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I SECOND THAT EMOTION: A PHENOMENOLOGICAL STUDY OF THE SOCIOEMOTIONAL EXPERIENCES OF BLACK AND LATINX STUDENTS IN DEVELOPMENTAL EDUCATION

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ABSTRACT

I SECOND THAT EMOTION: A PHENOMENOLOGICAL STUDY OF THE SOCIOEMOTIONAL EXPERIENCES OF BLACK AND LATINX STUDENTS IN DEVELOPMENTAL EDUCATION

Toni Foster-Irizarry

Some community colleges lack the socioemotional support required to help underprepared students grow into autonomous, college-ready learners (Callahan, 2004; Capt et al., 2014). Black and Latinx students could benefit from the inclusion of positive, emotionally supportive programming that acknowledges their personhood, cultural capital acquisition, and potential educational trauma caused by years of negative school experiences and emotions. The current phenomenological study explored the emotion-based perceptions of eight Black and Latinx students' experiences in developmental education classes at two urban community colleges. The central research question asked, "How do Black and Latinx community college students perceive and emotionally respond to developmental education experiences with educators?" The researcher utilized a theoretical framework comprised of Critical Theory with a focus on emotions, which provided a deeper understanding of the impact of students' perceptions. The most prevalent themes in the study demonstrated the impact of individualizing the academic experience, the benefits of motivating students, the effect of the presence of deficit of thinking, and the use of emotional awareness from developmental education students. By examining the students' perceptions of their experiences, the results of this study provided commonalities that students share in their emotional responses that can inform further research and policy supporting students in developmental education classes.

DEDICATION

This study is dedicated to every single high school equivalency student who shared their story with me and inspired me to conduct this sorely needed research. Every conversation meant a lot to me. I was honored that you trusted me enough to share your stories with me. Every student I've worked with helped me continue to develop my emotional intelligence while I helped them develop their cultural capital. I wanted all of you to succeed with all my heart. As a former remedial education student, I saw myself in each of you. I am forever grateful to every single student who called me "Miss Toni," or simply "Miss". I hope you felt the love I had for you.

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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

Emotions are defined as a social phenomenon used to make meaning of social experiences (Dirkx, 2001). An individual's cultural capital determines how they process their emotional experiences (Gabriel & Griffiths, 2002). Emotions also prompt the brain to create strong neural connections when learning. Individuals with strong emotional responses to an experience are more likely to remember the details from that experience (Wolfe, 2006). Participating in a college classroom is an inherently social experience between the students, their educators, and their peers. The social aspect means that classroom interactions between students and educators are also inherently emotional (Gabriel & Griffiths, 2002). It is imperative to study both negative and positive student emotions to gain a fuller understanding of their experience in college.

Classrooms are emotional places for formal learning where "fear, pride, anger, disappointment, embarrassment, humiliation, excitement, and anticipation can occur" (Callahan, 2004, p. 76). Students' emotions can be a window into the students' past experiences and why students respond the way they do. Educators of underprepared students need to be aware of the value of emotional responses that students present. Negative emotional experiences can negatively impact college students' retention, performance, and perceptions of their experiences (Andrade, 2007; Nora & Cabrera, 1996; Pritchard & Wilson, 2003). Negative emotional responses can trigger an educational trauma-related response. A student, for example, may have had consistently negative experiences with math professors. The negative experiences could result in the student refusing to work or participate when they feel overwhelmed in math class. If the student's trauma is triggered in the classroom, they may react negatively, inhibiting

impactful learning. Studies have shown that positive emotions, as one would expect, have the exact opposite impact on students (Acevedo-Gil et al., 2015; Museus & Neville, 2012; Perez-Felkner, 2015). Students who have more experiences related to positive emotions show increased retention, performance, and perceptions of their experiences (Acevedo-Gil et al., 2015; Becker et al., 2014; Locks et al., 2008; Perez-Felkner, 2015). Students that have experienced educational trauma will also have lower self-esteem in the classroom (Gray, 2019). Students who receive effective emotional support, however, have better outcomes and a better experience in school overall.

The current study was conducted during the COVID-19 pandemic of 2020-2021. The pandemic has caused an increase in anxiety, depression, and student concerns outside of the classroom. This shared global experience has impacted all students. The stress and anxiety that many students are feeling create emotional barriers to degree progression and completion (Chugani & Houtrow, 2020; Gupta, 2020). Emotions are a social phenomenon controlled by the sociocultural context that defines them (Gabriel & Griffiths, 2002). An individual's self-perception of status and cultural capital can determine how they respond emotionally in college (Callahan, 2002; Yosso, 2005).

Emotions are also a catalyst for individual and social change. A student can gain understanding of their experience through their own emotions (Callahan, 2004). A student, for example, is often on the verge of tears every time they take an exam. Exploration of this experience can lead to further understanding of the history behind these feelings and how the student can best move past them. In this interaction, the educator is not expected to act as a therapist. Educators are expected to be a supportive person who engages in active learning whether it is about the content or their students.

Exploring a students' emotions with them is a useful example of catalyzing change within the student.

As catalysts for change, emotions can also prompt students to further explore their own views and biases. Increased awareness of students' emotional needs in the classroom can assist educators and institutions in holistic curriculum development and maintaining a supportive classroom environment. The classroom environment can support a student's feelings when they can be acknowledged and discussed. Alternatively, the classroom environment can limit a student's feelings by preventing them from using their voice or expressing these emotions at all. If the emotions are supported, it will result in harmony. If the emotions are limited, it results in dissonance. Harmony in a typical classroom may further the status quo of White middle-class capital. Dissonance, however, challenges the classroom structure and forces students and educators to reassess expectations and beliefs in this space.

Educational trauma results because of emotional challenges that students face and do not recover from in the classroom. Black and Latinx students who have experienced educational trauma describe a variety of negative school experiences that have affected them emotionally. Jones et al. (2018) and Van Thompson and Schwartz (2014) conducted qualitative studies of students who experienced trauma in school. The students in both studies identified negative experiences in school such as: 1) being unable to read in high school despite school attendance, 2) being passed to the next grade when they were not prepared to do so, 3) managing a negative reputation among students and staff, 4) attending a school where they were visibly on the lower end of a broad wealth disparity, 5) being viewed from a deficit point of view, 6) educators expressing that they did not

care about student needs, and 7) feeling inferior or incompetent due to internalized negative remarks from professors. Many of these examples, such as a negative reputation and lack of care from educators, indicate that educator's perceptions of underprepared students impact the students' experiences. Although educators may not intend to cause emotional harm to their students, the students' perception of the experience is the more accurate determinant of harm (Becker et al., 2014; Gray, 2019; Perez-Felkner, 2015). Educators can only know if they caused no harm if they consult the student directly and build their conclusion based on the students' voice (Lundberg et al., 2018; Nora & Cabrera, 1996; Perez-Felkner, 2015).

Students' emotional responses provide insight into perceptions of their experiences (Museus & Neville, 2012). Researchers such as Lundberg et al. (2018) and Schnee (2014) found that students' perceptions of their classroom experiences and interactions with educators have a noteworthy impact on their success. Persistence is defined as how long the student remains enrolled at the institution (Andrade, 2007). Studies have shown that students demonstrate more persistence when they have a positive perception of their classroom experiences (Andrade, 2007; Barbatis, 2010; Crisp & Nora, 2010). Emotions can also be used positively as part of the curriculum to help students develop a positive perception of their learning experience. For example, the educator could begin a unit about persuasive essays by asking students about their own experiences where they attempted to persuade someone of something. Discussing a personal experience could potentially bring up strong emotions such as excitement or annoyance. This moment primes the student to be more emotionally committed to the classroom content. Although the students may recall a moment that is connected to a

negative emotion such as annoyance, it motivates them to write passionately about that moment. Students who are emotionally connected to their learning experience and feel confident in what they are communicating are better able to organize and utilize the knowledge gained (Callahan, 2004; Wolfe, 2006). This is ultimately a positive emotional connection to the academic environment

The original colleges, the Ivy Leagues, were the blueprint for future colleges. The Ivy Leagues were established with the intention of educating White men in the Christian religion, teaching them to work in the slave trade, and to enroll and indoctrinate indigenous peoples into the culture of the settlers (Wilder, 2014). As colleges began to grow and diversify in gender and race, institutions incorporated other methods of supporting students such as adding other programs that attend to diversity. This was completed, however, without intentional dismantling of the original structure built by the Ivy Leagues (Kliebard, 1982; Sloan, 1979). The typical structure of colleges poses a challenge to non-White and non-American learners because they are expected to reflect a specific cultural capital that they have not learned (Lundberg et al., 2018; Museus & Neville, 2012).

Over time, colleges broadened their admissions, allowing for a more diverse student population. In the Jacksonian Period, during Andrew Jackson's presidency, the United States (U.S.) focused on improving suffrage, education, and support for working individuals. After the Civil War, Black Americans were accepted as part of the social, political, and economic systems in America. The American Missionary Society helped construct institutions in the south to educate Black Americans that were formerly enslaved. After the Second Morrill Act, these institutions received land grants to

construct colleges for Black Americans. Because the Black Americans were formerly enslaved and education was withheld from them all previous generations and families, these institutions had to support students with remediation (Boylan & White, 1988).

Black colleges created after the Civil War offered a distinct type of education for underprepared students who had absolutely no experience in education. White institutions, however, built remediation programs for students who could read, but needed assistance with a specific type of content such as Latin (Boylan & White, 1988; Jones & Richards-Smith, 1988). The White institution's style of remediation was not beneficial because it maintained the predominantly White cultural capital and voice but did not allow Black students to express their voice. The Black colleges, on the other hand, offered varied instructional styles to welcome students into the academic space. They also encouraged students to assess their own beliefs and knowledge to better understand the information presented to them (Jones & Richards-Smith, 1988). In this space, the students were allowed to explore their own voices and emotions in the context of academia.

Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs) revolutionized education for underprepared students out of necessity. Based on the current system, students were viewed at a deficit and in need of significant support that spanned beyond content retention if they were to be successful in college (Boylan & White, 1988; Jones & Richards-Smith, 1988). HBCUs offered a supportive educational experience that included educators sharing knowledge, assumptions, and beliefs with students. The institutions and educators collaborated to offer programming that benefitted the collective of the Black community. For example, educators communicated the capital of commitment to

academic excellence rather than viewing students at a deficit (Franklin, 2002). The HBCUs utilized pedagogy that used students' skills and cultural capital to assist them in reaching college proficiency (Jones & Richards-Smith, 1988). In 2020, the U.S. Department of Education recognized the value of the attentive remediation provided by HBCUs as well as increased graduation rates (U.S. Department of Education Office for Civil Rights, 2020).

Prior to World War II, there was not much conversation regarding Latinx students' experiences in college. Very few colleges were begun with the intention of supporting Latinx students (Garcia, 2018; Rosenbaum et al., 2020). It was found that many Latinx students lacked access to higher education or did not complete their degrees. The enrollment of Latinx students was highly concentrated at specific institutions that received limited financial support to assist them. In 1984, Congress instituted legislation to identify institutions that serve Latinx students, increase awareness of Latinx student needs, and target funding for Latinx supporting programs (Garcia, 2018; Santiago, 2006). Eventually Hispanic Serving Institutions (HSIs) were recognized federally. HSIs are defined as institutions were 25% or more total undergraduate Hispanic full-time students. HSIs are different from HBCUs because HSI status is granted purely based on current enrollment of Latinx students, while HBCU status is granted based on the institution's intention to serve a predominantly Black population. Most HSIs exist to serve all students, some are other Minority Serving Institutions (MSIs) with a Hispanic student population over 25%. However, a few colleges, like Boricua College in NY, were started with the intention to serve Hispanic students. HSIs that are not created to serve Latinx students often lack the holistic, developmental support that are developed to support

students of color (Garcia, 2018; Santiago, 2006). The structure and curriculum of the institutions are based on predominantly White institutions (PWIs). In this context, Black and Latinx students are facing the same challenge: learning in a space that was clearly not made for them (Barbatis, 2010; Garcia, 2018; Ladson-Billings, 1998). Black and Latinx, therefore, will likely face challenges in their attempt to develop into independent learners in PWIs.

Martí (2016) emphasized the need for community colleges to develop student support from a comprehensive point of view. Martí (2016) urges administrators to consider the needs of the student as an individual to create effective policies. Traditional curriculum for underprepared students does not award students credit or class time and can also have negative impacts on students such as requiring them to pay additional tuition beyond their financial aid (Baum et al., 2010). Attwell et al. (2006) conducted a longitudinal study of 6,879 college students. The students who participated in one or more developmental education courses were more likely to complete fewer college credits overall than students who did not participate in developmental education courses. Students who do not receive their college diploma are missing a resource that could potentially increase their income by $20,000 (Baum et al., 2010).

Ninety-two percent of community colleges offer open enrollment compared to 25% of four-year colleges (Hussar et al., 2020). A concern, however, is that some community college programs have trouble helping diverse and underprepared student populations succeed. Academically unprepared students typically have one or more of the following characteristics: 1) above the traditional age for college (18-24); 2) members of an underrepresented minority; 3) first generation college students, 4) higher financial

need 5) employed for over 20 hours per week, and/or 6) single parents (Capt et al., 2014). Only 32.6% of community college students graduate within 150% of the expected time of degree completion, while 62.4% of four-year college students complete within that time frame (Hussar et al., 2020). The typical characteristics that underprepared students strongly overlap with common characteristics found in Black or Latinx students (Acevedo-Gil et al., 2015; Capt et al., 2014; Museus & Neville, 2012; Neville et al., 2004).

According to the Condition of Education 2020 report, 14% of students enrolled in community colleges identify as Black, 27% identify as Latinx, and 49% identify as White. In four-year colleges, 12% of students identify as Black, 20% identify as Latinx, and 56% identify as White. Community colleges typically have higher Black and Latinx populations and lower White populations than four-year colleges (Hussar et al., 2020). Though these institutions offer programming to a diverse population of students, they are not adequately prepared to support them. Black and Latinx students are more likely to have attended lower performing high schools prior to college (Roscoe, 2015). The lack of attentive support maintains the experience of academic marginalization for Black and Latinx students. They require effective social support, financial support, and mentorship to engage with and persist in the college environment (Parker, 2012; Roscoe, 2015).

The students that attend community colleges come from diverse backgrounds and have varied forms of cultural capital. Students' cultural capital impacts their perception of their college experience. Cultural capital is knowledge, social connections, language, and behaviors that an individual acquires to signal their status. The value of cultural capital can change based on the individual's environment (Museus & Neville, 2012).

Cultural capital strongly impacts an individual's success in an environment. In day-to-day life, a student can use their cultural capital to translate conversation for a family member or to use the jargon relating to their family business. Black and Latinx students may often enter college with a differing set of cultural capital than expected at the college they are attending (Acevedo-Gil et al., 2015; Marbley et al., 2013; Museus & Neville, 2012; Nora & Cabrera, 1996). In the context of higher education, cultural capital can include access to knowledge of financial scholarships or the variety of college programs available.

Cultural capital offers Black and Latinx students the opportunity to maintain their culture and community. Their capital, however, is not valued by the higher education system. PWIs typically value the capital of White middle-class students (Yosso, 2005). Studies have shown that students who are non-White or identify as immigrants may also lack the cultural capital required to navigate the collegiate classroom (Cureton, 2003). Students of underrepresented minority groups often face stress and frustration navigating PWIs that negatively impact their academic success (Cureton, 2003; Marbley et al., 2013; Neville et al., 2004; Smith et al., 2014). The history of most post-secondary institutions was constructed in preference to White American culture (Cureton, 2003; Marbley et al., 2013). In the context of this paper, the term *American* is used to refer to the culture of the United States of America (Cureton, 2003).

All students experience challenges related to their identities. Black and Latinx students experience challenges specific to their racial and ethnic identities (Barbatis, 2010). Smith et al. (2014) conducted a study of White, Black, and Hispanic students and found that the students of ethnic minorities (Black and Hispanic) reported poorer mental health than White students. Their symptoms were often associated with the students'

minoritized status. This association is an example of Black and Latinx students seen through a deficit lens. Many scholars conducted qualitative studies that listened to the perspective of Black and Latinx students (e.g., Barbatis, 2010; Marbley et al., 2013; Museus & Neville, 2012). The students in these studies described a lack of support or a lack of belonging in their environment. These struggles had an impact on the students' persistence through college. All studies concluded that institutions lack the socioemotional and cultural sensitivity to effectively teach Black and Latinx students (Barbatis, 2010; Marbley et al., 2013; Museus & Neville, 2012). Alternatively, students at schools that were able to provide positive emotional support had more positive outcomes (Acevedo-Gil et al., 2015; Parker, 2012).

Other scholars conducted studies exploring challenges that Black and Latinx students faced in college (Cureton, 2003; Marbley et al., 2013; Museus & Neville, 2012). Both Black and Latinix students described similar challenges regarding their family and community support outside of college. Some students received support in their household while others were beckoned with tasks their families deemed more important than school. The students also described a lack of connection to their college environment and educators. They stated that they struggled with race-related stress, low self-esteem, and low academic self-view. Perez-Felkner (2015) conducted a study with Black and Latinx students' college access based on their high school experiences. The researcher found that students who perceived more support from their school were more committed to their goals and trusted their educators. Interpersonal relationships between professors and students also had a positive impact on students' perception of school. The students with more positive perceptions have a higher regard for their capacity for educational success.

The programming and curricula provided for underprepared students are not necessarily holistically conscious and often view students through a deficit lens, which is the opposite of a positive perception. The curriculum may focus on the academic portion of student development but does not often focus on helping students develop into independent scholars with the ability to manage their emotions and socialize in the college environment (Lundberg et al., 2018). College programs often offer curriculum for underprepared students that are not engaging or cognizant of student diversity. Typical courses for underprepared students do not engage students in actively participating in the process of learning. It often contains activities of rote memorization and little consideration to students' voice or socioemotional needs (Bailey, 2009; Callahan, 2004; Marti, 2016). Educators often approach students using deficit thinking. Deficit thinking occurs when educators (or researchers) interact with students with a focus on what they lack or a perceived likelihood to fail (Ladson-Billings, 1998; Patton Davis & Museus, 2019). When an educator identifies a student as at-risk, the educator is assuming a likelihood of negative qualities that the student will bring to the classroom. The term *at-risk* assumes that students are less likely to graduate or persist through college. An educator using a non-deficit approach would leverage more positive aspects of the student such as knowing successful family members in their field of study, or beneficial aspects of their cultural capital (Patton Davis & Museus, 2019). An anti-deficit and holistically conscious style of teaching has proven to be beneficial to students' experiences and emotional responses to college (Lundberg et al., 2018; Perez-Felkner, 2015).

The deficit-based lens placed on Black and Latinx students by educators continues to marginalize students through their academic career. The educators' deficit lens also informs how students view themselves (Ladson-Billings, 1998). For example, in a study conducted by Perez-Felkner (2015), Black and Latinx students from low-income areas were given a chance to attend a charter school with more opportunities and funding than their local schools. The students still viewed themselves with a deficit lens because the message was reinforced from their previous school. The students continued to identify themselves as underdogs because they considered the school to be a "non-White" school. In a study conducted by Jones et al. (2018), students described experiences with educators in which the educators expressed negative perceptions and stereotypes of the students. The students continued to identify with those negative stereotypes and beliefs that their professors had reinforced. Students who view themselves through a strengths-based lens are more independent and success oriented.

In many cases, Black and Latinx students in community colleges struggle with prejudice, low expectations, and educational trauma caused by their previous schooling experiences (Jones et al., 2018; Museus & Neville, 2012). These barriers impact Black and Latinx students' ability to acclimate to the environment and persist through college. Black and Latinx also experience marginalization due to differing capital and skills (Marbley et al., 2013; Museus & Neville, 2012; Roscoe, 2015). For example, Marbley et al. (2013) found that many Black and Latinx students develop a negative view of their racial and ethnic identities when approached with a deficit model style of teaching. When Black and Latinx students' experiences are centered around their deficits, the deficit is often tethered to their race/ethnicity. The deficit model gives students the impression that

their race/ethnicity is less intelligent and less capable than that of the majority (Ladson-Billings, 1998; Marbley et al., 2013). Professors who use deficit thinking portray a negative view of the racial and ethnic identity to the student, and students can begin to believe this negative view. This is a form of educational trauma (Gray, 2019). Black and Latinx students' cultural capital often differs from the capital expected in higher education. Students who have developed a different cultural capital to that of the college tend to show less persistence and less positive feelings toward school (Marbley et al., 2013). Sharing cultural capital and uplifting Black and Latinx students can aid in their success in college.

