practitioner the youth of her program seemed to engage more with the African American pre-service teacher. With diversity equity and inclusion being at the forefront of organizations and university's agendas, TPSR program providers must also be

mindful of who they select to assist them with their program to greater reflect diversity, equity, and inclusion. This thought can be a double edge sword because culture is not limited to immediate visible and lingual differences among people. Therefore, TPSR practitioners who seek to engage in CRP cannot minimize culture to visible and audible differences and consider historic values and familial norms each child experiences.

In line with diversity equity and inclusion are two other factors that prompted to be challenges those practitioners faced or are mindful of when programming and working with youth. First was language and this came up in two different ways. Initially language was brought up as a barrier between programmer and youth, English, and non-English speakers. To overcome the language barrier one practitioner reported that he sought out undergraduate students to assist in leading the programs that were bi-lingual. Another idea or way practitioners can become more inclusive to English language learners is to incorporate other methods of learning and communication into their program that way the program can also promote content literacy. Using charts, graphs, Venn diagrams may assist youth and English language learners with understanding organization and complex text of speech (Buell & Whittaker, 2001). When discussing English language learners or non-English speaking students another term that can be used in a more positive light would be youth who are becoming bilingual (Maxwell, Odom, & Iruka, 2013). This removes the potential negative perspective. Secondly, language was brought up in that it may not be relevant to youth. Traditionally, TPSR focuses on the five levels of responsibility and utilizes terms that may not be colloquial to youth. For example, “respecting the rights and feelings of others” is how respect has been defined or explained in TPSR text, but this may not resonate with youth. Therefore, practitioners may want to be more thoughtful with examples and expressions of language that they use to describe levels of responsibility with the youth.

One concern of this study was that TPSR is a SBYD approach and therefore an assets-based or strengths-based model, yet strengths of youth were not explicitly explored in the interviews nor implied by the practitioners. CRP specifically the cultural relevance cycle also takes on this same peculiar phenomenon. The cultural relevance cycle offers reflection and cultural gap bridging yet to bridge the cultural gap may come across as being a deficit reduction point of view. This leads to question how practitioners can engage with the cultural relevance cycle and CRP from a viewpoint of strengthening and embracing the youths’ culture rather than

looking for the differences between cultures as an entity or gap that needs to be filled. Additionally, many TPSR programs were built to provide youth an opportunity that they did not have or offered youth a program that assisted the youth in overcoming an obstacle or inequity that they face. However, there was not a counterbalance to address the inequity or inequality, there was not a strength-based focus building from the youths' community or cultural assets. Fredricks & Simpkins (2011) reported similar suggestions, that future research should seek to understand how family or community strengths and supports impact youths' participation in PA programs. Practitioners in this study did talk of assets of youth in that they allowed the youth to be the expert of their lives and share their knowledge with their peers and practitioners. Additionally, the practitioners also sought out the strengths in their assistant program leaders such as multi-lingual undergraduate assistants and physical activity leaders. Nevertheless, more needs to be done to intentionally discuss and seek out the strengths of the youth that the practitioners work with. One way practitioners may become more aware and conscious of youths' assets is to conduct an asset-map. Asset mapping includes youth and adult leaders working together to determine what resources the community has that promote PYD (Handy, Rodgers & Schwieterman, 2011). This can also happen in the form of youth and adults surveying peers and adults in the community to hear about their perceptions of the local community and the youth in the community. From this data or asset-map youth and adult leaders can come together to develop strategies to increase awareness about the youths and community's needs and plans to increase youth engagement opportunities. A youth asset map is a tool that should be used in programs that intend to empower youth, develop leadership characteristics, and promote community engagement (Handy, Rodgers & Schwieterman, 2011). Furthermore, asset mapping does not necessarily acknowledge deficits of a community and instead focuses on positive perspectives and capacity-building of communities (Allar, Elliott, Jones, Kristjansson, Taliaferro, & Bulger, 2017). However, this may also serve to be a limitation in those aspects that a community lacks is not recognized. Therefore, a combination of a needs-based approach along with asset-mapping may assist practitioners with determining the needs of youth and their communities while utilizing the strengths and resources that the community already possess.

