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Programs in youth development continue to emerge as promising avenues to address challenges young people encounter throughout their daily lives. Each year, several students from UNCG's Middle College are selected to facilitate activities in the Youth Leadership Corps (YLC) program using Don Hellison's Teaching Personal and Social Responsibility Model (TPSR). YLC is an out-of-school youth development program for high school students that provides developmental, physical activities to local elementary school youth. Among physical activity curricular models used in the youth development field, the TPSR model has been commonly used with youth in underserved areas (Hellison, 2011).

Research has shown that TPSR programs have a positive impact on the lives of former youth leaders. The purpose of this study is to investigate how core TPSR values acquired through the YLC program have influenced how former youth leaders address issues of race and culture in their lives. Semi-structured interviews with three YLC staff members were also included in the study.

Data indicated that the core values and strategies taught in YLC helped influence how former youth leaders address issues of race and culture through internalizing self-awareness through the TPSR values, influences and expectations that impact their character and identity. The finding showed that former youth leaders learned that bridging cultural gaps, building supportive relationships, and empowerment through

patience and maturity with diverse populations through the core values and strategies taught in YLC affected their present-day life.

EXPLORING INTERSECTIONS OF YOUTH DEVELOPMENT USING HELLISON'S
TEACHING PERSONAL AND SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY MODEL
AND CRITICAL RACE THEORY

by

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

“For years sports have occupied a privileged place in our American culture. Their impact spans all ages, social classes, religions, races, and genders” (Martinek & Hellison, 2016a, p. 180). Using the right strategy in sports programs can teach children personal and social responsibility through experiences that potentially impact their lives during and after school. In recent years, there has been a renewed interest in working with underserved youth. A common priority in such programming is fostering responsibility and change for underserved populations as a pathway for creating healthy communities socially and culturally. The first programs that focused on a values-based approach to youth development by investing in the lives of young men were established in an out-of-school environment.

Many out-of-school programs use sport and physical activity to assist youth in learning to take responsibility. Since the contributory role has influenced sport and physical activity in youth development programming, a model that is based on teaching values to implement sport and fitness, life-skills, and more personal and social responsibility should be implemented in order to achieve positive and successful outcomes among youth.

For years sports and recreation professionals have overemphasized shortcomings of youth instead of working to foster their strengths, which inhibit their growth in youth

development (Coakley, 2002). The shift from a deficit model to a more responsibility-based application of sport and physical activity became evident during the later years of the twentieth century (Martinek & Hellison, 2016a). One reason for this shift was that the deficit model did not support the principles of the youth development field. In contrast, an asset-based model relies on the idea that the best way to approach youth is to build on their strengths and also be inclusive of a variety of groups (Benson, 1997; Hamilton & Hamilton, 2004; Hellison, 2011; Hellison et al., 2000; Martinek & Hellison, 2009).

Among physical activity curricular models used in the youth development field, the teaching personal and social responsibility (TPSR) model has been widely incorporated in many underserved youth communities as well as school physical education programs around the United States and the world (Hellison, 2011). There is an urgent need to implement programs to build young leaders by teaching them personal and social responsibility to enable them to succeed from childhood into adulthood. The grounded work of Hellison's TPSR model guides practitioners and facilitators in using physical activity to help kids take more responsibility for their well-being and be more sensitive and responsive to the well-being of others (Martinek & Hellison, 2016b).

Since the 1990s, the model has been used to assist in behavioral modification for delinquency prone youth. The 2000s brought a shift in implementation geared towards more physical education programs in schools and programs in extracurricular activities outside of school. In these programs, facilitators who implemented the elements of the TPSR model correctly (daily lesson plans, awareness talks, student/teacher assessments, group meetings, and self-reflection time) saw an increase among participants in self-

control, achievements, respect for others and their opinions, participation, and effort. Five levels of responsibility are the centerpieces of the TPSR model: (a) Respect, (b) Effort, (c) Self-direction, (d) Helping others, and (e) Transfer. By embedding the levels of responsibility ideas and strategies into physical activity programs, it gives the program leader and the participants a progressive framework of specific goals to work towards (Tannehill, Van der Mars, & MacPhail, 2013). Studies on the TPSR model have evolved in how the framework has helped to shape young people in the United States and other countries (Cryan, 2013; DeBusk & Hellison, 1989; Melendez, 2011; Walsh, Ozaeta, & Wright, 2010; Wright, 2009). A study by Wright (2012) showed these youth outcomes through a high school wellness program. Schilling's (2001) study highlights the outcomes through an extended day physical activity program. There were also studies that reported an increase in high levels of personal and social responsibility which are associated with high levels of intrinsic motivation in physical education (Hellison & Martinek, 2006; Hellison & Walsh, 2002) as well as intermediate academic results directly related to responsibility, such as attendance, delays, and conduct in class (Wright & Burton, 2008).

Studies have also emerged that look at youth who are now facilitators (i.e., youth leaders) using the TPSR model. Through Walsh's (2008) study, high school student leaders become aware of the components of the TPSR model, its purpose, and outcomes from positive behavior, mentoring, achievement, and future expectations and leadership. This same strategy is employed through club sports such as "Career Coaching," and contributes to the ultimate goal of transfer of knowledge as past participants are now facilitating the model to younger generations (Walsh, 2008). Transfer of knowledge is

defined as maintaining positive behaviors learned to daily life after leaving the program. Understanding the degree of transfer obtained and is vital to studies looking at fidelity of the TPSR model.

Other researchers have also studied out-of-school values-based TPSR youth leadership programs and have shown that young leaders gained confidence in the stance of their futures, improved social skills, increased ability to help others, acquired skills to solve conflicts, increased motivation to continue learning and their training, and acquired improved experience to teach and apply TPSR values (Cutforth & Puckett, 1999; Intrator & Siegel, 2008; Martinek, Schilling, & Hellison, 2006; Martinek, Schilling, & Johnson, 2001; Schilling, Martinek, & Carson, 2007b; Walsh, 2008).

Presently, many of these youth development programs work with a diverse group of children in terms of their socioeconomic status, gender, race, religion, appearance, and ethnicity (Fraser-Thomas, Côté, & Deakin, 2005; Russell & Van Campen, 2011). Such diversity is especially prevalent in programs serving inner-city youth. Hellison and Cutforth (1997) emphasized youth leadership programming, particularly programs that serve inner-city and underserved youth, and how they play a vital role in facilitating healthy development of diverse at-risk youth. This is important now because all cultures around the world are experiencing institutionalization, such as government housing and food stamps, which are leading programs to become inaccessible.

Highlighting culturally relevant pedagogies potentially provides a pathway for increased effectiveness when working with youngsters from diverse backgrounds (Delgado & Stefancic, 2017). Though TPSR and its core values and strategies do not

explicitly name culturally relevant pedagogical practices, they do contain elements that can be drawn upon to highlight a shift in this direction. By understanding how participation in TPSR programming has impacted former participants' navigation of race and identity in their daily lives, it may be possible to highlight certain practices as culturally relevant in nature. The TPSR model's values-based curriculum through sports and physical activity empowers participants to examine their values, beliefs, customs, and behaviors which have been shaped by society. Core values in TPSR include (a) putting kids first and being youth-centered to become better people, (b) promoting human decency and positive relationships with others, (c) holistic self-development where physical development must take place "side by side" with emotional, social, and cognitive development, (d) a way of being meaning who we are, the values that we live as we work with kids, and the values we hope they seriously consider as guidelines for their lives (Hellison, 2011). Within the levels of responsibility previously stated (respect, effort, helping others, self-direction, and transfer), transfer is the most relevant to this study.

Youth leadership programs such as Project Effort at the University of North Carolina at Greensboro (UNCG), where youth leaders teach the core values to others, have embraced the spirit of the TPSR model by teaching others personal and social responsibility and life-skills. Initially, Project Effort was developed as part of a three-tier program (sports clubs, mentoring, and Youth Leadership Corps) to encourage students from elementary through high school settings labeled at-risk due to behavioral problems and failing grades, to grow into healthy and knowledgeable adults in society (Martinek,

McLaughlin, & Schilling, 1999). The sports clubs primary focus is teaching participants to take more responsibility for themselves and for others by learning personal and social responsibility skills. The mentoring program is focused on goal setting to redirection poor academic performance and social behaviors to help youth participants transfer learned core values and goals from the sports club into their everyday life in school, homes, and their communities (Martinek & Ruiz, 2005). The YLC program is an outgrowth of Project Effort which former participants who initially were in elementary school are now high school youth leaders. The YLC program is located on the campus of UNCG and provides an opportunity for middle college students to become leaders by planning, organizing, implementing, and coordinating physical activities through sports using the TPSR model with local program children. This component of cross-age teaching provides youth development programs, leadership opportunities to empower veteran youth participants (Cutforth & Puckett, 1999; Martinek & Hellison, 2009; Schilling, 2001). This approach also enables both youth leaders and participants to examine their values, beliefs, customs, and behaviors which have been shaped by society.

Programs in youth leadership development continue to emerge as promising avenues to address challenges young people encounter throughout their daily lives. Each year, several students from the University of North Carolina at Greensboro's (UNCG) Middle College are selected to facilitate activities in the Youth Leadership Corps (YLC) program using Hellison's TPSR model. The YLC is an out-of-school youth development program for high school students that provides developmental physical activities to local program children. Being selected as a youth leader for the YLC program is an honor and

involves a weekly commitment of at least one day per week during the academic school year.

Over the past five years, YLC program coordinators have selected youth leaders of varying racial and cultural backgrounds to implement the TPSR model with program children from underserved areas. The two immigrant underserved populations that YLC leaders teach the TPSR core values and levels of responsibility are mostly from Africa and Asia. Most of the children from these populations have come to the United States as refugees and live in the most poverty-stricken areas in Greensboro, North Carolina. The youth leaders of YLC are also of varying races and ethnicities and share some of the cultural aspects as the participants. YLC members who share the same racial and cultural identity as the participants also share the same language, cultural wealth, and restrictions (e.g., head wraps, clothing, eating certain foods) compared to participants from the United States. These shared cultural differences can be leveraged as assets as YLC leaders build connections with the elementary school participants. These connections potentially enhance leadership, relationships, problem-solving, and teambuilding among YLC leaders to build interdependent relationships with one another when they encounter differences and barriers in achieving program goals among the youth they serve.

While research has shown that TPSR programs have a positive impact on the lives of the participants, little research has been done on how core TPSR values and levels of responsibility have influenced how former youth leaders navigate social and cultural challenges related to race and identity in their lives. Understanding these residual effects is the focus of this study.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this descriptive study is to investigate how aspects of culturally relevant pedagogy are present in the experiences of former YLC leaders as they implemented the TPSR model and core values. Through a series of interviews and observations, the aim is to identify moments when culturally relevant practices can be named and hopefully drawn out in more explicit ways in future iterations of programming through the responses of the former YLC leaders. While valuable, the TPSR model is presented and described in largely race-neutral ways. As such, this research will seek to explore a critical race theory approach to TPSR that youth development using race as an intellectual focal point (Kochanek & Erickson, 2019). By determining how the TPSR model might influence thinking about issues related to race, power, and privilege youth leaders may be able to address racism in their own lives and the lives of participants more effectively.

Exploring the connection between teaching TPSR core values and strategies, and the ways they may have influenced former participants' understanding of the intersections of race and identity will be guided by the following questions:

1. In what ways were the core values and strategies in the YLC program implemented?
2. How have the core values and strategies that have been taught in the YLC program affected the former YLC leaders' understanding of racial and cultural identity?

3. In what ways has the YLC experience and the TPSR core values affected how YLC leaders deal with social and racial issues in their lives?

Limitations

The limitations of this study are described in this section. The participants will be selected by purposeful sampling from a group who were previously active in a values-based after-school youth leadership program for at least one year. The sample size renders results ungeneralizable; however, the study has the potential to be replicated to include more participants in the future.

Another limitation of this study is the researcher's role. The researcher has worked at the University of North Carolina at Greensboro's (UNCG) Middle College for two years and has volunteered for the after-school youth leadership program, YLC, for at least one year. However, the researcher has neither taught nor developed a close relationship with the previous student participants in the study.

Assumptions

1. During the interview process, it is assumed that the participants in the study will understand the questions and elaborate on their responses.
2. It is assumed the participants will answer truthfully with their responses.
3. During data collection, it is assumed that the researcher will obtain meaningful and detailed information towards the study.

Definition of Terms

Cultural competency—to be respectful and responsive towards beliefs and practices of other diverse populations.

Discrimination—unjust treatment, inequality, or biases of a particular category of people mostly based on race, gender, religion, or culture.

Diversity—complex similarities and differences in one’s identity, choices, values, and perspectives among individuals who make up the wider community such as race, ethnicity, social-economic status, religion, etc.

Race—a class or kind of people unified by shared interests, habits, or characteristics (Webster, 2018).

Racism—the belief in the superiority and right to dominate over all other races or ethnic groups.

Teaching Personal and Social Responsibility (TPSR)—A values-based curriculum model that uses physical education activities as a vehicle for helping children and youth to become more personally and socially responsible for themselves and others (Hellison, 2011).

Youth Leadership Corps (YLC)—An after-school youth leadership program that provides middle college high school students a cross-age teaching opportunity.

Significance of Study

The study will extend previous work documenting the impact of the TPSR model by providing an understanding of how transfer of TPSR core values and levels of responsibility guided former youth leaders understanding of race and identity in their daily lives. The contribution of this study will provide insight around the concept of cultural relevant pedagogy for practitioners and adults working with youth. This contribution is significant as this type of initiatives potentially prepares young people to

become future leaders in their communities as they face challenges along their path to achieving their full potential. For example, “many of these programs have been started in order to provide some scaffolding for certain students who struggle socially, emotionally, and academically” (Martinek & Hellison, 2016a, pp. 182–183). Including a culturally relevant lens to understanding programming will only enhance such scaffolding.

CHAPTER II

LITERATURE REVIEW

The purpose of this review of literature is to investigate how the levels of responsibility (respect, self-direction, effort, helping/caring for others, transfer) and core values in Teaching Personal and Social Responsibility (TPSR), are acquired in the YLC program, may influence how former participants address issues of race and identity in their daily lives. The review of literature is categorized into five main sections. The first section, Positive Youth Development, provides a historical context for the field of sports and youth development. The second section Sports Based Youth Development Programs, describes sport and physical youth models and how curriculum development and interactions impact youth. The third section, Youth Leader Corps (YLC) centralizes on program and research related to that program. The fourth section, Culturally Relevant and Sustaining Pedagogy in Educational Settings, describes working with youth in educational spaces. The final section, Transfer, reflects how racial and cultural identity describes the theoretical framework for this study, which focuses on the experiences of former YLC leaders who implement the values-based model to address racial and identity in their own lives.

Positive Youth Development

Youth organizations were started as a response to a variety of political, social, and historical events. Historically, there were efforts toward controlling youth behavior with

an emphasis on prevention and as an alternative to the criminal justice system (Holt, 2016). Early prevention programs were created to address character building and leadership, literacy, family, and life-skills. More recently programming has evolved to include enrichment experiences, supplementing learning both inside and outside of formal school spaces. As current trends move toward an asset-based approach, we use several models to equip young people for success from adolescence to adulthood.

Around Industrialization (mid-1800s to 1900s) when machines were transitioning from hand production to power tools, young people were leaving small towns to migrate to big cities. Young men who moved to these urban areas were introduced to immigrants, people speaking in different languages, and adjusting outside of small-town living. Therefore, religious organizations such as the YMCA (that was started in London) would teach young people the importance of their basic physical, developmental, and social needs (YMCA, 2017).

Until the 1800s, children were viewed as smaller adults who had no strict guidance from their families. Popple and Vecchiolla's (2007) book on child welfare discusses the history of youth development and of how some children without care and supervision tended to roam the streets begging, stealing, and engaging in destructive behaviors. Previously, there had been little concern about the welfare of children roaming the streets, especially those who were free from parental supervision. Socially, adults began to respond to children who were orphaned by placing them under adult supervision through an apprenticeship or poorhouse. Some children were sent to America. Others,

who were orphaned due to their parents being pioneers through a hardship lifestyle, entered an indentured system or an apprenticeship.

Mather, Lager, and Harris (2007) describe the child welfare policies and systems through an indentured system where children were obligated to give their master obedience and labor. This was expected to pay for their livelihood and training by the time they reached maturity and the end of their indenture. The term indentured means placed under contract with a citizen of the town who agrees to maintain the child and teach him or her a trade or other gainful occupation in return for the profit from the child's labor. Indentured children were more fortunate than almshouses children because they were protected against some forms of cruelty. For example, the indentured children were able to live and care for a family in a smaller environment, and then able to return to their family after their term of servitude.

In contrast, children in almshouses were under the management of a superintendent and "owned" by the federal government since most of these children were orphans. Government commissioners made decisions about whether or not a child could return to their parents or friends if they were in almshouses due to being abandoned. In situations when parents returned, this led to children being taken out of school and participating in criminal activities. Parents would use their children in destructive behaviors and compromise their morals and welfare.

In an apprenticeship, orphans were placed in poorhouses or almshouses where the children grew up with people who were often elderly, sick, alcoholic, insane, or with mental disabilities. Unfortunately, people in the community usually would turn a blind

eye when they witnessed the abuse of a child. As concerns grew about the placements of children in these environments, orphanages were formed in the 1800s. They remained the primary child welfare institution until the 1940s.

During the 19th century, the indentured system declined, and apprenticeships began to decline for some children but not for needy children. Board (2017) described how male overseers were required to provide children with more schooling than they had received. This led to a shift in service by providing more steady homes for youth. Children who were orphaned and needy became part of the Children's Aid Home Society, whose focus was on helping youth by transporting them to other areas of the country through orphan trains to live with farm families. The orphan train system was problematic since youth needed necessities such as food, shelter, clothing, formal education, sports and recreational play (Board, 2017). This also led to resentment from the needy families because the government took and dumped their children so far away.

By the turn of the twentieth century, juvenile crime had increased due to a lack of parental discipline since there were more orphans on the streets. Boys began to roam the streets and needed to be held responsible for their destructive behavior. Children were seen as miniature adults, tried in court, and held the same accountability for their crimes as adults. Imprisoned children who were housed with adults, learned adult criminal behavior until the outcry of lawmakers and political officials to separate children from adults, lead to a separation in the court system. Therefore, juvenile courts started to discipline youth separately from adults. The movement then shifted to interventions in trying to discipline youth in this manner instead of incarcerating them.

In the 1950s youth development focused on growing good kids, but the climate changed with the Vietnam war. Americans became concerned about increases in juvenile delinquency during the 1950s post World War II and attempted early interventions to focus on crisis management, targeting the immediate problems of runaways, dropouts, teenage parents, and delinquents (U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, 2007). Social justice and civil rights issues began to emerge in the 1960s and 1970s. Young people were participating in more destructive behaviors such as teen pregnancy, drinking, and smoking. Society and government officials recognized the need for prevention programs due to these destructive behaviors although more intervention programs were being implemented.

As the field of youth development evolved, youth practitioners began to focus on prevention programs to counter problem behaviors before they surfaced. In the middle of the twentieth century, people began to recognize that youth needed support in their transition into adulthood. Prevention programs became the primary focus during the 1970s. Additionally, building on young people's strengths instead of trying to "fix" negative behaviors such as drug abuse, smoking, truancy, and teen pregnancy became more typical (Holt, 2016). The language used in programs also changed, transitioning from negative to positive connotations to more responsibility and asset-based to assist youth. Youth development practitioners and researchers emphasize that effective programs and interventions strengthen and seek to promote positive development rather than addressing negative risk factors in isolation (Konopka Institute, 2000). The development process supports the ability of young people to (a) analyze their strengths

and weaknesses, (b) set personal and vocational goals, (c) establish support networks to participate in community life fully and affect positive social change (Wehmeyer, Agran, & Hughes, 1998).

Many of the out-of-school programs used sport and physical activities to assist youth in learning to take responsibility for their actions. Out of school programming includes structured activities for groups of students, is overseen by an adult, expects regular attendance, and is provided in a physical location, such as a school or community-based facility (Bodilly & Beckett, 2005). The shift from an asset-based model to a more responsibility-based application of sport and physical activity became evident in the later years of the twentieth century (Holt, 2016). However, for years sports and recreation professionals have overemphasized shortcomings of youth instead of working to foster their strengths, which inhibit their growth in youth development.

Imagine an environment that is fun, engaging, and challenging, but also one that has clear rules, requires personal responsibility, and demands that participants show respect for themselves and others (Hellison, 2011). Adults who work with youth, are viewed as leaders and mentors among young people and their community. Their influence in teaching and guiding young people on the importance of their actions and consequences is vital to young people's development as responsible and caring citizens. Youth who attend out-of-school programs are usually labeled as at-risk or underserved youth who lack adequate services or facilities, and who are rarely provided the direction and tools needed for their personal development. As the positive youth development movement has gained traction within the youth sports context, researchers have

developed a range of useful strategies and models that are situated within PYD (Witt & Caldwell, 2018).