Museus and Neville (2012) conducted a study that showed how faculty/advisors that share cultural capital with Black and Latinx students contribute tremendously to students' success. Not only were students more capable of engaging with the academic environment, but they also enjoyed their time in school more. Both of these experiences (i.e. deficit model style teaching and the presence of cultural capital) show how Black and Latinx students' voices are limited in the academic space. The deficit model is presumptuous and inherently assumes a lack of ability (Ladson-Billings, 1998). Giving students the appropriate capital for the academic environment, however, empowers Black and Latinx students to participate and persist in their college experience (Marbley et al., 2013; Museus & Neville, 2012). Students who feel heard, supported, and have their lived experiences acknowledged develop into more confident, independent learners (Lundberg et al., 2018). Students who receive the cultural capital gain the knowledge to successfully persist at their academic institution (Gabriel & Griffiths, 2002; Lundberg et al., 2018).

Students who feel supported in their emotional and capital needs feel acknowledged as growing academics, rather than othered students with deficits.

Students that receive assistance in developing their emotional awareness and cultural capital are more confident in expressing themselves and participating in the classroom space (Callahan, 2002; Holley & Steiner, 2005). Lundberg et al. (2018) conducted a study that showed that underprepared college students are more likely to succeed when they can explore their feelings surrounding remediation. Some students expressed feelings of shame of the stigma of attending remedial courses. The students were given the safe space and cultural capital to self-identify the gaps in their knowledge, which motivated them to set and meet goals. Although there is research surrounding the benefits of cultural capital, safe spaces, and student persistence, less is known about how students use emotions to make sense of this experience and how educational trauma impacts their experience (Museus & Neville, 2012; Nora & Cabrera, 1996). Underprepared students flourish when given the opportunity to bridge their new college environment with their own cultural capital, beliefs, and knowledge. They often demonstrate more positive emotional responses as well (Acevedo-Gil et al., 2015; Lundberg et al., 2018; Marbley et al., 2013; Museus & Neville, 2012).

Financial concerns and burdens are another major barrier to success for underprepared students. During the Great Recession beginning in 2000, states' funding for community colleges fell 20% (Kirshstein & Humbert, 2012). This decline in funding limited community colleges' budgets significantly. Programming for underprepared students costs the institutions $1.9-2.3 billion to maintain supportive courses due to high volume of students. Students must use their personal funds and financial aid for

developmental classes that do not count toward their degree. If they do not pass the class the first time, they must use more money. This can lead to students running out of financial aid before they complete their degree (Bailey, 2009). On average, supportive courses cost students $3000 requiring them to borrow an additional $1000 in financial aid (Strong American Schools, 2008). Both students and institutions lose money due to unsuccessful developmental education programming for underprepared students. Community colleges provide programs such as learning communities that include innovative and holistic support that improve students' chances of succeeding in the classes and improve their likelihood of graduating. (Andrade, 2007; Leigh Smith & MacGregor, 2009). Because Black and Latinx students are often the most financially disadvantaged in school, improving education for underprepared students will help students persist through college without wasting their financial aid on non-credit bearing courses that offer them little support. The results could be used to further research policy development with consideration for students' socioemotional needs.

Running out of financial aid is especially problematic because a large percentage of underprepared students are Black, Latinx, or low-income. At public community colleges, 78 % of Black students and 75 percent of Hispanic students enrolled in remedial courses as compared to 64% of White students (Chen & Simone, 2016). This data indicates that, on average, institutions with unsupportive curriculum for underprepared students run the risk of limiting the success of a significant portion of Black and Latinx students. In understanding students' socioemotional needs and perception, educators and institutions will be better equipped to help students persist through college.

Seventy-six percent of students who were in the lowest income group (lowest 25% of students surveyed) enrolled in remedial courses. Only 59% of students in the highest income group (highest 25% of students surveyed) took remedial courses (Chen & Simone, 2016). As expected, community colleges have a higher rate of students utilizing Pell Grants. Pell Grants are offered to students in financial need to create a more educated workforce. Approximately one third of Pell Grant recipients (about 3 million) attend community colleges. Seventy-eight percent of Pell Grant recipients that attend community colleges are working students. On average, about half of community college students receive Pell Grants every year, while only one third of four-year college students receive Pell Grants (U.S. Department of Education, 2020). Community college students are, on average, in more financial need than those who attend four-year institutions. Studies identify financial limitations as a barrier of students' persistence through college, particular underprepared students (Jaeger & Eagan, 2009; Roscoe, 2015)

Though community colleges offer programming to a diverse population of students, they are not adequately prepared to support them. Black and Latinx students are more likely to have attended lower performing highs schools prior to college (Roscoe, 2015). They require effective social support, financial support, and mentorship to engage with and persist in their college environment (Parker, 2012; Roscoe, 2015). Black and Latinx students are more likely to be underprepared for college and therefore are enrolled in developmental education courses or supportive programs (Kozeracki & Brooks, 2006). In a study conducted by Chen and Simone (2016), 78.3% of Black students and 74.9% of Hispanic/Latinx students had to enroll in remedial courses for underprepared students. Only 63.6% of White students enrolled in remedial courses. In a study surrounding

educators' perceptions of courses for underprepared students, they described the students as having mental blocks, lack of confidence, less maturity, and less motivation than students in standard education courses (Capt et al., 2014). Although this data identifies areas for support, it demonstrates that educators who teach underprepared students view students with a deficit lens. An educator's deficit lens can influence how they interact with students. Educators with a deficit lens often approach students with lower expectations, therefore limiting their progression through college. Students met with a deficit lens will continually be marginalized through their school experience (Acevedo-Gil et al., 2015; Lundberg et al., 2018).

It is clear that there is a lack of literature that explores underprepared students' perceptions of their emotional experiences in courses through their own voices. Some studies explore students' experiences through surveys and previously identified variables that may contribute to their success or conflict (Crocker & Mazer, 2019; Johnson et al., 2014; Park et al., 2016; Smith & Jiménez, 2014). Researchers need to delve deeply into the students' emotions that they are feeling and what may be interfering with their progression through college.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to explore the phenomenon of emotional experiences and emotional responses of underprepared Black and Latinx students who have attended developmental classes in community college. The current study explored classroom experiences through the voices of Black and Latinx students who participated in courses for underprepared students. The researcher intended to better understand students' lived experiences to hear their experience through the students' perceptions.

Interviews focused on the students' emotional responses and perspectives to better understand and identify student-centered factors that impact their college experiences. This study gave a voice to Black and Latinx students to clearly express how their college experience impacted them.

The central phenomenon was generally defined as emotional experiences and responses in the classroom that caused students to feel positive or negative emotions. Positive emotions can include trust, interest, and joy. Negative emotions can include sadness, anger, disappointment, embarrassment. The participants were asked to describe and critically explore their emotional responses to help the researcher better understand their perceptions and expectations regarding classroom interactions with educators. The students that were interviewed in the current study may also include stories specific to the COVID-19 pandemic environment. The stories had value, nonetheless, because students described their perceptions of their experiences and their impact.

The current study explored students' perceptions of academic experiences using their voices and emotions. Research studies that focus on students' points of view are better able to identify more positive, socioemotional aspects of students' experiences rather than a deficit-based opinion from a third party (Acevedo-Gil et al., 2015; Lundberg et al., 2018; Perez-Felkner, 2015; Schnee, 2014; Smith & Jiménez, 2014). Critical Theory, the guiding theory of this study, states that storytelling has an important value in liberating and uplifting the storyteller. It offers a specific point of view in connection to their environment and experiences. Storytelling allows students to express their perceptions and feelings about experiences. Studies by Schnee (2014) and Smith and Jiménez (2014), for example, show how students' perceptions and experiences are

interconnected with emotions and cultural capital through the voice of the student. The students who participated in these studies were given a safe space to express how they responded to their experiences emotionally. The students described their experiences, social interactions, and cultural beliefs to express themselves. The current study created a similar safe environment where students could express themselves freely.

Theoretical Framework

Callahan (2004) states "The intersection of Critical Theory, emotions, and the classroom has many dimensions," (p. 76). Students' emotional experiences in the classroom are impacted by their social interactions with the educator, the capital of their environment, prior socioemotional experiences, and their own cultural capital (Yosso, 2005). The theoretical framework of this study discusses Critical Theory with inclusion of Critical Race Theory. The framework provides context for the potential exchanges with educators that impact students' emotions and emotional responses. The theoretical framework is comprised of Critical Theory with a focus on emotions, which could also lead to educational trauma.

Critical Theory focuses on using critical thought and rationality to gain understanding and control of an environment (Callahan, 2004). Callahan (2004) concludes that emotion and perception are essential components of Critical Theory. People use emotions to make decisions. Emotions are essential to understanding ourselves and others. Callahan (2004) emphasizes the importance of intentionally identifying and assessing emotions in the classroom as a means of building students' emotional knowledge. Underprepared students often feel marginalized by the experience. Students experience a stigma and feeling of inadequacy associated with being identified

as underprepared. Critical Theory upholds the relevance of students' voices in the academic space. Students' voices include the story they are telling in conjunction with their emotional responses to the experiences. The students' emotions strongly impact their self-perception and persistence through college (Lundberg, 2018). Critical Theory inherently intersects with emotions by acknowledging that all members of an environment, both the educator and the student, are human and have their own reactions to situations. These emotions and reactions can give insight into more information about a person (Callahan, 2004). In the current study, students discussed their emotional responses in the classroom. The students spoke about both positive and negative experiences they had in the classroom. Below are examples of positive classroom experiences that researchers have identified as resulting in positive emotional responses:

- Educators holding students to a commitment of academic excellence (Franklin, 2002)
- Advisors who provide cultural capital to students in need (Parker, 2012)
- Belief in the good will and competence of staff and educators (Perez-Felkner, 2015)
- Friendly interpersonal experiences with students or educators (Perez-Felkner, 2015)
- Trust in an educator that supports the student when they are in need (Perez-Felkner, 2015)
- Happiness when a professor calls attention to their skills (Rendón, 2002)
- Affirmation and validation of the students' capital, culture, and self (Rendón, 2002)

- Feeling welcomed and a positive sense of belonging in the college community (Zumbrunn et al., 2014)
- Engaging in passionate thought of a new topic (Quinlan, 2016)

Below are examples of negative classroom experiences that researchers have identified as resulting in negative emotional responses:

- Anxiety from multiple standardized tests (Gray, 2019)
- Maltreatment from professors, staff, and other students (Gray, 2019)
- Feeling ignored or punished when they are in need (Jones et al., 2018)
- Embarrassment due to differences in cultural capital and understanding (Lundberg et al., 2018)
- Shame caused by limited understanding of academic content as compared to classmates (Lundberg et al., 2018)
- Helplessness in overcrowded math classrooms (Jones et al., 2018; Perry, 2006)
- Lacking emotional validation or validation of beliefs (Acevedo-Gil et al., 2015)

Critical Theory's emphasis on emotions can also illustrate how the student could have been better supported in the classroom. Underprepared Black and Latinx students in education are experiencing "perceived sense otherness" in an environment causing them to feel as though they are in a deficit (Callahan, 2004, p. 78). Simultaneously they are entering classroom environments where they are approached with a deficit point of view and prevented from using their own voices (Ladson-Billings, 1998; Patton Davis & Museus, 2019). Utilization of Critical Theory employs storytelling to analyze experiences, beliefs, and knowledge of the individual. Storytelling offers students the

opportunity to use their voice to express their feelings and perceptions. Allowing underprepared students to tell the story of their emotional experiences when tackling various challenges in classes frees the student from the deficit view present in the classroom (Ladson-Billings, 1998; Yosso, 2005).

Prior to attending community college, students have previously developed their own cultural capital, expectations, and beliefs. Students may have also experienced educational trauma prior to college. Due to the White, middle class nature of education, Black and Latinx students are very likely to have experienced educational trauma (Gray, 2019; Yosso, 2005). The student's previously developed mindset and supports received from the institution have an impact on students' emotional responses, persistence, and motivation. The student's mindset can be flexible with appropriate capital, and support provided by educators and the institution

Conceptual Framework

The conceptual framework, as is shown in Figure 1, provides a visualization of the main concepts and theory and how they are integrated throughout the study. Once the student begins college, they enter a transitional experience. This transition occurs after the students' former academic environment prior to college. This could be high school or a high school equivalency program. During this previous experience, the students developed their own cultural capital, possibly experienced educational trauma, and constructed their own personal expectations and beliefs. This student transitions to community college and brings their previous experiences along. When the students have their classroom experiences, they experience a new environment with new capital, have interactions with their educators and other students, and may receive some degree of

emotional understanding and support. Depending on each students' experiences, they may have different perceptions of those experiences. The students' emotional outcomes in relation to their college experience are comprised of their experiences prior to college and current classroom experiences. Based on those experiences, students will develop perceptions of their sense of self, their education, and their college experience. They may also have emotional responses to their experiences. If the student has experienced educational trauma, those college classroom experiences may reduce or exacerbate their educational trauma.

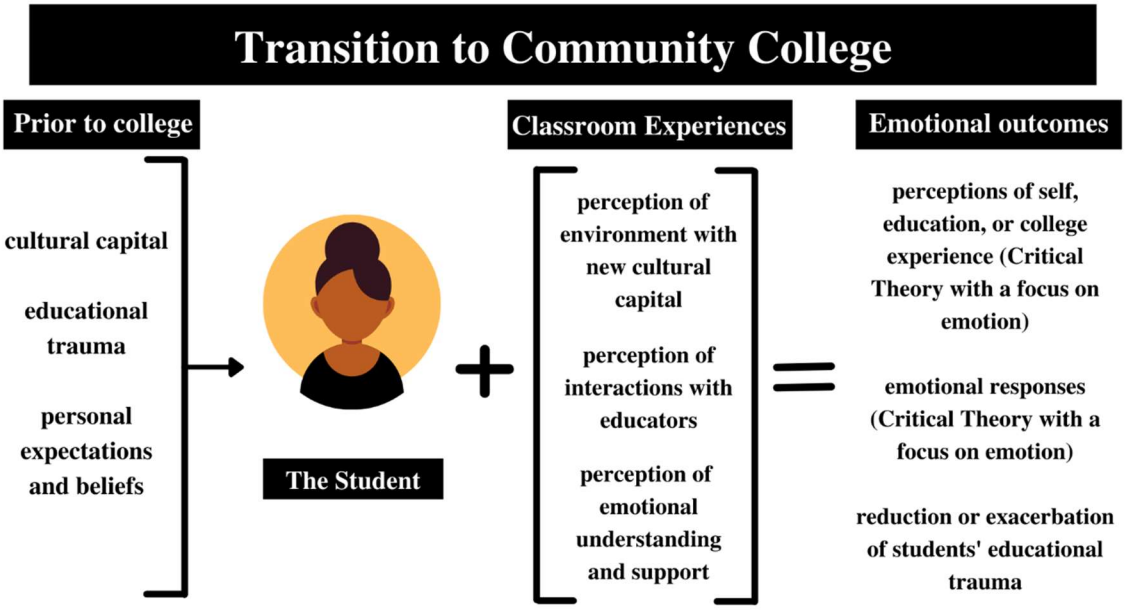
Emotions play a significant role in this theoretical framework. For example, previously developed capital in conjunction with negative experiences in the new environment can cause students to feel negative emotions. Imagine a student whose cultural capital includes speaking in African American Vernacular English (AAVE). Ladson-Billings (1998) stated that variations and culture and language often create challenges for students of color. The student in this example typically spoke this way in their previous school and were accustomed to doing so. The student participates in class with their new community college professor, Professor A. Professor A repeatedly ridicules and insults the student for speaking this way because it is not academically appropriate. Professor A finds her behavior appropriate in the classroom, but the student feels embarrassed and confused. The student was surprised about Professor A's egregious reaction to their vernacular of English. While adapting to a new environment, the student must contend with the embarrassment while also finding a new way to speak in class. Experiences such as these lead students to feel lesser about themselves as students, to drop out of college, or to fail their courses (Capt et al., 2014; Hoffman, 2014).

Alternatively, a student may have a positive experience transitioning to school. The student, for example, could speak a dialect of English seen as more appropriate in the classroom. In this student's experience, Professor A could commend them on their speech and focus on supporting them in other academic ways. The student would likely have a more positive assessment of their experience. Students' emotional experiences are very valuable. Students' emotional responses and perceptions create a vastly different view of the same classroom.

Critical Theory shows that students' voices are imperative to subverting the White-dominant culture in the educational space (Ladson-Billings, 1998). Emotions are the gateway to truly utilizing Critical Theory (Callahan, 2004). To better incorporate the storytelling required of Critical Race Theory, this study will consider the students' emotional responses to gain a clear understanding of their experience from their point of view. Once students transition into community college, they are then expected to participate in academia in a new and collegiate environment. Emotional understanding and support from educators increase positive emotional responses, improves positive self-perceptions, and does not exacerbate student trauma (Callahan, 2004; Gray, 2019; Jones et al., 2018; Lundberg et al., 2018).

Figure 1

Conceptual Framework of How Students' Self Combined with Academic Environment Impacts Students' Emotional Reponses and Perceptions



Note. This diagram illustrates a student's transition into college.

Significance of the Study

This study intends to improve the understanding of Black and Latinx students' socioemotional experiences in the classroom. The storytelling provided from the students offers the opportunity to better understand how to support students from a strength-based, anti-deficit lens. Callahan (2004) and Wolfe (2006) are proponents of emotion-focused curriculum and policy building. The data collected from this study leads to a better understanding of the point of view of Black and Latinx students. Previous studies have shown that students' perspectives and emotional responses to their academic experiences impacted their motivation and persistence through college (Andrade, 2007; Barbatis,

2010; Brock, 2010; Smith & Jiménez, 2014). In this study, the students were asked to share their story and their emotional responses to help develop a clear understanding of the experience from their perspective.

Students who are given the space to explore their emotions, share their own cultural capital, and learn the college's capital can learn the academic content and become independent learners (Acevedo-Gil et al., 2015; Lundberg et al., 2018). When students' voices and access to new cultural capital are limited, they tend to experience additional challenges that limit their persistence through college. For example, the students experience additional stressors such as anxiety, lower self-esteem, low sense of belonging to their environment, and race-related stress (Locks et al., 2008; Marbley et al., 2013). Each of these stressors lead to negative college experiences such as lower student persistence and educational trauma (Andrade, 2007; Barbatis, 2010; Marbley et al., 2013; Perez-Felkner, 2015). This study explores the relationship of the students' cultural capital, voice, and emotional responses regarding their experience.

Of the 6,606 post-secondary institutions, only 107 (1.6%) are HBCUs predominantly located in the southeastern portion of the U.S. (U.S. Department of Education Office for Civil Rights, 2020). The Hispanic Association of Colleges and Universities has identified 323 (4.8%) HSIs in the U.S., predominantly located in 22 states in the west and southwest portions of the U.S. (U.S. Department of Education Office for Civil Rights, 2020). Although there are a few HBCUs and HSIs, thousands of PWIs serve many Black and Latinx students. The students who participated in this study attended diverse institutions. Listening to the students' experiences directly from their

voices has proven to be very enlightening in relation to the experiences and emotional responses the students had.

Inhibiting Black and Latinx students' ability to express their voice and tell their story maintains the dominant White American culture and oppresses the voice of students of color (Ladson-Billings, 1998). Critical Theory offers the opportunity for students of color to share and develop their own capital in the academic space. Callahan (2004) stated that emotions are a great tool to break the cycle of domination. Emotions can also be used to create or destroy relationships. Educators need to offer flexible lesson plans that help students attend to and understand their emotions (Callahan, 2004; Parker, 2012). Allowing students to express and understand their emotions in the college space offers students empowerment. When students better understand their emotions and are given space to express their voices, they are no longer oppressed by the voice and capital of the dominant structure.

Connection to Social Justice

Emotional awareness in community college policy is beneficial to all students and particularly beneficial to students of color and students from low socioeconomic backgrounds (Cureton, 2003; Ingrum, 2006; Lundberg et al., 2018; Neville et al., 2004). Studies have shown that students of color, particularly Black and Latinx students, battle stressors caused by adjusting to a different cultural capital in their new academic environment and facing with racism (Andrade, 2007; Locks et al., 2008; Marbley et al., 2013; Neville et al., 2004). The race-related stressors are negative emotional experiences. Negative emotional experiences cause challenges for students navigating a new environment with different cultural capital.

The data collected from the current study illuminated students' personal challenges through storytelling. Students discussed socioemotional, socioeconomic, and cultural/racial challenges in connection to their academic experiences. The data also shed light on lived experiences from the perspective of a student, allowing community college staff to better understand how students process their experiences.