## **Implications**

### **TPSR Practitioners' Application of Cultural Relevance**

The purpose of this study was to explore the extent to which TPSR practitioners (N=6) implement the cultural relevance cycle and engage in CRP. The six participants in this study met the inclusion criteria of facilitating a TPSR program for youth and utilizing the TPSR model for more than three years. The six practitioners in this study came from different backgrounds and learned TPSR from various experts. Important to note is that all the practitioners in this study identified themselves as being white or Caucasian.

All of the TPSR practitioners noted that they perceive the TPSR model as being an inclusive model therefore assisting them in being culturally relevant. While not intentionally engaging in the cultural relevant cycle and CRP some aspects of TPSR coincide with the key aspects of the cultural relevance cycle. As suggested by Thul and LaVoi (2010) there's a need to gain insight as to what conditions PYD is culturally sensitive. The practitioners had differing opinions as to what parts of the TPSR model assists them in engaging in CRP. Inclusion and culturally relevant practices were promoted through the TPSR levels of responsibility, TPSR format, and the core principles of TPSR and assumptions associated with TPSR.

TPSR offers the opportunity for youth to express their voices as to how they interpret the responsibility levels and how they intend to apply the responsibility level outside of the program. Additionally, the responsibility levels allow for practitioners to refocus the youths' attention back to qualities of inclusion with their peers. The responsibility levels that promote social responsibility also encourage CRP among youth and practitioners. The social responsibility levels include Level I: Respect; respecting the rights and feelings of others, self-control, peaceful conflict resolution, and inclusion and cooperation, and Level IV Helping others and leadership; showing care and compassion, being sensitive and responsive, inner strength and perseverance (Hellison, 2011). These two specific responsibility levels relate to the ideas promoting cultural relevance in that inclusion is promoted as well as understanding of differences and being sensitive and responsive to peers and youth in the program. Being responsive or reflecting strategies that reflect cultural knowledge of the youth is the third step in Flory and McGaughtry's (2011) cultural relevance cycle. While this study did not establish a causal link between the responsibility levels and cultural relevance, it was evident that the practitioners embraced the responsibility levels in a way that guided acceptance and inclusion among youth and between

their peers. This was demonstrated by particularly by Hugo, going back to the foundation level of respect whenever an issue between youth occurred. Additionally, Will implemented the ‘ouch rule’, if a child said something that was hurtful to someone else the victim would say ouch. Mr. Black also relied on these foundational levels to promote inclusion and acceptance of all students no matter their ethnicity, gender, or sexuality. Regarding gender and sexuality Mariah and Julia’s programs focus on inclusion of girls and transgender youth that experienced risk factors of bullying and lack of engagement in school and after school.

The daily format of TPSR also assisted practitioners with the promotion of cultural relevance. Mowling, Brock, & Hastie (2011) suggest that programmers need to understand the youths’ cultural background being that it impacts the youths’ interpretations of the TPSR levels. In line with the CRC first step of understanding the youths’ backgrounds and Mowling, Brock & Hastie’s (2011) suggestion, the TPSR practitioners did get to know the youths’ community background and educational process. The practitioners capitalized on the TPSR format feature, relational time, to build a relationship with each youth participant. For example, Will explained “you go in understanding that you need to get to know each other and form that relational piece, and then if you can maintain the relationship, you can overcome most of the rest of the obstacles.” Will and the rest of the practitioners focus on that relational aspect of TPSR to get to know and understand the youth and maintain a positive relationship with the youth. Fostering positive relationships with a caring, competent, and consistent adult is part of PYD and sets the climate of the program (Larson, 2006; Holt et al. 2017; Perkins & Noam, 2006).