Teaching Personal and Social Responsibility (TPSR)

Don Hellison's youth development model, Teaching Personal and Social Responsibility (TPSR), promotes self and social responsibility by empowering students to take more accountability for their actions and teaching them to be concerned about the rights, feelings, and needs of others (Hodge, Lieberman, & Murata, 2017). Although there are other physical activity curricular models, TPSR is the most frequently implemented model across the United States and is widely known as a best-practice developmental and value-based model that addresses the needs of youth (Watson & Clocksin, 2013). The model is mostly used in afterschool and out-of-school programs, physical education activities in schools, and some alternative school systems to promote accountability, participation, and personal development in youth. By assisting in the development of young people as early as possible, youth will be equipped to live a healthy and productive lifestyle.

TPSR Responsibility Levels

Participants of the TPSR model learn to develop personal and social responsibility by understanding and valuing each other through the five levels of the program (Hellison, 2011). The TPSR youth development model reinforces the importance of teaching personal and social responsibility during childhood to empower, enforce, and affirm positive communication, values, and behavior throughout adulthood. In Level I (respect the rights and feelings of others), youth are encouraged to control their attitude, language,

and behavior toward others. In Level II (effort and cooperation), youth are encouraged to get along with others, improve physically in activities and life. Level III (self-direction) enables youth to take on more responsibility for their well-being and gives them opportunities for goal setting, problem-solving and decision-making. In Level IV (helping and caring for others), youth learn to empathize and to assist their peers while considering the well-being of others. Level V (transfer outside the gym) involves taking their new-found knowledge and transferring what they have learned outside of the gymnasium and using it towards everyday life. The transfer of values and leadership development in youth is most prevalent through the stages of youth leadership.

Hellison's daily program format sets TPSR into practice by conducting (a) awareness talks to formally open the session and ensure participants understand the true purpose of the program (i.e., taking responsibility), (b) physical activities planned that make TPSR come alive by embedding physical activity content and displays of behavior, (c) a group meeting at the end of the activity to allow youth to express their opinions about the activities and process how to make improvements in their behavior, and (d) self-reflection time to close the session so students can evaluate how personally and socially responsible they were that day (Hellison, 2011). The development process supports the ability for young people to (a) analyze their interpersonal strengths and weaknesses, (b) set personal and vocational goals, (c) establish support networks to participate in community life fully and effect positive social change (Wehmeyer et al., 1998).

Youth Leadership Models

Several youth leadership models have explicitly focused on leadership development in youths. One model focuses on leadership development more generally (Van Linden & Fertman, 1998) while the other models (Intrator & Siegel, 2008; Martinek & Hellison, 2016a) focus on youth leadership development in a physical activity context.

Van Linden and Fertman (1998) discuss that youth leadership is a process that is continuous and involves three stages; awareness, interaction, and mastery. The awareness stage assists youth in realizing they can lead and have leadership capabilities. Most young people do not think of themselves as leaders and feel that telling others what to do is an example of leadership. During the interaction stage, youth learn how to listen and communicate with others, refine their interaction, and view themselves as leaders. As they continue to refine listening and communicating skills (e.g., public speaking, and moderating), they enter the mastery stage where they have a much better understanding of what leadership involves.

Authors Intrator and Siegel (2008) designed a sports-themed after-school program to teach older youth to be sports coaches and organize a program with elementary school children in their community. Located in Springfield, Massachusetts, Project Coach utilized coaching as the means for youth to connect through sports by teaching and practicing essential achievement skills, behaviors, and attitudes that are linked with high achievement and success such as communication, conflict resolution, and leadership capacities (Intrator & Siegel, 2008, 2010). The authors focused on trends that were emerging in out-of-school programs that evolved from perspectives gained from years of

interviews, observations, and learned lessons from other successful sports-based programs. Intrator and Siegel implemented strategies by instilling learning, teaching, responsibility, and socialization by engaging in sports activities that would also increase academic achievement and youth development.

Project Lead located in northwestern Denver provides an opportunity for middle school participants to become youth leaders for participants in the fourth and fifth grade. The research on Project Lead indicated that youth leaders experienced positive outcomes including meaningful contribution, reflections on problem-solving and strategies to challenges, connectedness with adult role models, and aspirations of educational goals (Cutforth, 2000; Talbert, 2015).

Cutforth and Puckett's (1999) study on the Apprentice Teacher Program involved a group of urban youngsters who taught basketball as a way to teach the values of TPSR to young children who attended the summer sports camp. The program captured the interests and talents of young people who had been characterized as behavior problems, poor attendees, and low achievers in school. At the end of their eighth-grade year, the director of the program decided to create a 5-week summer program where the high schools would be responsible for teaching basketball to eight and nine-year-old children from a local housing development, located in South Side Chicago. The Apprentice Teacher Program was an extension of the Coaching Club, where they learned to interact with one another while learning to resolve conflicts and evaluate their behavior and attitudes (Cutforth & Puckett, 1999). "While the Coaching Club emphasized taking responsibility for oneself, the Apprentice Teacher Program extended that responsibility to

teach others in the program” (Wilkinson, 2010, p. 47). Research showed that experience improved their self-confidence, concern for others, intrapersonal and interpersonal skills, problem-solving skills, and enthusiasm for learning (Cutforth & Puckett, 1999). Cutforth (2000) conducted a follow-up study on the Apprentice Teacher Program and found that participants reported a higher degree of autonomy, developed a higher awareness for self-reflection, increased the ability to accept constructive criticism, and found a sense of community among the participants.

A school-based program part of a university partnership developed by Wright and Jacobs at Northern Illinois University is called Project Leadership. Project Leadership was formed after a local elementary school principal approach Wright and Jacobs to start an after-school program for academically and socially challenged students (Holt, 2016). The program provided psychological strength to cope with the challenges they encountered of schooling. Guided by the TPSR model, the program runs twice a week at the elementary school site. The students view the program as a sports club where they participate in physical activity and engage in community service projects such as food drives and community gardening.

The presence of the TPSR model in youth development is well known across the nation. As these models implement TPSR, most programs are implemented in a school or community based-settings. TPSR’s inclusion in physical education programs has broadened to numerous partnerships with universities, schools, and communities locally and internationally.

Youth Leader Corps

One of the longest-running community-based out-of-school and in-school physical activity leadership programs for elementary, middle, and high school youth that teaches personal and social responsibility is the Youth Leadership Corps (YLC). The program was developed by Dr. Thomas (Tom) Martinek, a professor at the University of North Carolina at Greensboro (UNCG), as part of a three-tiered interrelated program (a) sports clubs, (b) mentoring and (c) Youth Leadership Corps, known as Project Effort. Project Effort was formed as a collaboration between UNCG's Kinesiology Department and local school officials who wanted students, plagued with low grades, high office referrals, and school suspensions, to apply themselves in school and grow into responsible and competent young adults (Martinek et al., 1999).

As a values-based sport and mentoring program, YLC provides an opportunity for students from an alternative high school on a college campus, to plan, coordinate, develop, implement, and lead sports and physical activity lessons to elementary age children. The high school leaders are chosen through recommendations from teachers and school counselor. The selected high school students are provided opportunities to learn and become leaders of their own sports program while assisting youth to become personally and socially responsible people through implementation with a focus on caring and compassionate leadership (Schilling, 2001).

There are two main purposes of the Youth Leadership Corps program. The first is for high school students to develop leadership qualities such as problem-solving, communication, strategic planning, and conflict resolution (Holt, 2016; Wright, 2012;

Wright, Weidong, Ding, & Pickering, 2010). The second is for high school students to pass down these qualities to elementary children by utilizing the core components of Don Hellison's teaching personal and social responsibility model. This transfer of knowledge is imperative as students focus on academics, interpersonal skills and relationship building that will affect their outlook beyond the YLC program.

Recently, Melendez (2011) investigated what TPSR values and life-skills, acquired through Project Effort, have guided the lives of former YLC members. Using a qualitative multiple-case design, Melendez interviewed five former youth leaders to understand the influence of TPSR levels of responsibility and life-skills. The findings showed that the TPSR level of responsibilities, helping others, and the life-skills of being reflective were most valuable while learning self-direction and the value of respect and caring were acquired through Project Effort (Melendez, 2011). This study also shows the impact of transference of TPSR values and life-skills of former participants in Project Effort. Through my research, I will look at the idea of transfer in the way former leaders applied their experiences from the program to their own lives when dealing with issues of race and culture later in life.

Martinek and Hellison (2009) also developed a model on the stages of leadership based upon Hellison's TPSR model. It developed from the fieldwork with youth in sports and physical activity settings. Based on their research, Martinek and Hellison (2009) highlight the stages of youth leadership development. Stage one is Taking responsibility: where youth must learn to take responsibility for themselves and their actions, which gives self-direction and enhances self-respect. Stage two is Leadership Awareness:

getting youth to understand the importance of leadership and their potential to be leaders (e.g., help distribute equipment). Stage three is Cross-age Leadership: which allows youth to work with younger kids developing lessons through TPSR to learn values and responsibility. Lastly, stage four is Self-actualized leadership: which demonstrates that if youth have learned to take responsibility for themselves and their actions, they will transfer these leadership skills to other domains in their lives.

Other studies of YLC include Talbert's (2015) investigation on the impact of participating in a values-based youth leadership program on resiliency through the YLC program. Through cross-age teaching, the study focused on YLC members relationships with teachers, youth leaders, and program children along with personal expectations, and the pursuit of opportunities for personal growth. Schilling's (2001) study examined perceptions of program commitment among seven YLC participants from ages 12-15, in an extended day physical activity program using Hellison's TPSR model.

Lee and Martinek (2012) studied what influence the transfer of TPSR values and goals into classroom settings through observation of the classroom and interviews with participants, teachers, and program leaders. The participants in the study were part of the program and evaluated for a minimum of 8 weeks. Teachers, participants, and schools must be aware of TPSR and support the program. The findings revealed that transfer is influenced by the atmosphere of the school and its program structure. This includes the roles and behavior of the staff members by internalizing program values that helped the participants apply and transfer program values in school. The second finding was that participants who valued the program have a high level of confidence. The third finding is

that participants who had a structured opportunity in learning TPSR values transferred certain aspects of the program into their school climate. The study of Lee and Martinek (2012) helps to solidify that the outcome of the transfer of knowledge is essential and vital to the study of the effects of the TPSR model.

Culturally Relevant and Sustaining Pedagogy in Educational Settings

The YLC brings awareness to the way youth leaders develop programs that are sensitive in nature towards those of varying races to be culturally competent in working with others who are different from themselves. Programs such as YLC whose participants and leaders are from various backgrounds; race has not been the focus but implied even among youth leaders. The nature of the TPSR values that are experienced and taught by YLC leaders lends itself to the application of culturally relevant pedagogies. Applying these pedagogies raise the potential to enhance the awareness of the leaders' assessment of race and identity issues. This not only brings about awareness of the challenges that the children face but also those of their experiences in life.

According to Hammer (1993), "Understanding culture is the foundation—the starting point—for all intercultural efforts. It is the most difficult concept to find widespread agreement on, yet it is central to everything" (p. 255). Because YLC leaders come from and work with children from a variety of cultural and racial backgrounds, it is worthwhile to understand the impact of race and culture on daily lived experience. As such, Critical Race Theory (CRT) provides a lens for understanding how implicit experiences with the YLC have influenced the former youth leaders when dealing with racialized moments in their own lives. CRT builds on insights from the civil rights

movement of the 1960s, the critical legal studies of the late 1970s, and radical feminism. “The critical race theory movement is a collection of activists and scholars engaged in studying and transforming the relationships among race, racism, and power” (Delgado & Stefancic, 2017, p. 3). As we continue to grapple with notions of racialized understanding in the United States, youth programming provides a potential space for helping young people to understand the importance of recognizing and valuing difference. CRT posits the idea that racism is “normal” and not unusual because it is a permanent fixture in American culture (Parker, Deyhle, & Villenas, 1999). Given this idea, unpacking how youth engage with notions of race and culture in educative settings both in and out of school could help inform future programming.

Since shortly after the development of CRT, scholars in the field of education have used CRT to name, understand, and analyze issues of persistent inequality in educational settings (Ladson-Billings, 2005). In particular, the application of CRT has helped shed light on issues of persistence around school discipline, language, and knowledge hierarchy, tracking, high-stakes testing, curriculum, bilingual and multicultural education, and effectiveness of alternative and charter schools (Delgado & Stefancic, 2017). Many of these issues are connected to the shifts seen in youth programming. For example, in formal education spaces, there has been a movement to help teachers develop a greater understanding of asset-based frameworks when making decisions about curriculum and classroom environment. Beginning in mid-1990s, Gloria Ladson-Billings coined the term culturally relevant pedagogy to describe the practices of successful teachers of African American students. The theory drew upon the tenets of

CRT in acknowledgment of the necessity for teachers to understand race as a social construct and actively work to plan learning experiences that were relevant to the lives of students (Foster, 1995). Since the publication of this seminal work, others have applied the principles of culturally relevant pedagogy when seeking to understand how culturally relevant educational experiences impact students' sense of identity and belonging in educational spaces.

Simpkins, Riggs, Ngo, Vest Ettekal, and Okamoto's (2017) study examines how designing culturally responsive organized after-school activities effectively promotes positive youth development to the growing ethnic and racial diversity within the United States. The purpose of this study is to explore how researchers and youth practitioners can help ensure that out-of-school activities are culturally responsive and address the specific needs of youth who participate in these activities. "Yet, very little work on program quality has focused on the importance of culture, how youth's culture might be explicitly addressed in organized activities, and the effects of culture in activities on adolescent outcomes" (Simpkins et al., 2017, p. 12). Culturally relevant activities are structured to make young people feel comfortable expressing their identities by providing opportunities for youth to share positive cultural stories and life's experiences with marginalization (Simpkins et al., 2017). Adolescent participation in decision making and forming positive, supportive relationships with staff and adults, promote belonging by fostering program ownership and investment (Camino, 2000; Larson & Walker, 2010). By understanding the background of youth, will aid in creating culturally responsive

opportunities and social norms in programs through learning experiences that provide a sense of belonging, leadership, and competence.

CRT affects the way we view K-12 students in youth development by considering the ways race and racism impact educational structures, classroom practices and behaviors, and effective teaching. Since education in the United States is not addressed in the Constitution, it is regulated by individual states to generate legislation and enact laws designed to ensure children receive an education. The *Brown v. Board of Education* decision in 1954 is considered a landmark in history among critical race theorists. In this case, the court declared state laws establishing separate public schools for Black and White students to be unconstitutional (Parker et al., 1999). The notion of equal opportunity was to give students of color the same school opportunities as Whites in curriculum, instruction, and other resources.

According to Ladson-Billings (2009), “critical race theorist saw the official school curriculum as a culturally specific artifact designed to maintain a White Supremacists master script” (p. 32). This means that stories of African Americans were muted and erased from schools because they challenged dominant culture, authority, and power. Culturally relevant pedagogy is connected to a larger body of knowledge and theory surrounding multicultural education and helping culturally diverse students excel academically (Castagno & Brayboy, 2008). Culturally Relevant Pedagogy and Multicultural Education called for an end to instructional strategies presumed that African American students are deficient.

Structural racism encourages deficient thinking:

Deficit thinking also takes on the position that minority students and families are at fault for poor academic performance because (a) students enter school without the normative cultural knowledge and skills and (b) parents neither value nor support their children's education. (Yosso, 2005, p. 75)

As a result, a student's fund of knowledge and cultural capital are often overlooked.

Tara Yosso (2005) defines community cultural wealth as an accumulation of specific forms of knowledge, skills, and abilities that are valued by privileged groups in society. Yosso is known for work that applies ideas inside of schools. Her work rejects the racialized myth that the low educational outcomes at every schooling level are related to issues of race and ethnicity for Chicana and Chicano students. She explains how White middle-class culture is known as the standard against which all other forms and expressions of culture are judged in comparison. For example, if a student brings knowledge of speaking two languages in-school and out-of-school, they may be able to show cultural wealth by translating homework and vocabulary.

Understanding interactions with youth programming via the frameworks discussed previously, potentially provides a pathway for recognizing the assets students possess and bring with them to educational settings. Educational settings such as out-of-school programs such as YLC provides a natural setting to students from various backgrounds. As our population continues to increase in size, it is essential to consider ways to provide organized out-of-school activities that are responsive to the youth's culture and everyday lives. This study will aid to ensure that out-of-school activities are

culturally responsive and address the specific needs of youth to be most effective and transferred to their daily lives.

Transfer

Transfer describes the phenomenon of youth making use of content learned in one setting and applying newly learned knowledge to another setting where application may not necessarily be required (Gould & Carson, 2008; Wright, Richards, Jacobs, & Hemphill, 2019). Transfer is the ultimate outcome of the TPSR model that helps students to display good character, citizenship, and leaders. The belief is that what students learn in these contexts will influence their beliefs and behaviors in other areas of their lives. An approach to teaching through physical activities that addresses transferring newly acquired knowledge of core values, known as the levels of responsibility, and life-skills into everyday life, is Hellison's TPSR model. The product outcome is for transfer of learning to be the ultimate outcome by utilizing the components of the TPSR model.

Transformative experience relates to the transfer of learning in a way that addresses cognition (e.g., seeing opportunities to apply the material) and motivation (e.g., having the desire to apply the material) as well as behavior (e.g., choosing a course of action based on that understanding and motivation). (Wright et al., 2019, p. 317)

In the evaluation of the TPSR research, the degree of transfer of learning has some implications and difficulty to research on its ultimate outcomes. The impact participation has on participants outside of the gymnasium is the bases of the model, and practitioners are encouraged to consider their commitment to transfer of learning within their practice to increase effectiveness and positive impact on the student. Most

practitioners realize that transfer of learning and helping kids to lead better lives is their ultimate goal. “Transfer assumes that the skills and values learned in responsibility-based physical activity programs are applied in different contexts, so it is important to consider the programs and transfer contexts together” (Lee & Martinek, 2012, p. 190). Transfer of learning will continue to be a future research component on TPSR as practitioners continue to contrast and compare past and present research and outcomes. For this study, the transfer of knowledge with former youth leaders of YLC on how they can apply learned experiences and its impact on others through race and identity were addressed.

CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY

A notable characteristic of TPSR is its aim to transfer learned behavior obtained from physical activities to everyday life. Although past research studies have revealed challenges in studying long-term effects related to transfer, no research has been done regarding if and how the core values and levels of responsibility have influenced former youth leaders' understanding of race and identity. A descriptive qualitative inquiry will be employed through the use of case studies, to gain a deeper understanding of how participants navigate issues of race and identity since leaving the YLC program. In this study, the researcher will examine the experiences of former YLC youth leaders who implemented the TPSR model, and how they draw on this model to productively navigate and address these issues in their own lives.

Five former leaders of the YLC program of varying racial and cultural backgrounds will be interviewed in order to determine the ways they describe the transfer of their learning in the program to their own lives, particularly in terms of racial and cultural identity. Investigating the experience, they note as contributing to their understanding could help pinpoint underlying moments of culturally relevant pedagogical practice. Identifying and drawing upon these practices in more explicit ways serves to enhance the YLC program in future iterations. The following questions direct this research:

1. In what ways were the core values and strategies in the YLC program implemented?
2. How have the core values and strategies that have been taught in the YLC program affected the former YLC leaders' understanding of racial and cultural identity?
3. In what ways has the YLC experience and the TPSR core values affected how YLC leaders deal with social and racial issues in their lives?

Context of Study

Through the responses of former YLC participants, the researcher is able to explore how the TPSR model helps to navigate intersections of TPSR strategies utilizing culturally relevant pedagogies by transferring these experiences into one's daily life. Acknowledging race and identity from the responses of former YLC leaders supports the tenets of culturally relevant pedagogies and the constructive analysis of how race relations informs and influences others. For example, students have better educational outcomes when they have same-ethnic/racial teachers (youth leaders) and when their cultural practices (e.g., language, dress) were embedded within the materials and lessons (García Coll & Marks, 2009).

Through this study, we hope to gain a better understanding of the relationships between race and identity, life skill development, and transfer of knowledge among for YLC leaders' lived experiences outside of the classroom. Through participant responses and experiences acquired through YLC, the researcher will explore how we can help

ensure that after-school activities are culturally responsive and address the specific needs of youth who participate in these activities.

Similar to previous research on the TPSR model, studies have been conducted to examine YLC and the effects the program has on participants. Studies have focused on program commitment (Schilling, 2001; Schilling, Martinek, & Carson, 2007a; Schilling et al., 2007b), fostering leadership qualities in veteran youth (Martinek & Schilling, 2003; Martinek et al., 2006; Schilling et al., 2007b; Talbert, 2015), and the influences and degree of transference of core values and levels of responsibility (Gordon & Doyle, 2015; Lee & Martinek, 2012; Melendez, 2011).