Central Research Question

How do Black and Latinx community college students perceive and emotionally respond to developmental education experiences with educators?

Research Sub Questions

1. How do underprepared students describe their experiences?
2. How did underprepared students justify their emotional responses to their experiences?
3. How does the experience impact underprepared students' perceptions of
    a. college?
    b. themselves?

Definition of Terms

Cultural Capital. Cultural capital is knowledge, connections, language, tangible allotments, and intangible allotments that an individual acquires to signal their status. Cultural capital can be limited by gatekeepers such as professors and school staff. Cultural capital is also thought to be associated with upper class individuals. Utilization of cultural capital is associated with positive educational and employment outcomes (Dumais & Ward, 2010).

Educational Trauma. Educational trauma is defined as "the cyclical and systemic harm inadvertently perpetrated and perpetuated in educational settings" (Gray, 2019). Perry (2006) refers to educational trauma as a result of abusive, neglectful, or violent experiences that influence the students' capacity learn. These impactful events often result in students who have been conditioned to expect fear in educational environments.

Emotional Response. An emotional response is a verbal statement, vocal noise, or physical response that someone provides that portrays their emotions (Callahan, 2004; Perry, 2006).

Motivation. A college students' motivation is their impetus to complete their degree or certificate (De Castella et al., 2013). Students have intrinsic motivation, which are motivators from within the person that allow them to persist. Examples of intrinsic motivation include personal objectives and beliefs. Students also have extrinsic motivation, which includes factors surrounding the student that push them to persist. Examples of extrinsic motivation include financial gain and fulfilling expectations of a family member (Covington & Müeller, 2001).

Negative Emotions. Negative emotions are emotions that feel unpleasant and disturbing (Gabriel & Griffiths, 2002). These emotions can include fear, anger, and helplessness (Perry, 2006).

Persistence. Students who show persistence maintain motivation and complete their college degree or certificate (Nora & Cabrera, 1996). Rates of persistence in student populations is often used as a student success metric. Institutions consider students that persist successful (Andrade, 2007).

Perception. Students' perceptions of their experiences are defined as how the experience is viewed through their eyes (Zumbrunn et al., 2014). Multiple studies have shown that colleges can construct programs with positive intentions, but the student's perception of the program may vary from the intention (Smith & Jiménez, 2014). In a study conducted by Schnee (2014), it was found that students who participated in a learning community, a supportive program created specifically for underprepared students, did not perceive this experience as positive. The authors concluded that a students' perception of their programming has a strong impact on the program success.

Positive Emotions. Positive emotions are emotions that feel pleasant (Gabriel & Griffiths, 2002). These emotions can include, but are not limited to happy, excited and hopeful (Callahan, 2004).

Standard Classroom. The standard classroom describes the typical classrooms found in PWIs. The institutions use curriculum and teaching styles that assume all students present share homogenous cultural capital and beliefs (Ladson-Billings, 1998).

Stress. Stress is defined as "any challenge or condition that forces our regulating physiological and neurophysiological systems to move outside their normal dynamic activity (Perry, 2006)."

CHAPTER 2: REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

This chapter provides a theoretical framework and literature review to further understand the phenomenon addressed in the research question. The purpose of this study was to explore emotional responses and perceptions of Black and Latinx underprepared community college students as told by the students. This chapter will further explore the conceptual framework discussed in chapter one in the form of a theoretical framework. The theoretical framework includes theories that focus on the importance of students' emotions, needs, perceptions, beliefs, and capital in conjunction with the quality of faculty support. The studies in the literature review demonstrate the impact of emotions and student mindset on successful learning.

Theoretical Framework

The theoretical framework of this study uses Critical Theory to understand the inherent value of students' emotional experiences through college. This model focuses on how students' cultural capital, beliefs, and perceptions of themselves may surface as emotion-based responses. Critical Theory introduces the concept of critical thought applied by both students and professors to maneuver through emotional experiences in the classroom. Critical Race Theory (CRT), which is grounded in Critical Theory, expounds with a focus on the racial aspect of Critical Theory. Both Critical Theory and CRT value the voice and storytelling of the oppressed. Callahan's (2004) discussion of Critical Theory emphasizes the emotional aspect of Critical Theory, and CRT focuses on voice and capital involved in social interactions in the classroom. The current study highlighted the voices of Black and Latinx students to understand their emotional experiences in developmental education courses through their own storytelling.

Before discussing Critical Theory, it is important to describe the standard college experience. The standard classroom as described by Ladson-Billings (1998) means that the institution is predominantly White using typical classroom curriculum and training commonly found in many classrooms. The standard pragmatic style of education, invented by John Dewey, is not beneficial to whole-person learning (Sloan, 1979; Yorks & Kasl, 2002). Whole-person learning refers to a curriculum or program that consider all aspects of the individual learning, including their social capital, cultural capital, and socioemotional needs. The standard pragmatic education requires students to orient themselves in a manner that requires solely logical thought regarding the curriculum. The standard classroom structure assumes that the curriculum and teaching styles are effective methods of education for all students. This assumption, however, is not true. Educators in the standard college teach with a bias that has been taught and maintained since the inception of colleges. This bias assumes that women and people of color are at a disadvantage in education and views them at a deficit. The curriculum represents the dominant Eurocentric voice and does not represent students of color. The promise of "color-blindness" in the classroom states that all students will be seen as the same. This normativity, however, assumes homogeneity that reflects White middle class capital and experiences.

The standard classroom curriculum does not include innovative or varied forms of assessment of student learning. Therefore, students who do not respond well to those types of assessments are likely to do poorly. It is uncommon to find assessments that involve students' voices, emotions, and beliefs. Because the standard classroom simultaneously assumes normativity of the capital students share but does not offer

students space to share their voices or experiences, it continues to maintain a dominant, oppressive structure. Critical Theory and CRT challenge the dominant structure by incorporating students' voices and emotions into classroom assessments and interactions. The current study used students' voices, emotions, and storytelling to better understand their perception of their experience.

In the standard classroom experience, students often study from a completely pragmatic point of view, devoid of emotions or personal input (Callahan, 2004; Yosso, 2005). Research has shown that students' emotions and stories are intertwined in all learning and need to be acknowledged (Museus & Neville, 2012). A student's emotions, background experiences in school and cultural capital form the mechanism that they use to process and apply new knowledge. (Callahan, 2002; Dirkx, 2001; Museus & Neville, 2012; Wolfe, 2006). Critical Theory with a focus on emotions provides researchers and educators the understanding to recognize the value in students' emotional responses to uplift and support them.

The purpose of Critical Theory is to analyze and critique society in its entirety. The act of critiquing, which is referred to as critical activity, assesses the separation between individuals and society (Horkheimer, 1972). Horkheimer (1972) noted that Critical Theory must include the entirety of society, economy, and culture. The intention of Critical Theory is to unite oppressed classes. Critical Theory works through and removes the tension between rational thought and irrational thought. In Horkheimer's (1972) description of Critical Theory, he notes the importance of each person's reactions to the experiences being critiqued. The researcher also states that when individuals are met with a challenge, they are likely to feel negative emotions. Horkheimer (1972)

advised that emotions, especially in times of challenge, should be considered and discussed because they represent the reality of the individual's experiences. Because Critical Theory considers students' emotional responses, Critical Theory has an inherent connection to emotion-based reactions.

The Critical Theory lens is used to assess all social structures, which includes academia. Callahan (2004) focuses on the inherent emotional context of using Critical Theory. Critical Theory, in the context of emotions in the classroom, is used as a method to "emancipate dominated people through reason" (Callahan, 2004, p. 75). Callahan (2004) also discusses the importance of using Critical Theory to help educators use emotions in classrooms while simultaneously helping students understand and maneuver them. Critical Theory with a focus on emotion is relevant to the current study because it gave the researcher the opportunity to deeply understand Black and Latinx students' experiences through their own voice. This practical assessment of emotions in the classroom should create a more beneficial environment for students by offering them a space to express and critically assess their own emotions. This assessment offers the student a clearer sense of self in the context of the classroom environment. A student, for example, expresses frustration and signs of shutting down when working with complex algebra problems. The standard school model assumes that the student is at a deficit and needs additional tutoring in math using the same curriculum. Critical Theory, however, creates an opportunity for professors to assist students using the student's voice and creating a solution specific to the student. Through engaging with the student in classroom discussion, the student expresses that they are very proficient with calculating basic math in their head from personal experience. The professor then offers a solution

that allows the student an opportunity leverage their personal experience in mental calculations while working on algebra. Critical Theory with a focus on emotion in the classroom acknowledges the fact that all classroom stakeholders (i.e., the faculty member and the students) are human and have their own emotional reactions to all situations. Faculty must understand that emotion is a social phenomenon that gives experiences meaning and manipulates the person's perception of future experiences (Callahan, 2004).

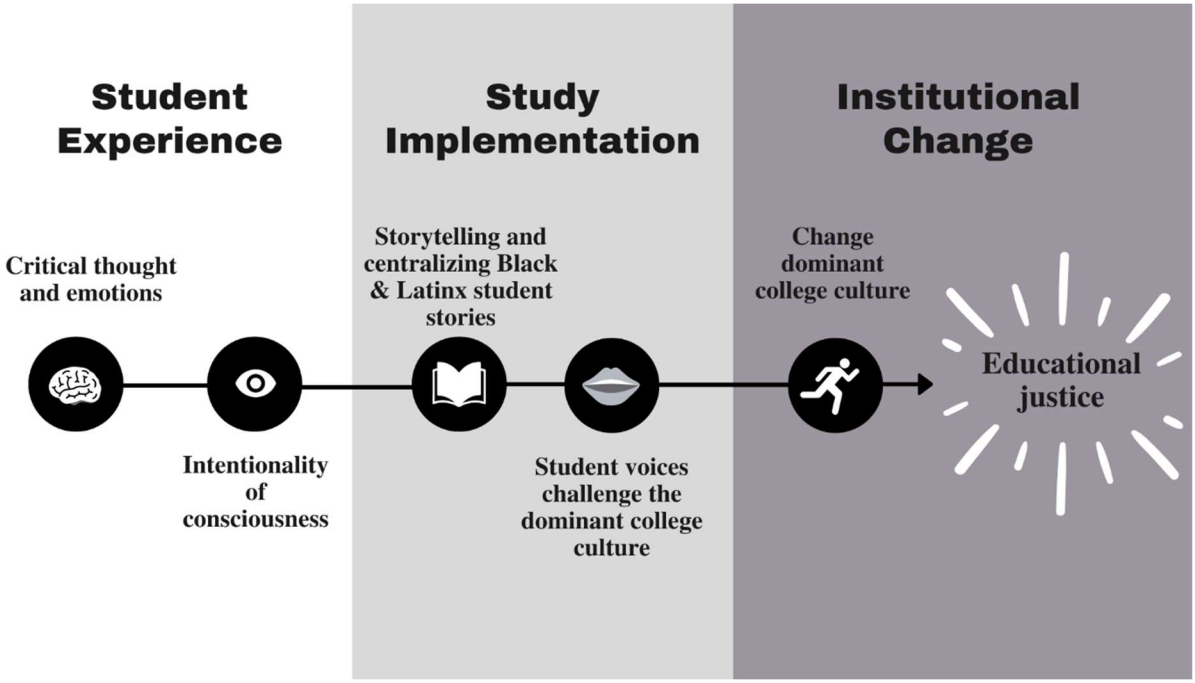
CRT began as a legal theory, but was limited to legal studies. The theory was then expanded to education and other discipline. The standard academic environment assumes that emotions have no place in education. Racism is also a part of the culture in education. This is seen in the assumed deficit view that is placed on students of color (Ladson-Billings, 1998). Yosso's (2005) five tenets of CRT state the following: (1) there is an inherent intercentricity of race and racism; (2) CRT exits to challenge the dominant ideology of White privilege and deficit models; (3) social justice is the main goal of CRT; (4) there is value in centralizing the experiential knowledge, stories, and narratives of people; and (5) CRT is interdisciplinary. CRT expands Critical Theory to include specific aspects that support the needs of people who are racially minoritized by uplifting their voices and experiences in an environment that assumes personal experiences have no value.

Reality is socially constructed through the experiences and environments of the humans living in it, also referred to as intentionality of consciousness (Ladson-Billings, 1998). Critical Theory and Critical Race Theory reveal each individual's perception of their experience through critical thought and intentionality of consciousness. Figure 2 models how Critical Theory can be used to translate students' intentionality of

consciousness into tools to challenge and change the dominant college structure. Storytelling and the human voice are very valuable when critiquing a system such as the college education system. The standard college setting, however, does not value experiential knowledge. Sharing and centering stories and emotions of Black and Latinx individuals in the standard college setting creates an opportunity to challenge the dominant structure present in colleges. In this opportunity, people exchange capital, express emotions, and share pieces of themselves with those around them (Ladson-Billings, 1998; Yosso, 2005). Storytelling creates a space for self-examination and overcoming challenges through better understanding. Sharing one's voice and emotions also allows the sharer to preserve their sense of self in a new environment and dismantle oppressive structures (Ladson-Billings, 1998). Student voices are powerful because they make space to create educational justice through dismantling the dominant structure.

Figure 2

Model of Critical Theory and Critical Race Theory Challenging College Culture



The standard college experience assumes normativity of all students. Normativity, however, is a relative term because many elements of normative capital found in college are unfamiliar to students of color. Normativity in standard college assumes all students share White middle-class experiences and capital. Students who do not use the presumed normative capital are assumed to be at a deficit. Students, however, have their own cultural wealth (Yosso, 2005). Yosso (2005) introduced cultural wealth in relation to CRT. Cultural wealth is nurtured by the valuable knowledge gained through different forms of cultural capital. Cultural wealth is made of six forms of cultural capital: aspirational capital (the ability to maintain hopes and dreams); linguistic capital (intellectual and social skills created through communication in one or more language

style); familial capital (cultural knowledge and kinship ties shared among families); social capital (networks of individuals with community resources); navigational capital (the skill of maneuvering through PWIs); and resistance capital (oppositional behavior used to challenge inequality). These aspects of culture are represented through language, immigration, gender, phenotype (physical features), sexuality, region, race, and ethnicity. It is often looked down upon to include these personal characteristics in the classroom. A Black or Latinx student's voice lets both the student and educator challenge racist, deficit-based thinking in the academic space (Ladson-Billings, 1998). Without Black and Latinx students' voices, emotions, or storytelling, the academic will remain a space where White middle-class views are upheld and the culture of minoritized students will remain devalued (Ladson-Billings, 1998).

Emotions are a key component of human communication, learning, and understanding. Emotional connections facilitate learning. Disregarding emotion as a factor in the classroom can hinder students' learning and lead to traumatic experiences. People use emotions to make sense of social situations and to function effectively in those social situations (Gabriel & Griffiths, 2002). The cultural wealth that students have informs how they perceive and emotional respond to experiences. Callahan (2004) and Dirkx (2001) emphasized the practical use of emotions in the academic environment. According to both researchers, other studies often focus on the negative aspect of emotions in the classroom, referring to students' emotional needs as baggage. In some studies, for example, educators with a deficit point of view of students' emotions also do not consider the positive and pragmatic uses (Capt et al., 2014; Kozeracki, 2005). Humans make emotional connections for safety and for knowledge. These emotional

connections are tied to their cultural capital. Without considering the function of emotions, faculty members lose an important component to connect with their students and connect their students to the academic content. Callahan (2004) and Wolfe (2006) are proponents of understanding students' negative emotional responses as a learning experience.

All students experience a full range of emotions in college. These emotions include, but are not limited to fear, excitement, humiliation, anticipation, trust, or happiness. In a study conducted by Torres and Hernandez (2009), for example, the researchers identified that a higher percentage of Latinx students faced challenges due to their different cultural capital. This is often due to a lack of access to college within their community and the high percentage of parents who are working class immigrants with no previous experience with college in the U.S. The capital valued in the working class and non-collegiate space varies very differently from the White middle-class capital expected in college (Yosso, 2005). Torres and Hernandez's study showed that Latinx students are more likely to have higher satisfaction when they have a guide such as an advisor to validate the students' cultural wealth and introduce them to college's cultural capital. Students with advisors also identified that they felt more "at home" at the institution, encouraged and supported, and felt a higher sense of belonging. The critical assessment of the Latinx students' voices and experiences showed students' cultural wealth and offered a space to them within the institution.

The college classroom is an inherently social environment where students enter with their own cultural wealth and capital. Emotions incorporated with capital are used for sensemaking and helping individuals function in a social context. Gabriel and

Griffiths (2002) described emotions as a social phenomenon that are learned aspects of behavior. Emotional responses are comprised of the active emotion of the individual and the audience that is present for the emotional display. Because of emotions inherent place in socialization, the researchers find that emotions are a beneficial instrument for defining experiences of respect, position, status, and authority. Emotions represent the individuals' conscious judgments of those experiences. Gabriel and Griffiths (2002) stated that people often adopt and adjust responses based on social sanctions. This creates a potential for more than one emotional response to an experience: (1) the response that the individual presents during that experience based on their audience and (2) the true emotional response that they felt. The social sanctions of the standard classroom dictate that emotions and storytelling have no place in college. Students in that space must follow these sanctions and, therefore, maintain the dominant, oppressive structure. Critical Theory and CRT work to dismantle these sanctions by offering students a space to use their voices and include themselves.

Emotions give meaning to all social experiences. Students' emotional responses can even occur prior to engaging with the content of the class. Students may have feelings about their previous experiences in the institution and educational trauma (Callahan, 2004). They could be wary of the environment due to their experiences with prejudice and racism in academic settings (Jones et al., 2018). Engaging in developmental education programming for example, is often associated with stigma. Students who enroll in developmental education programs may be struggling with that stigma when they enter the classroom (Parker, 2012). Callahan (2004) states that understanding students' emotions can help them develop their personal power as

autonomous learners. Critical Theory offers educators the opportunity to understand students' emotions and help them utilize and control their own emotions.

Callahan (2004), Wolfe (2006), and Holley and Steiner (2005), among other researchers, all highly recommend creating a safe space for students to explore academically and emotionally. The safe space would be for students as well as faculty. Both parties would be able to think and speak freely without judgement, but also with consideration to all others present in the room. Safe spaces give students room to tell stories and use their voices. A safe space that meets these requirements gives individuals room to grow and develop in the classroom environment. Safe spaces are crucial to Critical Theory and CRT. Critical Theory and CRT inherently assume that the Critical Theory classroom environment is open to critical assessment, and therefore safe for emotions and sharing. Van Thompson and Schwarz (2014) conducted a qualitative study regarding men of color with educational trauma participating in higher education. The men noted that during their schooling experience, professors were hurtful and dismissive. The men noted that they never felt safe in that environment because both the students and the professors treated them poorly. Van Thompson and Schwarz (2014) noted the men who participated in the study could have benefitted strongly from safer classroom spaces. The researchers learned more about the need for a safe space by creating a safe space where the men were able to explore their educational trauma freely. Safe spaces are important because students spend a significant amount of time in the classroom. Students who consistently feel unsafe will carry that feeling through all academic experiences, resulting in educational trauma (Gray, 2019; Perry, 2006).

Critical Theory and CRT create a safe space to deeply understand students' emotional responses to their experiences. Their emotional responses are driven by their beliefs, experiences, and capital. The theoretical framework is inherently emotion-based. Critical Theory asks that the listener, be it the researcher or educator, make an effort to understand the root of students' emotional responses in a safe academic space. Emotions are extremely valuable and contain information that is beneficial to both understanding and assisting students. All students' cultural wealth and capital should be incorporated into a safe space. It allows students the chance to express their emotions and connect personally to the content discussed. The purpose of Critical Theory is to better understand the voice of oppressed populations and to use that information to liberate them from oppression. This benefit of Critical Theory is particularly useful in the current study, which focused on Black and Latinx students. The researcher applied Critical Theory with a focus on emotions when interviewing and analyzing the data of the interviews.

Review of Related Literature

This literature review details Black and Latinx students' experiences as students in developmental education courses in college. The review begins with the importance of students' perception of their own experiences. Then it will discuss the impact of emotions and educational trauma on students' college experience. Students' race, ethnicity, and access to capital have been proven to be factors that impact persistence and motivation through college. Faculty members are important in this context because they are keepers and distributors of capital for college students. They can support students socioemotionally to help them develop into autonomous learners who have a sense of belonging in their academic environment. This literature review demonstrates the

characteristics of students in developmental education courses and faculty members in conjunction with students' emotions, race, and ethnicity.