Relational time also serves as an opportunity for youth to engage in activities of their choosing giving them some autonomy. Autonomy is also built into TPSR with Level III: Self-directions; on-task and ability to be independent, goal, setting, courage to resist peer pressure (Hellison, 2011). Autonomy was reflected in many of the programs. At this point in time gender differences stood out to the practitioners. For instance, Angela noted that boys leaned towards team sports and girls selected more feminine activities such as dance and hula-hoop. Mr. Black also perceived that boy preferred team sport more than girls. In line with Angela was Mariah’s perception that girls loved to engage in the beginning awareness talk and reflection. Mariah stated: “Our female program has a lot less movement and activity in it because they love to talk, and they love awareness talk, they love group meetings. . . it looks like an opposite image of what our boys’ programs look like.” Sport and PA selection did not necessarily hinder one

gender form engaging in a program but is something that practitioners should be mindful of. Another part of the TPSR format that assisted practitioners with cultural relevance was the awareness talk. Reported by Will was friction between ethnic groups. Will capitalized on TPSR formatting, awareness talks, to address conflict between different ethnic groups.

Reflection time is another aspect that is built into the TPSR daily format that is also part of engaging in the cultural relevance cycle. According to Flory & McCaughtry (2011) reflection is continually happening in the cultural relevance cycle. Particularly with step three, strategies to implement to connect to the youths' community, or bridging the cultural gap between practitioner and youth. Angela who engaged in culturally relevant physical education and had utilized the cultural relevant cycle noted the connection between TPSR and the cultural relevance cycle. Mariah's connecting component of the two was reflection, it's constantly happening in both cultural relevance cycle and in TPSR. This reflective component is at the practitioner level of reflecting on their beliefs, values, and biases, and how they can create program content that reflects the needs of the youth. Additionally, reflection is encouraged among youth to look back on their engagement with the TPSR responsibility levels and how they can apply the levels outside of the physical activity setting. Practitioners reported engaging in self-reflection too. This self-reflection was used as a way for the practitioners to navigate their own ethnicity in relation to the youths' ethnicity. Mr. Black, Angela, and Mariah noted that their ethnicity impacts their privileged position in life, values, and biases or beliefs. This self-reflection serves to be an essential component being that the practitioners of this study were all Caucasian and reported serving youth that are 'diverse'.

The core values and general assumptions associated with TPSR were brought up by practitioners as assisting them in promoting culturally relevant practices. The core values of the TPSR model consists of: (a) putting kids first, (b) human decency, (c) holistic self-development, and (d) a way of being (Hellison, 2011). The core values of TPSR are also critical aspects of PYD and SBYD programming. The core value of being holistic when it comes to implementing TPSR programming was shown in the practitioners' ability to talk about the youths' community dynamics and educational process and how those two aspects of the child's life influence their program engagement. While practitioners acknowledge their understanding of the youths' background and barriers in life such as low-income, food insecurity, low school quality, violence, and other dilemmas associated with urban living, most of the practitioners did not

acknowledge the youths' struggles explicitly in their program. For example, Mariah and Julia know that some of the youth they work with come from low-income families, therefore they selected an activity that did not require any equipment. Hugo surveys his youth annually and low-income and food stability are two issues reported, but his program does not address those issues. The lack of explicitness when addressing youth's inequities may be due to PYD programs evolution over time. There was a shift in focus from deficit reduction to an asset enhancement approach. This lack of explicitly acknowledging youths' community and educational downfalls could be because TPSR takes on an assets-based approach when working with kids. Therefore, this may be impeding practitioners from engaging in the critical aspect of the CRP and the cultural relevance cycle.

Cultivating a critical or socio-political perspective is a key feature in CRP and the cultural relevant cycle. Ladson-Billings (1995) defined CRP as a critical lens that "not only addresses student achievement but also helps students to accept and affirm their cultural identity while developing critical perspectives that challenges inequalities." As previously stated TPSR practitioners take on a strength-based approach when working with youth and programming for youth. All of the programs but two listed in Table 5.1 were created with the purpose of filling a void or addressing an inequity the youth face. Three of the programs offered some content that explicitly addressed the issues that youth must overcome such as lack of career knowledge and value of education, violence in their community, and bullying and body image. Some of the practitioners noted that they did structure the program content to fit the needs of the youth. For example, the boxing program selected boxing since it does not need equipment, the rugby program occurred during the end of the school day so the youth could avoid times of heightened violence, and Angela's P.E. course incorporated activities that the youth could access in their local community. Many of the practitioners said that they did not explicitly address how the youth navigate low-income living, violence, unstable households, urban living, and low-quality education and other plights that the TPSR practitioners noted. Ethnicity was not addressed as being a concern to the practitioners. Given the current political climate this might also be a point that practitioners can be more mindful of, ethnic related inequities that youth must overcome. TPSR practitioners can be more critically and socio-politically consciousness and bring the inequities that the youth face up to the surface when engaging in reflection and awareness talks.