YLC Program Format

The YLC program runs once a week for an academic school year where high school students create physical activity lessons and teach them to program children based on sports skills, goals, problem-solving, and responsibility. Youth leaders spend up to three hours planning, teaching, and reflecting on their experiences. Each youth leader is responsible for teaching various sports skills (e.g., dribbling, volleyball, catching) and the highlighted level of responsibility to elementary school children at different stations (Martinek & Schilling, 2003). Teaching assistants, who are typically graduate students who attend UNCG, can make suggestions on such things as location of equipment but must allow the youth leader to develop and implement the lessons themselves.

For each session, the elementary school participants arrive and practice a skill on their own in the gymnasium. The director then signals for all youth leaders, teaching assistants, participants, and volunteers to come to the center of the circle to discuss the

levels of responsibility for the day (e.g., self-direction) and to remind kids to try their best in each sport. The participants are then sent to their stations typically by age or grade, where they await a youth leader to show them a new activity while focusing on program goals. Each youth leader gives an awareness talk such as a warm-up or icebreaker to emphasize the importance of responsibility. Then the participants have around four to eight minutes to practice the physical skill while implementing the level of responsibility highlighted for the day. After participants have visited each station, everyone in the gymnasium reconvenes back to the center of the circle to reflect upon their experience, performance, and goals during the session. Youth leaders reflect on their perspectives with participants on how things went with each group during each home station and if they feel the small groups accomplished the daily goals and task. Once the participants leave, the youth leaders have a short meeting to discuss their reflections as a group and then write these experiences down in their journals. At the end of the day, youth leaders, assistants, staff, and volunteers all visit the university cafeteria to discuss their lessons, reflections, and experiences further. Doing so increases team cohesiveness, bonding, and socialization among each other.

Positionality

My positionality in social justice and learning personal and social responsibility for youth through physical activities mirrors the lives of the youth leaders included in my study. My personal and childhood experiences impacted my interest in working with young people by helping them establish their lens of values and life-skills through physical activities using critical race theory. I am operating from the lens of experiencing

discrimination, deprivation and being stereotyped simply for the skin I am in. I recognize that young people are our next generation and as adults, we must equip youth to seek who they are and take responsibility for their actions as they explore ‘who they are’ as youth leaders in the world. Young people must contribute to the fabric of authenticity in finding their truthfulness through guided values and life-skills while not ‘sitting’ around and waiting for others to define who they could become. My position is to remain ‘conscious’ by adding to the gap of knowledge concerning critical race theory in youth development while also teaching young people to be personally and socially responsible for their actions. The ethical dilemma that I may face is that I have a teacher/student relationship with the youth leaders. Yet, as also being a minority woman gives me an edge in building rapport. I want them to trust me, but I also seek the truth in my research.

Since the age of 13, my brother and I would walk or ride our bicycles to the local Boys & Girls Club a mile down the road to be a part of a place for youth to develop, explore, and play. Through these experiences, sports and play became my favorite daily activities and a form of therapy through hard times in high school and learning to adjust to a blended family.

After high school, I attended North Carolina Agricultural and Technical State University, a historically Black university, and later transferred departments from engineering to recreation. While studying towards my degree, it was evident that I flourished in my major. I felt that I had arrived in my calling to work in sports and youth development. These experiences made me hungry for more education and experience academically to become a more prominent professional. Upon graduation from North

Carolina Agricultural and Technical State University, I continued my education by attending graduate school at Temple University. At Temple University, I continued my education to increase my knowledge of sports administration with area high school and professional athletes. After receiving my Master's degree, I returned to the Boys & Girls Clubs as a full-time employee to work with board members and politicians on issues that affect our youth and their skills, attitude, and beliefs on society.

In May 2013, after 28 years with Boys & Girls Clubs, an induction into the Salvation Army Boys & Girls Clubs of Greensboro Hall of Fame, I decided to resign my position to pursue my doctoral degree. Through the Community Youth Sports Development concentration at the University of North Carolina at Greensboro (UNCG), I teach undergraduate students and currently on the path to becoming a tenured professor while working in youth programs. Continuing my research in youth programs has helped to shape my area of interest to explore more research in physical activities for underserved youth, and cultural aspects and values in sports through youth development. These topics became of interest to me as a practitioner, interacting and hearing the needs of youth as they transition from adolescence to adulthood from varying races.

As I conduct my inquiry study, Glesne (2016) describes how researchers have little control over identity categories (age, race, gender, etc.) although some positions could be misrepresented. This is important in recognizing youth leaders of varying races and cultural backgrounds, and their contribution towards my study remaining true to my own identity through observations, fieldwork, and interviews for my research. By pursuing my Ph.D., not only will this opportunity enhance my knowledge in becoming a

better instructor but also assist in nonprofit and youth organizations that I volunteer and advocate for others to support. My goal is to share those experiences and life lessons with others who may not understand how race, sports, and youth development play a vital role in one's development physically, mentally, emotionally, and spiritually.

My research will add to the body of knowledge of how core TPSR values acquired in the YLC program may influence former participants understanding of intersections of their racial and cultural identity in their daily lives, relationships, and experiences. As a doctoral student at the University of North Carolina at Greensboro under advisement from Dr. Tom Martinek, I am furthering my research into conceptual and theoretical frameworks in community youth sports development. The proposed program helps to support my research in positive youth development and leadership related to character building, modeling, respect, and responsibility. As a third-generation teacher and the first in my family to graduate with a Masters and soon a Doctoral degree, I am excited to keep pushing forward with my education.

My involvement in the YLC program began my sophomore year at UNCG. As I was observing and interacting with the youth leaders and learning their roles and responsibilities, I quickly became a volunteer. Over the next year, several graduate students and I who participate in the YLC program were responsible for assisting youth leaders in developing, coordinating, and implementing physical activities for program children. As a volunteer, I was able to develop relationships with youth leaders, implement the components of the TPSR model with youth of varying races. Being a part

of the YLC program helped me to learn more about the program, TPSR, and the relationships with youth that I plan to instill upon future generations.

Pilot Study

A pilot study is a small-scale methodological test conducted to prepare for the primary study and is intended to ensure that methods or ideas would work in practice (Kim, 2011). The pilot study allowed the researcher to practice as the interviewer and make necessary revisions. The general goal of a pilot study is to provide information that contributes to the success of the research project as a whole. Five sections described the pilot study that was conducted for this research. The first section described the nature of the pilot study. The second section discussed the participant selection. The third and fourth sections provide a brief summary of findings and reframing the research questions. The last section describes the methodological revisions for this research.

The Nature of the Pilot Study

The goal is thus to test the study on a small scale to sort out all the possible problems that might lead to failure of the research procedure to minimize the risk of failure. The purpose of this pilot study was to test the interview protocol and gather information that would improve the quality and efficiency of the future study. The questions that guided this research study were:

1. In what ways were the core values and strategies in the YLC program implemented?

2. How have the core values and strategies that have been taught in the YLC program affected the participants and YLC leaders' racial and cultural identity?
3. How has the YLC experience and the TPSR core values helped YLC members deal with social and racial issues in their lives?

Participant Selection

One participant, who was a former youth leader, was selected for this pilot study. The participant selected met the purposeful sampling criteria of being a former youth leader of the YLC program. The participant was an 18-year-old female, former youth leader of the YLC program, and a current college student at the University of North Carolina at Greensboro. The participant chose the name "Vanessa" as a pseudonym to maintain anonymity for the pilot study. Vanessa identified herself as a Muslim female whose ethnicity consists of both Egyptian and Caucasian.

Brief Summary of the Findings

The findings of the pilot study express that Vanessa was knowledgeable of the core values and levels of responsibility of the TPSR model through two data sources. Race and identity issues impacted Vanessa through her lifestyle as a Muslim, Bi-racial female that aligns with the experiences she learned through the YLC program. The core values of human decency and holistic self-development aligned with the findings in how Vanessa contributed her exposure with diverse groups from the YLC program. This is evidenced as Vanessa discussed how attending a trip to Sri Lanka impacted her development from YLC to her personal life through patience and understanding while

connecting socially and personally through meeting others of varying races. This illustrates that Vanessa's values and life-skills align as evidenced by exemplifying an increase of confidence by developing positive relationships with other ethnicities as well as her own.

Evidence also shows that Vanessa has experienced some challenges in her present-day life as it relates to race and identity through the core value a way of being—the values we live as we work with kids—since leaving the YLC program. This is illustrated when Vanessa discussed meeting others from Sri Lanka who shares her same culture and half of her racial identity. Being half Egyptian, she feels that being of the same ethnicity as the people of Sri Lanka is shared but the values to consider through cultural relevancy are the lessons she learned the most. Being in the YLC program helped her to appreciate and develop positive relationships with kids and adults, share similar characteristics of her cultural while adjusting in another country. Vanessa indicated that she was surprised that many graduate students, adults, and professors, were not able to make these adjustments to a new culture. This was very surprising to Vanessa, and she is very appreciative of the YLC program and the levels of responsibility she learned from the TPSR model that contributed to her cultural pedagogies.

Through the levels of responsibility, the findings indicate that respect and transfer influenced Vanessa most as a former YLC youth leader. This is evidenced by Vanessa's interaction with former YLC participants and members of the program. Bringing everything she learned outside of the gym helped in her transition to college, and especially her trip to Sri Lanka. Vanessa indicated that through transfer and respect, she

obviously could not have brought those levels of responsibility to Sri Lanka if they were not lessons learned from YLC program. Vanessa states that she can now bring values and life-skills she learned because she now understands more about her culture and identity. Vanessa indicated that she did not research her culture and went to Sri Lanka unprepared, but then felt she would not respect it (her cultural background) if she had. Therefore, she is not putting any learned values and levels of responsibility into use.

Reframing Research Questions

There were five interview questions in the original design of the pilot study. As the researcher analyzed the data, it was essential to modify the research questions by reducing the wording in each question and placing them into a sequential order. During the interview, the researcher repeated some of the questions more than one time after reciting long questions to ensure that the participant was clear on what was being asked. The original questions were more protracted without a sequential order from the beginning of the youth leader's experience in the YLC program to present-day life. Therefore, the rationale for this decision was to reframe the research questions to minimize reciting for clarity and placing them in sequential order from the time they were directly involved in YLC to now being former members. For example, in the original question in Appendix D was "*What are the common core values of TPSR (including inclusion, life-skills, and reflection) that have been incorporated among school, work, and in other aspects of their everyday lives since transitioning from high school to college/work?*" This question was too long and reframed to give the participant a broader open-ended question with a direct approach.

Methodological Revisions

This pilot study helped the researcher identify methodological changes in the data collection process. One of the changes made was to edit the wording of the questions during the interview protocol. Some of the questions were shortened to keep the questions simple for the participant to elaborate on her experience since leaving the YLC program. Some of the participants' answers overlapped questions due to the length of her answers. For example, the original questions listed in Appendix D that overlapped in the participants' answers was, *What are the common core values of TPSR (including inclusion, life-skills, and reflection) that have been incorporated among school, work, and in other aspects of their everyday lives since transitioning from high school to college/work?* The second question was, *What are the core values and life-skills that have been experienced in the YLC program that connect YLC members to their racial and cultural identity?*

After analyzing the data, the participant answered both questions simultaneously due to her more extended response. By editing the wording of various questions of the interview protocol, helped to give a more clear and concise answer towards the questions with a more direct response.

Due to the outcome of the pilot study, the second revision was the order of the questions. The researcher categorized the questions starting with exposure of the TPSR model and former experiences in the YLC program. The questions will then address transfer of knowledge into everyday life through personal, educational, and work experience. The reason for this revision is to ensure that racial and identity issues are

addressed throughout the study while learning cultural relevant pedagogies through each participant's individual story/case study. This process will assist the participant to elaborate more on their former experiences on values and life-skills since leaving the YLC program.

Research Design

A qualitative inquiry approach was used for this study. Utilizing a qualitative approach, the researcher is able to gain a holistic perspective that is descriptive in a natural setting (Denzin & Lincoln, 2011). Using a case studies approach allows the researcher to gain a better understanding of the impact and effects of a TPSR program model from viewpoints of varying races. Yin (2009) states that "multiple-case studies provide more convincing data and also can permit the investigation of broader topics than single-case studies" (p. 260). Therefore, the data analysis and findings from multiple-case studies are more compelling and dynamic in nature.

Data sources include one-hour interviews with five former youth leaders of varying races who were former participants in the YLC program. Since former youth leaders have moved to various locations in the United States, the interviews were conducted both face to face or over the phone using a computer and two handheld audio recorders. The recordings were transcribed into word documents, and data were coded into emergent themes and categories. By using a qualitative method, research is done to maintain openness on what is being observed and collected so that nothing is missing during data collection (Smith & Glass, 1987; Wiersma & Jurs, 2009).

Constructivist Paradigm

A constructivist paradigm will be utilized to focus on exploratory in-depth perspectives and issues with former youth leaders of the YLC program. A constructivist paradigm focuses on the perspectives of those who are actors in the world, interacting with people in their social environments and talking with them about their experiences (Glesne, 2016). In the current study, the researcher was interested in how core TPSR values and strategies, implemented in the YLC program, may influence how former participants address issues of race and identity in their daily lives, relationships, and experiences working with younger program participants.

Constructivist researchers focus on understanding and reconstructing the meanings that individuals hold about the phenomenon being studied (Holstein & Gubrium, 2007). Perceptions from the former youth leaders related to the YLC program provides information on the transfer of core values and levels of responsibility from the TPSR model, and the YLC program, and the impact of their experiences in their daily lives. By allowing youth leaders to express their in-depth experiences, representation of the voices of the participants helps readers to place themselves in their shoes (Hatch, 2002). Using a Constructivist paradigm through a conceptual framework allows for the exploration of numerous meanings through individual and personal experiences with the intent of creating a common theme or idea.

Participant Selection

Purposeful sampling was utilized as described from the readings of Patton (2002), along with my advisor, Dr. Tom Martinek, to select five former youth leaders of the YLC

program. Each participant was a member of YLC as a youth leader for at least 2 years. The participants consisted of men and women from varying races and ethnicities who graduated high school between 2015 to 2018, from The Middle College of University of North Carolina at Greensboro or Page High School of Guilford County Schools. Criterion sampling was a technique used for this study to assist in selecting participants that meet predetermined criteria of importance. The screening process was based on the criteria that the students were former youth leaders of the YLC program.

Data Collection and Procedures

Data collection was conducted throughout the individual interviews with each staff member and former youth leader of the YLC program. Data sources consist of two audio recording devices, consent form, and a demographic questionnaire. Yin (2009) stated that carefully conducted case studies benefit in having multiple sources of evidence to ensure that the study is as robust as possible. Through converging multiple sources of data, it is vital that the results accurately reflect the case studies and that the participants' stories are reliable.

A demographic questionnaire (Appendix B) used in this study, provided necessary information as a data source on each youth leader such as name, gender, age, race, and ethnicity. This information assisted the researcher in identifying youth leaders of varying backgrounds.

The main data source was semi-structured interviews with prompts. Semi-structured interviews help to define the areas to be explored in which the interviewer sets up a general structure by deciding in advance how much information needs to be covered

and the main questions to be asked (Drever, 1995). Semi-structured interviews are very flexible, and the interviewee has a fair degree of autonomy in what they would like to divulge during the interview. See Table 1 for an overview of the data sources.

Table 1

Overview of Data Sources

Data Source	Rationale
Demographic Questionnaire	To obtain the necessary background information from each former youth leader. Information will be used before selection of youth leaders to ensure varying ethnicities and races are represented in this study.
Interviews	Former youth leaders discuss the YLC program and its impact on race and identity since leaving the program.

Interviews and Protocol

Once approval from the UNCG Institutional Review Board, the researcher identified the youth leaders who meet the study criteria. After contacting the participants, the researcher informed each youth leader individually about the purpose of my research project, their role in the study, and ethical considerations, such as identity protection and trustworthiness. Previously, the researcher observed the YLC program and became more involved by interacting and asking questions in efforts to understand the roles and responsibilities of the youth leaders. All research participants are over the age of eighteen for this study.

Once the participants agreed to the study, consent forms (Appendix A), and demographic questionnaires (Appendix B) was distributed and returned before the

interviews were conducted. Upon return of the consent forms and demographic questionnaire, the youth leaders and researcher scheduled times and location of each interview. A general script explaining the study and choosing a pseudonym can be found in (Appendix C). Guided research and interview questions (Appendix D), assisted the researcher during the interviews. Each interview lasted a minimum of one hour and was recorded using two audio recording devices, while notetaking on a computer. All interviews will take place at the University of North Carolina at Greensboro's Jackson Library unless the youth leader is unable to attend face to face. If the youth leader was unable to meet at Jackson Library, the interview was recorded using a computer software system and an audio recording device.

Member checks will be conducted one week upon the conclusion of the last interview with youth leaders. The participants read written transcripts of their interviews to authenticate and clarify information conducted during the study. By having each youth leader validate the transcript from their interviews, eliminates any personal bias or doubts of the researcher. Upon the end of each interview, the youth leaders received a thank you card for their participation.

Data Analysis

Upon completion of the individual interviews, each recording of the dialogue was transcribed and coded in order to identify themes and patterns within each case and then across the five case studies. Using thematic analysis, the researcher focused on "searching through the data for themes and patterns" (Glesne, 2016, p. 187), the

researcher analyzed each data source coding all pieces of information derived from data collection that would address the research questions for my study.

Each category was labeled with terms based on the actual language from the participants. By seeking the stories of youth leaders, inductive coding was used to formalize themes and patterns to see what was presented in data collection. Once the codes were established, each coding category was assigned a word or phrase. The researcher used this process to generate codes for the descriptions, which then led to simplifying categories and developing themes into narrative passages so that the findings materialize logically from each participant's response. Hatch (2002) states, "an inductive analysis, categories emerge from the analysis of the dataset as a whole" (p. 152).

The study focuses on YLC participants through the lens of CRP which analyzes the responses of the participants through the principals of CRP. Analyzing these experiences and patterns through the responses of the YLC participants educates other adult leaders on the use of culturally relevant practices that will aid to enhance their programs. Although YLC does not focus on CRP, these moments are drawn from implementing TPSR strategies with people of varying races and ethnicities.

The findings from this study may help inform adult and youth leaders in instructional practices that best support equitable learning opportunities. Additionally, this study added knowledge to the experiences of youth leaders who implement the TPSR model and the transference of their experience into their daily lives through culturally relevant pedagogy, and the interconnectedness between various factors influencing one's race and identity.

Trustworthiness

As a former volunteer of the YLC program, the researcher's personal biases were a possible threat to the trustworthiness of this study. The researcher did not want positionality or predetermined thoughts to deter from what would be found in the study. The researcher wanted to remain truthful to the study, the results, and privacy of the participants individual interviews as mentioned in the readings of Lincoln and Guba (1985). Previous interactions and observations with the former youth leaders of the YLC program were purposeful in establishing trustworthiness. Although a constructivist approach was used in this study, data triangulation through several data sources was instigated to address any threats due to the researcher's prior knowledge and interest.

A member check was utilized to ensure the findings in the research accurately represent each youth leader. Member checking measures the validity of the information attained from individual interviews that the researcher transcribed. A series of member checks were performed to ensure an accurate account of the participants' experience was captured. After completing the interviews, the researcher transcribed and analyzed the data to form themes and categories of information towards my study. As a researcher, I shared the information with each youth leader to validate that I was able to capture their experiences. Each youth leader was provided a copy of the data analysis to ensure the findings were supported by data, rather than resulting from my bias or perspective.

CHAPTER IV

INDIVIDUAL CASE STUDIES: STAFF MEMBERS

The purpose of this section is to provide the perspectives of staff members through race and identity working with students in the YLC program. The researcher aimed to explore each staff member's perspective associated with their information and observations of youth leaders bridging cultural gaps, relationship building, and empowerment through the components of Cultural Relevant Pedagogies (CRP) in the YLC program.

Research Question 1

In what ways were the core values and strategies in the YLC program implemented? Research Question 1 was answered by the staff members in this study. The findings will be presented from interviews with staff members in two sections: (a) the core values implemented in YLC that impacted the lives of former youth leaders, and (b) the strategies used to implement core values.

This section provides background information related to each staff member, followed by individual findings of their information and observations of how youth leaders are impacted through race and identity related to the TPSR model and core values. The final phase is a cross-analysis summary of key areas that highlight the perspectives of each staff member. To protect the privacy and identity of the participants, each participant selected their pseudonym in this study.

Staff Member Case 1—Linda

Background Information

Linda is a 26-year-old Caucasian female who was born in Jim Thorpe, Pennsylvania. Both of Linda's parents are from American/English descent and were born in the United States. Linda was raised by both of her parents and has one older brother who resides in Pennsylvania. Linda received her master's degree from Appalachian State University in Exercise Science with a concentration in research. When Linda visits home from college, she typically does not stay in the same residence as her family but typically visits more with her mother and older brother, who is a Chiropractor. Linda identifies her religion as Roman Catholic and describes her relationship with her maternal family as "warm and close-knit." She indicated that her family are the closest people in her life because there is nothing like family; they are always there when you need them. For fun, Linda indicated she likes to cook, bake, and boat with her family. She describes herself as a caring and outgoing type of person who "loves working with youth and participating in sports activities."