Perceptions and Experiences in Developmental Education

Enrolling in developmental education courses can be a challenging experience for students. Adult education classes typically rely on rote memorization of the content that the student needs to learn to engage in standard education courses. To better understand the student experience, it is important to understand their perceptions and points of view. Developmental education classes, for example, are typically stigmatized. This may have an impact on the students' perception of themselves and their intellectual ability. It would benefit both students and faculty if faculty members are more prepared to support students and their need for content and emotional support.

Andrade (2007) conducted a literature review to assess how learning communities impact students' involvement, satisfaction, achievement, and persistence. The review was conducted by identifying the most common objectives of learning communities to identify which features result in success. The researcher defined a learning community as a block scheduling of courses that share a connected curriculum. The researcher analyzed the studies by identifying the percent of studies that refer to certain terms and concepts. Through this literature review, Andrade (2007) found that involvement, satisfaction, achievement, and persistence are effective ways of measuring student success. The researcher emphasized the value of students' satisfaction with their experience and their active involvement in college. These studies of learning communities consistently reviewed students' satisfaction with their experience. Andrade's (2007) study does not explicitly review the impact of student perception. However, student satisfaction and

institutional involvement inherently require attention to students' perception of their experience.

Andrade's (2007) study supports constructing programming with consideration to the students' perception of their experience. A students' sense of belonging supports the importance of students feeling as though they are a part of the college community. A student who feels satisfied with their programming and feels that they belong in their environment are more likely to persist through college (Zumbrunn et al., 2014). This current study valued the importance of students' perception of their experience to gain an accurate understanding of the impact. Satisfaction, for example, is an emotion-based factor of students' experience. Andrade (2007) defines satisfaction as positive attitudes toward an individual or experience. Although Andrade (2007) does not explicitly state that satisfaction is emotion-based, but she does refer to it as "feelings toward satisfaction" (p. 12) or in the context of "feelings toward peer collaboration" (p. 12).

Schnee (2014) conducted a study analyzing students' perception of their placement in developmental courses. The courses were offered in the style of a learning community. The researcher conducted a longitudinal study over the course of three years. The researcher interviewed 15 students in the lowest level of developmental education English course in a learning community. The university was an urban community college in the northeast. The students were interviewed once per semester during their first three semesters and once a year for the rest of the study. The researchers used semi-structured interviews and triangulated the data with quantitative data. The quantitative data included students' persistence through developmental courses, cumulative credits, GPA, grades and developmental courses, and persistence beyond their remedial courses. Schnee

(2014) found that remediation was stigmatized among students. They felt that taking part in remediation identified them as less capable than other students. One student stated that he felt bullied by other students for his academic weakness. Once the students engaged in the learning community, however, the students felt more engaged. They stated that they were experiencing more intellectual engagement in their classrooms. The additional engagement was due to the active learning and critical thinking required in a learning community style course. The students also noted that once they had completed their developmental courses, they were disappointed by the lack of engagement in their standard college courses. Schnee (2014) identified this experience as pedagogical dissonance. Pedagogical dissonance is when a student perceives the pedagogy of a new academic environment as jarring or inadequate.

Schnee (2014) discussed students' perception of their academic experience. Specifically, it refers to students' perception of their placement and remediation and their progression through college. Her research illustrated moments of transition that pose a challenge to students in developmental education courses. Firstly, the students were adjusting to being classified as developmental. After experiencing the courses, students had to transition into standard-style classrooms. The students found the unanticipated transition to standard-style classes to be jarring, leading to pedagogical dissonance. By reviewing students in developmental education courses' transition through college, Schnee (2014) identified ways institutions could better support their transition and ensure continued persistence. Schnee's study (2014) also validated Callahan's (2004) description of Critical Theory with a focus on emotions. The current study focused on students'

feelings to gain a better understanding of how they perceive their experience in developmental education programs.

Barbatis (2010) conducted a study to understand under prepared community college students' perception of their experience in a learning community. The researcher conducted semi-structured interviews with 22 subjects. Seven students identified as Black, and three students identified as Latinx. The students were recruited from a large urban community college. The students enrolled in non-credit bearing reading, English, and math developmental courses. Barbatis (2010) conducted semi-structured interviews with each student and a focus group after the interviews. after data analysis, the researcher identified four themes: pre-college characteristics, external college support and community influences, social involvement, and academic integration. Barbatis (2010) noted that pre-college characteristics such as sense of responsibility, goal orientation, resourcefulness, determination, cultural and racial self-identification, and faith all motivated students to persist through their college experience. In terms of the second theme of support, students attributed their collegiate success to support a friends and family who understood the value of their experience. The theme of social involvement contained assertions from students that participating in social activities on campus had positive impacts on their college experience. the 4th theme of academic integration shows that students who persisted felt included in the campus academic culture. The feeling of inclusion came from the opportunity to develop the skills that are essential for success rather than focusing specifically on retaining course content. A common thread along each theme was race and culture. Students often referred to their race, culture, and faith to

explain their beliefs an understanding of their own experience. Race, culture, and faith also were used to explain students' goals and motivation.

Each of the four themes had an impact on students' persistence through the developmental education program. Not only were these characteristics found in the interview data, they were also found in the students who dropped from the study. Three of the four students who dropped out of the study worked full time and were responsible for young children. The students that participated in the study expressed that they felt integrated and included in the campus community as a whole. The current study supports the idea that underprepared students, or students in developmental education programs, who persist are likely to share some of the characteristics described in Barbatis's study (2010). In the current study, the researcher recruited Black and Latinx students. It is expected that their culture will be pertinent to their beliefs. Students will also likely describe their internal motivations and beliefs to support the experiences that they are describing.

Gaining a detailed understanding of students' experiences is imperative to constructing truly beneficial programming. Although factors such as persistence and GPA are relevant to the students' experience, their perception of the experience can provide a more comprehensive understanding. Through studying students' perception of their experience, researchers were able to identify factors such as satisfaction and inclusion in the campus environment (Andrade, 2007; Schnee, 2014). In speaking with students, researchers also had the opportunity to hear about the impact of students' race, culture, and faith in the context of their college experience (Barbatis, 2010). This study sought the details found in students' emotional responses to their college experience.

The Influence of Emotions in Education

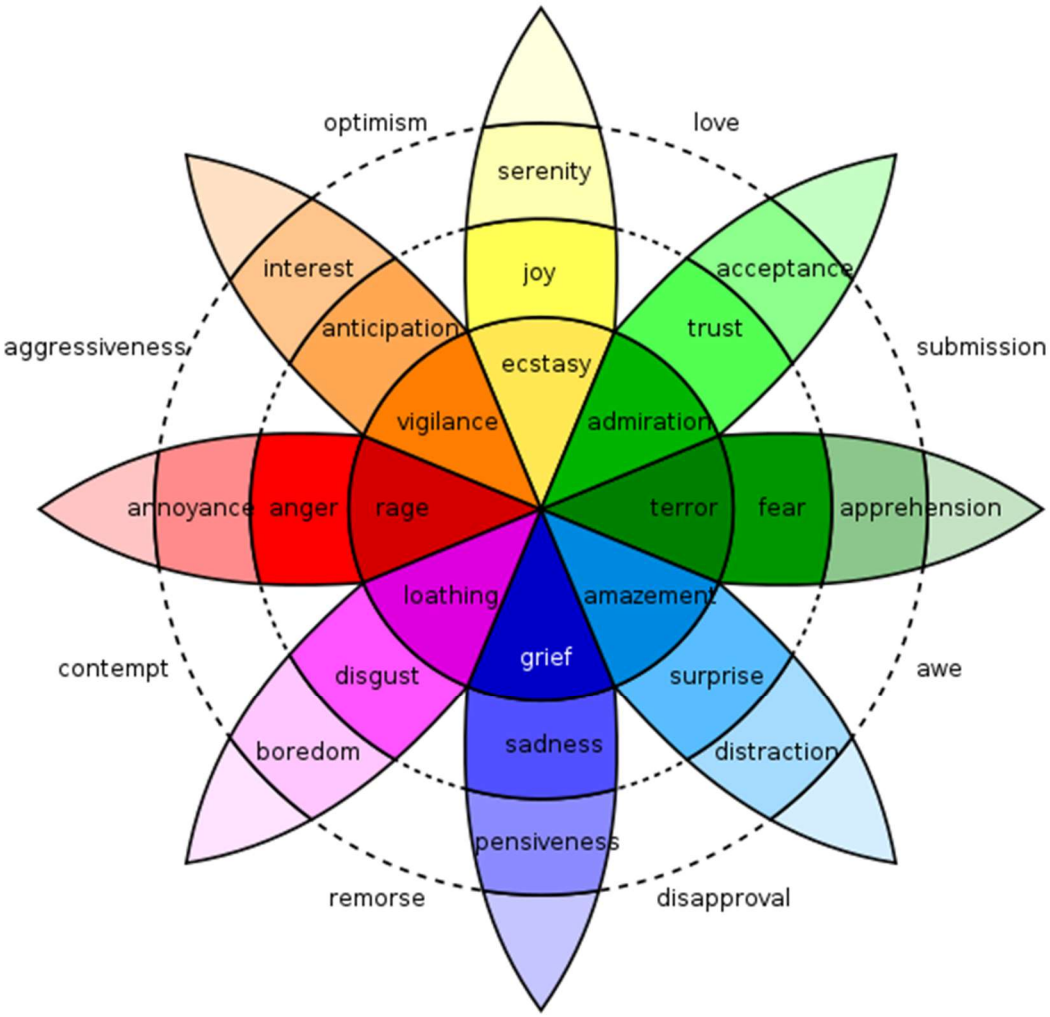
Emotions are a key portion of human evolution. Plutchik (2001) described emotions as "a complex chain of loosely connected events that begin with a stimulus and includes feelings, psychological changes, impulses to action, and specific, goal-oriented behavior" (p. 348). The current study explored students' emotions to investigate each of the factors Plutchik (2001) described. Applying Critical Theory in the context of emotions offers the opportunity to develop a deeper understanding of the students' experience and their perception of that experience (Callahan, 2004; Ladson-Billings, 1998). Because human emotions are so complex, simply identifying students' emotions will not be sufficient to understand their experiences. The type and intensity of the emotion are just as important as the subsequent physiological response and prompt to action. Exploring students' emotions and responses in relation to their emotions will strengthen descriptions of their experience.

Plutchik (2001) created the Wheel of Emotions. The Wheel depicts and categorizes a variety of human emotions. The emotions bloom out from the center of the wheel. The emotions listed on the inside of the wheel are more intense than those on the outside. For example, rage is the highest intensity, anger is the middle level of intensity, and annoyance is the lowest intensity. The Wheel also shows emotions that are a hybrid of two others. Love, for example, is a combination of emotions from the ecstasy section of the wheel and the admiration section of the wheel. Because emotions are a part of the human experience, it is anticipated that students could feel any of the feelings identified on the wheel. A student who enjoys the conversations they have with the professor may feel admiration and anticipation for the next conversation. A student who does not feel

confident in their ability to read aloud may feel apprehension before their English class. The current study refers to Plutchik's wheel of emotions (2001) when categorizing or discussing emotions.

Figure 3

Plutchik's Wheel of Emotions



This is a depiction of Plutchik's (2001) Wheel of Emotions.

Emotions are an important factor in building knowledge. Emotions are tied to memory and making meaning. Emotions even dictate the attention the individual will offer to an experience (Wolfe, 2006). Both the emotional experiences of the students and the faculty are relevant in the classroom environment (Callahan, 2004). Dirkx (2001)

provides a literature review of the impact of emotions on adult learning. The researcher specifically argues that emotions should be used to help students make meaning. When students use emotions to connect meaning, they can create a more profound understanding of the content. The researcher discusses the human experience of emotion in general while providing examples of those situations. In conjunction with the practical use of emotions, this literature review also discusses how faculty members view adult students. It is common for professors to use negative terms such as *baggage* when referring to students' emotional histories. This calls attention to a similar point from Callahan (2004). Callahan (2004) stated that faculty members need to be aware of their own emotions and responses. Referring to a student as having baggage implies negative feelings and connotations which could be reflected in the classroom. Dirkx (2001) concluded that the emotional connections that both faculty and students make will impact their future behaviors and understanding of situations.

Dirkx (2001) also fills gaps from Callahan (2004) by discussing specific ways that emotions could be used in a classroom. Dirkx (2001) recommends using the imaginal method. The imaginal method takes advantage of imaginal learning by using images to mediate new concepts and construct meanings. Dirkx (2001) stated that people can form deeper meaning when they related information to images, utilize their imagination, and connect to information with empathy. The researcher demonstrated the importance of emotions in making meaning and the practical use of emotions in adult education. Dirkx (2001) confirms that working with faculty and students' emotions are pivotal to a supportive classroom environment. The current study explores students' emotional

responses and perception of their experiences. It is expected that students will discuss their emotional responses and their perception of faculty members' emotional responses.

Students spend a significant amount of time in the classroom. Because emotions are an important part of the human experience, the classroom includes a mix of emotions from professors and other students (Becker et al., 2014; Callahan, 2004). Educators' moods also have power over the emotional state of the classroom. Becker et al. (2014) conducted a study that assessed emotional crossover. Emotional crossover occurs when emotions are directly or indirectly elicited from the emotions of others. Emotional crossover occurs commonly in the classroom. Becker et al. (2014) proposed three hypotheses: (1) students' perception of their educators' emotions relate to the students' emotions; (2) educators' instructional behavior (e.g. whether or not the student understands the lesson) relates to students' discrete emotions; (3) educators' emotions are related to students' emotions in class beyond the impact of instructional behavior. The researchers recruited 149 students with a mean age of 15.63 years old. Each of the students were given an iPod Touch 4G to record their responses. The iPod would ask questions about the students' momentary emotional responses to their experience.

Becker et al.(2014) found that emotional crossover does occur in the classroom. The data collected from the students supported all three of the researchers' hypotheses. Students' perception of educator's emotions impacted the students' own emotions. For example, when educators were more excited about the subject, the students mirrored that excitement. Educators' instructional behaviors affected students' emotions, specifically enjoyment or anger. Above all, the educators' emotions had more of an impact on student emotions than their instructional behavior. Students' moods also affected how they

viewed professors' emotions. Overall, this study exemplified the power and presence of emotions in the classroom. Students' emotions are impacted by a variety of factors, including their current mood, their perception of educators' emotions, and their classroom experience. Becker et al.'s (2014) study explored students' emotions, but did not delve into the students' understanding of the experience. The students only identified their emotions or their perceptions of their educators' emotions. The current study gave students the opportunity to think critically of their own experiences and emotional responses. This assessment illuminated details of students' complex emotional experiences such as emotional crossover or their perception of educators' emotions.

Emotions are highly relevant in the context of the educational space (Becker et al., 2014; Callahan, 2004; Crocker & Mazer, 2019; Quinlan, 2016). Students' emotions direct how they will approach a situation. Because of this effect, emotions are crucial in forming knowledge and building relationships (Dirkx, 2001). Quinlan (2006) conducted a literature review that analyze studies of emotions in the higher education environment. The researcher grouped the analysis in four categories of studies: 1) the student's relationship with the subject matter; 2) the relationship between students and faculty; 3) students' relationship with their peers; and 4) students' relationship with themselves. The studies exploring students' relationship with the subject matter discussed educator's abilities to communicate their passion and enthusiasm about a subject. Instructors that can get students talking about detailed ideas, humanize researchers who are mentioned, and treat students as members of the disciplinary community will help students engage in *passionate thought.* Passionate thought is described as the individual demonstrating excitement and deep enthusiasm for a topic (Neumann, 2009). The other three categories

discussed in the literature review discuss interpersonal and intrapersonal relationships in the higher education space. A study discussing student and professor relationships found that students who nominated professors for teaching awards tended to describe the positive emotions that the professor made them feel (Moore & Kuol, 2007). Professors, however, are hesitant about being emotionally expressive and tend to limit their emotions in the classroom (Zhang & Zhu, 2008). Quinlan (2006) concluded that teaching is a highly emotional experience, and it would benefit the educator to engage with their own emotions.

In Quinlan's study (2006), professors who demonstrate emotional competence in the classroom are more likely to be correlated with students' positive feelings of enjoyment, pride, and hope in the academic space. Professors who do not demonstrate emotional competence are associated with negative emotions such as boredom, shame, hopelessness (Mazer et al., 2014). In the literature review, students' relationship with their selves was important to their academic experience. Since college students are in transition, they must use critical thinking to challenge their own previously constructed beliefs. Students may feel challenging emotions during this transitional period such as hopelessness or confusion (Parks, 2000). Quinlan (2006) states that it would be beneficial for professors to be prepared to emotionally support students and teach them how to maneuver socioemotional interactions. This literature review supports the current study by showing the inherent socioemotional nature of higher education classrooms. Students need emotional support to assess themselves in relation to their new environment. Without that support, they are more likely to associate their experiences with negative

emotions. Students with support, however, associated their experiences with positive emotions.

Pritchard and Wilson (2003) conducted a survey to assess socioemotional factors in relation to attrition. The researchers surveyed 218 undergraduate students, 88% of which were White, 5% were Black, and 2% were Latinx. The survey asked students how frequently they experienced 55 stressors in the past month. They also reviewed characteristics such as perfectionism, self-esteem, coping tactics, affective states, optimism, and social health. Through a MANOVA analysis, the researchers identified correlations between characteristics. Pritchard and Wilson (2003) concluded that socioemotional health impact students' persistence and achievement. Emotional health was significantly related to GPA regardless of genders. Students who identified as perfectionists had higher GPAs. Higher stress levels were significantly related to lower GPAs. Poor emotional health, demonstrated by more fatigue and lower self-esteem, was statistically significantly related to students' intention to drop out. Students who intended to persist demonstrated more positive coping skills, such as concentrating their efforts on school and turning to religion. The researchers found that the frequency of alcohol intake had a negative impact on GPA.

This study shows statistically significant relations between emotions and student actions. Students who felt negative emotions were also found to have negative coping skills, and more stress and more attrition. Students that felt positive emotions were found to have positive coping skills, less stress, and less attrition. Students' emotional states can be a cue toward their experience and persistence. Critical Theory with a focus on emotions emphasizes the importance of analyzing student's socioemotional needs for

better understanding of their needs and the impact on their persistence. Educators should also consider that students may have educational trauma. Gray (2019) stated that educational trauma can result in more student fatigue, higher stress levels, lower self-esteem, and poor coping skills. This study identifies the significance of emotions in the academic space through the measurable impact of positive and negative emotions on students' experience.

Emotions and Reactions. Emotions are a social phenomenon that help individuals make sense of social situations and function effectively in them (Gabriel & Griffiths, 2002). Adults, including students, adjust and limit how they present their emotions according to the rules and appropriateness of the situation (Callahan, 2002). Callahan (2002) explored how emotional expression and emotional management impacts individuals in an organization and influences action within the organization. The qualitative study was conducted at a nonprofit that served veterans. The 21 individuals chosen for the study were staff members that worked with the volunteer branch of the nonprofit. Some participants were senior staff and others were non senior staff. The case study was conducted using face to face interviews and written documents such as letters and emails. The data was analyzed by transcribing interviews and coding the data. The data was coded by colleagues that were separate from the study to ensure trustworthiness of the analysis. The researcher also had two staff and two volunteers review the data.

The study found that emotional structuration had a large impact on when and how the participants utilized emotional management. Emotional structuration occurs when individual's emotional reactions are defined by their place in a social structure. Participants reported that they would try to utilize more positive emotions when facing

the public. The participants also engaged in more emotional suppression when facing the public than when they were interacting internally within the organization. In addition, the participants in the study noted that they utilized more emotional suppression with staff members that had more seniority than them within the organization. Callahan (2002) concluded that the use of emotional suppression impacts the institutional culture because individuals with less seniority are less likely to express concerns and therefore less likely to bring an individual impact to the organization. This study is relevant to the current study because it exemplifies a specific example where emotions can impact interactions between adults. It reveals that emotions can be utilized and suppressed based on the perceived social and cultural capital of the individuals in the interaction.

Students in developmental education courses are, by definition, less prepared than college-ready students. This means that they may face additional challenges in or outside the classroom and when engaging in other aspects of college. Lee (2012) conducted a mixed-methods study exploring library anxiety in students in developmental education courses. Library anxiety is defined as any anxiety students' have regarding using and accessing library resources. The researchers recruited 191 students who were in their last level of developmental education courses. After assessing the quantitative data, the authors interviewed 13 of the 191 students to gain better understanding of the results. The researcher used Bostick's library anxiety scale followed with interviews. Lee (2012) categorized library experiences in three categories: (1) library awareness; (2) library use; and (3) library value. The researcher found that students were uninformed of the library, and therefore less likely to utilize services. The survey results indicated that students with more library anxiety were less likely to visit the library. Students with higher workloads

were more likely to have higher library anxiety. The survey results also revealed that students with more professors' support or orientation regarding the library had less library anxiety and were more likely to use the services. Overall, the students in developmental education courses who participated in the study expressed that they experience library anxiety.