According to Ladson-Billings cultural relevance includes developing students academically (1995). The TPSR model is typically applied to sport, physical activity and P.E. settings where the programs promoted physical literacy and life skills rather than traditional academic development. In programs that incorporate journaling content literacy might be enhanced (Buell & Whittaker, 2001). The TPSR programs in this study did not have a specific emphasis on enhancing reading and writing mechanics, but by having the students write and read they are completing a complementary task. Only one program had a traditional academic portion where academic preparedness was a focus. In the kinesiology career club high school students were assisted with creating career paths and educational goals to obtain their desired career. Other programs did not have a focus on academics but did focus on life skill obtainment. The TPSR model focuses on life skills and allowing youth the select what life skills within the framework they want to learn and how to use their life skills outside of the sport or activity setting (Hellison, 2011). Additionally, in TPSR programming there is an awareness talk. At this point in the program youth are given the opportunity to create their own meanings of life skills. The life skills are then embedded into the program therefore offering youth an opportunity to demonstrate the skill. At the conclusion of the program youth are given the chance to reflect on their life skills and demonstrate their concept of the skill and other ways they can apply the skill. By providing youth with the opportunity to demonstrate the life skill and share their understanding of the life skill content literacy may be enhanced (Buell & Whittaker, 2001).

Lastly, an implication for TPSR practitioners to be culturally relevant is to access tools and resources on cultural relevance and inclusion of youths' gender and ethnicity. Personal experience was reported most often as the practitioners' resource. Additionally, the practitioners reported being most comfortable with addressing gender or ethnicity, but not transgender issues or sexuality. Many of the TPSR practitioners in this study claimed that they did not have specific tools or resources to refer to when trying to be culturally relevant and cultivate an inclusive environment. A specific critique was for the TPSR Alliance to create such tools and address inclusivity of gender, ethnicity, and sexuality. Adult program leaders provide opportunities for youth to experience challenge, provide youth with opportunities to develop relationships with a positive adult role model, and set the climate of the program (Larson, 2006; Holt, Neely, Slater et al. 2017; Perkins & Noam, 2006). Therefore, it is imperative for TPSR practitioners to have

access to tools and resources that assist in the programming and navigation of youths' culture especially regarding youths' gender, ethnicity, and sexuality.

## **Methodology**

The researcher has three implications for methodology in reference to the current study. The first implication for methodology refers to the interview protocol, particularly the way questions were worded. The TPSR practitioners were asked "What is it about the TPSR model that aids you in creating a culturally inclusive program?" This question maybe leading assuming the practitioner believes that the TPSR model aids in creating a culturally inclusive program. Therefore, it is important for the interviewer to be able to rephrase a question and ensure interview questions are not misleading. During the interviews practitioners also had a hard time focusing on culture as it relates to gender and ethnicity. Specifically, ethnicity was hard to tease out. Many of the practitioners spoke about race rather than of ethnicity. There is a need for more research to be conducted that is mindful of ethnic populations and sub-populations (Thul, LaVoi, and Wasend, 2018).

The second methodological implication is related to the diversity of TPSR practitioners. While the inclusion criteria of this study were TPSR practitioners that have been practicing the model for three or more years and work with youth, many of the practitioners identify as white or Caucasian and work with youth that are ethnically diverse. Due to the nature of this study, exploring the extent to which TPSR practitioners employ cultural relevance their ethnic background and position in life may put them in a place of power and impact their true awareness and understanding of the youth. As found by Allison and Hibbler the local community and families in the recreation centers want staff to reflect the diversity of the community (2010). The researcher would be mindful to include more ethnic diverse TPSR practitioners in the interviews.