While working towards her master's degree, Linda realized that instead of working in Exercise Science, she wanted to pursue a career working towards her passion for sports and youth development. Linda's inspiration to pursue a Doctoral Degree in CYSD came after watching a YouTube video of Dr. Tom Martinek describing how physical activities aid in youth development through teaching personal and social responsibility life-skills, values, and principals through lessons to young people.

Linda describes her college experience as “wonderful and eye-opening” as she approaches her third year at UNCG. She explained that she enjoys her program and meeting new people from diverse backgrounds. Linda works with other staff members, youth leaders, and refugee children from local area schools in the YLC program. Linda joined YLC and Project Effort as a staff member two years ago.

Individual Findings

Bridging Cultural Gaps. Linda explained that one of the most utilized strategies she observed by YLC youth leaders and staff members to bridge cultural gaps was seeing everyone rely on one another even though they had their diverse backgrounds. As an example, Linda stated,

If a youth leader in the group has knowledge or background in Swahili knowing youth in our program speaks the same language, that leader will lead the group activities and rely on other leaders for support.

She further explains by youth leaders stepping forward to lead the group activities; it creates an environment for bonding and has supportive relationships with one another regardless of one’s race or social background. This also broadens her perspective on how Critical Relevant Pedagogies (CRP) is being utilized. Linda feels that it is essential how CRP is being utilized among YLC and the TPSR model. Linda stated,

Because we do serve all different groups of people who speak different languages and are from different countries, it is vital for us to know what may or may not be offensive, and how to handle certain situations. Also, what we might find offensive but really, it is not offensive to them. We need to be aware of our own biases and understandings of their culture and our own.

Linda explained that youth leaders and staff members must apply the values and life-skills of the TPSR model and use reflection to guide their actions presently and in the future. Youth leaders do so by listening and understanding youth's concerns and issues while having patience with them. Linda often stated how applying the components of the model in their daily lives will aid in working more with youth. She sees the components being applied and implemented through physical activities in the YLC program with the elementary school children from different cultures.

Relationship Building. Throughout the interview, Linda often mentions how relying on one another leads to building supportive relationships. She describes relationship building between the youth leaders through cultural pedagogy as being 'really nice' when youth leaders and program children can communicate through language and the level of activities in the program; especially since everyone in the program is from a diverse race and background. An example is when program children want to communicate that they desire to play basketball with youth leaders. Both parties will point to the basketball, walk to the basketball hoop, and begin playing and bonding over a game. Linda also describes building supportive relationships through race and identity among herself, youth leaders, and staff members. This is evidenced in how members of YLC rely on one another as they prepare snacks for youth, give verbal cues to communicate with other staff members, keep time to assist youth leaders with the pace of the program, and assist with rotating program children to various stations for physical activity. Linda explained how building relationships is continuously enhanced and occurring stating:

We are all different culturally, which is pretty cool. We have South Korean, African American, African, and other ethnicities, so there are different backgrounds, which is really cool. So sometimes I think there are language barriers a little bit, but for the most part, it is just getting over that. Then being very open and honest with one another if not understanding something. So, I feel free to ask if you can explain it to me a different way or again. I know sometimes, I will talk slower, because I talk fast sometimes because I am from the North and that is what we typically do. Just being aware of how we interact and rely on one another in YLC, that type of stuff.

Other examples she indicated were taking children to the restroom, observing youth to ensure everyone is participating in the activities, and using visuals, hand gestures, and various forms of communication to help kids understand the activities.

Linda described how fostering relationships had been reflected among youth leaders in YLC. Linda explained that relationships among the youth leaders were promoted when they communicate and spend time with one another. Linda stated:

Relationships among the youth leaders are built and fostered when the youth leaders hang out and communicate with one another outside of the program. After reflection time with Dr. Martinek, the youth leaders will walk together to the cafeteria, hang out with one another, sit together, and learn about one another and build friendships. It is cool to see the diversity and the youth leaders bond and become friends outside of the program. They transferred their bond to outside of the gymnasium.

Empowerment. In discussing experiences of empowerment among YLC through CRP, Linda described a moment in the YLC program when program children entered the gym and took their shoes off before playing games. Linda stated,

A lot of the children take their shoes off. We allow for that to happen, and we do not do anything about it. We, as the program staff and youth leaders, act like it is normal and let it go. We do not question them. So, I think that is probably like one of the major ones. That is empowering for them that no one is questioning them

and just letting them go, and then we let them like, speak whatever their common language is like, communicate with one another.

Linda described an “a-ha” moment of empowerment among YLC leaders and program children. Linda explained that she saw some of the refugee children from Africa trying to teach some of the youth leaders Swahili. For Linda, this was a moment of reflection where program children were able to be the teachers, and youth leaders were the participants. She felt this moment of empowerment as ‘really cool’ and would impact youth leaders for the rest of their lives as one of the most meaningful experiences they would ever encounter in YLC. Linda explained that this experience also shows the effectiveness of youth leaders through the value of transfer, taking what they have learned beyond the gymnasium and into their everyday lives. Linda stated,

Sometimes I think the kids do not get all the levels of responsibility right away, and it takes a while. I think they are very valuable because when I do mention the values to them [program children]. I ask them, why are you behaving this way, is this respected? They realize no it’s not. They have a moment where they reflect and say ‘oh, that is what the program is about. I like that I learned this from the program.’ They learn they are not supposed to behave this way, like shouting out over someone else, running to different groups in YLC when I’m not supposed too. I think they realize that, and the core values do shine through.

In summary, Linda appeared to value her experience and role as a staff member in the YLC. She feels that the best way to bridge cultural gaps is seeing everyone work together. Linda explained that youth leaders from diverse backgrounds bring dependence and reliability with one another, especially in the areas of communication due to language barriers and knowledge of cultural backgrounds. This is evidenced when the youth leader with a familiar language or background comes forward to lead the group activities in

YLC. Linda's perspective is when a youth leader steps forward in YLC; it creates an environment of bonding and supportive relationships among others from similar and diverse backgrounds to bridge cultural gaps.

Linda views race and identity as a way to build relationships by working together and understanding one's cultural differences through language and activities to build lasting relationships. Linda views fostering relationships among youth leaders and with staff members by being with one another and communicating together. Linda's perception of how race and identity are impacted and reflected within the YLC program extends outside the program as well. Linda continues to improve her relationships and communication with her fellow peers whose race and ethnicity are different from her own. By working together and forming supportive relationships, Linda feels this is her best reflection on how the model has impacted her life and the lives of the YLC members to be more confident in working with others from a different race and cultural background.

Linda views empowerment as the 'a-ha' moments among youth leaders and program children. These moments of reflection include when program children took off their shoes in the YLC program, and youth leaders never questioning youth about this practice. Also, teachable moments of empowerment when program children taught Swahili to youth leaders in YLC. Linda views empowerment transferred not only through integrating programs using the levels of responsibility through the TPSR model, but also through reflection, life-skills, patience, and more importantly, reliability among diverse populations in YLC.

Staff Member Case 2—Lisa

Background Information

Lisa is a 32-year-old Asian female who was born in Seoul, South Korea. Both of Lisa's parents are from Asia/South Korean descent and were born in South Korea, along with her younger sister, who resides in South Korea. Growing up, Lisa was very close with her family and continues to have a very close connection with them while being in the United States. She values their opinion and consults them with important decisions in her life.

In high school, Lisa attended a traditional school in South Korea from grades Kindergarten to thirteen. Lisa describes her school as having rigorous teachers and a dress code policy. Students had to wear school uniforms, and a hair policy (no dyes, perms, or long hair) was enforced. School hours were from 6:50 a.m. to 10:00 p.m. studying all day except lunch and dinner. As the hours were their daily school schedule, students did not have the freedom to voice their opinion on rules and guidelines around the school. While in high school, Lisa studied and dedicated herself to enter the top university of South Korea. Lisa explained that she had an opportunity to take an entrance exam (e.g., SAT) that is only offered once a year in order to get into a good university. If she did not achieve a good score on the exam, then she could not enter a great university. Lisa's favorite things to do in the United States are spending much time with nature, learning more about America's educational system, and building self-knowledge more about this country. Lisa explained her feelings about the difference between the United States and South Korea as freedom. She explains:

I would say that the United States offers a person more freedom. In my life, I do not have to pay attention to other's view and sight. Americans do not focus on what brand I wear, how old I am, and where I live. People in the United States are very polite and respectful to others. For example, holding a door until a person passes through, say hello and show a smile even if we do not know each other, and often say sorry and thank you, yielding to others who pass or walk by.

Lisa said her committee members in her master's degree program, recommended that she continue her studies towards her doctoral degree at UNCG. Lisa was initially in sport sociology studying the interactions and relationships with youth. She then turned her interest to Community Youth Sports Development (CYSD) working with underprivileged youth and refugee children. After contacting Dr. Martinek, Lisa was accepted into the doctoral program in Kinesiology.

The YLC program has provided Lisa with many opportunities to assist and work with program children and older youth members in their leadership experience. Through these learning experiences, Lisa indicated that she is surprised how long the YLC program has been in existence, operating for over 26 years and enjoys the non-physical power the program director brings to the program. This includes the program director's philosophy, support, and empowerment to youth leaders while developing and sustaining YLC.

Upon graduation, Lisa wants to enter a post-doctoral program researching sociological perspectives based on youth development. After observing the staff and faculty members and strong commitment and dedication to YLC, Lisa feels empowered to learn and observe more about the relationship's youth leaders.

Individual Findings

Bridging Cultural Gaps. Lisa explained that one of the main focal areas observed in the YLC program is bridging cultural gaps. This is the role of the program director. Lisa explained that the program director's role is essential since the YLC program has refugee children from different countries who are Chinese, African, Korean, and Nigerian. She states that the program director sets the tone of the program even when others speak a different language or have a different cultural background. She describes how program children and the youth leaders are faced with challenges to communicate with each other; especially since the younger children do not speak English. At the end of the program day, the youth leaders and staff gather together during the reflection time, and the program director gives feedback on their interactions. Lisa describes the reflection time with children who are culturally diverse as one of the most critical aspects of the program. Lisa stated,

Our program director, Dr. Tom Martinek gives youth leaders feedback and ask the youth leaders to write down their thoughts and reflections from the day. Usually, leaders say to him that they had some challenges on communicating with each other because the younger kids cannot speak English. Dr. Martinek will generally reply, "So how are we going to deal with the situation?" He waits for their feedback and gives suggestions. Dr. Martinek does not push students to understand one's culture, but his strategies usually make youth leaders think about and understand different cultural ways we approach youth when they cannot speak English. He reminds youth leaders to think about the relationship between the youth leaders and the younger kids: communication, the relationship, and the connection.

Lisa continues to describe the reflection times with the youth leaders as a way to bridge cultural gaps as youth leaders communicate and build strategies to communicate

with program children by showing signals with hands and parts of the body such as kicking, shooting, and dribbling. She also discussed gestures such as smiling, nodding, and illustrating physical skills to make younger kids understand the nature of the learning experiences.

Lisa also explained that out of the values of responsibility, respect is the most essential value that is used to reduce cultural gaps. Lisa explains that when respect is utilized, it means that contact has been made, such as looking at someone's eyes when talking, having a positive attitude, and being attentive and open to listening. Linda expressed that respect is vital to her Korean heritage and also the values she sees in the youth leaders in the YLC program.

Relationship Building. Through the value of respect, Lisa feels that fostering relationships and bonding occurs through broad communication regardless of a person's race, identity, or ethnicity. Lisa described her observations in the area of bonding through communication among youth leaders as being broad due to the background of the participants. Lisa stated,

Younger kids come to the gym and prefer to play with the program's youth leaders and the younger kids. They played games to communicate with each other. I think the bond helps them to form relationships with each other. Youth leaders try to remember that they are younger kids, and when the younger kids come the next day, they remember each other.

She discussed how youth leaders and staff members who are from the United States bond differently compared to others who came from a different country. Lisa describes how the youth leaders and staff come together, regardless of their diverse culture, and enter YLC

greeting one another by waving hello, hugging one another and the children in the program. Lisa states, “in greeting one another, youth leaders and staff ask, ‘how is it going today,’ and attempt to draw a closer relationship to make one another feel more comfortable.”

During the interview, she describes and demonstrates how greetings are different in the United States compared to South Korea. In South Korea, a person bows when they greet someone who is considered older and outside of their age group as a form of respect. If one person is the same age as a person they are greeting, both parties do not have to bow to one another. They are considered equals in age. If a person is older than Lisa, she will take the person’s hand and shake with both of her hands. Lisa explained:

In terms of greetings and respect, we have such a different culture. For example, when we say hello in the United States, regardless of age, we say hello to you by waving or shaking your hand. In South Korea, when I say hello to other than me, I have to bow”. By learning different forms of greetings among the participants, I see the youth leaders implementing this among the younger children. It is important to learn one’s culture to ensure we are not offending them or being disrespectful. The youth leaders are wonderful in learning this to bond with the participants in YLC.

Lisa described the communication among youth leaders as ‘very supportive’ through their interactions and working together planning and implementing programs for program children. Lisa stated,

When youth leaders meet every Friday, they come in around 3:30 p.m. and talk about what physical activities they would like to plan for the day. They mostly gather around and discuss how they plan to run the program for the day and ways to make the physical activities better for youth. Their behavior is very supportive, as the youth leaders are from different cultures and races. They listen and ask each other for help in working with other kids [program children] who are from

similar backgrounds. Through YLC, they are able to have time to talk and discuss the program. Otherwise, I do not think they would have enough opportunities to communicate and bond with one another to build supportive relationships.

Empowerment. When comparing how the core values and TPSR model are perceived among those in the program, Lisa states that everything seems pretty simple but feels it is a bit tricky. Lisa explains that she questions some responsible values such as self-direction which can have various meanings in different cultures. Self-direction is connected to the notion of empowerment as Lisa is ‘continuously learning’ about the TPSR model and core values in YLC. Lisa states:

Sometimes, even I cannot understand the meaning of self-direction, which is very hard. When I observe the youth leaders, they usually use respect, communication, and effort, they are not using self-direction leadership well. We need a bit more modified values to fit more into society for various cultures. The first limitation is the age of the participants, followed by the population. In order for us to use the youth development model, we need to evaluate the TPSR model to fit into different populations through race, identity, and culture. We need to evaluate how TPSR and the evaluation tools are used in different settings among diverse populations and expand the model.

Lisa explains that updating the model and evaluation tools to today’s time using different settings such as community and recreation centers among diverse populations and in various countries will educate and empower practitioners and youth leaders with knowledge in working with people from varying backgrounds.

Overall, Lisa’s views of race and culture in the experiences of former YLC leaders through culturally relevant pedagogy are present in YLC leaders as they implemented the TPSR model. The core values are shown through her perspectives on respect, communication, and reflection. As a staff member, Lisa thought highly of the

TPSR model and indicated that she wants to implement what she has learned and observed from the youth leaders and TPSR model through YLC into daily programs when she returns to South Korea. Lisa views respect as honorable and the most crucial component implemented within YLC and former youth leaders. Lisa's perspective of youth leaders increasing their knowledge of learning various forms of greetings and communication styles shows that life-skills and values are being utilized among diverse populations. This helps to bridge cultural gaps among various marginalized diverse populations.

Lisa's perspective of reflection among youth leaders indicates that interactions with others and moments of relevance made a significant impact in working with diverse populations. This is shown through Lisa's perspective of reflection time in the circle when the program director assists youth leaders and staff, as they evaluate their experiences with program children. While youth leaders encounter barriers such as differences in language, greetings, and communication, these were also used as decisive moments of reflection as leaders learned how to work together to implement physical activities using the TPSR model. Through Lisa's perspective, everyone involved in YLC learns one's identity, culture, and background by creating a space for learning that can transfer knowledge outside the gymnasium to everyday life.

Staff Member Case 3—Justin

Background Information

Justin is a 33-year-old Asian male who was born and raised in South Korea. Both of Justin's parents are from Asian/South Korean descent and were born in South Korea.

Both of his parents raised Justin along with his younger sister, who resides in South Korea. Justin describes himself as a fun and respectful person who has a great relationship with his family and his parent's. After wanting to leave for the United States, his mother was reluctant and wanted him to stay. Fortunately, his father told him to leave South Korea for the United States to pursue his educational, professional, and personal goals.

In high school, his goal was to become a Taekwondo (TKD) champion. In describing the high school atmosphere in South Korea, Justin explained that all students spend a lot of time training to win games in various sports rather than focusing on studying. They believe that if one became a champion of a sport, that person could attend college and succeed in life. Therefore, teachers' and coaches' primary purpose was to push students very hard to train and win games to conquer their sport. This was the culture and environmental climate known in South Korea in which he was raised. Justin describes his relationships in high school as having "lots of friends" who were his roommates and teammates who trained very hard as they shared their feelings towards training and earned achievements. His teachers and coaches were pushed to develop students into prominent athletes who would earn gold medals for their school. All of their training records and results from competitions were open for public view. The scores were then compared to other competitors who participated in competitive Taekwondo inside and outside of their school.

Comparing his feelings about being in the United States and how his experience is different than in South Korea, Justin described that both countries are protected by law,

policy, and caring adults. Justin indicated that he feels that the United States is the “strongest and richest country in the world. Therefore, it is obvious that the average number of children are growing up in a better environment and circumstances than others in developing countries.” Justin mentioned that although the United States is not a utopia, he believes that several developing countries want to create a utopia where all children thrive as these countries are still fighting to create a perfect place for youth.

Justin is a student in the Department of Kinesiology in (CYSD) at UNCG. He explained that he chose this major and concentration in hopes to become a productive programmer for children to thrive. As a TKD instructor, Justin implied his desire to gain and advance his knowledge by learning effective teaching, communication, and interaction skills. Through these skills, Justin states that he wants to implement academic knowledge of methods and strategies on how children learn, think, and succeed.

He was inspired to attend UNCG by wanting first to learn the English language.

Justin stated,

My first plan was to learn English at Interlink Language Center in UNCG. While there, I had some opportunities to teach Taekwondo in Taekwondo studios in Chapel Hill, Raleigh, Durham, Cary, and Burlington, North Carolina. The Taekwondo masters demonstrated how to teach life-skills through their program. I was very inspired by their teaching methods, philosophy, goals, and interaction with children. I became interested in studying how to teach life-skills through martial arts. Then, I found Dr. Martinek, who had been doing what I wanted to learn.

Justin joined the YLC program almost three years ago. He describes YLC as an ideal program for youth development scholars and practitioners who engage with older kids who are youth leaders and elementary school children. This is important to Justin,

who desires to run a program similar to YLC through Taekwondo. Justin feels that through his work and association with YLC will help other youth development practitioners become responsible through planning physical activities, skills, and values for our youth to succeed.

While in the United States, some of Justin's favorite activities are walking at the park, camping, and eating while always thinking of ways to mentally challenge himself to elevate himself to the next level. Once he completes college, Justin plans to implement the TKD program that he developed during his doctoral studies program. He also desires to become a professor, become a TKD instructor, and a director for youth development programs.

Individual Findings

Bridging Cultural Gaps. Justin discussed his perspective of strategies utilized in the YLC program to bridge cultural gaps. Justin describes how teaching sports and physical activities provide the most effective strategy to bridge cultural gaps among various diverse groups. By doing so, this will strengthen youth leaders through communication and working together as a team through planned program activities. Justin explained that providing a safe environment for youth to feel welcomed like giving high-fives and encouraging kids to get involved regardless of one's ethnicity, race, or identity, builds a connection of supportive relationships.

Justin indicated that he feels good about how culturally relevant pedagogy is being utilized among YLC leaders using the TPSR model. He indicated, "I am proud that YLC has diverse youth leaders (African American, African, White, Asian, and Hispanic),

physical activities, teachers, and a creative learning environment. Kids get to see a similar face. I think that is good.” Justin explained that having a racially diverse environment helps youth leaders to learn from one another such as language, saying hello, thank you and leading instructions. While youth leaders implement the activities in English, Justin sees youth leaders relying on one other’s background, native language, and cultural knowledge to lead physical activities and sports with program children.

Justin discussed his perception of values among youth leaders. Justin feels that from the standpoint of one’s culture and race, the core values and TPSR model are perceived as ‘hard to describe’ among program children who were not born and raised in the United States. He feels the youth leaders in the YLC program do a great job implementing the model, but he is also learning more about the context of each value from America since he was born and raised in South Korea. Justin stated:

The core values are hard to describe to those of us who were not born or raised in the United States. The words mean a different context based on our cultural upbringing. What is respect to what is self-direction? What is effort? The significant part about the values is that youth leaders can describe and create what it means to one’s cultural and racial identity and background. We use respect here in YLC, and the youth leaders will use and visually model how to show respect through teaching younger elementary school students. This brings a deeper meaning and depth to the word respect in the United States compared to native countries. Therefore, the values are really good, and youth leaders do a great job implementing that with youth.