Lee (2012) suggested that librarians and community college staff should be proactive in helping students who are fearful of using services. Perry (2004) and Gray (2019) have described fear and anxiety as emotions that prevents action. Fear can result in educational trauma. Fear responses and anxiety can also be a sign of educational trauma. Lee's (2012) study demonstrates the importance of recognizing and attending to students' emotional needs. Library anxiety is a helpful example of identifying students' emotional needs and supporting them with affective programming. The current study does not intend to diagnose students with educational trauma, but to identify and understand the stressors identified in common with educational trauma.

Safe Spaces. Safe spaces are beneficial for intellectual development. They allow learners the opportunity to explore their emotions and understanding of the course content without judgement or fear of failure (Holley & Steiner, 2005; Lundberg et al., 2018). Holley and Steiner (2005) conducted a qualitative study to identify the characteristics of a space that students deemed to be a safe space. The study explored how these facets affect the students. The authors used a convenience sample of 121 students enrolled at a baccalaureate and Master of Social Work program at a Western university. In the results, the researchers noted some trends. Men overall felt safer in the classroom spaces. White students also typically felt safer than students of color. Overall,

97% of students responded that a safe space is very important or extremely important to them.

The students stated that they wanted an open environment to explore ideas with the help of a supportive instructor. The students expressed that the instructor should be comfortable with conflict and discussing controversial ideas. Students of color stated that they wanted instructors to pay attention to cultural issues. The students wanted all participants in the environment to be aware of themselves and their biases when they contribute to the conversation. Students discussed the physical environment. They said that a safe space had seating that allowed them to see everyone in the classroom. They mentioned appropriate room sizing and good lighting. When students described an unsafe space, they stated that the instructors were overly critical, biased, opinionated, judgmental, and did not accept other people's opinions. When students described fellow students in an unsafe space, they described those peers as biased, close minded, and apathetic about the learning experience. According to the students, an unsafe classroom typically had row style seating and prevented students from engaging in discussion. The researchers explored safe spaces to identify characteristics of environments that foster student persistence.

Holley and Steiner's (2005) work gave detailed examples of the facets that can make up a safe space for students. The students identified characteristics in themselves, other students, faculty members, and the physical space to identify factors that have impacts on their comfort. The results of this study point to factors that make students feel unsafe, such as being judged negatively or met with a closed mind. The students in the study even identified the typical classroom seat placement (i.e. all seats facing the front

of the room) made them feel less safe. Holley and Steiner (2005) mention the difference in student perception of safety based on their race and gender. Students who feel unsafe in their environment will be less likely to explore the content provided. The study gave students a space to engage in critical reflection of their classroom experience. Although Holley and Steiner (2005) did not explicitly state the impact of student emotions, this study inherently considers the relationship between students' emotional responses to their learning experience. The current study developed an experience-based understanding of what makes students comfortable and uncomfortable in their academic environment. These characteristics were identified using the students' descriptions and emotional responses.

The current study focuses on students' perceptions in conjunction with the emotional responses they share pertaining to their experiences. Emotions are helpful for building meaning for all stakeholders in the classroom space. Both student and faculty game understanding through emotions. Emotions impact how individuals communicates, interact with others, and engage with unfamiliar experiences (Callahan, 2002; Lee, 2012). For this reason, it is important that faculty members are aware of their own emotional responses (Dirkx, 2001). Students benefit from professors who demonstrate emotional competence and share skills with them such as passionate thought (Quinlan, 2016). Students find spaces that they perceive as safe to be more beneficial to their academic experience (Holley & Steiner, 2005). Engaging students in a positive emotional manner can also help reduce attrition and increased persistence (Pritchard & Wilson, 2003). The previous studies establish emotions as an extremely valuable asset in higher education.

Faculty members must be trained in understanding and utilizing the asset of emotions to help connect students to the college experience.

Educational Trauma

Educational trauma refers to traumatic experiences that happen in a learner's academic career. The traumatic experiences manifest as the person continues through all educational experiences (Perry, 2006). Educational trauma is a result of cyclical and systemic harm caused in an academic context. Academic contexts include, but are not limited to, standardized testing, curriculum, the classroom, and professor expectations (Gray, 2019). Educational trauma is not limited to minoritized or lower income students. Any student can enter college with educational trauma from their previous school experiences. All stakeholders in the academic environment (i.e., students, parents, professors, staff, etc.) can cause educational trauma. Educational trauma can be related to the student's socioeconomic status, race, ethnicity, and gender (Gray, 2019). Symptoms of educational trauma include, but are not limited to, anxiety, depression, stress, low self-esteem, resistance to school tasks and assignments, eating disorders, inattention, impulsivity, aggressive behavior, hopelessness, and disruptive behavior. Students who experience educational trauma can exhibit memory problems, deficiency in organization, impaired language skills, changes in brain architecture, absence from school, failure to complete work, and other impactful experiences. Students who experience educational trauma are also at risk for a variety of long-term concerns, though these concerns may not be directly caused by educational trauma. These concerns include occupational problems, disability, social problems, and disrupted neurodevelopment.

Trauma was initially identified as a result of war. Psychologists working with soldiers were able to identify that trauma made processing information difficult. Soldiers would return from war unable to cope with and function in civilian life. Similar symptoms were identified in Holocaust survivors and victims of accidents (Ringel & Brandell, 2011). There are two types of trauma: big T Trauma and little t trauma. Big T Trauma includes serious threats to life and health. Little t trauma includes milder events such as embarrassment, failure, regret, or humiliation. Gray (2019) states that both forms of trauma are impactful on a student's development. All forms of trauma block the brain and prevent effective learning. This is because the traumatized brain is constantly in a disturbed state. The disturbed state is exacerbated when the student reenters the environment that caused them trauma. Students may not realize that they are experiencing trauma. A non-traumatized brain can keep relevant information and dispose of irrelevant information. A traumatized brain will experience their trauma in real time, which causes variable degrees of focus on relevant and irrelevant experiences.

There are four forms of educational trauma: spectral, in-situ, ex-situ, and socioecological. Spectral trauma (e.g., standardized testing) is a result of pedagogical practices. In-situ educational trauma (e.g., bullying by staff or students) occurs in the school, but separate from pedagogy. Ex-situ educational trauma (e.g., family issues or food insecurity) occurs outside of the school, but affects learning in the classroom. Socioecological educational trauma occurs when multiple systems in the school work against a student. Standardized tests, for example, can have a negative impact on students as well as professors. Professors with students who test low on standardized tests can be subject to punishment or demerits. This administrative system can have an impact on how

the professor engages students going forward. Both Gray (2019) and Perry (2006) emphasize the importance of academic institutions offering trauma-informed support to students and assessing all facets of the institution for all four forms of educational trauma.

Gray (2019) states that pedagogical practices that lead to educational trauma are tools of White supremacy in education. Gray (2019) introduces a term from Arendt (1994) called the *banality of evil.* The banality of evil refers to the idea that individuals can shirk accountability for their negatively impactful behaviors by stating that they were obeying orders or the law. Institutions and faculty members often act in accordance with orders and rules from other structures and individuals including educational standards, government standards, and pedagogy from other schools. The rules, however, are stemmed in historically oppressive and non-inclusive curriculum (Callahan, 2004; Jones et al., 2018). Gray (2019) also refers to the term *poisonous pedagogy.* Poisonous pedagogy is carried out through educators and school staff doing mental or physical harm to a student for the good of the student. This can include using actions of manipulation and hypocrisy that have been traditionally used by previous generations. The banality of evil and poisonous pedagogy work concurrently as a tool of White supremacy to maintain the utilization of unintentionally harmful teaching methods. The banality of evil and poisonous pedagogy also remove the opportunity for critical thought of the students' experiences and the educator's actions.

Educational Trauma in Developmental Education. Gray (2019) states that the U.S. education system accepts stress and anxiety as necessary parts of the learning process. Gray (2019), however, disagrees with this idea and states that educators and

administrators should try to minimize all stress and anxiety. Educational trauma, for example, can be a result of building frustration and anxiety in an adult learner from fear of getting questions wrong or "feeling stupid" (Perry, 2006). The stigma of developmental education pertains to students feeling less intelligent than their peers due to their placement in the program. Perry (2006) discusses the neurological effects of trauma on an individual. He states that a traumatic experience can alter an individual's brain, prompting a fight or flight response to a non-threatening situation. Individuals who have traumatic experiences develop fear responses to certain triggers, which sensitizes them to those interactions. He then applies that logic to an academic situation. Students may experience negative interactions at school and later associate those same negative experiences in college, resulting in discomfort, anxiety, and possibly fear when they are in a learning environment. Students in developmental education courses have stated feeling each of these emotions in relation to college (Lee, 2012, Lundberg et al. 2018)

Developmental college students are more likely to have experienced negative high school experiences. This could include attending underserved schools, having negative associations with instructors, or a tendency to do poorly in certain subjects. These students tend to want a post-secondary degree, but they do have apprehensions toward certain aspects of school (Bettinger et al., 2013; Kisker & Outcalt, 2005). Educational trauma is an example of a common characteristic among students in developmental education courses (Kisker & Outcalt, 2005). Students who experience educational trauma have more intense stress responses to school situations. Students who do not do well in school are often more sensitized to the demands of school, triggering a stress response to schoolwork (Lundberg et al., 2018). Educational trauma leads to stronger negative

responses from those students when they are placed in moderate to challenging academic settings. These responses include psychologically dissociating from class, which could cause the students to "space out" or miss important information in the classroom. Some students also get emotional or angry (Perry, 2006). This is one example of the many characteristics to consider when constructing and managing a developmental education program. Students in developmental education courses require both holistic and academic growth.

Attending to students' emotional needs is beneficial to the entire community college population, especially students in developmental education courses. Gray (2019) states that institutions, for example, could reframe failure for students. The college experience contains many examples of failure that feel terminal. This can include failed tests, failed courses, or unpublished works. Oftentimes, these moments of failure signify a last chance and a negative emotional result. Like Callahan (2004), Gray (2019) suggests creating learning experiences out of moments of failure. Both students and faculty could benefit from improving their knowledge regarding educational trauma and their knowledge of the students' emotional experience.

A variety of researchers mention forms of educational trauma and how it negatively impacts students in developmental education courses (Brock, 2010; Holley & Steiner, 2005; Van Thompson & Schwartz, 2014; Wolfe, 2006). Students' previous academic experiences play a major role in their responses to higher education. They enter college after spending years having experiences, processing emotions, and forming perspectives. Every student has different views and expectations of the classroom. Students with educational trauma will find it challenging to work in certain

environments. Without an attentive eye, they could also be triggered by specific subjects, situations, or even words. Educational trauma and negative college experiences can strongly impact a students' sense of belonging in the academic environment. It can also rob them of a sense of control over their experience (Van Thompson & Schwartz, 2014). Students need to feel a sense of belonging in an environment in order to participate. Belonging is closely intertwined with emotions. If a student feels that sense of belonging, they will be able to participate actively in the environment. The sense of belonging can change depending on the context. Students may feel a sense of belonging with their friends but lose that feeling when they are on the college campus (Zumbrunn et al., 2014).

Students with negative self-perception who do not feel cared about also feel as though they do not matter. Students with distrust in authority are expressing educational trauma due to previous negative interactions with authority. Faculty members and curriculum developers need to be aware of how to engage in positive and meaningful interactions with students of color, particularly due to potential educational trauma in their past academic experiences. According to Capt et al., (2014) and Hussar et al. (2020), students in community colleges and students in developmental education courses are more likely to be students of color. Institutions should be aware of the increased likelihood that students of color have experienced educational trauma.

Occurrences of Educational Trauma. Van Thompson and Schwartz (2014) conducted a qualitative study with men of color who experienced educational trauma. The researchers noted that the students had been emotionally triggered from their previous experiences. Emotionally triggered means that another event related to the

student's trauma caused strong emotional responses as though they were experiencing their trauma again. The students in Van Thompson and Schwartz's (2014) study detailed experiences of embarrassment and humiliation in the classroom. Although they were little t traumas, they had a lasting effect on their educational experience. As other researchers have stated, college is a mode of access to higher income (Arnold et al., 2015; Bailey, 2009). Though little t traumas do not affect students' physical safety, they do impact their ability to complete school and therefore access higher income.

Professors, for example, may disregard students of color in the classroom due to a perceived lack of potential. This study implied that educational trauma is particularly common among students of color because they do not receive the same level of academic, social, or cultural support from their institution. Jones et al. (2018) explored the educational trauma created in the school-to-prison pipeline. The school-to-prison pipeline is a sequence of traumatic experiences that lower students' chances of success and increase students' chances of incarceration. The school-to-prison pipeline predominantly affects Black and Latinx students. The students in Jones, et al.'s (2018) study recounted experiences aligning with educational trauma. The students reported a negative self-perception, distrust in authority, and not feeling cared about. Negative self-perception aligns with the impacts of educational trauma (Gray, 2019).

Emotions are the key to learning. Without emotions and emotional responses, students will be limited in information retention. Community colleges should also consider the educational trauma it is likely that students have faced. Negative emotional responses leading to educational trauma can block the brain from learning. It is also particularly likely that the students of color at the community colleges have these

experiences. Faculty members' teaching style and curriculum should reflect awareness of students previously constructed beliefs and fears. Critical thought and reflection are particularly beneficial tools that both faculty and students could use to navigate the emotions that are relevant to the learning experience. Faculty members should work to intentionally support students though critical reflection.

Negative emotional experiences can have other negative impacts on the students' academic experience. For example, students may experience anxiety that causes them to avoid what makes them anxious. Negative emotional experiences have the potential to lead students to experiences that are damaging to their future. Educational trauma can even manifest from negative emotional experiences. Community colleges should build more faculty awareness of the impacts of negative emotions.

Students are often impacted by negative emotional experiences that occurred prior to college. Jones et al. (2018) conducted a qualitative study exploring the impact of the school to prison pipeline on Black and Latinx men. The school to prison pipeline is defined as a sequence of negative and traumatic experiences that ultimately result in the student's failure to complete school. The traumatic, punitive experiences increase the likelihood that a student will end up incarcerated after failing to complete school successfully. The researchers conducted an evocative autoethnography study of three men of color. Creswell and Poth (2017) define an autoethnography as a study written and recorded by the individuals who conducted the study. The three men involved in the study were incarcerated at the time of the study. The data were presented in a narrative form. The narrative indicated that the students did not experience appropriate support in school. They had very negative perceptions of their school experience, which they

connected to their incarcerations. The men recounted a lack of empathy from their professors, lack of support from their parents, and unreachable expectations in school. The study found that the men had experienced educational trauma in school. They discussed a lack of parental support, low quality schooling, consistent police presence in their schools, a clear wealth disparity, and unstable housing. The men also expressed that they had to maneuver through their school experience while managing a negative reputation, a low self-opinion of themselves, consistent punishment, and a distrust of authority. The men in the study agreed that their detrimental school experiences led them to adjusting their mindsets to tolerate their traumatic environment. According to Gray (2019) and Perry (2006) traumatic experiences negatively impact brain development, causing a change in how the person behaves, which is also corroborated by participants in the Jones et al. (2018) study.

The Jones et al. (2018) study also demonstrated the impact of educational trauma. As previously stated, students who experience educational trauma also experience changes in their brain. These changes in the brain caused a change in the students' responses, perception, and points of view. In the Jones et al. (2018) study, one of the men asked himself, "What could I have become?" (p. 66). This statement not only expresses the individual's disappointment in their experiences, but it also shows that they recall a time when they were different mentally. They are identifying the strong negative impact their school experiences had on them. It shows that they think about who they were prior to experiencing the educational trauma that changed their mindset. Educational trauma is highly impactful on the individual in school and any environments that harken back to their trauma. Jones et al. (2018) state that schools should take a more "whole child

approach" to better understand and support the students' needs. This study is relevant to the current study because it provides a longer-term narrative of the impact of educational trauma, particularly on students of color.

Van Thompson et al. (2014) further explored educational trauma in students, specifically pertaining to men of color. The researchers conducted a qualitative study demonstrating the trauma experienced by men of color throughout their academic career. The researchers interviewed 20 men that identified ethnically as Black and Latinx. The ethnographic study included a questionnaire followed by a semi-structured interview. The study found that many of the participants had experienced educational trauma. The educational trauma related to their lack of access, negative experiences with professors, and racist experiences. The researchers also noted that the students found it emotionally challenging to recall their trauma. As stated by Gray (2019), recalling trauma and revisiting environments where trauma occurs can trigger strong feelings. The findings stated that students would benefit strongly from learning in safe environments. These safe environments include a nonjudgmental space where students can explore concepts. The safe environment also includes educators and administrative staff willing to understand students' needs.

The qualitative study by Van Thompson et al. (2014) discusses the impact of trauma in the academic space. The study also focuses on the need for safe environments for learning. Callahan (2004) discusses the benefits of providing a safe space for students to learn. Both researchers state that learning is most effective in environments where individuals are comfortable to explore their own thoughts and beliefs. Critical reflection is most effective in environments where individuals can analyze new information in the

context of their own points of view and habits of minds openly. Faculty members need to be prepared for the fact that students may enter their classroom with a history of educational trauma or negative emotional experiences. If faculty are to engage with students, they must be equipped with strategies to support students emotionally, avoid exacerbating old educational trauma, and avoid creating new educational trauma. Emotional awareness offers faculty the opportunity to explore these experiences with students and uplift them (Jones et al., 2018; Van Thompson & Schwartz, 2014). This current study explored students' positive and negative emotional experiences to provide more understanding of students' perception. Students' perception can give effective understanding of the quality of program and students' experience (Museus & Neville, 2012; Nora & Cabrera, 1996).

Many studies focus on the needs of students in developmental education courses. Lundberg et al. (2018), however, worked to identify characteristics of students in developmental education courses engaging in a more successful and supportive program. Lundberg et al. (2018) conducted a case study of a developmental education math program at a minority serving four-year college. The researchers' intention was to identify characteristics of students in developmental education courses who continue to successfully continue their education beyond their developmental course. Lundberg et al. (2018) conducted a case study of students at Chief Dull Knife College (CDKC). This institution was identified because of its participation in the Minority Serving Institution Models of Success. This is a national study that identified 12 minority serving institutions that have promising initiatives to support minority student achievement. A case study of a college with demonstrated developmental education success provided Lundberg et al.

(2018) with the opportunity to identify characteristics of successful students in developmental education courses.

The students who participated in the study were predominantly Native American. The researchers confirmed that developmental education programs typically included people of color and students of a lower socioeconomic status. The researchers identified a variety of characteristics that commonly impacted students in developmental education courses. The researchers conducted interviews of students to further understand the mindsets and perceptions of successful students. The results showed that CDKC developmental math students' success was identified based on their development as autonomous students rather than their grades in the classes. In the literature review, Lundberg et al. (2018) noted that students who were not as successful in college stated that they were felt fear in the college environment, had a difference of cultural capital, and having challenges understanding the navigational capital of their college. The students in the CDKC math program experienced active engagement from faculty and participated in active learning as well. The program at CDKC provided students with clear goals and a safe space to learn. The students were given the opportunity to self-identify the gaps in their education and were included in the learning process.

The study by Lundberg et al. (2018) reinforces the significance of student perception, the effect of students' emotions, and the value of Critical Theory with a focus on emotions. The researchers stated that successful students felt the goals of the class were clear and that they were included in the learning process. The researchers considered students' emotional responses such as math shame. Math shame is defined as a type of educational trauma pertaining to math. Faculty at CDKC provided a safe space

where the students were able to participate in the learning process, and think critically, and participate in transformative learning. The safe space allowed students to explore and develop their relationship with math. Similarly, Holley and Steiner's (2005) study understood the value of safe spaces. Lundberg et al. (2018) discusses fear and fear of failure. The developmental math program offered students a safe space where they could confront their past fears of math and their fear of failure. The researchers stated that successful persistent students were better identified by the skills they learned. The current study sought to understand students' emotional reactions and potential trauma. Students can often carry fear from previous experiences into their new interactions (Gray, 2019). It is the responsibility of the faculty to give students a space to manage their negative emotions.