The last implication for methodology involves the collection of more archival information about each TPSR program. While the interviews were able to obtain the practitioners thoughts and opinions about their program the interviews were not able to obtain specific wording, marketing, materials used regarding each TPSR program. The way their program is marketed and explained to others may not sound as culturally relevant or use culturally relevant terminology as the partitioner thinks. By including archival information, the researcher can see what the mission visions and values are of the program as marketed or written down.

## **Conclusion**

In conclusion, TPSR does promote aspects of the cultural relevance cycle, but not CRP entirely. CRP is also a strengths-based oriented ideology that promotes the teaching to and through youths' culture and reaffirms their cultural values. However, due to the current climate of political tensions across race, ethnicity, gender, and sexuality, self-reflection and tools and resources for navigating these complex social structures is needed. Furthermore, considering not only the youths' present community dynamics and educational processes as well as the historical component of the community is worth exploring. Culture is more than the present moment of where youth are in society, the history of the youths' family, geographical location, and traditions must also be considered.

## **Recommendations for Future Research**

At the conclusion of this study, there were more questions to research and "answer". The researcher proposes the following recommendations:

1. An expanded study to include more TPSR practitioners particularly those that do not identify as Caucasian.
2. An expanded study that includes the youths' perception of the practitioners' culturally relevant practices and specific components about the program that makes the youth perceive the program as culturally relevant or not. This study could be conducted by interviewing youth participants of TPSR programs.
3. To address causality issues related to the impact of engaging in a values-based program, a comparison study could be conducted that includes both TPSR practitioners and non-TPSR SBYD practitioners. This would further identify if TPSR promotes culturally relevant pedagogies.
4. The current study looked at gender and ethnicity informing culture. Utilizing a broader definition of culture such as the inclusion of history, traditions, language, religion, geographical location, and socio-economic status should be considered.
5. A study to determine if TPSR format can enhance youths' general academic literacy.

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## APPENDIX A: RECRUITMENT SCRIPT

Hi, this is Brittany Pinkerton from University of North Carolina at Greensboro a current TPSR practitioner and advisee to Dr. Tom Martinek, that assists with the program(s) Project Effort and Youth Leader Corp at UNCG. As a PhD candidate that is interested in cultural relevance and inclusive physical activity programs that utilize the TPSR model, I am reaching out to you to see if you would like to participate in a virtual interview about your TPSR modeled program. Your participation in this study would include filling out a virtual consent form, filling out a basic demographic questionnaire, and engaging in a semi-structured virtual interview with me that will be recorded. The semi-structured interview is estimated to last 30-60 minutes. In order to participate in this study, you will have to have at least 2 years of TPSR programming experience and preferably work with youth (ages 5-17). If you are interested in being a participant, please respond to this email to receive a virtual consent form and set up a time and date to be interviewed.

Thank you for your time and consideration,  
Brittany Pinkerton.

## APPENDIX B: VIRTUAL CONSENT

### UNIVERSITY OF NORTH CAROLINA AT GREENSBORO

#### Consent to participate in research

Project Title: TPSR Practitioners Perspectives on Cultural Relevance in Sports Based Youth Development Programs

Principal Investigator (PI) and Faculty Advisor: PI Brittany Pinkerton & Faculty Advisor: Dr. Tom Martinek

Participant's Name: \_\_\_\_\_

#### **What are some general things you should know about research studies?**

You are being asked to take part in a research study. Your participation in the study is voluntary. You may choose not to join, or you may withdraw your consent to be in the study, for any reason, without penalty.

Research studies are designed to obtain new knowledge. This new information may help people in the future. There may not be any direct benefit to you for being in the research study. There also may be risks to being in research studies. If you choose not to be in the study or leave the study before it is done, it will not affect your relationship with the researcher or the University of North Carolina at Greensboro.

Details about this study are discussed in this consent form. It is important that you understand this information so that you can make an informed choice about being in this research study.