As an assistant to the YLC members, Justin shared his observations with youth leaders about their teaching life-skills and values of the TPSR model.

Relationship Building. Justin describes how relationship building between the youth leader and program children begin once the kids enter the gym. He explains how

the children enter the gymnasium and have free time playing with youth leaders before the start of the structured activities. Justin stated,

Once the kids [program children] come into the gym, they have free time with the youth leaders before they start the structured activities. During free time youth leaders will bond with the younger kids by greeting them saying, hey, how is your day? How are you today? How do you feel? Something like that. I think this is kind of welcoming. Every youth leader has a different strategy to have a strong relationship with kids.

Justin explained how the TPSR structure and lesson format brings youth leaders and program children together. Justin discussed how a group setting assists youth leaders to bond more closely with kids and talk with children about the level of responsibility they plan to work on for the day. Justin explained how youth leaders are ‘not stepping back’ or just watching youth perform physical activities even through language barriers. He explained how youth leaders are bonding and working together to lead physical activities and rely on one another to educate kids on core values and life-skills. Justin stated,

When two kids play indoor football and pass the ball to each other and then pass the ball back to the youth leader, they all celebrate. After watching the youth leader, they [program children] celebrate as well. Everyone counts the number of points the team earned, and the youth leader gives encouragement by saying ‘good job,’ ‘or counting the number of points.’ This gives them more of a challenge to impress their peers and youth leaders saying ‘hey, let’s get 50 more points.’

Justin described how youth leaders are playing games with program children. He stated,

Youth leaders form relationships with the kids by stepping in there and playing football, basketball, and other physical activities with youth. This makes the kids more engaged in the activity and also the youth leaders as well while taking care of the kids. This is a core strategy used in building relationships.

Empowerment. Justin indicated that the experiences of empowerment seen through race and identity among YLC leaders were created through a welcoming classroom learning environment. Justin described how the program director, staff, and especially the youth leaders create this type of setting and atmosphere for program children who enter the program. Through YLC, Justin explains there is no dominant or higher position over another person; everyone is equal and working together.

Justin feels that youth leaders in YLC are also empowered when given ‘choice and voice.’ He describes ‘choice and voice’ as seeing youth leaders developing their chosen physical activities and implementing them in the program while also being able to ask questions, being heard, and voicing their concerns with others. Justin points out that he sees youth leaders give direction to younger children and feeling free and empowered to give feedback and suggestions to one another (e.g., “Hey, I like the activity you prepared,” “what about going this way or that way”). Empowerment in a created learning environment also assists with the implementation of teaching life-skills and the levels of responsibility through the TPSR model. Justin explained,

Teaching life-skills these days is hard. I heard many teachers or students take on the school day and then come to my class in Taekwondo. I asked them why are you taking Taekwondo? Most reply because in school, they do not teach you skills. So, in my class, I Taekwondo and I teach life-skills as well. In YLC, here is a different setting. They emphasize teaching life-skills. It is not only the teacher that says respect is important, but it is to make the youth leaders say hey, respect

is important. To learn how we show respect. How we respect the program, the environment, and the vital time we have together in YLC that is unique.

In summary, Justin described his perspective through race and identity of the youth leader's engagement in the YLC program. Justin discussed youth leaders teaching sports and physical activities as the most effective strategy to bridge cultural gaps. By youth leaders providing a creative learning environment through planned physical activities, communication, and working together through language barriers will assist in bridging cultural gaps and relationship building in YLC. Justin explained that youth leaders build relationships with program children from varying cultural backgrounds by encouraging kids and making them feel welcomed, giving high-fives, and having a racially diverse atmosphere. Youth leaders also build relationships among themselves as they rely on one another to assist with language barriers, relying on one another to lead the physical activities and communicating with kids, and spending time among each other learning one's culture, race, and their perception of the values using the TPSR model.

Justin indicated that youth leaders are empowered when given 'choice and voice' as they develop physical activities teaching the levels of responsibility and core values to program children. He explained that youth leaders could choose the physical activities they would like to implement and teach kids in YLC. Youth leaders are also able to voice their concerns and ask questions with the program director and amongst themselves, giving feedback and suggestions to improve their implementation of the activities using the TPSR model. Justin feels that diverse youth leaders who engage and teach values and

life-skills of TPSR through physical activities can assist in promoting a transfer of knowledge from the gymnasium to the classroom.

Cross-Case Group Analysis

Overall, the group findings and discussions through the narratives of the three staff members show a comparison of bridging cultural gaps, relationship building, and empowerment with the youth leaders in the YLC program. The data for all three staff members shows that respect is honorable and the most vital level of responsibility that is implemented in the YLC program. The three staff members perception of bridging cultural gaps among YLC members are common in areas where reliability requires youth leaders to achieve the objectives of the program utilizing the TPSR model.

The data through Linda's responses show that building cultural gaps consist of youth leaders rely on one another to achieve the goals and objectives of the program with a diverse population who have similar cultural backgrounds as the program children. Lisa's and Justin's data are similar in their responses through their narratives that the program director's role and interaction with youth leaders are vital to bridging cultural gaps among all in the program. Justin also believes that the strategy of youth leaders', creating an inviting learning environment, also assist in bridging cultural gaps for program children.

Through her responses, Linda talks about how race and one's identity is vital in making connections and supportive relationships among youth leaders who serve and interact with different groups of people from different languages. Linda feels that it is essential for youth leaders who are from a similar or familiar background as the program

children, to step forward and lead physical activities—relying on one another leads to building supportive relationships and bonding among youth leaders. Lisa and Justin’s responses focused on respect for others and how YLC leaders made connective relationships among one another, with staff, and program children. Lisa’s responses on fostering relationships and bonding are through ‘broad communication’ among youth leaders due to the background of participants. During the interview, Lisa indicated that youth leaders from diverse backgrounds utilize respect for one another and program children by looking at one’s eyes, having a positive attitude, and being open to listening. Justin’s data on relationship building focuses on youth leaders building a creative environment and processing their moments of reflections and bonding with the assistance of the program director. Language and implementation of the TPSR model were the critical aspects of all three staff members responses in their perceptions in how relationship building was evident among YLC members. Data shows that through communicating and overcoming language barriers, YLC members were able to implement physical activities, teach the levels of responsibility and core values of the TPSR model, to make connecting relationships with program children.

The connection in relationships with YLC members among staff and program children helped to equip youth leaders to feel empowered. Through having supportive relationships, youth leaders in YLC were also able to empower program children. Data shows that Linda’s responses connect to youth leaders and staff members bonding with program children through building supportive relationships. Youth leaders and staff members are empowered by assisting program children in understanding how the core

values are vital to equip youth to feel empowered by understanding the meaning and importance of the YLC program.

By working with youth leaders, Lisa's and Justin's responses connect to the program director's tone. By processing reflection time at the end of the program day, youth leaders can process what values and life-skills they applied to that physical activity. Then youth leaders can reflect on how they have used that particular physical activity in the past and improve their interactions with program children in the future—being able to ask questions and process their interaction with everyone in the program whether the person was of a different race or identity or the same. Lisa's data, through her responses, support that some of the levels of responsibility can have various meanings among diverse populations. Equipping youth leaders to explore using the TPSR model and core values among various settings (community or recreation centers) and populations of varying cultural backgrounds empowers our young leaders to transfer their knowledge of the model and YLC program outside of the gymnasium. By creating a safe environment, Justin's perception is that a child will have 'choice and voice' to speak freely with youth leaders and staff in YLC. Not only does this support his view on building supportive relationships but also empower among the youth leaders in YLC.

The data shows that all three staff members have commonalities in working with others, bridging cultural gaps, relationship building, and empowerment with youth leaders in the YLC program. Their diverse backgrounds show various paths on how they view race and identity among youth leaders in YLC who implement the TPSR model. Data shows that even with language barriers, the intersections, and moments of reflection

through their perspectives, we see the value of respect of one's race, identity, and diversity is highly valued and vital among youth leaders in YLC who implement the TPSR model.

CHAPTER V

INDIVIDUAL CASE STUDIES: YLC MEMBERS

The purpose of this descriptive study was to investigate how aspects of culturally relevant pedagogy are present in the experiences of former YLC leaders as they implemented the TPSR model and core values. By using a case study design, this chapter provides the individual case findings for five former youth leaders based on their perspectives of how race and identity were impacted working with students from the YLC program.

Each case with the five participants is presented in four phases. Each case provides background information associated with the youth leader's profile and demographic information. The second phase, the Participant's Perspective, gives a description of premises and its impact related to the participants through race and identity, such as values of self-awareness, influence and expectations, and individuality. The third phase suggests findings related to the youth leaders' impact through race and identity in the YLC program in terms of the research questions. Data have been checked, approved, and agreed upon by the participants in this study.

Values of Self-Awareness

The theme **Values of Self Awareness** includes the core values, and life-skills, and being aware of conscious knowledge of one's own feelings, character, and motives that were taught and transferred to their daily lives. The core values with a particular focus on

the teaching and learning experience and potential benefits for youth participants must be “experienced” over time and practiced and internalized to some degree (Martinek & Lee, 2012). Throughout the five case studies, the former youth leaders discussed how core values (respect, effort, self-direction, helping others, transfer) and life-skills, impacted their lives, and the lessons learned using the overall findings from the case study data. According to the case findings, effort and self-direction were the most significant core **values of self-awareness** that were significant in their moments of reflection during and after the YLC program.

Influences and Expectations

In the current study, substantial evidence shows how the theme of **influences and expectations** impacted the lives of former youth leaders. These reflections are shown through the responses of the participants as they relations to race and culture with diverse populations. The participants discussed how their interactions among other youth leaders, and with the program youth influenced their daily lives and expectations their role and responsibilities among peers and their present-day life reflect through the core values learned the YLC program.

Identity

Youth leaders discuss ways the core values helped participants deal with race and identity in working with program children and in their own lives. In this study, former youth leaders discussed how language, sense of belonging, citizenship, connections, and familiarity in race, culture, and ethnicity shaped their **identity** through the core values in YLC.

Case 1—Mariah

Background Information

Mariah is a 19-year-old African American female from Greensboro, North Carolina. Both of Mariah's parents and older sister are African American descent and were born in the United States. At the age of 12, Mariah lost her mother due to cancer and lives with her father and sister when she comes home from college between semesters. She describes her relationship with her father as being very close and would likely call him her best friend if she had to choose one. Mariah has not identified a religious belief but often speaks about God and Christianity when referring to her religion of choice.

In high school, Mariah stated that she considers her high school experience to be a pleasant experience. Mariah explained that one of the reasons she chose to attend this high school (the Middle College at UNCG) was due to its reputation. Mariah stated, "I wanted to attend a good school that would challenge me intellectually and helps me reach my future goals while having an overall great experience." She explained that she had good teachers, but the work was also very challenging and time-consuming. Mariah described high school as having several close friends, but no specific best friend. She explained, "I had a large group of friends, as the six of us stayed together close from freshman to senior year. We still hang out even though we attend different universities."

As a former YLC youth leader for over two years, Mariah applied for the YLC program in high school after hearing the upperclassman talk about their experiences and how much they enjoyed being a part of the program. After some brief conversations with

the upperclassman, Mariah reached out to Dr. Martinek about joining the YLC program. She describes the YLC program as a great program that offers young people the ability to get involved and stay involved over a period of time. Mariah stated, “I appreciate how YLC offers refugees and youth leaders opportunities to work with others from diverse populations and gives us leadership experiences through physical activities.”

Currently, Mariah is a student at Duke University majoring in History, minoring in chemistry, and concentrating in United States History. Upon graduation, Mariah plans to attend medical school.

Participant’s Perspective

Values of Self-awareness. Mariah explained that self-direction was the core value that impacted her life the most. Mariah taught the core value of self-direction with program children and felt she has always had a strong moral compass that has guided her throughout life. Mariah discussed how she remains focused on her goals in school and life while establishing a visual plan on what to do next for her future. Mariah wants to implement her design plan and be intentional with every step of her life. In doing so, effort was also a quality she learned in the YLC program that impacted her life, describing how it is also a part of self-direction. Mariah stated, “effort played a huge role in my life because I feel like effort goes with self-direction. It is one thing to make those plans, but it is another thing to carry them out.” She explained that effort and self-direction are significant to her personally and her leadership style in YLC compared to some of her peers. Mariah feels the values have more significance and meaning to her life

and sets her apart from other youth leaders in YLC and peers her age since the loss of her mother:

Everyone in YLC can put forth effort. Even as youth leaders, we put forth effort in developing physical activities that the kids will enjoy. If no one tries to put forth effort, then that means they are just not trying to do anything. After losing my mom, I have learned that I have to put forth effort and at least try to do new things to help my family and that carries over from YLC.

Mariah talks about how she feels the TPSR values were viewed by herself and other youth leaders in the YLC program when most of the participants are minorities:

I think the TPSR values are very important; however, I did not understand them and their impact until really my third year of being a part of the program. I realize it while applying to colleges and talking about being a part of the program, and I had to analyze and contextualize it. After speaking to other youth leaders, it was not just me. I had to ask myself, what is this doing, and it got me interested and involved by looking at what type of difference I am making and how am I making it. How is what I see today when I am telling them [program children] to do it, how is it affecting the behavior in my future? For the children, when they come consistently to YLC, they will also learn the values, and it becomes the norm and something they want to learn and follow because many children build connections and strong relationships with us as youth leaders. Many times, they want to be like us and do things that we do. We [youth leaders] have to be respectful and remember to take what we learned to the fifth one in TPSR, transfer. Remembering to talk to children about taking what we learned outside the gym and take it home being kind and respectful to our families.

Mariah also shared that being a leader in YLC has also taught her self-awareness and life-skills through personal privilege, being crafty, and being creative. She described how she doubted herself and her creativity in planning various physical activities and through the core values in TPSR. Personal privilege allowed her to be creative and express herself freely through planning and developing physical activities around the

TPSR core values. Mariah also shared that she never considered herself to be the most crafty and artistic person but being in YLC helped her to open her creativity:

When we do activities, and if the kids did not like it, we would change it on the fly and find a way to still get the point across and make it more engaging for them. I feel like that was one of the skills I learned the most that taught me also about volunteering your time and being glad to be there in YLC.

In learning about the values of TPSR and how the YLC program affected her life through self-awareness, Mariah discussed moments of influence and expectations through reflections that she learned and enabled her to ‘get outside’ of herself and concentrate on the bigger picture.

Influences and Expectations. Mariah discussed that being patient was an important factor she learned to ‘get outside of herself’ and her own head, thoughts, and perceptions. She explained that things make sense to us around our own universe and things that make one comfortable. Mariah discussed how being around the refugee, and immigrant children taught and influenced her to ‘get outside of herself’ and her own way of thinking and learn more about other people. She describes how YLC gave her the confidence to visit and work with youth at a local community center. Mariah also expressed how working with refugee children in YLC made her aware of her privilege as an American citizen:

I enjoyed going to one of the community centers. I cannot remember which facility because it was somewhere off the highway. I remember you know, going and hanging out with the kids teaching them and doing some things with them and activities. I think the biggest thing that is giving me and teaching me a lot about self-awareness and teaching me about my privileges as an American citizen.

Mariah discussed her perspective of having mentors, youth leaders, and adults present who are the same race or cultural background as the participants in the YLC program. She stated, “having the presence of diversity and different people from different places is definitely important and something the kids should be shown. However, I do not think that necessarily has to be somebody from the kids’ background.” Mariah explained that it is essential for kids to see diversity and socialize as we get to know people from various races. Mariah stated,

I think it’s important from a diversity standpoint. I think that if you can have youth leaders dedicated to getting involved and engaged with the children, that’s really all you need. I think that race is not as big of an issue to younger [program children] kids as it is to older people.

Mariah discussed how her experiences in YLC prepared her for college and life outside of the program. Mariah explained that one of the most significant impacts that YLC provided was encountering different races and cultures of people and being prepared to encounter even more. She stated, “Without having the YLC program, I would not have been as open in understanding and to process being wrapped in a diverse group or as open to another person’s culture.” Mariah explains the impact of the program stating that youth leaders have to be committed to coming to the program every week; leaders must spend time together interacting, building relationships and understanding one another while also learning to get along with others. Mariah also explains how YLC taught her not to be judgmental. Mariah stated,

In YLC, we made a commitment to come every week repeatedly for four hours. We spend time together outside of YLC as well. Everyone [youth leaders] had to

get along that didn't, even though most of us did. Everyone always made an effort in YLC, and I feel like that is one of the biggest things that being exposed to so many different cultures taught me to be accepting of more cultures. My experience with some cultures with children in YLC taught me to not be judgmental but compassionate with how I look and judge people. YLC helps you understand how much race and their culture and ethnicity play a role in their lives and how they have no control over that.

Identity. Mariah discussed how the English language is a part of American culture, and most citizens speak this as their first language. In the YLC program, Mariah feels that her race and cultural background is not one of American culture being that she is African American. Mariah explained since she was born in the United States, she does not feel she is looked down upon due to her American culture and speaking the English language around refugee children who typically stereotype African-Americans as people who should not 'be here' [live in the United States]. Mariah discussed being in YLC and reflecting on her race and ethnicity as a young African American female and identity being privileged to be born in America and being an American citizen and not feeling judged by refugees and others in YLC. She stated,

I am not usually looked at like that, people telling me oh you should not be here and things like that. So it just kind of helped me recognize my privilege because being around the children, it is not something that everyone talks about, it is not outright said, you know, but we have this group of people from different places all coming here to try to make a better life for themselves and their children. You know, whether they have a choice or not, there are so many challenges and obstacles they are facing, that in itself for a lot of us, being born in America and being an American citizen for generations is not something we all think about as youth leaders because it is not a challenge for us.

Mariah described how seeing others who are going through the experience of being an American citizen is 'eye-opening' to herself and all of the youth leaders in YLC.

She recalls a time where the children were talking about America but did not know how many states there were in America. Mariah stated,

None of the children knew except one, and I was thinking, who is going to teach them American culture, American History, and American life? A lot of immigrants and refugees people come to America and think Americans and people living in America say you should learn the language, do this and that and you should learn how to assimilate. However, where are they going to learn this? Who is going to teach them? That was one of the biggest things that I have learned from being a part of YLC. You just have to be a teacher that can learn from your students.

Mariah described how similarities of a person's race or culture influence how she interacts with them or others while implementing the TPSR model. She feels that for the program children, race does not play a factor in the model itself because they are so young. Mariah explained that due to their age, she does not feel that race is something the program children have been taught. However, Mariah states, "I do not think race is factored into it. That is something that other people think are important." She continues to describe how youth leaders in YLC feel that race and one's identity is essentially saying,

That is definitely the case for youth leaders that a lot of times we look at the make-up of the kid's diversity. Who is coming from where? What ethnic issues may be going on with certain regions? That was something that we either were or not aware of, and that could to a degree, affect how we interacted with the children based on our interpretation of what may or may not have been acceptable to their race or culture. We tried to find out because we have so many people from different backgrounds. We try always to be respectful of different cultures and different ethnic groups.

Mariah explained that youth leaders should not enter the YLC program with expectations of thinking, "I want to specifically help other the refugee's community,

Black children or other children.” Mariah described how YLC impacts the lives of youth leaders through leadership opportunities and learning factors that are important in life just as the program impacts program children through life-skills and levels of responsibility. Mariah discussed the advice she gives to other minority youth leaders who join YLC and are seeking leadership opportunities:

I would tell youth leaders to make an impact on every child and every student as much as you can. There are so many learning opportunities and you will learn more about yourself. YLC is a program with a huge leadership opportunity as well as learn how to be a leader, a follower, a learner. I would advise them not to come [into YLC] thinking I want to help the refugee community specifically. I want to specifically help other Black children like me, or White children you know because there is something that factors into what draws a lot of people to the program. If you come in looking at it like that what will happen is over time you will find, there is not as much of a difference for the children. Of course, these are things you notice. What the YLC program gives to me I have noticed, is a lot of different things like interactions, how race and things like that helps make connections, and how people behave. I think for the children; my biggest advice is to tell all youth leaders to just to come in and treat them like children. Race doesn’t matter to them unless someone tells them it does, and you know people are not going to tell them that. Babies are not born hating or racist or you know issues like that. It is something they are taught in time.

In summary, Mariah’s values of self-awareness focus on self-determination and effort. She discussed how effort had been a large part of her journey, which is shown through her approach in ‘getting outside of herself’ through interactions with diverse populations and cultures. Mariah discussed how working with refugees and immigrants made her aware of her personal privilege as an African American woman and as an American citizen. She discussed her perspective of not being judged as an African American woman who lives in America while in the YLC program. Mariah is aware of her privilege to live in America and the influences and expectations that come from being

in an environment that could be judgmental. Yet, being a leader in YLC has also taught Mariah the importance of self-awareness and life-skills through personal privilege, being crafty, and being creative, which are components that influenced her as a leader. Mariah's seems to be more aware of her identity and the identity of others from diverse populations since being in YLC. She describes how the diversity of youth leaders and program children helped her with her own identity as an American citizen. This has also impacted other youth leaders who work with refugees and immigrants who were unaware of the struggle's kids have to become American citizens and their daily lives. Mariah credits for YLC program for 'opening her eyes' to 'get outside of herself' and be more open to various races, cultures, and diverse populations.