Educational trauma has long term effects on students whether they are carrying fear to their next academic experience or directed to prison through the school-to-prison pipeline (Jones et al., 2018; Lundberg et al., 2018). Students can be afflicted by educational trauma when they have experiences such as lack of support and lack of understanding. Educational trauma also changes the students' perspective of themselves and future experiences that resembled the source of their trauma (Jones et al., 2018; Perry, 2006). Some solutions for assisting students in alleviating fear and educational trauma includes training faculty to be more emotionally aware and creating a safe space. Prepared faculty will engage students in critical thinking about the content and help them familiarize themselves with their own beliefs and understanding. This will assist students becoming more autonomous learners (Lundberg et al., 2018). Although all students can experience educational trauma, there are additional traumatic experiences that are

commonly found in communities of color. This can include low quality schools, low funding, lesser prepared professors, and mistreatment from professors based on race (Cureton, 2003; Jones et al., 2018; Van Thompson & Schwartz, 2014). The current study explored the experiences of Black and Latinx students because previous studies have identified that they share similar negatively impactful experiences (Jones et al., 2018; Parker, 2012; Pritchard & Wilson, 2003). These experiences will be reviewed further in the next section.

Race and Developmental Education

Students' experiences in developmental education courses are impacted by the stakeholders in the classroom. This includes other students and the faculty member. In a study conducted by Moss et al. (2014), the authors explored the impact of developmental education courses as moderated by classroom composition. The authors stated that meaningful classroom interactions are influential components of learning. The classroom environment can be affected by the students' level of readiness, the course content, and the preparedness of the instructor. The researchers in this study identified a sample of 3249 students. Forty-five percent of the students were eligible for financial aid and 48% were part time students. The researchers used score cutoffs of a standardized placement test to determine whether the student would participate in developmental education courses or standard education courses. In the analysis, the researchers compared course grades of students near the cutoff score and examined which proportion of students in developmental education courses moderated the effect of the course. Moss et al. (2014) also used regression lines to evaluate the effect of the cut off scores.

The researchers found that students who participated in the developmental education program were 1.62 times more likely to receive a higher grade in a college level class. The benefit of the developmental education course was moderated by certain instructors. The researchers identified this result because the positive effect of developmental education classes varied by instructor and classroom. According to students' scores, there is a positive relationship between students' achievement and being recipients of financial aid or enrolling in course is full time. The characteristics of being non-White and enrolled part time resulted in negative associations with achievement. The data showed that there was also a negative relationship with achievement and lower classroom performance for students of color.

Although Moss et al. (2014) did not intend to focus on race specifically, the study validates an important gap in developmental education. The researchers stated that the program is successful even though the success was mostly gained by White students. The current study argued that this is not an appropriate metric of success. If the pedagogy is only beneficial to White students, then it is ineffective and racially biased. The mere presence of Black and Latinx students on campus is not enough to lead them to success. Black and Latinx students need additional support in developing social and cultural capital while being attentive to potential educational trauma. It is the responsibility of institutions to gain a clear understanding of the lack of achievement and how they can better support all students.

As previously mentioned, the first HBCUs revolutionized developmental education by providing attention that was specific to the needs of the Black students that they served. Parker (2012) conducted multisite case study interviews at minority serving

institutions in Colorado, Kentucky, North Carolina, and South Carolina. The researcher interviewed faculty members to better understand the reasons behind increased success of Black and Latinx students in developmental education programs at minority serving institutions. The researcher accumulated the results into a report to better understand students' experiences. Parker (2012) found that institutions with more underprepared students have a higher demand for resources and funding. There are also insufficient resources to support the high demand. Faculty reported that there is a negative stigma in developmental education. Instructors at a North Carolina school alleviated that by having the students read about Frederick Douglass, who learn to read even though he was enslaved. The minority serving institutions also reported attending to students' personal experiences. they provided students with social, financial, and emotional supports that would help them navigate the college environment. The minority serving institutions provided holistic support and served the whole student. The institutions provided academic supports through programs such as learning communities. The South Carolina institution described reviewing their own assessments to ensure that student placement was accurate. This study verifies the idea that students in developmental education need support in engaging in the college environment. They also need support managing their own personal experiences and needs. This degree of support gives Black and Latinx students the opportunity to gain social and cultural capital at the collegiate level.

Students of Color and the Transition to College. Students in developmental education courses are often in transition from their previous academic experience. In high school, students are held to different standards. There is significantly less autonomy and independence. Young adult students are transitioning from relying on others to relying on

themselves. More mature students are transitioning from non-academic independence and previously constructed beliefs (Quinlan, 2016). The research of Locks et al. (2008) assessed students' transition to college on a diverse campus. This study delved into student persistence by including concepts such as social and cultural capital. The qualitative study reviewed students' sense of belonging at their institution. The researchers looked at a variety of pre-college characteristics including experience with diversity, preference of campus activities, positive interactions at school, and racial tension.

The researchers used data from a previously conducted study of 10 public universities that were demonstrated a commitment to diversity. The national multi-institutional research project was called Preparing College Students for a Diverse Democracy. The researchers randomly selected a subsample of 1,112 students' survey responses to analyze their interactions with peers in a diverse institution. The data were then analyzed using structural equation modeling. The researchers found that racial tension, parental support, social capital, cultural capital, and campus integration all affected students' sense of belonging. Students of color who experienced racial tension were less likely to feel a sense of belonging at college. Students with less parental support were also less likely to feel a sense of belonging. Students who were not well versed in the social and cultural capital used on the college campus found it challenging to integrate and develop a sense of belonging.

Transitioning into college comes with its own challenges such as becoming comfortable in a new environment. When students are part of a minoritized population, however, they may also experience prejudice and recognize that they lack the social and

cultural capital to participate comfortably in their new environment. Both studies in this section identify challenges that are specific to students of color who are transitioning into the college environment. It is important to help students develop their social and cultural capital while also helping them acculturate to the college.

As previously discussed, students of color experience challenges in education specific to their race and ethnicity. White students do not have these experiences (Jones et al., 2018; Moss et al., 2014). Nora and Cabrera (1996) conducted a quantitative study exploring how students' perception of prejudice impacted their transition to higher education. The researchers reviewed students' academic abilities, perception of discrimination, academic experience, social integration, and institutional commitment. Each of these factors were reviewed in the context of the students' persistence through college. The researchers' sample was comprised of first-time freshmen from a PWI in the Midwest. The student sample identified as 0.1% Native American, 10.7% African American, 21.5% Asian American, 17.2% Latinx and 50.4% White. The students filled out a survey that measured perceptions of prejudice and discrimination, encouragement from parents, academic experiences, social integration, academic and intellectual development, goal commitment, and institutional commitment. The data were analyzed using a two-step structural equation modeling procedure. The researchers found that students with more goal commitment, parental support, academic development, and a positive perception of institutional commitment showed higher rates of persistence through college. The researchers found that perception of prejudice and discrimination were a stressor that students of color were experiencing.

Nora and Cabrera's (1996) study exemplifies the benefit of investigating students' perceptions of their experiences. All four characteristics that Nora and Cabrera (1996) identified as impacting student persistence are related to the students' view of themselves and their place in the institution. Factors such as parental support and academic preparation impact whether the student feels as though they have the right assets to navigate college (Museus & Neville, 2012). The students in Nora and Cabrera's (1996) study who demonstrated more persistence felt as though they belonged in their community and felt that they had the tools to transition into college. Nora and Cabrera's (1996) research corroborates the work of Andrade (2007), Schnee (2014) and Zumbrunn et al. (2014). Andrade (2007) and Schnee (2014) found that students' perceptions and satisfaction open a doorway to great understanding of how students understand their own experience. The research conducted by Zumbrunn et al. (2014) demonstrates the significance of sense of belonging as relating to persistence, and Nora and Cabrera (1996) corroborated this evidence in the among non-White student populations. Without the tools to transition into college successfully, students' persistence may suffer. The current study explored students in developmental education courses' experience in the context of their academic environment. It is expected that interactions with educators will include students' reactions to the presence or absence of tools to succeed.

The Distribution of Capital in College. Students who require developmental education programs have been found in other studies to also need socioemotional support in terms of social capital, and cultural capital. Marbley et al. (2013) assessed emotional, social, intellectual, mental, and physiological effects of higher education on African American students in developmental education programs. Marbley et al. (2013)

conducted a case study of underprepared students who attended a PWI. The data were collected through interviews. The researchers also analyzed the data with the intention of giving advice for practice. This study exemplified the negative impact of racism in the academic environment on students of color. It shows that students of color are experiencing additional stressors due to racism and Eurocentric policies at PWIs. Students described experiences of discrimination and alienation at their institutions. The researchers state that open access to education does not guarantee equity in education. Community college staff should be prepared to work with and support all students.

Marbley et al. (2013) collected data using an autoethnographic method reviewing narratives provided by the authors. The authors identified as African American students who participated in developmental education programs at PWIs. The authors triangulated the data provided from the narratives and with their theoretical framework to identify common themes. In this study, however, three out of five of the researchers did not mention when the story of the narrative took place. Two researchers stated that their stories had taken place in 1975 and 1984. Although the stories presented in the narratives took place over 30 years prior to the study, the data collected was still corroborated by the theoretical framework of more recent studies. Marbley et al. (2013) identified three common themes that the narratives recognized as a challenge: social isolation, hostility, and unwelcoming environments. The narratives discussed a lack of support in each of those aspects. Based on the narratives, the researchers concluded that faculty needed cultural sensitivity training that includes acknowledgement of privilege and Eurocentricity. The researchers also suggested creating clear strategic plans to increase diversity in the student population, and in curriculum by utilizing institutional practices

that reflect non-Eurocentric values. They recommend encouraging students of color to participate in the college environment and partnering with other local communities of color. Although the study contained stories from decades prior to the publishing, the researchers could still point to modern literature that expressed these same concerns. The current study goes further to explore this topic with a focus on students' emotional responses and descriptions of their perceptions.

Social and cultural capital are important to alleviating the stress of discrimination. Museus and Neville (2012) demonstrated in their study how social capital impacts minority students' trust and closure in their academic environment. Closure is defined as close connections between individuals in the environment. The researchers examined the impact of institutional agents on students' social capital. Institutional agents are defined as people who guide students through learning and using social capital on a college campus. Examples of institutional agents include advisors and faculty members. The researchers stated that social capital is impacted by of the size of social networks the individual has and the capital of the individuals in that network. An institutional agent's role is to transfer the volume of capital that they have to their students.

In this phenomenological study, Museus and Neville (2012) conducted interviews of purposefully selected students. The 60 students were identified as Asian students, Black students, or Latinx students. Using the interview data, the researchers identified the characteristics of an effective institutional agent. The four common characteristics of effective institutional agents were: (1) establishing a common ground with the student; (2) providing holistic support; (3) developing closure; and (4) sharing proactive philosophies that the student can apply in college. The findings indicated that students

entering college have social capital developed from their home environments, friendships, and previous school experiences. Upon newly entering the college, students must transition to a new system of values and resources (Museus & Neville 2012). This study showed that students of color could benefit from support in accessing and utilizing social capital. In addition, the study verified the value of positive student-faculty relationships. Not only do students need an institutional agent, but they also need close relationships, known as closure. Nora and Cabrera (1996) identified that students need guidance when transitioning into a new environment. Museus and Neville (2012) further supported that idea by defining the ways that institutional agents can ease students' transition. The findings of Museus and Neville (2012) support the study by Marbley et al. (2013), who found that faculty members should be prepared to act as institutional agents to provide students with the social and cultural capital to navigate college. Students can experience a smoother transition if they trust their institutional agents and receive support regarding social capital. Institutional agents, including educators, should be prepared to support students and impart social and cultural capital.

Validation and Persistence Among Latinx Students. Although not all Hispanic/Latinx students share the same exact experiences, there are similar experiences shared within culture and capital (Acevedo-Gil et al., 2015). Studies have also shown that Black students share similar experiences since they come from cultures that are different from the Eurocentric culture offered in PWIs (Marbley et al., 2013; Moss et al., 2014; Parker, 2012). The differences in experiences combined with environmental factors can have a strong impact on students' experiences. Crisp and Nora (2010) conducted a study assessing Hispanic student' persistence and success in developmental education

programs. The researchers stated that Hispanic students are less likely to complete or persist through developmental education programs. The students also exhibited higher attrition rates. The researchers wanted to identify factors that are related to the probability of students being successful in their second and third years of college. The researchers also wanted to explore whether the variables differ among developmental and non-students in developmental education courses. The variables included demographics, sociocultural variables, academic experiences, environmental factors, and pre-college characteristics. The data was collected from the Post-Secondary Students Longitudinal Study, which track students to review transfer patterns, enrollment, persistence, and degree attainment. The data was analyzed using a dichotomous logistic regression.

The researchers found that students with higher math grades in school, degree of parental education, access to financial aid increased the students' likelihood of being successful. Delayed enrollment in college and working higher hours decreased students' persistence. Crisp and Nora (2010) state that environmental factors (i.e. finances, socioeconomic status, work hours, and delayed enrollment) can impact a student's persistence. Parental education levels, however, have a significant impact on students' college experience. Students with parents who attended college can receive social capital from their parents prior to college. This study shows a statistically significant relationship between an important source of capital and student success. The current study agrees that lack of collegiate social capital may be reflected in students' experiences. Studies such as Locks et al. (2008) and Museus and Neville (2012) have shown that lacking appropriate social and cultural capital can pose as a limitation to students' persistence.

Positive validation from educators provides students with positive reinforcement of their actions and self-view (Rendon, 1994). Previous studies have shown that students' perception of their experiences impacts their persistence and success in college (Andrade, 2007; Crisp & Nora, 2010; Nora & Cabrera, 1996). In this qualitative study, Acevedo-Gil et al. (2015) conducted semi-structured interviews with students in developmental education courses to understand the pedagogical and curricular experiences they have in an outside of class period. The researchers also explored how the experiences impact the students' academic self-perceptions. Sixty percent of the students in the sample were Latinx. With the data, the authors were able to code the results into two categories: 1) academic invalidation and 2) academic validation. Students who experienced academic invalidation provided examples such as being placed in developmental education programs, engaging in deficit focused pedagogical practices, and stereotype threat. Stereotype threat occurs when students are met with a stereotype, from educators or students, that they are intellectually inferior due to their race or ethnicity. Students that experienced academic validation stated that validating professors had high expectations of them and related to the students' social identities. The educators were also able to bridge students' aspirations with their own expectations. Validating educators acknowledged the capital and culture of the students is valuable. The students expressed positive emotions toward experiencing validation from peers and educators.

Acevedo-Gil et al. (2015) concluded that students often have high aspirations, but there is a gap in their success because they are presented with lower expectations. The researchers state that acknowledging social identities and appreciating diversity can be beneficial to students. Institutions need more validating pedagogy and effective diversity

training for educators. This study provides an example of the impact of students in developmental education courses' perception and capital on their college experience. Students with high aspirations have specific goals for themselves. Being met with low expectations invalidates the students' positive opinion of themselves. The study also showed that educators with higher expectations offer more social and cultural capital, effectively preparing the developmental education student from their college experience.

Race and ethnicity are important factors to consider when supporting students in developmental education courses. A students race and ethnicity contributes to the social and cultural capital that they have learned prior to school. If institutions do not impart the capital onto the students, their achievement and persistence will suffer as they transition to a new environment. It is important to measure the success of all students, not just the racial majority. Black and Latinx students face additional stressors such as racism from staff and other students, which ultimately impacts their sense of belonging in that space. Minority serving institutions have proven that emotionally aware and appropriately trained institutional agents can support students effectively.

Faculty's Role in the Developmental Education Experience

Viewing the classroom from the faculty members' point of view provided additional understanding of how faculty can better support students in the classroom. Faculty members have the most interaction with college students. Institution should prepare faculty members to effectively support all students that are enrolled at the institution. Faculty members have the potential to have a very strong impact on students' experiences.

Students in developmental education experience distinct challenges. Faculty members must be prepared to uplift students' skills and accommodate their needs in times of challenges. Capt et al. (2014) assessed faculty effectiveness in developmental education courses. Developmental education courses were defined as courses for college students who are not academically prepared to study at the college level. The sample of 16 participants included faculty members from a New York State community college and from a West Texas community college. The participants were chosen purposefully based on the following criteria: (1) a full-time faculty member teaching developmental courses; (2) an administrator working in professional development; and (3) an administrator working in student testing/placement. The researchers used three data sources: institutional documents, semi-structured interviews, and developmental classroom observations. The documents helped the researchers better understand the policies and course structure at the institution. The semi-structured interviews included participants' discussion of their roles in the developmental education programs. The data was then triangulated to make a more cohesive assessment of the institutions and of the faculty/staff experiences.

Capt et al. (2014) divided the findings into four categories: (1) diversity of students and student needs; (2) perceptions of placement tests; (3) the developmental component; and (4) faculty characteristics. The researchers found that faculty and staff recognize a variety of needs and skills within students that include educational trauma, other mental blocks, lack of experience in the college setting, and differences in readiness for college. The faculty and staff that were assessed regarding the placement test. They agreed that the tests and the grading styles of the tests varied significantly, which caused

a less valid assessment of student ability. Faculty members that taught developmental education described encouraging students emotionally, supporting them socially, and helping them build confidence. The findings showed that faculty members who teach developmental ~~to~~ education need to be "the right people" (p. 10). This indicated that not all faculty members are prepared to support students in developmental education classes. Faculty members working with developmental students must be flexible and patient. They should be prepared to be challenged in different ways than they would be challenged in traditional classrooms. This study is relevant to the current research because it expresses clearly that faculty need certain types of preparations to support developmental education students. Not all professors can provide a satisfactory classroom experience. Institutions should be aware of hiring and training effective faculty members to support developmental education students.

Research has shown that the standard, pragmatic curriculum for underprepared students does not offer support to whole-person centered learning (Bettinger et al., 2013; Yorks & Kasl, 2002). Standard curriculum for underprepared students focuses more on rote memorization and content retention than developing students' abilities as learners (Attewell, et al., 2006). Critical Theory requires a flexible lesson plan that that offers students a space to explore their own emotional responses and voices. A study conducted by Smith and Jiménez (2014) exemplified the difference between emotionally supportive learning and standard pragmatic learning. Smith and Jiménez (2014) compared the assessments of students in developmental education courses in learning communities to non-students in developmental education courses taking the same assessments using the standard curriculum. The researchers set out to understand the educational experience of

students in developmental education courses at Kingsborough Community College. The students took the same class, but with different teaching methods. The study lasted for two semesters. In the first semester, the researchers assessed 13 students in developmental education courses and 19 traditional students. In the second semester, the researchers assessed 17 students in developmental education courses and 16 traditional students. The learning communities included activities focused on critical thinking and group thinking. The students were assessed based on their grades on six factors: 1) quizzes, 2) midterm papers, 3) midterm exams, 4) final papers, 5) final exams, and 6) their final grade. The researchers analyzed the grades by comparing average scores on each of the six assignments.

Smith and Jiménez (2014) found that in the first semester, students in developmental education courses outperformed traditional students in the quizzes, midterm exam, final exam, and the final course grade. In the second semester, the traditional students outperformed students in developmental education courses on the midterm paper, midterm exam, final paper, and final exam. Although the traditional students outperformed in those assessments, the students in developmental education courses received higher final grades and no student had a grade lower than a C-. In both semesters, the students in developmental education courses had higher final grades but were outperformed in terms of writing papers. The authors expect that the traditional students were more secure in their writing skills prior to the class, which increased the chances that they would excel in writing papers.

In learning communities, students participated in linked classes that promoted the development of independent learning using mechanisms of social and academic

development. Learning community curriculum challenges students to connect to the curriculum and engage in practical critical thinking while learning content. The study showed that the learning community format helped students in developmental education courses achieve similar or higher scores than general education students. The learning community format also coaxed different social responses from faculty members. Faculty members who taught the learning communities acted as "cheerleaders." The cheerleaders deliberately motivated students by boosting their confidence and offering alternate solutions. Faculty members who taught the traditional curriculum courses, however, acted as "prophets of doom." The prophets of doom attempted to motivate students negatively through constant reminders of demerits or punishment for failure to complete work. Instead, they focused on reminding students to be self-sufficient rather than helping them develop that skill. Curriculum styles such as learning communities, are beneficial in helping students draw an emotional connection to learning (Bean & Eaton, 2001). Students benefit from cheerleaders over the traditional prophets of doom. Acevedo-Gil et al. (2015) recommend the cheerleader style of support.

As a result, in the learning communities had a more positive outlook on their educators while students in the traditional classroom viewed them negatively. Students in traditional courses were met with professors who were described as prophets of doom. The prophets of doom would consistently use failure as a motivator. Students were told that they should finish their work and do well to avoid failing the course. The students noted that these reminders acted more as demotivators. This study clearly shows that perception and critical thinking are key to better understanding and managing the

classroom space. If the educators understood how they were perceived by students, they would have the opportunity to adjust accordingly.