You will be given a copy of this consent form. If you have any questions about this study at any time, you should ask the researchers named in this consent form. Their contact information is below.

Brittany Pinkerton [bbhollan@uncg.edu](mailto:bbhollan@uncg.edu)

Tom Martinek [tjmartin@uncg.edu](mailto:tjmartin@uncg.edu)

**What is the study about?**

This is a research project. Your participation is voluntary. This study intends to gain insight about if the Teaching Personal and Social Responsibility model (TPSR) practitioners incorporate cultural relevance into their sport and physical activity programs. What methods TPSR practitioners use to incorporate cultural relevance, and what challenges they face when providing an inclusive activity program. The PI intends to conduct semi-structured interviews via online virtual meeting platform Zoom.

**Why are you asking me?**

The reason you are being selected to participate in this study is because either you are a member of the TPSR Alliance or the Youth Leader Corp (YLC). If you are a TPSR practitioner then you must have at least three years of experience implementing TPSR modeled sport or physical activity programs for youth. If you are a YLC leader then you must have participated in YLC for at least two years to ensure you had opportunities to lead physical activity stations. Your experience utilizing the TPSR model will ensure that you've had plenty of time to practice the TPSR values and to tailor your program and fully understand the TPSR responsibility levels.

**What will you ask me to do if I agree to be in the study?**

You are being asked to engage in a virtual individual interview with the PI. The PI will follow-up with you via email to schedule a time and date for the interview. Once a time and date are selected the PI will send you a Zoom invite that is passcode protected to meet with the PI virtually. The interview is expected to take 45-60 minutes. The PI will record the interview in order to transcribe the conversation. The PI will follow-up with via email one week after the interview with a transcription of the interview for you to check your responses and add any information you feel may be missing.

**Is there any audio/video recording?**

Being that the main data source of this study is the individual interview the PI will be audio/video recording the interviews. If you choose to engage in a Zoom or FaceTime interview your image maybe seen while collecting data and may identify you. Because your voice will be potentially identifiable by anyone who hears the recording, your confidentiality cannot be

guaranteed although the researcher will try to limit access to the recording as described below. The researcher will store the audio/video file in UNCGBox a username passcode protected storage system. The researcher will also be in a quiet room alone to make sure no one else can hear or see you when conducting the interview and when the PI is transcribing the information.

### **What are the risks to me?**

The Institutional Review Board at the University of North Carolina at Greensboro has determined that participation in this study poses minimal risk to participants. The minimal risks of this study include potential identification as indicated above due to the recording of you voice and possibly image depending on interview method choice (FaceTime, Zoom, or phone call). To minimize this risk the PI will conduct the interviews in a private room without others around, and will transcribe interviews with headphones so now one else can hear you voice.

If you have questions, want more information or have suggestions, please contact PI Brittany Pinkerton at [bbhollan@uncg.edu](mailto:bbhollan@uncg.edu) or Tom Martinek at [tjmartin@uncg.edu](mailto:tjmartin@uncg.edu)

If you have any concerns about your rights, how you are being treated, concerns or complaints about this project or benefits or risks associated with being in this study please contact the Office of Research Integrity at UNCG toll-free at (855)-251-2351.

### **Are there any benefits to society as a result of me taking part in this research?**

The research being conducted intends to gain insights that may benefit sports-based youth development practitioners and TPSR practitioners as well as the youth they serve.

### **Are there any benefits to *me* for taking part in this research study?**

There are no direct benefits to participants in this study.

### **Will I get paid for being in the study? Will it cost me anything?**

There are no costs to you or payments made for participating in this study.

**How will you keep my information confidential?**

All information obtained in this study is strictly confidential unless disclosure is required by law. The video/audio recording and transcriptions will be stored in UNCGBox, a username and password protected online storage system. The transcriptions will be conducted by the PI in a private room. You will be able to select a pseudonym for data dissemination. The data will be kept for 5 years after the conclusion of the study data collection per UNCG data storage policy. The estimated conclusion of the study will be February 2021 therefore the data will be stored until February 2026 and deleted at that time.