Case 2—Jazmine

Background Information

Jazmine is an 18-year-old Asian female from Sri-Lanka who speaks Tamil, which is the native language of Sri-Lanka, and English. Both of Jazmine's parents are Sri-Lankan descent and came to the United States to give their children a positive future and education. Jazmine was born in the United States and lived at home with her parents and younger brother. As a Biology Major in Pre-Optometry, Jazmine attends college at the University of North Carolina at Greensboro. She is currently on track to complete her college degree within the next 2 years. Jazmine identifies her religion as Hinduism and practices her faith of love, peace, and harmony as part of her daily lifestyle. Jazmine was exposed to YLC her sophomore year of high school and joined after meeting her school's program liaison Dr. Tom Martinek. She participated in YLC for over 2 years.

Participant's Perspective

Values of Self-awareness. Jazmine explained that effort was the value that impacted her life the most in comparison to the other TPSR values. The reason why she stated that is, “because effort can be displayed in all aspects of life and without trying.” Jazmine taught that effort is needed for a person to succeed in life. Through her experiences in the YLC program, she learned effort was displaying solid work which contributes to prosperity and success. Jazmine described how youth leaders build relationships by displaying effort in trying to develop physical activities that engage program children to fit their interest, culture, and values. Jazmine stated,

The first year, I had to kind of feel out how the kids were and what they enjoyed. The youth leaders and I tailored the activities to fit the kids [program children] likings, their interests, their culture, their values, and their weaknesses and strengths. By weakness and strengths, I feel we as youth leaders would be able to notice if someone did not work well with other students. We would tailor the activity to enhance their level of respect for others, and it helped us to work together as youth leaders as well.

Jazmine expressed that the TPSR values are viewed in a positive light by the youth leaders of YLC. She explained that the youth leaders see that the values and life-skills need to be exercised in the real world beyond high school and college. Jazmine expressed that she feels her identity and status as a minority, compared to Caucasians, is viewed as very low:

As a minority, when we step out to the real world, the sad truth is, we are down here while Caucasians are up here, so this is great to be implementing the values at such a young age because we get to realize the proper way to have respect, self-direction, effort, helping others, and transferring. It is a rooted thing at a young age, so you get a head start when you actually step into the real world.

Jazmine explained how all of the levels of responsibility had been assimilated in all aspects of her life:

Respect, in a way where you have to be able to respects everyone in order to strengthen teamwork. This has also influenced the way I interact with people and diverse populations. Self-direction in understanding your purpose in life. That is always going to drive you to do the best in your everyday life. I feel that self-direction and effort go hand-in-hand very well. Self-direction drives you to put forth your all, so your effort and that can be used in a positive light by helping others, and that is a transferable skill that can be applied in all aspects of life including school, work, the gym, everywhere.

Influences and Expectations. Jazmine discussed how exposure to different populations, cultures, and the impact of YLC has helped her deal with social and racial issues. She explains that the experiences in the YLC program has given her exposure to different cultures, the diversity of populations, and being able to interact with others from varying backgrounds. Jazmine stated, “I think it is pretty cool that we are interacting with younger students because you see how they are raised and the rooted cultural beliefs and values they have.” She explained that through exposure youth leaders can have a better understanding of how those students will interact in the future. It helps us as leaders become exposed to others in a safe environment.

Jazmine said that she is ‘a lot more cautious’ since transferring new knowledge gained as a youth leader in the YLC program to the outside of the gymnasium into ‘the real world.’ Jazmine described how being a role model for others have influenced her decisions along with the other youth leaders in YLC:

At the end of the YLC program day, the peer coaches and I would often reflect, and receive constructive criticism and praise from other peer coaches as well as

staff and Dr. Martinek. I would always take this to heart. I do not take it personally, but I take it to heart because I know that it's not always about me. It is about how we are interacting as youth leaders, how I am molding the students [program children], and the impact we are making with the kids. So, whatever they tell me, the good things, I try to enhance. The bad things, I will make sure I decrease those things, and it makes me more cautious towards the decisions I am making and that transfers to the decisions I am making in everyday life as well.

Jazmine described how interacting with other cultures and populations influenced her thinking as she worked with other peer coaches implementing physical activities. She explained that as peer coaches, there were many times youth leaders had to work together to break down physical activities and directions into 'baby steps' for program children to understand that people learn differently. Jazmine discussed how, as youth leaders had to break down directions into several steps and had to be aware that all kids may not reach the final step of the activity:

When we are creating the lesson plans, we have to kind of tailor the activity for each age group, and each race sometimes. We [youth leaders] would do something where we may think it is simple, but a different race may feel like this is a new thing. When we see the response from the students and the kids, we realize that maybe this is not the best way to approach this [activity]. Maybe we need to kind of switch it up. This has definitely molded my attitude towards learning.

Identity. Jazmine described one of the strategies utilized in YLC to bridge cultural gaps was to recognize one's cultural and individual differences. She explained this is the first step in realizing what youth leaders need to do in order to enhance connections among themselves and with the program children. Jazmine described an example of bridging cultural and individual differences of diverse groups during one of the free times in the YLC program:

In the beginning, when we would have free time, there was a predominant minority group of people. We had people from Africa that day in the program. I remember there were three girls I would notice would always dance, and I thought it was interesting. I was like, oh, I used to dance at a younger age, and I talked to them, and they taught me some dances. They told me that back home, that's something they would do. I noticed some Hispanic girl was looking at them dance. So, I was like, "Oh, can you teach me how to dance?" Then I noticed the Hispanic girls were playing jump rope and I was like, "Oh, do you guys want to learn?" I feel like that's a way to bridge cultural the cultural differences and they all become friends. I think that's a great way to do that. Noticing cultural differences, individual differences, and then bringing that together.

Jazmine's expressed her perspective on having other minority youth leaders present who are the same race or cultural background as the participants in YLC as "absolutely super important." She contributes seeing youth leaders and program children similar in race and culture in YLC as a 'boost in their confidence level'; especially those who are also Asian-American as herself. Jazmine explained that being able to see other minorities in YLC shows representation to program children that they can be young leaders as well:

I feel like I have a deeper understanding and connection when I interact with other Asian American. Immediately, I feel like I have a connection with them, and I feel like the students feel the same way. It's just who we are and it's just natural. I remember growing up and feeling like there was a lack of representations for myself and the media. Growing up I didn't see many Asian-Americans so to see and work with other youth leaders and kids who are Asian American is great.

Overall, Jazmine discussed how exposure to diverse populations and cultures of people from varying backgrounds within the YLC program have impacted how she manages social and racial issues. Jazmine feels that the values and levels of responsibility implemented among youth leaders are positive because it helps them once they step into

‘the real world’ by recognizing the proper ways to have respect, self-direction, effort, helping others, and transferring information learned from YLC into everyday life.

Jazmine credits exposure to diverse populations and cultures and working with other youth leaders in the YLC program as one of the most valuable experiences that impacted her approach in working with others.

Case 3—Neo

Background Information

Neo is a 20-year-old African American male from McLeansville, North Carolina. Neo and his parents are of African American descent and were born in the United States. Neo has two younger brothers, ages 13 and 17 who live at home with his parents. He describes his relationship with his family as being very good. Neo describes his family bond, explaining he does not hide anything from his parents, which allows them to accept who he is and acknowledges his true character. Neo identifies his religion as a Nondenominational Christian. His favorite things to do are traveling and learning more about people and their cultural differences.

Neo was inspired to attend high school at the Middle College of UNCG seeking an opportunity for recognition of his academic excellence. He wanted to be in an environment that challenged him to excel and grow as a student. Neo explained that he had an enjoyable experience in high school. Though the middle college was not a traditional school, he said that he feels he did not miss out on anything different from a typical high schooler. He considers himself as being very social and active in school, having a multitude of friends and established strong relationships with all of his teachers.

Neo believes that high school contributed as a platform for success towards his life's future endeavors.

During his junior year of high school, Neo was selected to YLC after submitting his application on why he would like to join the program. In working with the YLC program for over two years, Neo said that he genuinely enjoyed everything about the YLC program:

One of my favorite things about YLC was the type of leader it made me. Most students are not given opportunities to develop leadership skills at such an early age. The freedom to create activities with children also helped to improve my independence. The skills acquired from YLC are ones that will last a lifetime.

Currently, Neo is approaching his third year at North Carolina State University majoring in Zoology as a student-athlete in Track and Field. Neo implied that Zoology is a broad field when it comes to studying animals. He has always known he wanted to study animals in the future but was unsure of the exact path he wanted to follow. Choosing Zoology as his field of study allows Neo to see the many opportunities the field has to offer.

Upon completing his undergraduate degree, Neo plans to get his master's degree and will evaluate whether to continue to pursue his education with a doctoral degree or work in Zoology. He hopes to have a future career in phylogeny and diversity.

Participant's Perspective

Values of Self-awareness. Neo discussed how self-direction was the TPSR value taught in the YLC program which impacted his life the most. He explained that self-direction was a value instilled in him throughout his life. Neo described self-direction as

following a path to where he is now in life. Neo discussed how his elementary and middle school were not the best schools that influenced his life, so he 'self-directed' himself to the Middle College of UNCG to have more opportunities:

Even before I knew the value of self-direction, it was something I had used all of my life. I self-directed myself to the Middle College and then that's where a lot of opportunities opened up for me. I feel like if it had not have been for self-direction, my life would not have been what it is now.

Neo described how learning to overcome language barriers was a strategy he utilized in the YLC program to bridge cultural gaps. He explained his experience culturally in talking with program children saying that "if people don't speak the best English it is not so much of telling them but showing them what to do and demonstrating the physical activities." Neo discuss how youth leaders depend on one another and how it helps them to identify their personal strengths and areas of improvement to bridge cultural gaps among diverse populations:

Culturally, if people do not speak the best English, it is not so much of telling them but showing them what to do, or like giving them a demonstration. We can hear another youth leader that is leading a group, and sometimes even some of the peers who might speak better English, have them slow down the correct way to do things. That is probably the biggest cultural gap is just language, that language barrier. Whenever you are trying to explain something but the kids [program children] are not really following. So, most of the time it is easy to sense that, and this is when you just try to use demonstrations rather than words. This helps to know your sense of awareness in ways to improve through language.

Neo discussed how the values of the TPSR model and life-skills had impacted his life since being in YLC. Neo talked about how his race and identity have not changed, but he is more knowledgeable about who he is and gaining more respect for himself and

others and understanding that everyone is different. Neo explained that he is more self-aware of himself and appreciative of other's differences:

I have more respect for myself and understanding that everyone is different and being different is a good thing. People that have differences should not be frowned upon—it also made me feel humble seeing a lot of kids [program children] who are not as fortunate as I am. I am blessed being able to lead them. I want to be the best role model possible for them and try to teach them [program children] and instill as many values in them as possible so that they can be successful in the future.

Influences and Expectations. Neo discussed how the values are viewed by others when most of the participants are minorities. He explained that the expectation from others outside of the program looks like the target audience are minorities when it is refugees and immigrants. Also, people from the outside will think the values are just for minorities when it is geared towards all youth:

From the outside, the others are majorities and it is going to seem like we [youth leaders] are trying to help them because they are minorities when that is not necessarily the case. I feel like if you put everybody in the same category and expose them and show them what we as youth leaders are trying to do with the values, then it would be seen as just like a way to help youth rather than a way to help minorities. From the outside, I feel like if you do not know what is going on and you just see leaders helping a bunch of minority kids, you are going to think they are helping minorities rather than they are helping kids in different socioeconomic levels.

Neo also discussed how a person's race or culture influences how he interacts with them or others while implementing the TPSR model. Neo explained that whenever he is around someone that is similar in race or culture, it is easier to be himself all the time. Neo describes how respect is the greatest value that youth leaders can show to one

another, themselves, and to program children in the YLC program. Neo feels that when he is around people from diverse populations, he does not let them look down upon him or others in YLC. In YLC, Neo explained that everyone respects one another regardless of their differences.

Neo discussed how reflection impacted himself and the youth leaders in YLC. Neo described how youth leaders would reflect on their experiences working with youth in the YLC program. He explained how youth leaders would discuss how the program children were not listening and being attentive when they first began the program. As the children continued to attend the program, he noted how youth leaders discussed seeing a change and transition in behavior:

When youth are going from group to group, sometimes they learn different values, respect, responsibilities, and integrity, but then when they go to another group, they might learn just one of the values or life-skills. If they hear the word respect a few times, they are going to pick up on it. I feel that reflection part actually starts when we really think about what it means to be respectful. For leaders, whenever we are in a group, it starts when we are able to talk to each other and get opinions from everyone on how to improve. I feel like that is a good way to reflect on us as leaders from diverse backgrounds because we learn new tactics and ways to improve things that we have been doing wrong, or even ideas that we have not thought of before.

Neo discussed how being in YLC influenced his ability to become 'more aware of what is going on' and more responsive to issues that affect other minority participants in the program. He describes how issues such as racism or being respectful to one another with children who are very young in YLC, can be addressed since they are the most vulnerable:

Being in YLC makes me more aware of issues such as racism and being disrespectful to one another can happen. If I see it going on, I immediately stop it, because I know it is not okay. The kids at this point in their lives, their age being so young, there are probably the most vulnerable. If you tell them at that age that it is not okay and you cannot do that, then they probably will not do that when they get older. However, if we let it slide then they are going to continue that behavior and it may even get worse. That is definitely something I look out for. Even if it is not racial, or cultural, like just arguing or they are not respecting each other in general, I am going to shut down the behavior immediately and teach them a better way to go about it.

Identity. Neo explained that it is ‘most definitely’ essential to have minority instructors, mentors, and leaders present who are the same race or cultural background as the participants:

Most definitely, especially for like younger people because as you get older, you see things other than color. You start to understand, but for younger kids [program children] if they see someone that looks like them, sounds like them, or acts like them, they are probably going to be more inclined to listen to them in YLC. They will be more inclined to open up and follow direction, so I feel like that is a good way to get them to understand TPSR values because when it is coming from somebody similar to yourself, you kind of think that it is the right things. They see someone that reminds them of their mom and think, I know my mom is a good person, so they have got to be a good person as well.

Neo explained how exposure in the YLC program helped to prepare him to deal with social and racial issues in his life. Neo discussed how he was exposed to much diversity learning about people from varying backgrounds, cultures, and food. He describes how exposure to various cultures made him more open-minded and understanding of people who are different from him. He continued describing how being open-minded and understanding transferred with racial issues. Neo stated, “There are people from different races and just the fact of being exposed to that in YLC, prepared

me for later on in life. I had time to adjust rather than just being thrown into it when I got to a bigger environment [as I got older].” Neo described an experience in YLC that helped to ‘open his eyes’ racially in that everyone does not see others the same way that he does:

One of the biggest examples of a racial issue was in YLC with one of the kids [program children]. I have had some of the kids be racist before. I had a kid of Asian descent be racist to one of the youth leaders, asking him why he had mud on his face. He was asking why he was so black. I told the kid everybody looks different. You do not look the same as another person in your group; that’s just how it is. So, it just kind of ‘opened my eyes’ to like not everybody thinks the same way I do. Like, I don’t see color, really, so whenever I saw that, it’s kind of just helped me understand that people—I did not really think that people would blatantly just say racial stuff like that. I mean, because it has never happened to me, but I guess it just showed me that it happens, and you just have to learn how to deal with it.

In summary, the TPSR core value that Neo taught to program children and impacted his life the most was self-direction. He discussed how respect of one’s differences has made him more humble, appreciative, and fortunate to be a role model and lead program children in YLC. Neo stated that it is ‘most definitely’ necessary having minority instructors, mentors, and leaders present who are the same race or cultural background as the participants.

Case 4—Mufasa

Background Information

Mufasa is a 20-year-old Asian male who was born in Pakistan along with his mother and father. Both of Mufasa’s parents and two younger brothers are of Pakistani descent and moved to the United States when he was very young. Mufasa describes his

relationship with his family as very close and supportive. Mufasa said his family has a very structured lifestyle that practices customs towards his faith. Mufasa identifies his religion as a Sunni Muslim.

Mufasa attended the Middle College at UNCG for high school desiring a non-traditional program that would challenge him in the classroom while seeking an opportunity for recognition of academic excellence. He wanted to be in an environment that pushed him to excel and helped him grow as a student. Mufasa describes high school as having a small group of friends and a great experience. He also said that he had a few challenges with people who saw him as different due to his race and religious background. Fortunately, Mufasa discussed that most of his peers accept him for who he is as a person 'inside and out.'

Mufasa heard about the YLC program through a teacher at school and inquired about becoming a part of the program. Later, he was notified that he was accepted as a YLC youth leader and credited the program for helping him throughout his later years in high school. Mufasa credits YLC into becoming a leader. He explained that most students are not given opportunities to develop leadership skills at such an early age. The freedom to create his own activities with the children also helped him to improve his independence. Mufasa explained that the skills acquired from YLC are ones that will last a lifetime. After high school, Mufasa works part-time at a local store and continues his education at UNCG towards one day working in Zoology. He chose Zoology since it is a broad field when it comes to studying animals. Mufasa says that he has always known that he wanted to study animals but was unsure of the exact path he wanted to follow.

Upon graduation, Mufasa wants to remain in the United States and support his family. When he completes his undergraduate degree, he will continue his education pursuing a master's degree and then decide whether or not to get a doctorate degree. He hopes to have a future career studying animal phylogeny and diversity. He also hopes to visit family members in his homeland of Pakistan.

Participant's Perspective

Values of Self-awareness. Through his learned experiences, that he taught in YLC, Mufasa said that the core value of effort impacted his life the most. He explains that effort is the value that has been the hardest for him to implement in his life over the years. Mufasa struggles in finding motivation and the will to do things even though it is not always easy. Mufasa discussed how he tried to fight through effort with the temptation of wanting to sometimes just go home and lay around in the bed. He credits YLC as being a motivator to equip him to learn how to get through that challenge versus wanting to go home and lay around. He discussed how teaching the core value of effort to program children helps him to instill effort in his own life by holding himself accountable by 'showing up' and being a role model for others. Mufasa stated, "I am trying to be a role model for young kids so realizing and trying to teach kids makes me realize I cannot teach kids these things if I cannot even do it [teach about the value of effort] myself."

Mufasa discussed how the interpreted the TPSR values were shared culturally around the world but learned differently being in YLC. He explained in an example using the value of respect thinking all people respect their parents.

We focus on a lot in our groups, specifically the value of respect. I felt like using the idea of respecting your parents was culturally the same. I used something that like transgresses some cultural boundaries. Even though their [youth leaders and program children] culture is different. We [youth leaders] go to two different elementary schools with our program and there are a lot of kids there. Some of the kids in the program are immigrants or born from immigrant parent families, but like all the kids who were born here [United States], respect is something we have to work on. The idea of respect is something we bring up a lot of times. We were asking all of the kids would you utilize respect like outside of the YLC program? We would talk about their home lives and find out way they do and do not use respect at home and with their parents.

Influences and Expectations. Mufasa discussed that one of the strategies he implements to bridge cultural gaps is talking to program children about music artist, art, and various sports. He stated several times that he was not born in the United States and can understand how elementary school children feel coming from a different country. Therefore, he feels the age of the children being similar to the youth leaders, helps to bridge those gaps and give them similarities of topics to discuss, including being raised in the United States. Mufasa further elaborated:

I am not from around here [the United States], and a lot of the kids and youth leaders were born and raised here. It was a little difficult for me, [implementing the TPSR model and connecting with youth] I think the age thing helped because we were similar in age. A lot of current topics are things we can talk about. That is where we begin to bridge those cultural gaps. Even though I am not from here, being raised here [in the United States], I had some knowledge of those things because they are currently hot topics.

Mufasa explained that he feels there should be a ‘healthy mix’ in having minority instructors, mentors, and youth leaders present who are the same race or cultural background as program children. He described the ‘healthy mix’ as having someone that

you can learn about their culture while sharing with beautiful people who come from the same situation as yourself.

We all come from so many different experiences, and if you have somebody who comes from the same situation, you might be able to understand, and they will be able to help you understand as well. Although it is very important to learn to work with and respect people from other cultures, I feel like it is also nice. Especially, since the little kids need to have somebody there, like one or two people, who are from the same culture like in our program [YLC]. In YLC, they had two people per group model, so it was like they [program children] had one person from a grouping of different cultures. That was very important and a great thing to implement as well.