Students in developmental education courses benefit from programming like learning communities that provide holistic, well-rounded support. Similar to Smith and Jiménez (2014), Lundberg et al. (2018) also emphasized the benefits of helping students develop into autonomous learners. Learning communities offer students a safe space to actively explore their own knowledge in a safe space. By connecting courses and encouraging exploration, learning communities also present students with the opportunity to engage in critical reflection and assess their own knowledge. The value of learning communities is relevant to the current study because it exemplifies a classroom environment that is holistically and emotionally beneficial to students. In this space, students are free to exercise their social and cultural capital, participate in holistic learning, and explore their relationship with new educational content.

Student-Faculty Relationships. Student faculty relationships also have differing impacts based on the modality of the course (i.e., in person or online). Johnson et al. (2018) conducted a quantitative study investigating how interpersonal interactions affect students' satisfaction in an online course. The researchers conducted a survey with a Likert scale to test their hypotheses regarding students' interactions. The researchers compared student satisfaction to face-to-face class delivery two online class delivery. The data was analyzed using an ANOVA. The researchers found that for every 20% increase in student-faculty interaction, students experienced a 9% increase in satisfaction. The researchers found that the data results supported six out of seven of their hypotheses. The researchers found that students that experienced higher student to professor interaction,

whether the class was face-to-face or through video delivery, experienced greater levels of satisfaction. This study also showed that face-to-face class delivery garnered more student satisfaction than online class delivery. The student survey results also showed that higher student-to-student interaction in an online class lowered student satisfaction. Students were more likely to rate student-to-student evaluations with more warmth and competence when the classes took place online. Student-to-professor evaluations, however, were not impacted by class delivery mode. The researchers also hypothesize that students would show greater levels of satisfaction with student-to-student interactions in face-to-face classes. This hypothesis was not supported by the data collected.

The results of this study showed that student satisfaction is an important characteristic to consider when assessing course delivery. The research also shows that student-faculty member relationships and interactions have a stronger impact on student satisfaction than student-to-student interactions. These results support the idea that faculty members should be aware of the impact of their interactions with students. This includes awareness to educational trauma and emotional needs. The study also used warmth as a characteristic to assess how students feel about their classroom interactions. The article does not explicitly state the importance of emotion, but it discusses characteristics such as warmth and satisfaction. The researchers define warmth as the individual's perceived sociability and kindness. The terms *warmth* and *satisfaction* imply that the students feel happy about the classroom interaction that they are experiencing. Critical Theory with an emphasis of emotions recommends using characteristics that

focus on emotion to gain an effective understanding of how all stakeholders are experiencing an interaction (Callahan, 2004).

Zumbrunn et al. (2014) conducted a study with the intention of studying the qualities of student-faculty relationships that impact student persistence. The purpose of this mixed-methods study was to assess how student perception of support and belonging impacts their motivation, engagement, and achievement in college in conjunction with academic contextual characteristics. The study surveyed 212 undergraduate students enrolled in educational psychology at a Midwestern university. The researchers utilized a demographic questionnaire. An adapted version of the Psychological Sense of School Membership Scale, and the task value and academic self-efficacy subscale and scales from the student evaluation of teaching questionnaire. The researchers collected the data midway through the semester without the presence of instructors, promoting more honest answers from the students. Follow-up phenomenological interviews were conducted afterward to further analyze the data collected from the surveys and scales. Zumbrunn et al. (2014) used bivariate and multivariate analysis to identify correlation estimates through two models. The two models delineated students' perceptions of the support they received, their sense of belonging, self-efficacy, and how students value tasks presented to them. The results of the study found correlations that impact students' success. The researchers found a bivariate correlation between belonging and achievement. Belonging, self-efficacy, and task value were same-level predictors of student engagement. Instructor academic and social support was a predictor for students' self of belonging, self-efficacy, and task value.

The researchers concluded that a supportive classroom environment had a significant impact on participants' sense of belonging in the academic space. A participant's sense of belonging had a statistically significant impact on their self-efficacy and how they valued classroom tasks. Self-efficacy had a statistically significant impact on student engagement and achievement. Lastly, student engagement had a statistically significant impact on their achievement. The qualitative data of the study showed that interpersonal relationships had affected students' feeling of belonging. Students with more interpersonal relationships felt that they belonged in the classroom space. Acceptance and support were important to the students who participated in the study. The students who participated in the study discussed the advantage of instructor acceptance and support in the classroom. When faculty are more supportive and engaging with students, the students felt a greater sense of belonging in the classroom. The study is relevant to the current study because it identifies socioemotional factors such as motivation, support, and a sense of belonging. This study emphasized the importance of social connection in the academic space.

Zumbrunn et al. (2014) supported the importance of race relations in an institution. Zumbrunn et al. (2014) found students who related more to the professor also participated more in class. This study also confirms the relevance of social and cultural capital to the classroom environment. Similar to the students in research by Locks et al. (2008), the students in research by Zumbrunn et al. (2014) describe the classroom environment as a new context with its own social rules. College students need to learn the social and cultural capital of their academic environment to better participate and

therefore develop a sense of belonging. Students' sense of belonging and involvement have an impact on their persistence through a program (Andrade, 2007).

Students may find engaging in a new academic environment challenging due to a lack of capital, supports, or assets (Museus & Neville, 2012). Micari and Pazos (2012) explored the impact of student-faculty relationships in a challenging course. Through previous studies, the researchers identified organic chemistry as a notoriously challenging course for college students. The researchers used a survey with a Likert scale to measure students' perception of their relationship with faculty members, confidence in their academic abilities, and perception of their own identity in the field of science. The participants were 354 students currently attending six organic chemistry courses at the Midwestern university. The researchers found that students' relationship with faculty members affected their performance in the course and their confidence in their abilities. The researchers also note the difference between a hard course and a challenging course. The researchers stated that in challenging courses, the student-faculty relationship is "fraught with worry over grades, confusion, and lack of confidence about course material, and intimidation related to seeking out help from the professor," (Micari & Pazos, 2012, p. 42).

Studies have shown that students in developmental education courses feel similar anxieties (Lee, 2012; Lundberg et al., 2018). Students in developmental education courses are often aware of the negative connotation of developmental courses. Students in developmental education courses are also worried about whether they passed their class because it determines whether they progress through college (Jones et al., 2018; Lundberg et al., 2018). The conclusions in the Micari and Pazos (2012) study reveal that

students' fears and anxieties have an impact on their success in the classroom. The research also reinforces the idea that a positive and emotionally supportive relationship with faculty members can uplift students in challenging times and positively impact students' persistence.

Students in developmental education courses have a diversity of needs. It is important that faculty members understand those needs because students are strongly impacted by their interactions with faculty. Interactions with faculty are important to students regardless of the modality of the course (Johnson et al., 2014). Effective support of students in developmental education courses can increase the students' persistence, engagement, and performance in school. Student-faculty relationships have an impact on how students experience and persist through college. Students' perception of this experience determines the success. Students in developmental education courses should find courses challenging as opposed to hard, as defined by Micari and Pazos (2012). Developmental education courses should challenge students' beliefs and knowledge rather than create hurdles to the completion of the class. The current study will dive deeper into students' emotions to better understand other factors that impact students' perception of their college experience in connection to faculty members.

Conclusion

The topic for the current study discusses the impact of emotions in the classroom setting. Students' perceptions of themselves and their environment will likely impact their motivation and persistence through college (Schnee, 2014; Zumbrunn et al., 2014). Students' race, ethnicity, pre-college characteristics, capital, and educational trauma often direct how students respond to an perceive their experiences. Each of these factors work

concurrently to produce the students' responses. Previous studies have addressed student social interactions such as persistence, academic achievement, involvement, satisfaction, sense of belonging, and motivation (Andrade, 2007; Barbatis, 2010; Brock, 2010; Capt et al., 2014). Studies also address the connection with social and cultural capital, and student's pre-college characteristics (Cureton, 2003; Marbley et al., 2013; Museus & Neville, 2012). These studies do not directly discuss these factors in relation to emotions. Emotions are an inherent factor, particularly in terms of students' perception of their experiences. Studies that explore satisfaction, sense of belonging, motivation, and capital are acknowledging students' emotional responses to their experiences. The current study focuses specifically on the identification and use of emotions that students experience in the classroom. The goal of the current study was to support the results of these previous studies and discuss students' experiences in the context of positive and negative emotional responses in the classroom.

CHAPTER 3: METHODOLOGY

In academic spaces, it is expected that people will marginalize their emotions to exclusively apply rationality to the situation (Callahan, 2002; Dirkx, 2001). Emotions help people to contextualize and understand new information. Callahan (2004) describes emotions as a beneficial tool in learning and also assessing others' experiences. Critical Theory and CRT show that the human voice and emotions can destroy oppressive structures by giving a voice to the silenced. Emotions give both faculty members and the researcher a context to better understand students' experiences. Understanding students' voice and emotions clarifies their point of view, their beliefs, their understanding, and the cultural capital they bring to the academic space. It also offers faculty and researchers the opportunity to understand students' experiences relating to educational trauma. In this current study, participants were interviewed using phenomenological research design. A phenomenological research design is helpful in this context because it helps the researcher make meaning of individuals' experiences by synthesizing storytelling data and describing their experiences (Creswell & Poth, 2017). Creswell and Poth (2017) state that phenomenological studies focus on the conscious experiences of the participants. Focusing on conscious experiences allows phenomenological studies room to consider the participants' perception and emotional responses to their experiences.

Phenomenology

Phenomenological studies inherently go against the pragmatic environment of the classroom (Yorks & Kasl, 2002). A phenomenological study explores and describes themes that have been expressed during data collection. The themes describe what the participants of the study have in common and provides a composite description of their

experiences. Researchers using a phenomenological research design describe, not only what the participants experienced, but how they experienced it. This correlates with Callahan's (2004) description of Critical Theory with a focus on emotions. Critical Theory uses the individual's perception of their experience to form a deeper understanding of that experience. By incorporating the participants' perception, the data represented the *intentionality of consciousness*. The intentionality of consciousness means that reality is defined by individuals' distinct perceptions of their experiences. This coincides with Critical Race Theory which states that reality is constructed by social experiences (Ladson-Billings, 1998).

The present study was conducted using hermeneutical, introduced by van Manen (1990). Hermeneutical phenomenology focuses on the individual's lived experiences. Hermeneutical phenomenology focuses specifically on how objects and experiences are perceived by the participants in the study. In conducting this hermeneutical phenomenological design, the researcher demonstrated an abiding concern to the phenomenon at hand. Next, the researcher identified essential themes that occurred in the data. The phenomenon was described in detail as the researcher interpreted and mediated the meanings provided by the participants. This study conducted attentive and receptive interviews with specific attention to the participants' description of their experiences, how participants described those experiences, and their emotional responses to those experiences.

Social Constructivism and Advocacy Paradigms

The research was approached through a social constructivist and advocacy paradigm, which also influenced the creation of the theoretical framework that guided the

study. A paradigm is a set of beliefs that guides the researcher. Creswell (2007) describes two relevant paradigms: social constructivism and advocacy. Both paradigms guided this study in understanding meaning and positing suggestions for advocacy. Both paradigms focus on understanding and supporting the perceptions of the participants. These paradigms use and analyze data with the intention of maximizing the benefit to the participants. This study applied social constructivism and advocacy paradigms in the context of understanding and validating the experiences of Black and Latinx students in developmental education courses in a community college.

The social constructivism paradigm seeks to understand the world as it is seen through the eyes of a certain group. The social constructivism researcher's goal is to refine subjective meanings provided by participants and apply them to people, objects, and experiences (Creswell & Poth, 2017). Social constructivism is a collaborative effort between the researcher and the participant, rather than an individual investigation (Applefield et al., 2000). In the current study, the researcher interviewed the participants to gather data on their experiences with developmental course and program educators. In this study, the participants were the experts because they described their own experiences. Through this mutual construction of knowledge, the researcher identified subjective meanings expressed by the participants. These subjective meanings were applied to this population of students' preferred style of treatment and educators' role in student comfort and persistence through community college.

The social constructivism paradigm connects to Critical Theory, theory of transition, and the theory of transformative learning. Each of these theories describe the importance of social interaction when assessing the human experience. Each theory

marks perception of the experience as a key factor in defining the experience (Callahan, 2004; Gray, 2019; Perry, 2006). The social constructivism paradigm helps the researcher define a mindset that looks carefully at the defining characteristics of socializing. These characteristics include emotions, cultural capital, and the consciousness of the participants (Creswell, 2007; Gabriel & Griffiths, 2002; Neville, 2012). In this study, participants' emotions were at the forefront of defining the students' experience. The social constructivism paradigm directed how the subjectivity of the students' experiences are developed. It was expected that the participants would express their emotional responses to experiences, and the data collected validated that. The researcher also explored the emotional responses that the students presented outwardly in those experiences.

The advocacy paradigm requires the researcher to work toward an action agenda to benefit the participants of the study. The intention of the advocacy paradigm is to change the lives of the participants and the institutions in which they reside. The advocacy paradigm is particularly useful in supporting marginalized groups in times of oppression, suppression, alienation, and hegemony (Creswell & Poth, 2017). Zaidi et al. (2016) define cultural hegemony is the act of limiting the cultural interactions in an environment to that of the majoritarian group. Cultural hegemony is maintained when the social constraints limit academic participation to the educational task and content exclusively. Cultural hegemony prevents students from connecting new information to themselves emotionally and culturally. Zaidi et al. (2016) stated that education typically requires subjectivity to be removed and is subsequently defined as "common sense" (p. 7). The researchers noted that this educational environment can be oppressive. Creswell

and Poth (2017) also suggested that researchers use Critical Theory to identify and illuminate potential social action. Critical Theory works to understand the underlying aspects of social life. The researchers stated that CRT works to eliminate the alienation and uplift minoritized populations (Yosso, 2005). Creswell and Poth (2017) stated that researchers using the advocacy paradigm should focus on bringing about change by beginning with a clear stance in the context of the research question. Like the social constructivism paradigm, researchers should also engage in collaborative meaning making with the participants in the study with the goal of amplifying the voice of the participants.

The current study applied the social constructivism paradigm in conjunction with the advocacy paradigm to explore students in developmental education courses' experience in community college. This study sought understand the participants' experiences as they view it subjectively and subsequently used that knowledge with the purpose of action by analyzing student experiences that can inform policy changes and further research. The data collection was a collaborative experience between the researcher and the participants. The data included descriptions of social and cultural norms in the community college environment that students were or were not privy to. The social constructivism paradigm notes that these norms are imperative to social interaction. The advocacy paradigm recommends that researchers using this paradigm should seek to reform hegemony. In the case of this study, some of the students' experiences included experiences with cultural hegemony in their community college. The experiences with cultural hegemony were included in the implications of findings and recommendations for future practice in Chapter 5.

Research Questions

Central Research Question

How do Black and Latinx community college students perceive and emotionally respond to developmental education experiences with educators**?**

Research Sub Questions

1. How do community college students, who attend developmental education classes, describe their experiences?
2. How did underprepared students justify their emotional responses to their experiences?
3. How does the experience impact underprepared students' perceptions of
    a. college?
    b. themselves?

Methods and Procedures

Setting

The purpose of this study is to explore the phenomenon of students' emotional responses to positive and negative experiences participating in developmental courses in community college. Creswell and Poth (2017) recommend conducting a study in a natural setting that is familiar to the participants. At the time of research, the world was experiencing the COVID-19 pandemic. Many students have been attending class through video chat platforms such as Zoom and WebEx. The two community colleges chosen for this study are referred to as City Community College (CCC) and Urban Community College (UBC). CCC and UBC are both located in a large metropolitan area of New York City. Both community colleges serve a student population that is comprised of predominantly Black and/or Latinx students. Black and Latinx students were selected based on their current or previous enrollment in developmental education courses. The students who participated were enrolled in developmental courses no earlier than four years prior to the study.

Miles et al. (2014) suggest making intentions clear to participants prior to the study. This should be done for the institution providing permission and the participant. In this study, the application for the Institutional Review Board (IRB) for CCC and UBC was completed with clarity regarding the goals of the study. The researcher gained access to each institution through recommendations from administrative staff. The participants of this study received a clear description of the purpose and intention of the study. When they first spoke to the researcher, they received a basic overview. They received an informed consent document that contained a detailed description of the study. The

description included the goal of the study, procedures, how data would be used, potential risks, and expectations for audiovisual recording.

Participants

When conducting an effective hermeneutical phenomenological study, it is recommended that the researcher locates individuals who have had the lived experience necessary to describe the phenomenon at hand (Creswell & Poth, 2017). CCC and UBC have developmental education programs that serve students who are underprepared for college. This study explored examples of past and present experiences that Black and Latinx students in developmental education courses that had a positive or negative impact on their academic identity and perception of college.

The sample of participants chosen from both institutions is a convenience sample and a critical case sample. Miles et al. (2014) stated that a convenience sample is chosen due to the ease of accessibility to the researcher. The sample is a convenience sample because the researcher accessed the institutions through classmates and close connections at each institution. Fraenkel et al. (2012) describe a critical case sample as a sample of participants specifically chosen to represent a phenomenon that occurs in their community. A phenomenological study should also interview five to 25 participants to gain diverse and saturated data (Creswell, 2007). The sample of participants in the current study included eight people. In this case, the population was defined as Black and Latinx students who participated in developmental education courses at a community college. The researcher faced challenges in recruiting participants. Prior to receiving

access and IRB approval to CCC and UBC, the researcher was denied access to nine community colleges in the area.

At CCC, 64% of the students are recipients of a Pell Grant. At UBC, 71.2% of students who attend come from households with an income of less than $25,000 per year. The poverty line in the city was approximately $35,000 per year in 2018. According to CCC's demographics, 33% of students identify as Black and 39.2% identify as Latinx. At UBC, 17% of students identifies Black and 48% identifies Latinx. At both institutions, Black and Latinx students account for over 60% of the student population by both institutions. As discussed in Chapter 1, community colleges often have higher populations of Black and Latinx students than four-year colleges. Community colleges also serve many students in financial need or utilizing Pell grants (U.S. Department of Education, 2020). Although both institutions serve a significant population of Black students, neither institution identifies as a HBCU. Both institutions serve a population of students that are above 25% Latinx, therefore qualifying them both as HSIs.

Of the two institutions, only CCC offered data regarding their developmental education program. Of the incoming freshman at CCC, 48.7% enrolled in developmental math programs, 10.9% enrolled in developmental reading programs, and 26.9% of students enrolled in writing programs. This data only shows how many students were enrolled in developmental education programs. As discussed by researchers such as Bailey (2009) and Bettinger et al. (2013), it is common for students to avoid enrolling in developmental education programs despite institutional policy.

Data Collection Procedures

An effective qualitative study starts with a clear question. Next, the researcher determines the degree of detail, relevant theories, and literature review surrounding the question (Creswell, 2007). The study conducted was a qualitative study with a phenomenological design. The participants connected with the researcher three times: twice for an interview and once via email for further validation. The data was collected, coded, and analyzed by the researcher.

The current study followed a timeline to ensure timely completion of data collection and analysis. The researcher gained access to the research sites after the submission of the research proposal. After gaining access, the researcher completed the institutions' IRB application. The application contained a comprehensive and detailed description of the study. Once the IRB was approved, the researcher contacted potential students with a description of the study. The researcher identified potential participants with the assistance of department leaders and faculty members. The researcher contacted each participant to discuss the purpose of the study, review the letter of consent, and answer any questions. Participants signed a letter of consent prior to participation in the study. The researcher interviewed eight students for this study. Each participant was interviewed twice with a third email contact for additional questions. At the end of each interview appointment, the researcher scheduled the next appointment. Then, the researcher reviewed the data collected and the notes written for any emerging themes.

Phenomenological Design. The participants in qualitative studies, particularly phenomenological studies, are the experts regarding the phenomenon. The researcher's goal in a phenomenological study is to gain an understanding of the participant's

experience (Fraenkel et al., 2012; Miles et al., 2014). As recommended by Creswell (2007), the researcher should observe participants in a natural setting. In qualitative research, the researchers should also be aware that the study is an emergent design that may change as the study progresses. It is imperative for the researcher to be flexible and prepared to work with a variety of responses that the participants may provide. The researcher should approach all data collection through interpretive inquiry. Interpretive inquiry helps the researcher understand the participants' worldview and the meaning that they ascribe to their experiences. In this study, the researcher utilized these recommendations when constructing the research protocol and engaging with the participants in the study. The participants were the experts on their emotional experiences and were treated as such. The researcher maintained flexibility in conversation to ensure that the participant remained comfortable. There were instances where the participant would speak beyond the scope of the study. The researcher guided the conversation back to the topic with respect to what the participant had just shared.