**For Internet Research, include this wording:** Absolute confidentiality of data provided through the Internet cannot be guaranteed due to the limited protections of Internet access. Please be sure to close your browser when finished so no one will be able to see what you have been doing.

**Will my de-identified data be used in future studies?**

De-identified data will not be stored and will not be used in future research projects.

**What if I want to leave the study?**

You have the right to refuse to participate or to withdraw at any time, without penalty. If you do withdraw, it will not affect you in any way. If you choose to withdraw, you may request that any of your data which has been collected be destroyed unless it is in a de-identifiable state. The investigators also have the right to stop your participation at any time. This could be because you have had an unexpected reaction, or have failed to follow instructions, or because the entire study has been stopped.

**What about new information/changes in the study?**

If significant new information relating to the study becomes available which may relate to your willingness to continue to participate, this information will be provided to you.

**Voluntary Consent by Participant:**

By “Yes, I would like to participate”, you are submitting this consent survey, you are agreeing

that you read, or it has been read to you, and you fully understand the contents of this document and are openly willing consent to take part in this study. All of your questions concerning this study have been answered. Clicking “Yes, I would like to participate”, you are agreeing that you are 18 years of age or older and are agreeing to participate, in this study described to you by Brittany Pinkerton.

☐ Yes, I would like to participate    ☐ No, I do not want to participate

## APPENDIX C: DEMOGRAPHIC QUESTIONNAIRE

- 1) What is your race and Ethnicity?
- 2) What is your gender?
- 3) What is your current role and affiliation?
- 4) How would you describe your sport/physical activity background?
- 5) How long have you been practicing the TPSR model?
- 6) How/who did you learn the TPSR model from?
- 7) Name of program(s) you have hosted/ran that utilizes the TPSR model.
  - a. Can you please list publications, website etc. about your TPSR program?
  - b. Who is the program(s) targeted audience?
  - c. Where do these program(s) take place?

## APPENDIX D: SEMI-STRUCTURED INDIVIDUAL INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

- 1) What are some of the systematic and structural inequalities or policies that the youth you serve face?
  - a. How do you address these inequalities into your program?
  - b. How do you relay these inequalities to the youth you serve?
- 2) How do you get to know each child individually?
  - a. Can you name an example of a time you did this, how you did this, and how it informed your program?
- 3) How do you get to know and understand the youths' community dynamics and personal life influences on their program involvement?
  - a. How does the child's community and educational processes influence their engagement in your activity program?
  - b. How do you use that information to educate youth academically/physically in your program?
- 4) How do males and females respond to the TPSR programs you provide?
  - a. Do you offer TPSR programs geared towards a single gender? If so why or why not?
- 5) What is it about the TPSR model that helps include all genders or what makes it exclude genders?
- 6) How would you describe the ethnicity of the youth you serve?
  - a. How does ethnicity impact youths' learning experiences of a TPSR modeled program?
- 7) What is it about the TPSR model that helps be inclusive or exclusive to various ethnicities?
- 8) What about sexuality? Is sexuality brought up in your program i.e., are derogatory or homophobic remarks addressed as racial slurs and trash talk are?
- 9) What are some tools or resources you have accessible to address gender, ethnicity and sexuality in your program?
  - a. What is your comfort level handling youth of varying genders, ethnicities, and sexualities?

- 10) What methods or approaches do you use in your program to provide culturally relevant programming for all genders and ethnicities?
  - a. Can you provide specific examples of what you did to provide programming geared towards youths' gender and race/ethnicity?
- 11) What is it about the TPSR model that aids you in creating a culturally inclusive program?
  - a. Is it the TPSR layout, model, responsibility levels, or core values that assists you most in creating an inclusive environment?
- 12) What are some of the challenges that you face when being culturally relevant and inclusive to all genders and ethnicities?
- 13) In the future how do you plan to culturally relevant pedagogies and practices with your programming pertaining to culture, gender and ethnicity?
- 14) What program(s) have you been involved with and currently are involved with?
  - a. Tell me more about the program.
- 15) What is the mission/visions/values of the program(s)?
  - a. Are there any publications or resources that shares more information about the program(s)?