Mufasa discussed that he used ‘saucer memory’ in order to engage students. He explained that ‘saucer memory’ is where a person would go and see where they have done this before in their life and how affected them. He described how youth leaders could talk about the TPSR model and core values, but it is not until they can find some way to show the program children some form of real work application. Mufasa described how this happened:

As youth leaders, we have to find a way to show kids [program children] they can actually go out and use the core values in the real world. Saucer memory is something we used to do with every activity for the week. We would have a TPSR value that we were trying to get across, and we would try to give them some sort of homework in a sense. We would tell them to go out and see where you have used this before in your life. Wherever you used this value before in your life, how has it affected you? So, I thought that was pretty effective [by engaging the students] because it gave them a chance to talk to us [youth leaders].

Identity. Mufasa discussed how being in YLC helped him deal with social and racial issues. He explained that he enjoyed working with people from diverse populations but not sure if the message is coming across. He realized that working with other

different groups, he frequently questions if the message of what they are teaching through the TPSR values is getting across. He discussed how he could relate to trying to understand the culture of America through the values because he is continuing to learn and value them through his identity as well:

I think working with people from diverse populations, I do not know if they understand the values or if I am getting them across or not, especially being they are so young. I really like working with individuals from those different cultural groups. That [exposure] helped us as youth leaders and I personally be able to realize that we are not that different. We have common similarities even if we are different races, cultures, and backgrounds.

Mufasa discussed how the YLC experience helped him deal with social and racial issues in his life. He described his experience as ‘being able to help him in life’ through exposure. He explained that meeting others from different populations in life and with YLC, you have to work with people from different ethnic groups and become culturally aware, just like learning someone’s racial background. Mufasa stated,

The experience helped prepare me even if I do not realize it on a conscious level that was almost a subconscious level to be able to equip those groups. Before coming to YLC, I was a really awkward kid. I did not really interact with kids. I just did not because I felt like that as well being a kid. I viewed them [kids from different varying backgrounds] differently. However, if you go to YLC, I realized in the end we are all just human. It is not that hard just treating somebody like a person. All you have to do is remember that one rule that in the end you guys are both human beings with feelings, thoughts, ideas, opinions and that’s all. If you remember that, you are good to go.

Mufasa discussed the core values and life-skills that he experienced that connects YLC members to their racial and cultural identity. He explained that he used to be ‘ashamed’ of his culture at times where he ‘just didn’t really like it.’ Mufasa described it

as not complaining or hating his culture but just not owning his culture and therefore, his identity. He explained that speaking his native language, URDU, is very different, and he did not learn to appreciate his cultural background until he entered the YLC program:

I did not own my culture or language as my own. I was not out there complaining about it. I speak Urdu and feel like I stood out. However, after I went to YLC, I learned I should appreciate my own culture. Now I think it is great! I have been raised here [in the United States], it's great to know and be aware and at the end of the program, to learn that you survived. That is because I had to learn how to adopt parts of this [American] culture here t my life. I learned that I should also remember to stick to my roots and remember where I am from. I think I am more Americanized honestly, especially because I do not really have contact with people from my own cultural group. It was mostly just like I was much more exposed.

Mufasa continues to explain that he understands his parents did their best to help him with his feelings. He credits other youth leaders who were similar in age as the piece that gave him a connection versus his parents due to the gap in their ages. He explains that meeting people who were similar in age and shared the same cultural background helped him to feel more comfortable with those around him. Mufasa said that “I adopted some things that I feel are part of another culture. You have to adapt parts of that culture to be able to survive, like language. Doing this was great for me.”

Case 5—Andrew Luck

Background Information

Andrew is a 19-year-old Hispanic male who was born and raised in Greensboro, NC. His parents were born and raised in Mexico and moved to the United States before he was born. Andrew visits Mexico as often as he can and describes his parent's native country as entirely different than the United States, stating it is a different people,

different customs, and a different language. Andrew mentioned that he loves his family, and they mean more to him than anything else. Andrew has two brothers and one sister who lives at home with his parents. He describes his relationship with his family as very respectful and loveable. He has a few best friends that have always been there for him throughout his life. Andrew identifies his religion as being a Christian and believer in Christ.

Andrew was inspired to attend the Middle College at UNCG in wanting to challenge himself more academically. He describes his high school experience as enjoyable and likes having wonderful teachers and peers. After his sophomore year of high school, Andrew inquired about the YLC program to gain volunteer hours and learn more about working with children. Andrew discussed that working in the YLC program was a great experience that he loved and enjoyed because he was able to interact with children and make their days better. By having three siblings at home, Andrew felt that he could make a difference in children's lives just as he experienced at home.

Andrew attends college at North Carolina Agricultural and Technical State University (NCAT) and majors in Business Management. He chose this major in hopes to have his own flying transportation business. Upon completing college, Andrew plans to join the United States Air Force as an Officer.

Participant's Perspective

Values of Self-awareness. Andrew discussed how teaching the core value of effort was the TPSR value which impacted his life the most. He wanted to put forth his best. Andrew discussed how being his best means putting more into things he does in his

daily life, such as completing his homework and interacting with other people. He explained that displaying these forms of effort while making sure that he completes his education and going to work daily are ways he puts forth '100% effort' in everything in his life.

Andrew talked about the strategies he implemented as he engaged in program children in the YLC program using TPSR core values. He explained how he first used icebreakers to get everyone together as a group saying their names and what they enjoyed. He credits the value of respect that played a vital role with younger youth by being aware of other diverse populations and cultures of kids in the program:

It also made younger kids more comfortable with everyone else and being respectful, so they would not say the wrong things. Some kids did not know any better and would say the wrong thing at times. There are kids who do not know and that is where TPSR came in with respect, self-direction, effort, and helping others make sure they are there for each other being a good wingman and helping each other.

Andrew discussed how the YLC experience had affected his life through the value of transfer through leadership. Andrew explained that the YLC program was the first time he was really introduced to leadership. He talked about being inspired by the elements of the program and the TPSR model, life-skills, and learning to take these elements and practice them in his everyday life:

YLC is the first time I was introduced to a youth leadership program. Ever since then, I was inspired by the TPSR model and the core values, relationships with youth leaders, learning life-skills, and taking all, I learned and transferred it to my life. I have learned a lot from the YLC program, and I still use it all right now. I have transferred some of the skills down to ROTC, especially leadership. Like I said leadership is big time in ROTC and becoming an officer in the Air Force,

ever since then, I have been inspired, and it [YLC program] helped me a lot to get to this point. Some of the core values in the Air Force are respect, integrity first, excellence in all we do, and that is basically what YLC is about, making sure that you are an overall great person, a great leader, and contributor to society. It has impacted my life for good. I am just really grateful for what I experienced in the program and used it in my personal life.

Influences and Expectations. Andrew discussed how the TPSR values are viewed by himself and others when most of the participants are minorities. Andrew explained that he views the values as principles that he is going to need in life. He explained how each value had influenced him and others in life:

Personally, I view them as principles that we are going to need in life. We are going to need respect even if you are in a business world, on your job, or in the military. You need to give respect in order to receive respect, that is my opinion. In self-direction, you have to make sure you know what you want to do in life. You need to be disciplined enough to go after it. Do not stop until you accomplish it. Through effort, I am going to give effort 100% all the time. I remember a quote that said, do you want it as much as you want to breathe? So, with effort that comes into play because it depends on how much effort you want to give. Helping others, that is like what mothers tell you when they are raising you so not only do you look good, but they will also. Transfer, these skills are not only in the gym but outside would be impactful if you took what we learned into our daily lives. We [youth leaders] do all of these that we learned in YLC and try to practice them in our daily lives.

Andrew discussed how similarities of a person's race or culture compared to his influence on how he interacts with others while implementing the TPSR model. Andrew explained that he has friends from all walks of life and different ethnicities. Comments from others do not influence how he feels about a person. Andrew talked about how the TPSR value of respect influenced his life and making sure he treats everyone the same.

A person's ethnicity does not matter. That is not going to influence my thoughts about a person or sayings such as you are a good person or not. Nor my interactions with someone. I am always going to interact with whomever I want no matter their racial background. The TPSR value of respect, is highly significant to me, because that is how I was raised. Being respectful no matter what, I am going to give you respect as long as you give me respect. Just because I am Hispanic, does not mean I am going to treat someone else who the same race and cultural background better or differently. I am going to give respect to everyone that gives respect back to me.

Identity. Andrew discussed how the YLC experience helped him deal with social and racial issues in his life. Andrew explained that being a minority male in society, there were numerous times people thought he should act a certain way due to his nationality:

Being considered a minority, there were plenty of instances where people thought just because I look a certain way that I must act a certain way. They have expectations and stereotypes of my nationality. I am whom I am, meaning my culture, my religion, how I look, my ethnicity it is all me. One aspect of TPSR that helped me a lot is respect. Acknowledging respect and making sure that I give respect back because I do not want them [program children and youth leaders] to feel discriminated against. I want them to feel the same way and see how I am feeling. There is no good making other people feel bad. I do not want to put evil back out in the world. I want to put positivity and good vibes out there, YLC helped me improve that.

Andrew discussed how he thinks it is important to have minority instructors and minority youth leaders in YLC. Andrew talked about wanting kids to see images of leaders who are minorities, that look just like program children. He explained that program children do not see or know as much information as youth leaders or older adults. Therefore, it is vital for youth of all ages to see other leaders of various ethnicities so they can look in the mirror or talk with their families about meeting others who look just like them. Andrew explained that it is essential for program children to have positive

images of people who look just like them and say ‘I want to be just like him, I want to be just like that person’ to inspire the kids they are mentoring. Andrew discussed how program children who participate in YLC are going through a lot in their lives. Andrew stated, “the kids in the YLC program go through a lot and are basically at risk. To see that and to get them motivated, to inspire to be like them or us, people who look like them are important to help in their development.”

Overall, Andrew discussed how the core value of effort was the TPSR value that he taught in YLC and impacted his life the most. Andrew discussed how the YLC experience helped him deal with social and racial issues in his life through each core value. Andrew explained that being a Hispanic male in society, people stereotyped him thinking he should act a certain way due to his nationality. He discussed how he thinks it is important to have minority instructors and minority youth leaders in YLC. Andrew feels it is important to have youth leaders and other role models that the program children aspire to become.

Cross-Case Analysis

The purpose of this descriptive study is to investigate how aspects of culturally relevant pedagogy are present in the experiences of former YLC leaders as they implemented the TPSR model and its core values. Specific questions that guided the research were: (a) How have the core values and strategies that have been taught in the YLC program affected the former YLC leaders’ understanding of racial and cultural identity?; (b) In what ways has the YLC experience and the TPSR core values affected how YLC leaders deal with social and racial issues in their lives? Cross-case analysis

findings and discussion regarding two of the research questions are presented in this chapter.

Research Question 2

The core values and strategies taught in the YLC program that affected former YLC leaders' understanding of racial and cultural identity?

Values of Self-awareness. Effort and Self-direction were identified most often as the two core values taught in YLC that affected the lives of former youth leaders during and after the YLC program. Throughout the interviews, the responses of former youth leaders indicated that effort was the essential value that impacted their lives, and in working with program children from various backgrounds and ethnicities.

Andrew explained that without effort, he would not attend school, work, or do anything in life. He believes that effort is vital to his success in life. Jazmine said that she shares the same view as Neo and Andrew adding that she feels effort is applicable in all aspects of her personal, social, and work environment. She also wanted to share this with refugees and immigrant children in the YLC program. In the focus group, Mariah agreed with Andrew and Jazmine on their views of effort and wanting to help minority children in the YLC program. She also feels that effort is vital in working to build connections and relationships with youth leaders. On the other hand, Mufasa explained that effort is a value that has been a struggle before and after the YLC program. He feels that at times, he does not put forth his best effort when it comes to beginning a task. However, he explained that YLC has been impactful and empowering in motivating him to be

surrounded by a diverse population of people from different races and cultures since coming to America.

The data shows that self-direction was the second value taught in YLC that affected the lives of former youth leaders. Neo said that teaching self-direction by the youth leaders was the most important core value in guiding him in the right direction, kept his head on straight, and lead him to be a part of the YLC program. He feels that self-direction stands out to him most; explaining that having that drive and ensuring his direction is on the right path is something that even before joining YLC has been a primary source of success in his life.

Mariah discussed that outside of YLC, self-direction is more critical than effort. She explained that she processes her decisions by asking herself questions such as, “How will this benefit my life in the future? Is this worth spending time on to help me towards my future goals?” Throughout times in her life, Mariah’s focus has been on making the right decisions in her life. She does not want to accept a decision she may not agree with but would like to be more careful about being effective and efficient in the use of her time.

The strategies taught in YLC such as keeping kids focused, a sense of humor, and having a general knowledge of the diversity of program children may explain why former youth leaders perceive effort and self-direction as the core values that were the most impactful in their lives. It is important to remember that all of the former youth leaders came from varying backgrounds and experiences that molded their outlook on the values as they transition from adolescence into adulthood. Although the former youth leaders

have discussed how the values have affected their lives, not all of the participants perceived the five core values and life-skills to be essential. For example, Mufasa discussed how he has struggled with the core values of effort and self-direction since his family came to America:

I feel like an outsider since coming to America. I feel like I have to work harder and I understand and know more about culturally relevant topics when it comes to race. The core values in YLC have helped me to understand about American culture as we teach them to program youth. However, another thing is my identity. I am a Muslim American and so it's like my identity is an aspect of who I am.

Influences and Expectations. Neo explained that the core values and strategies taught in YLC influenced how he interacts with others from diverse populations. They encouraged him to be more willing to speak up about racial and social issues. He discussed that race does not play a factor when it comes to interacting with others who are similar in race, culture, and identity.

Andrew discussed how the core values aid in teaching program children interaction and communication. He explained that teaching interaction and communication makes him have a closer connection by building positive relationships with program children, by talking with them and finding out their likes and dislikes. Andrew discussed how the core value of effort has given him confidence to teach program children and began a conversation regardless of their religion, race, and ethnicity. He stated, "In YLC, it feels like everyone is on a team, and the core values used were like a framework that helped us bond and give everyone respect in the program." Andrew also explained how a person of similar race and cultural background attempted

to bond with him and ‘get away’ with mischievous things in a ROTC program (being too ‘chatty’ and ‘under minding’ his authority in front of others). Andrew explained that he still treated the young man in his platoon, the same way he would with others from varying backgrounds, regardless of their ethnicity. This also gave Andrew a sense of empowerment knowing that the core values taught in YLC also transferred and affected his present-day life.

Mariah agreed that race does not matter when it comes to her interaction and communication in teaching the core values to program children. However, it does affect how she interacts with young adults. Mariah discussed how, as an African American young woman at a predominantly White college, she believes people have a perception of her based on her race. Therefore, it affects how she interacts with others in academia because she holds the belief that people attribute her behavior to her entire race. Mariah explained that when communicating with older adults of diverse races and cultures, her speech becomes more formal and structured in nature. She does not feel that children have the same prejudices or biases as adults. However, when it comes to interacting with adults, she behaves a certain way in order to defy people’s stereotypes of her as an African American woman of color.

Jazmine explained that as an Asian-American female, she feels her connection with other Asian Americans YLC participants is stronger compared to other races in the program. She feels that a common foundation and connection to YLC, a sharing of the cultural traditions, core values, and practices, have helped to enhance her interactions and communication in a safe environment.

Mufasa explained that he feels that it is much easier to share interactions and communication within his race and culture because of the experiences both parties have in common. He explained that having knowledge and familiarities of a person's culture helps him to relate to 'real-world' practices and skills such as learning a new language, working with computers, and other day-to-day activities.

The data from the focus group shows that the core values that they taught in YLC influenced youth leaders' interactions and communication to build positive relationships and connections with program children from diverse populations. However, it does not appear to make a reliable connection to race and identity with someone similar in race, culture, and identity. The data from the focus group indicates that the core values taught in YLC influenced how Mariah interacts with others from diverse populations. Specifically, these data indicate that her interactions were different with older people from diverse populations. Mariah seems to be more formal with older people whose race, and identity does not affect her formality. However, she displayed a lack of formality with other youth leaders of a similar race, culture, and identity compared to the other former youth leaders. Mariah feels a sense of empowerment when she is surrounded by other youth leaders from varying backgrounds in YLC. Mariah expressed that she does not have to compromise her character within the group dynamics, or her peers based on her race, culture or identity.

Building supportive relationships and relying on one another as youth leaders while feeling empowered by teaching the core values to program children of diverse populations, are some of the CRP experienced in YLC. Learning to interact and

communicate with youth leaders and program children, by having knowledge and familiarity with other races and cultures, helps to overcome language barriers while discussing issues that are important to them and their community.

Identity. The data supports that these strategies are a reflection of how youth leaders have worked with program children from various diverse backgrounds, and in their personal lives since the YLC program.

Mariah explained that the most prominent strategy she used to bridge cultural gaps in YLC was encouraging everyone to embrace the value of effort while reaching their goals. Although Mariah taught all of the core values in YLC, and self-direction was the most impactful in her life. However, she felt effort was the most important that everyone can learn from. Mariah stated, “It is important for everyone to give their best effort in everything a person attempts to do in life.” Mariah discussed how the strategies she implemented in the YLC program makes it possible for youth leaders to work through challenges in planning and coordinating new ideas while bonding and working together with minority children. Mariah explained how this has transferred to her life while currently in college. It has helped her face the challenge of attending a predominantly White institution while being a woman of color.

Jazmine explained that she first attempted to recognize cultural differences, as well as individual differences while migrating these together as a strategy for bridging cultural gaps. Jazmine discussed how this strategy of bridging cultural gaps has also impacted her life in learning to approach others from diverse cultures and populations and sharing information. She used the example of girls watching other young ladies doing

their cultural dancing, while another cultural group may be apprehensive in approaching the young girls to learn.

Andrew discussed his strategy in bridging cultural gaps by using icebreakers to begin conversations about food, clothing, and music. In the focus group, Mufasa agreed with Andrew that he uses icebreakers with program youth in YLC to bridge cultural gaps. Neo explained that he implements the same strategies with youth to establish an environment where everyone feels they are treated equally.

The data from the focus group support Mariah and Neo's views that self-direction has been the most impactful value in their lives. As African Americans, the data indicates that they are driven by self-direction through their backgrounds and life experiences. They have carefully structured a successful pathway for their lives by evaluating themselves and being aware of how the core values have shaped their self-awareness. Jazmine's responses focused on the core value of effort being utilized in all aspects of her life. Through the core value of effort, she learned in YLC, Jazmine discussed how she focused on putting forth her best effort to bridge cultural gaps by first identifying cultural differences then individual differences. Jazmine was able to be mindful of one's race and identity while trying to put forth effort in being respectful which is the first TPSR core value. In the focus group, Jazmine explained this is the expectation of her faith, and also reflects her identity.

In summary, the core values and strategies taught in YLC that affected youth leaders to overcome challenges by reflecting on their experiences that have impacted their racial and social identity. By reflecting on their individual experiences, youth

leaders will be better equipped to recognize the complexities of race and culture with program children in YLC and transferring newly learned knowledge in working with other diverse populations. Their interactions and communication among diverse populations affect their racial and cultural identity as former youth leaders, and as responsible and caring people of our society.

Research Question 3

YLC experience and the TPSR core values affected YLC how leaders deal with social and racial issues in their lives.

Values of Self-awareness. Former youth leaders discussed how transferring new knowledge and being a role model for others influenced their decisions to make positive choices in their present-day lives. Neo discussed how program children are consistently watching the actions of their youth leaders. He described how knowing children are watching his actions makes him ‘genuinely present’ himself.

Mariah explained that knowing program children are watching her and being a role model, make her behave in a way that is appropriate and professional. Jazmine and Neo explained that integrity played a considerable role in their actions as a role model for program children. She described the importance of integrity, being truthful and honest, not only in the YLC program but in her everyday life. Jazmine stated, “It is more about your character and building upon that and not your reputation. YLC helped us to understand integrity and being a role model by working with younger kids no matter our race and ethnicity.”

In the focus group, Andrew, Mariah, Neo, and Jazmine, agreed about the importance of transferring integrity into everyday life. Transfer is the fifth TPSR core value of responsibility. They discussed how YLC helped them to learn more about integrity with different races and cultures while continuing to ‘do the right thing’ at all times. This empowered them to take the core values implemented in YLC and transfer them to everyday life by building supportive relationships with peers at their colleges, displaying patience and maturity when working with others from diverse populations, while embracing self-direction and the effort to try new experiences.

Andrew explained that working with younger children makes him accountable of his actions. Even when alone, Andrew ensured that he is respectful, honest, and courteous to others. He learned in YLC, the importance of integrity and transferred this knowledge to working with people from varying backgrounds in his present-day life:

You do not want to be a hypocrite by telling the younger kids one thing and doing another. So always walk with integrity and keep in mind whenever you are dealing with kids or life in general, because people are watching you.

Mufasa discussed how being a role model to program children in YLC has become his ‘personal motivator.’ It has taught him that there are people ‘cheering you on’ and ‘looking up to you’ when you least expect it. Although being a role model in YLC motivates him to live out the core values, he has struggled to implement them in his own life. Mufasa explains this issue:

It makes me feel like a hypocrite when I am not living by the core values, I learned in YLC. Therefore, it motivates me to live in the moment and examine the core values that you are transferring to your kids such as positive values.

In summary, being a role model for others and having integrity played a vital role in youth leaders making positive choices in their present-day life. The core values taught in YLC also helped youth leaders reflect on how self-awareness affects being a role model for program children in YLC and diverse populations through race and culture. Former youth leaders learned the importance of being self-aware of displaying integrity while being accountable for your actions in their present-day life.

Influences and Expectations. Mariah explained that the YLC experience helped her deal with social and racial issues by instilling patience and maturity, which helped her to understand others from diverse racial and cultural backgrounds. She explained that while in the YLC program, she learned about the issues and concerns people transport with them from their home countries, and why they moved to the United States. By having patience and the maturity to listen and empathize with others from diverse populations, it broadened her cultural perspective in learning to process and think things through rather than react emotionally. As mentioned, youth leaders must have patience and maturity in order to work with others from diverse populations. This happened while learning to process and think through things, rather than behaving or reacting emotionally. That is, it has helped her to understand why people have different beliefs that may be negative or celebratory of their own. Mariah believes the core values in YLC supported her understanding of what is essential amongst people from diverse populations through bridging cultural gaps and connecting with supportive relationships. Based on the discussions in the focus group, patience and maturity are needed in working with younger youth.

In the focus group, Neo agreed with Mariah that everyone thinks differently and that it is 'alright' and accepting:

Mariah took the words right out of my mouth. With diverse people understanding, listening, having patience, and knowing that everybody thinks differently, is important. It is crucial to understand that where they are coming from, and how they were raised, is what brought them to think the way that they do. We can not necessarily be upset with someone for thinking a certain way, especially if that is all they may know.

Neo explained that his experiences in YLC taught him to be open-minded and listen to others who have different views on life. He has learned patience and maturity through his exposure in working with diverse program children. Now that he is older, he is prepared to listen to various perspectives without being negative or confrontational.

In the focus group, Jazmine agreed with Mariah and Neo that youth leaders were able to understand that patience and maturity are needed to address social and racial issues within the YLC program. Jazmine explained that youth leaders were able to talk, listen, and understand issues involving diversity by implementing physical activities. This helped her gain a deeper understanding of views from varying diverse populations.

Mufasa also shared the same views as Jazmine, Mariah, and Neo, and explained how the core values helped YLC participants deal with social and racial issues in their lives. He explained that he feels everyone wants to be heard and be able to express their views without feeling that they are saying something improper or wrong to others. Mufasa discussed how he is learning to practice patience as he is continuing to implement the core values in his life. He said that youth leaders in the YLC program are more mature. They accept the idea that everyone may not always agree with the way society

views issues. The program helped him to build relationships and understand life-skills that are both respected in the YLC program and life.

In the focus group, Andrew agreed with the other youth leaders that having patience has made him more willing to work with people from varying racial and cultural backgrounds. He explained that being in YLC made him more open-minded when it comes to dealing with social and racial issues in his life. Andrew explained that learning to be more open-minded made him more mature compared to his peers in high school by teaching the core values to program children in YLC. He discussed how being out in the ‘real world’ and attending college has aided in learning how to deal with antagonistic people. Andrew said that it no longer affects him when others disagree or get upset in expressing their views.

In summary, the data responses of the participants show that the YLC experience and the core values helped YLC members deal with social and racial issues in their lives. Through the themes of influences and expectations, former youth leaders learned the significance of the values of self-awareness, with others from diverse populations and cultures. During the interviews, the participants viewed themselves as having more patience and maturity than their classmates outside of YLC. In this study, each former youth leader discussed how learning to work with program children aided in their development of patience and maturity, especially when discussing issues related to race, culture, and the beliefs of others.

Identity. The experiences taught through the core values in YLC impacted youth leaders through race and identity and transferred to their present-day life. Neo explained

that as an African American male, he does not have many issues in his present-day life related to racial and identity issues; he also feels people do not expect much from him. He discussed how, when he arrived at college for a scholarship retreat, people would ask him questions as to why he was at a predominantly White institution. Neo explained that people would automatically profile him and ask what types of sports he plays. He said that it might have been a compliment, but it felt more like people expected him to be an athlete rather than a scholar; an expectation based on the color of his skin. Neo discussed how he tried to bridge these cultural gaps by building relationships and utilizing patience and maturity with dealing with diverse populations.

The data show that Mariah's case is similar to Neo's as it relates to racial and identity issues at a predominantly White institution. She discussed how seeing most African American in a position of service, such as housekeeping and servicing lunch, is difficult to watch when she walks across campus. Mariah explained that many people become shocked to find out she is a student and not 'the help.' Mariah explained that this often leads to 'being doubted' by others about her intellect. This is especially true when she wears paraphernalia from her university, just like the other students on campus. The responses of Neo and Mariah shows that they feel the expectation of proving and distinguishing themselves and their identity. The data provides evidence that the core value of self-direction impacted their lives. The doubts of others help them push through the challenges, issues, and expectations of those around them.

Jazmine, Mufasa, and Andrew discussed how the challenges and issues of their present-day life exist around being stereotyped as minorities. Jazmine explained that as

an Asian-American female, students expect her to be highly intelligent in math and science. This creates pressure to try and fulfill that expectation. She struggles with math and science herself and feels that the expectation of being highly intelligent is indeed a stereotype.

Andrew explained that as a Hispanic male, people expect him to know how to play soccer and celebrate Cinco de Mayo. He discussed how he is stereotyped as being the 'traditional Hispanic,' someone who likes sports and participates in many celebrations. Andrew explained he does not like soccer and recalls a time where a guy asked him if he was training for a soccer game when he was only playing outside to stay in shape. Andrew also explained that due to his race, people assume that he celebrates Cinco de Mayo when he is just trying to be himself. Andrews stated, "Besides being stereotyped as a soccer player or someone who celebrates Cinco de Mayo, I have not been exposed to a lot of racial and identity issues."

Mufasa expressed that he feels he is stereotyped because he is from Pakistan and is of the Muslim faith. Compared to the other youth leaders in this study, Mufasa has had the most struggles with his identity. He stated, "Since I was not born in the United States, I never really encountered anyone from the same cultural background and race as me. I feel like it is tough for me to fit in. I feel like I am not embraced because I am not from America." Mufasa explained that his biggest challenge is feeling isolated from his peers. Because of this, Mufasa has struggled with the core value of effort because he does not feel motivated to attend classes in college.

Mufasa continues to utilize icebreakers taught in YLC to begin conversations with people who do not share the same racial or cultural background in his present-day life. He also feels his identity to ‘fit in’ to the American culture is more difficult compared to the other youth leaders.

In summary, developing an in-depth understanding of the lives of people who differ in race, culture, and ethnicity, is something that can only aid the practice of implementing cultural relevant pedagogies in youth development settings. In their present-day life, these former youth leaders continue to have struggles but endure to persevere. The challenges of race and identity they have experienced since the YLC program have continued to be issues youth leaders will continue to address. However, the core values and strategies have been essential in helping to equip these five former youth leaders as they encounter racial and cultural differences since leaving the YLC program.

CHAPTER VI

IMPLICATIONS AND CONCLUSIONS

According to Kochanek and Erickson (2019), “Problematizing positive youth development through sport using CRT can inform a more socially responsible, just framework that empowers all sport participants, including youth of color” (p. 2). Critical race theory is particularly applicable to positive youth development through sport. While this qualitative study consisted of a values-based after-school program, the following implications are possible for in- and out-of-school youth development programs that are specific to CRP. The current aim of this research was to explore moments of culturally relevant pedagogy through a values-based responsibility program from the perspectives of the participants.

This chapter is divided into three sections. The first section discusses the implications for youth development programs through critical race theory. The second section explains the methodological implications, and the third section includes the researcher’s recommendations for future research.

Implications for Youth Development Programming through Critical Race Theory

The purpose of CRT from the participant’s perspective was to examine core values and strategies using the TPSR model through CRT. Using the TSPR values-based responsibility model while exploring intersections of race and culture to examine how the

perspective of former leaders can help to reimagine CRP in PYD by being more socially responsible.

The five participants in this study came from various racial and social backgrounds before entering the YLC program. All of the participants spoke highly of their experiences and credit the program for their current knowledge, understanding, patience, and present maturity from working with people from varying backgrounds. The participants discussed ways that youth programming can be generalized to enhance experiences through critical race theory.

Research conceived through a CRT lens must center race, challenge the dominant narrative, value experiential knowledge, and have a commitment to social justice (Solórzano & Delgado Bernal, 2001). The impact of having mentors and other staff members from various races, cultures, and ethnic backgrounds is that it helps kids build supportive relationships and empowers staff and others in youth programs. The youth leaders saw themselves as “teachers” and “role models,” forming a connection of learning the core values and strategies using TPSR and applying new knowledge learned to younger children from diverse populations. Relationships developed between the youth leaders and program children validated Hellison’s (2011) core values, showing that TPSR is a “best practiced” model.

Another implication of program development was learning to be open-minded and embrace diversity by practicing cultural competency. Within the focus group, there were several critical discussions on the importance of being respectful and applying cultural competency in program planning and implementing working with diverse populations.

By having an open mind listening to others and being willing to hear opposing views teaches leaders how to practice respect and embrace differences in program planning and their present-day life. The core values guided their daily lesson planning to embrace differences in language, cultural practices, and gestures. Learning to have an open mind and embrace differences with a positive approach and assisting youth in processing the importance of how comments can be negative, and offensive is important to manage using the components of the TPSR model. Youth leaders can use guiding suggestions to not only empower adolescent youth but inspire all children to critically contribute to increasing their personal development and knowledge of racial and social issues through critical race theory.

A third implication is to make sure that leaders deal with racial and social issues by setting a great example inside and outside of the program by recognizing privilege. Hellison (2011) stated, “Those of us who work with kids must be wary of cultural preconceptions and stereotypes, even those that seem sympathetic.” Aspects of the participants, PYD programs, and relationships impact knowledge, translation of the core values, and life-skills through behavioral transfer. Mariah expressed that leaders should be the example that they wish they had growing up. She explained that the most significant asset a leader can demonstrate to youth is modeling and leading by example. Mariah stated, “When a youth leader displays this type of behavior, children will follow.” As we learned from the strategies implemented in YLC, intervention and transformation in understanding race, culture, and ethnicity, would not feel comfortable for participants without providing a safe learning environment for challenge and empowerment.

Discussions around privilege among leaders were at the “surface level” concerning self-reflection and being aware of their position within the YLC program. Program development from youth leaders surfaced around the advantages of privilege one must recognize whether in race, culture, or ethnicity. Leaders recognized that some ethnic groups do not share freedom and privilege. Therefore, if our goal is to produce practitioners who implement CRP into youth development programming, they must be self-reflective and aware of their position and privilege in society. Practitioners in the youth development field could benefit from having a challenging, self-reflective discussion around this topic.

Methodological Implications

Two methodological implications regarding the current study deserve attention related to the interview protocol. The former youth leaders interview protocol was semi-structured in relation to the questions that were asked during the one-on-one interviews. It is important to recognize the order of the interview questions discussing TPSR, YLC, and race and identity from high school to their present-day life. The protocol was very beneficial in allowing participants to concentrate on the storytelling of their journeys in YLC. However, there were instances in which participants struggled to articulate responses to lengthier questions that were more in-depth on race and identity. To avoid this in future research, more follow-up questions will be added to individual interviews.

The second implication for methodology involves field observations in the present-day life of former youth leaders. The current study did not include field observations of former youth leaders’ present-day life at their current settings to observe

how core values through race and identity have transferred. However, this could be improved by selecting participants within a one or two-hour radius to observe how the values and life-skills were applied in their college experience. It allows another source of data that would strengthen the findings of the study.

As we continue to explore aspects of CRT in youth development, we must highlight the opinions of youth on how to address race and culture in- and out-of-school programming. Additionally, we must continue to examine the issue of race and culture through the challenges of diverse populations. By identifying parallels and differences among all diverse populations, we can begin to bridge cultural gaps through understanding, patience and maturity, and empowerment by eliminating stereotypes while implementing core values, strategies, and principals that will be effective between communities that are often divided.

Recommendations for Future Research

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

1. It is essential that we continue an expanded study of other youth leadership programs to explore internalized racism in working with diverse youth.
2. Investigate PYD leadership programs that examine exclusion among children and youth who are perceived as “different” through language, race, physical features, emotions, gestures, identity, or appearance.
3. Further, highlight the impact of CRT among youth of varying backgrounds in schools through a values-based program.

4. Identify parallels and differences among marginalized youth who struggle to build understanding, empathy, and solidarity between communities that are often divided.
5. To explore the intersections of bi-racial and multi-racial youth development programs.
6. Examine the experiences, observations, and perspectives of minority youth at predominantly White institutions.

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APPENDIX A

CONSENT TO ACT AS A HUMAN PARTICIPANT

Project Title: **Exploring Intersections of Youth Development using Don Hellison's Teaching Personal and Social Responsibility Model through Culturally Relevant Pedagogies**

Principal Investigator: PI: Trina Pratt

Participant's Name: _____

My name is Trina Pratt and I am a student in the doctoral degree program in the School of Kinesiology at the University of North Carolina at Greensboro. I, the researcher, am requesting your permission to participate in my doctoral dissertation 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.

The purpose of my research study is to gain an in-depth understanding of the impact a values-based youth development program influences former youth leaders of Youth Leadership Corps. (YLC) understanding of one's race and identity. I am particularly interested in understanding how race and identity will help to explain how youth leaders of various backgrounds analyze youth leadership.

Research studies are designed to obtain new knowledge. This new information may help people in the future. You have been selected as a participant in my study because you were a former youth leader of the YLC program. You will be asked to participate in individual interviews. During the interview, I will ask you a series of questions that focus on your understanding of values and life-skills, knowledge acquired from the YLC program and transferred to everyday life guided by race and identity through cultural relevant pedagogies. The interviews will be conducted face to face in an appropriate destination (such as the UNCG library) or by recording from software through the internet. All information obtained in this study is strictly confidential unless disclosure is required by law. You must consent to being audiotaped in order to be in this study.

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. The Institutional Review Board at the University of North Carolina at Greensboro has determined that participation in this study poses minimal risk to

participants. Because your voice will be potentially identifiable by anyone who hears the recording, your confidentiality for things you say on the recording cannot be guaranteed although the researcher will try to limit access to the recording as described below. You will be entitled to change your name in the study to a pseudonym to conceal your identity.

Attached with this letter is a copy of this consent form and demographic questionnaire. 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.

If you have questions, want more information or have suggestions, please contact me at Tlpratt@uncg.edu. If you have any questions or concerns, please feel free to contact my faculty advisor Dr. Tom Martinek by email at Martinek@uncg.edu or by telephone at (336) 334.3034.

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.

By signing this consent form/completing this survey/activity (used for an IRB-approved waiver of signature) 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. By signing this form, you are agreeing that you are 18 years of age or older and are agreeing to participate, in this study described to you by Trina Pratt.

Signature: _____

Date: _____

APPENDIX B
DEMOGRAPHIC QUESTIONNAIRE

Date: _____

Name of Former Youth Leader (please print):

First

Middle

Last

Address:

Current City _____ State _____ Zip Code _____

Phone Number (____) _____

Birth Date ____/____/____ Gender: ___ Male ___ Female

Email Address: _____

Youth Leader's Race (Check all that apply)

American Indian or Alaska Native

Asian

African American or Black

Hispanic (specify country or origin) _____

Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander

White

Other

What is your ethnicity (nationality, ancestry, language)? _____

What is your mother's ethnicity? _____

What is your father's ethnicity? _____

What country were you born in? _____

What was/is your religion? (Please specify both major religious grouping (e.g., Catholic, Protestant, Jewish, Muslim, etc.) and denomination or sect (e.g., Methodist, Conservative Jew, Sunni Muslim):

Religion: _____

What is the highest level of education you have completed? _____

Are you currently a student? _____ If yes, grad or undergrad? _____

Major: _____

Describe your employment status: ___ Full-time ___ Part-time ___ Unemployed

What is your marital status? ___ Single ___ Married ___ Divorced

APPENDIX C

RESEARCH SUMMARY SCRIPT FOR YOUTH LEADERS

You are invited to participate in a research study aimed at learning about how TPSR levels of responsibility (respect, effort, helping others, self-direction, and transfer), acquired in the YLC program, may influence how former participants address issues of race and identity through core values (putting kids first, human decency, holistic self-development, way of being) in their daily lives, relationships, and experiences. This research is being done as a requirement of the doctoral program in Kinesiology at the University of North Carolina at Greensboro.

You are being asked to participate in this study because you serve in the role of youth facilitator with the Youth Leadership Corps (YLC) program. I believe your intentions, experience, and relationships with others will help me to better understand how the TPSR levels of responsibility influence how former participants address issues of race and identity through core values. Benefits of participation include the potential opportunity to gain insight about yourself, the program, and motives for participating in YLC. In addition, your participation in this study may help me and others better understand how activities are planned, implemented, and enacted using the TPSR model's 5 core components (respect, effort, self-direction, helping others, and transfer). There is, however, a small risk that talking about relationships and how you see yourself can be mildly upsetting.

Only the research personnel will know that you are participating in this study. In order to protect your identity, I will use a pseudonym of your choosing in any written or spoken sharing of this work. With your permission, I will audio record to tape-record our interview. I will be the only person who listens to and views the tapes and notes from our sessions. When I am not using them, they will be kept in a locked security box that only I have access to. After completion of this study, all tapes will be destroyed.

In addition to the time I spend with you, afterwards, I will be debriefing this research project. I am requesting for you to make time for a one-hour interview. The interview will include questions asking for your insights around your involvement in the Youth Leadership Corps, your understanding of the ways in which race and identity may or may not impact your involvement, and your thoughts about what this involvement has meant to you as an emerging leader. Additionally, I will observe your interactions while you implement activities with younger program participants and consult with adult supervisors from varying racial and cultural backgrounds. Finally, I will ask all participants to come together in a focus group to highlight the ways in which participation in YLC has informed your relationships as youth facilitators and/or in other ways. I will schedule follow up interviews with participants as needed.

Please note that there are no right or wrong answers in the study. My goal is to hear any insights you may have gained by participating in the YLC program and/or working to implement the principles included in TPSR. You may decide to leave the study at any time, and you may choose not to answer any interview questions posed. If

you decide to stop the study, your decision will not affect any future contact you have with the YLC program at the University of North Carolina at Greensboro.

APPENDIX D

INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

This research is directed by the following questions:

1. In what ways were the core values and strategies in the YLC program implemented?
2. How have the core values and strategies that have been taught in the YLC program affected the former YLC leaders' understanding of racial and cultural identity?
3. In what ways has the YLC experience and the TPSR core values affected how YLC leaders deal with social and racial issues in their lives?

Interview Questions for Youth Participants

TPSR

1. When did you become exposed to TPSR?
2. What TPSR value impacted your life the most and why? (respect, self-direction, effort, helping, and transfer) TPSR model, list an example of trying your best and working through challenges (effort) through sport influenced your life?
3. How do you engage young students into TPSR? What strategies have been effective?
4. What strategies do you utilize in the YLC program to bridge cultural gaps?
5. How do you feel the TPSR values are viewed by others when most of the participants are minorities?

YLC

1. How has the YLC experience helped you deal with social and racial issues in different aspects of your life (personal, education/work, relationships, etc.)
2. How does similarities of a person's race or culture (comparative to yourself) influence how you interact with them or others while implementing the TPSR model?
3. Do you think it is more important to have minority instructors, mentors, or adult leaders present who are the same race or cultural background as the participates?
4. What advice would you give to other minority youth leader who will join YLC?
5. How has the YLC experience helped you deal with social and racial issues in your life?
6. How has the YLC experience effected your life?
7. What are the common core values of TPSR (including inclusion, life-skills, and reflection) that have been incorporated among school, work, and in other aspects of your everyday life since transitioning from high school to college/work?

8. What are the core values and life-skills that have been experienced in the YLC program that connect YLC members to their racial and cultural identity?

Race and Identity

9. How does racism and identity impact former youth leaders and participants.
10. How does transferring new knowledge (taking it outside the gym) and being a role model/mentor for others influence your decisions.
11. How does one's difference in race or culture (other than yourself) influence how you interact with them or others while implementing the TPSR model?
12. How does the TPSR experience influence your thinking/feeling differently about race, school, or attitude towards learning?
13. How has YLC influenced your ability to become more responsive to issues that affect other minority participants in the program?
14. What are some of the challenges/issues in your present-day life as related to racial and identity issues?
15. How have racial and identity issues been impactful in your everyday life? What are some of them?
16. General, personal experience, personal college, social life, kinds of experiences dealing with cultural identify. How has YLC helped to influence those experiences through racial identity.

Is there anything else that I should have asked concerning this study?
Thank you again for your assistance towards this study.