In a phenomenological study, it is expected that the researcher will identify a concern and collect data with the goal of identifying running themes. The researcher should locate a site, gain access to the site, acquire a purposeful sample, and record data, resolve any field issues, and store the data effectively (Creswell & Poth 2017). This study was conducted in that manner. The participants in this current phenomenological study had a shared experience of the phenomenon of participating in developmental programming. Creswell and Poth (2017) stated that the researcher should be flexible by making space for participants to lead the conversation.

Interviews. The current study used interviews to collect data from participants with the goal of better understanding their positive and negative experiences in community college developmental education courses. The researcher chose interviews as the method of data collection supported by recommendations from Vogt et al. (2012). Vogt et al. (2012) suggest using interviews to seek knowledge that is best obtained from individuals who had that experience or are members of that community. They would be able to provide detailed subjective data to describe their experiences. Interviews also give people the opportunity to provide in-depth answers. According to Vogt et al. (2012), generalization is not the focus of interviews in research. The goal of interviews is to develop conclusions that contain detailed explanations and give participants the opportunity to reflect and clarify their statements. Vogt et al. (2012) state that open-ended questions are most effective in this context. Open-ended questions give the participant the opportunity to explore and express their response. Closed questions can limit the data available to be collected. The researcher of this study conducted interviews with open-ended questions to collect data regarding students' experiences. The researcher also included some close-ended questions during the follow-up interviews to identify specific emotions and emotional responses.

The current study was conducted with a semi-structured interview. A semi-structured interview includes open-ended questions along with potential probes. Probes are improvised questions that allow the researcher to change the direction of the interview as needed. Creswell and Poth (2017) emphasize the importance of flexibility in conducting phenomenological research. When a researcher is exploring a phenomenon, they must be aware that the participant responses can lead the study in a different

direction. The researchers should be prepared for this change. In a semi-structured interview, probes are used as preparation for unpredictability. The researcher used the two-interview series structure. Throughout these interviews, the researcher: 1) created a context and understanding their history; 2) probed more into details reviewed from the first interview; and 3) reflected on the meaning of the data collected with the participant. Reflecting on the meaning of the data with the participant is also referred to as ethical validation by Cresswell and Poth (2017). This structure of interview will allow a researcher to gain a deeper understanding of the participants' experience applied to an accurately described context.

In an interview, participants engage in conversation, often pertaining to personal information and their own experiences. It is recommended that the researcher take steps to create a safe and comfortable environment for the participants. It is helpful to begin with small talk. In this situation, the researcher is allowed to converse and share some experiences with the goal of connecting with the participant. This is especially helpful in a study where the participant is not familiar with the researcher (Bogdan & Biklen, 2012). Bogdan and Biklen (2012) provided steps for easing the conversation in an interview. The researcher is expected to guide the conversation. The researcher is also expected to stand their ground while conducting the interview without being defensive. The researcher should treat the participant like the expert in the conversation while minimizing the researcher's own input. In this current study, the researcher facilitated conversation by beginning the interview with small talk with the intention of creating a more comfortable and trustworthy environment for the participant. For example, the conversations began with commiserating about the challenges of being a college student

or connecting over the joy of graduating in the future. The researcher occasionally shared experiences to connect with the participants' experience. For example, Bart shared that he was treated as less intelligent because he spoke with a Caribbean accent. The researcher shared that her mother had a similar experience when she went to the same school.

The purpose of this phenomenological study is to "hear silenced voices" (Creswell & Poth, 2007, p. 40). Qualitative researchers should state their biases before engaging in research. Stating biases is a useful method of validation. Addressing biases provides clarity to the reader regarding impacts that the researcher may have on the data collection process (Creswell & Poth, 2017; Miles et al., 2014). In the context of this study, the data collector has been identified as having racial and observer bias. The data collector in this study constructed questions that are objective that do not lead participants to answers. The questions were open and give participant space to describe their own experience as they see fit. Creswell and Poth (2017) and Vogt et al. (2012) state that too much description of the study can impact the validity of the study because it may affect the content and presentation of the data by the participant. In this study, the researcher disclosed all relevant information, but limited disclosure appropriately by stating that the study was interested in learning about their positive and negative experiences in community college.

Reflexive Comments. Reflexive comments are notes taken by the researcher that describe what the participants are experiencing as the study progresses (Creswell & Poth, 2017). Reflexive notes typically include observations of the participant's reactions that are written as textural and structural description. Textural description is the description of what the participants experienced. Structural description shows how the participant

perceived their experience (Creswell and Poth, 2017). Reflexive comments add an additional layer of data collection that identifies emerging biases, beliefs, and reactions of participants. Creswell and Poth (2017) recommend adding reflexive comments at the open and close of the study to set the stage for more description of the results. Embedding reflexive comments in study results situates the results in a more detailed setting rather than solely relying on the words of the participants. Reflexive comments include facial expressions, emotional responses, and other observable reactions that may not be conveyed through words exclusively. The current study explored emotional responses of participants. The researcher used reflexive comments to further triangulate the data by adding students' expressions of emotion while they shared their experiences.

Table 1

Summary of Data Collection and Analyses Guided by the Research Questions

Research Questions	Data Source	Analysis Technique
1: How do underprepared students describe their experiences?	Initial Interviews (via Webex) Follow-up interviews (via Webex) Reflexive Notes and Memos	Interviews were transcribed and edited by the research. The interview protocol informed initial themes. Final themes were identified using manual coding and memo writing in Dedoose.
2: How did underprepared students justify their emotional responses to their experiences?	Initial Interviews (via Webex) Follow-up interviews (via Webex) Reflexive Notes and Memos	Interviews were transcribed and edited by the research. The interview protocol informed initial themes. Final themes were identified using manual coding and memo writing in Dedoose.
3: How does the experience impact underprepared students' perception of college? themselves?	Initial Interviews (via Webex) Follow-up interviews (via Webex) Reflexive Notes and Memos	Interviews were transcribed and edited by the research. The interview protocol informed initial themes. Final narrative summary of students' perception was identified using manual coding and memo writing in Dedoose.

Data collection took approximately eight months. The data was transcribed by the researcher and coded in Dedoose, a program designed for qualitative data analysis. After initially coding the data, the researcher horizontalized the data, condensed the information into themes, and identified relevant examples of those themes in Microsoft Excel. Transcription, coding, and analysis took approximately six weeks. Once the data was analyzed and reviewed, the researcher drafted and submitted the results, discussion,

and ancillary pages that comprise the complete dissertation study. The results and discussion were drafted and submitted separately to save time.

Trustworthiness of the Design

A trustworthy research design provides a clear expression of the researcher's intention while employing strategies to ensure that data collection is effective and accurate (Creswell & Poth, 2017). This section utilizes the documentation of quality enhancement efforts recommended by Guba and Lincoln (2012). Creswell and Poth (2017) suggest building a scaffolding of trustworthiness through collecting sources, methods, and theories that corroborate the data collected. The current study detailed prior research relevant to the experiences of Black and Latinx students in developmental education programs. Guba and Lincoln (2012) developed strategies to be applied through a qualitative study that ensure trustworthiness of the study's design. These strategies are to be applied throughout the inquiry, during data collection, during data analysis, and during presentation of findings (Guba & Lincoln, 1982). The strategies include improving the

- credibility: accuracy of the findings of study
- dependability: repeatability of the study with consistent findings
- confirmability: neutrality and minimalization of biases in the study
- transferability: applicability of the study to other contexts, and
- authenticity: consistency of the data collection and findings with the participants' stories.

Each of these strategies are applied to cover all the aspects of the trustworthiness of a study (Guba & Lincoln, 1982; Moran, 2021). The current study also applied methods of

trustworthiness to the sample, assessing the impact of the researcher, and data collection as recommended by Cresswell and Poth (2017), Fraenkel et al. (2012), Guba and Lincoln (1982), and Miles and Huberman (2014).

Trustworthiness Throughout the Inquiry and Data Collection

The researcher in the current study utilized two strategies recommended by Guba and Lincoln (1982) to improve trustworthiness throughout the entirety of the qualitative study: reflexive journaling and careful documentation. Reflexive journaling improves the credibility and authenticity of the study. The researcher used reflexive journaling during data collection to monitor participants' emotional reactions, gestures, and noted themes. The researcher used reflexive journaling during data coding and analysis to compare the participants' stories, document themes within stories, and note common reactions and experiences. Careful documentation with an audit trail improves the dependability and confirmability of the study by creating a detailed description of the inquiry and discussing all biases. The researcher documented all steps taken in the study, methods of validation, credibility, and biases of the researcher throughout Chapter 3.

In the current study, the researcher used recommendations from Miles and Huberman (2014), Fraenkel et al. (2012), and Creswell and Poth (2017) to build awareness of effective sampling, awareness of researcher biases, and awareness of validation strategies. Miles and Huberman (2014) recommend checking for representativeness in the sample to ensure that participants are representative of the phenomenon described in the study. To ensure trustworthiness during recruitment, the current researcher sampled from a community college with a higher population of Black and Latinx students and offer developmental education programs.

In qualitative research, researchers should be aware of bias to maximize the validity of the data collected (Fraenkel et al., 2012). Fraenkel et al. (2012) provide descriptions of the observer effect, observer bias, racial bias, and selection bias. Observer effect in conjunction with each of the three examples of biases are expected to impact the data collection of this study. The observer effect states that the presence of an observer will have an impact on the behavior of the participants. In the context of a qualitative interview study, the observer effect is unavoidable. Observer bias is defined by the characteristics of the researcher that may impact data collection. Racial bias is the impact of the researcher's race on the study. In this study, the students' perception of the researcher and her race likely impacted how they share information and how comfortable they feel.

Cresswell and Poth (2012) state that ethical validation and substantive validation are helpful strategies for ensuring trustworthiness of a study. In applying ethical validation, the researcher questioned all underlying moral beliefs prior to engaging with participants. This is further described in the Research Ethics section. The researcher applied substantive validation by understanding her own knowledge of the content. The researcher assessed previous studies and applied critical thinking to her understanding of the content and results of the studies. This will be further described in the Researcher Role section.

The researcher applied methods of data collection recommended by Guba and Lincoln (1982) to improve the transferability, authenticity, and dependability of the study. The researcher utilized audiovisual recording, and verbatim transcription to improve the authenticity of the study. Recording the participants' interviews ensured

accuracy of the data collected and created a source that the researcher could refer to for later analysis. The saturation of data improved the possibility of transferability to the study. The saturation of the data created a detailed narrative of who the students were before, during, and after their developmental education experience. The saturated description helped the researcher develop and share a clear understanding of the sampled group. The researcher also employed member checking during data collection to improve the dependability of the study. During the participants' first interviews of the study, the participants described their experiences with each of their teachers and advisors, creating a base narrative for the follow-up interview. During the follow-up interview, the researcher reviewed a summary of each experience described during the first interview and asked if the participant wanted to add anything else. The participants added details and confirmed the summary.

Trustworthiness Through Triangulation and Data Analysis

Researchers utilize triangulation to validate the accuracy of their study. Fraenkel et al. (2012) describe triangulation as "checking what one hears and sees by comparing one's sources of information" (p. 517). Triangulation allows the researcher to cross-check multiple sources and methods to create corroborating evidence (Creswell & Poth, 2017; Fraenkel et al., 2012). In the current study, the researcher triangulated data using the following methods: (1) two-interview series; (2) reflexive journaling; (3) saturation of data; (4) searching for rival thinking. These methods helped ensure trustworthiness.

The two-interview series transcript was transcribed from audiovisual recordings. As recommended by Guba and Lincoln (1982), the data was rigorously transcribed and cleaned by the researcher. The first interview garnered participants' perspectives on their

experiences with each of their educators. The second interview was used for member checking, follow-up questions from the first interview, and naming emotional responses in the previously described scenarios. Emotions were named in the follow-up session because the researcher did not want to interrupt the flow of storytelling to request names for emotions. Standard educational environments require students to put their emotions aside to participate in an emotionless learning space, therefore, it is expected that the participants may need additional time to identify and discuss their emotions (Callahan, 2004; Sloan, 1979; Yorks & Kasl, 2002). Using reflexive journaling, the researcher constructive a narrative that based on the textual and structural descriptions of the participants interviews to corroborate the validity of the conclusions. Saturation of data occurs when the researcher no longer finds new information that answers a question or adds to category (Creswell & Poth, 2017). In this study, saturation of data was achieved through further probing into the college experience until the participant ran out of new information.

Rival thinking, also referred to as disconfirming cases by Guba and Lincoln (1982) is defined by Yin (2016) as perspectives that rival each other and cannot coexist. Researchers engaging in rival thinking utilize a continued sense of skepticism throughout the study. This skepticism exists surrounding appearance of events and actions and the original assumptions of the research question. The research questions were investigating positive and negative experiences, therefore, giving participants room to present rival thinking regarding their program experience. The researcher avoided assumptions of the students' perceptions and maintained an openness to experiences that rival what was expected. The literature review may offer assumptions about professors' actions and

students' perspectives. The students offered new perspectives that rivaled certain assumptions.

Trustworthiness in the Presentation of Findings

The researcher utilizes recommendations from Guba and Lincoln (1982) to improve the credibility, transferability, and authenticity of the study. The researcher achieves this through the following strategies: (1) documentation of quality enhancing efforts; (2) documentation of research credentials; (3) thick vivid description of findings; (4) and impactful, evocative writing. Documentation of quality enhancing efforts are found in the Trustworthiness of Design section of Chapter 3. Documentation of research credentials are found in the Researcher's Role section of Chapter 3. The other two strategies are detailed below.

The researcher used the thick and vivid description in conjunction with the impactful, evocative writing strategies to create a detailed story of the participants' experiences in developmental education courses. Thick and vivid descriptions improve the opportunity transferability by creating a clear understanding of the findings that the reader can understand and connect to. The researcher used thick and vivid descriptions to improve authenticity by creating a saturated, detailed description of the participants' story, packed with emotional responses. The stories they shared affected their academic careers going forward. Therefore, the findings were presented with impactful, evocative writing that presented the participants' stories with impactful beginnings, middles, and ends. Impactful and evocative writing improves the authenticity of the study by creating an expressive storyline, giving the reader the opportunity to understand and connect with the participants' stories.

Research Ethics

Researchers should always consider the welfare of the participants in their study. The study should be conducted with the goal of giving back to the participants and avoiding exploitation (Creswell & Poth, 2017). Ethical research should be conducted with the intention of positively impacting students and enacting social change. The researcher should also demonstrate that they have a commitment to the participants' values (Vogt et al., 2012). The current study explored the phenomenon of emotional responses to negative and positive experiences of students in developmental education courses. The data collected was used to inform faculty members and policy makers regarding student experiences. Therefore, the data were collected respectfully and ethically to accurately represent the students' perspectives. This was achieved by allowing participants space to explore their feelings safely. The students were also given the freedom to not answer certain questions.

It is beneficial for researchers conducting interviews to build rapport to increase interview participation. It is expected that the researcher will be very clear about their intentions with the interviews. In terms of ethics, clarity regarding the purpose of this study gives the participant a detailed understanding of what they should expect (Bogdan & Biklen, 2006). It is the moral and legal responsibility of the researcher to communicate clearly and commit to the values of the participants. Researchers should reassure participants by clarifying that participation in the study is voluntary and expressing that participants can remove information as needed (Vogt et al., 2012). The researcher acquired informed consent, notified participants of any risk of harm, and ensured confidentiality and anonymity. The researcher limited all risk and prevented harm to the

participants by acknowledging the participants emotions as valuable and decompressing at the end of the interview session to alleviate any risk of harm.

Prior to study execution, it was expected that the students who participated in the current study would detail experiences of stress, anxiety, and failure in relation to school. According to Vogt et al. (2012) an ethical qualitative study intentionally lowers risk of harm. Risk of harm can be lowered by keeping participants informed and getting honest consent from participants prior to the study. Seedat et al. (2004) wrote an article regarding the ethics of conducting research with trauma survivors. The ethics of working with trauma survivors is relevant to this study because it is highly probable that participants in this study may describe experiences that resemble educational trauma. Seedat et al. (2004) warn against diagnosing participants during qualitative studies. Seedat et al. corroborates the recommendation of Vogt et al. (2012) regarding lowering risk of harm. Seedat et al. (2004) also discuss the autonomy of the participant. The participant should have a sound understanding that they are the experts and leaders of this experience. For participants to give suitable consent, they were assured that their participation is voluntary. Seedat et al. (2004) reviewed studies where trauma survivors were the subjects. The literature review found that trauma survivors may be very willing to describe their experiences, or they could be hesitant and uncomfortable.

In the current study, the researcher created an open and honest environment that allows for the participant to determine their level of comfortability and act accordingly. The researcher also gave participants the opportunity to avoid certain topics if it made them too uncomfortable. The researcher of this current study maintained consistent awareness of the participant's experience and emotional responses through the study. The

theoretical framework of this study emphasizes the importance of the perception of students. The researcher held the perception of the participants in high regard. The participants received a clear explanation of the study. The participants were free to exit the study if they saw it as necessary. The researcher also included time for a decompression conversation after the interview. The decompression conversation gave the participant a space to express how they felt about the interview experience, ask questions, and address any concerns. In the findings and the discussion of the study, the researcher will not diagnose any students with educational trauma. The researcher will instead identify experiences that resemble educational trauma and justify those similarities when making recommendations.

Data Analysis Approach

Data analysis in phenomenological studies occurs immediately at the start of data collection. This is because phenomenological studies require the researcher to be anticipatory of the participants' potential responses (Creswell & Poth, 2017). Prior to the study, the researcher will create pre-codes. Pre-codes were prepared before the interview (Fraenkel et al., 2012) using the theoretical framework and conceptual framework that were created in Chapter 2. As the researcher received data from the interview, it was noted in relation to pre-codes. The data collected in the current study was collected using semi-structured interviews, analyzed through a computer program for coding, and corroborated by participants.

Creswell and Poth (2017) recommend recording semi-structured interviews. By recording the interviews, the researcher is free to take notes and organize thoughts while the recording stores detailed conversation data for later review. While recording for a

semi-structured interview, the researcher should use headers to organize information, marked spaces in the notes in between questions, memorized the questions before the interview, and wrote closing comments after the interview has ended. The researcher recorded the video calls. These recordings were used for transcriptions and for the researcher to review the participants' reactions, expressions, and tone of voice.

Coding data requires the researcher to find themes within the research by identifying common themes and building an understanding of the data presented by participants (Miles et al., 2014). The data codes were marked using Dedoose, a program used to analyze qualitative research. The researcher began with a larger set of codes that will be continually synthesized through four rounds of horizontalization. Creswell (2007) defines horizontalization as developing a cluster of meanings into themes. Horizontalization also allowed the researcher to repeatedly cycle through the data to improve understanding and to potentially identify more accurate themes. Then, the researcher selected key examples to accurately represent each theme. By preparing with precoding and recording the interviews, the researcher created a jumping off point to analyze and categorize the data efficiently.

Researcher Role

The researcher's role is impactful on the collection and analysis of the data. The researcher identifies as a Black woman with adult education teaching experience. The researcher was a developmental education student. The researcher also identifies as a first-generation American of a Jamaican family. The Researcher's Role section documents the researcher's credentials and background, as recommended by Guba and

Lincoln (1982). This section will include a reflection of the researchers' characteristic biases that are relevant to the study.

The researcher has a six-year history of teaching adult education. Many studies consider developmental education to be a type of adult education (Brock, 2010; Jones et al., 2018; Van Thompson & Schwartz, 2014). The researcher is also biased toward the experiences of individuals who have received a high school equivalency diploma. It is common that students in developmental education courses have a high school equivalency diploma. The researcher was also highly invested in the progress and persistence of her students. In the researcher's experience, all the adult education students that continued to college had to take developmental education courses. The researcher also took remedial math and writing courses in college. Although this took place at a four-year college, the researcher sympathizes with this experience.

The students that the observer taught were almost exclusively Black and Latinx students. Through the last six years of teaching, the researcher has only taught approximately three students who identify as White. As stated by Torres and Hernandez (2009), students connect to people who have similar social and cultural capital to themselves. An individual's racialized experience, especially in the context of a Eurocentric academic space, has an impact on their social capital, cultural capital, and their point of view. During the study, the researcher was able to connect to Black students from a perspective of shared cultural/racial experiences, and a shared knowledge of experiences shared by her former students. The researcher connected to Latinx students with a shared knowledge of cultural experiences and a shared knowledge of experiences shared by her former students.

The researcher is also a first-generation Jamaican American who grew up in a predominantly Jamaican and Caribbean neighborhood with other first-generation American families. According to the researchers' personal experiences, people tend to remark on her vernacular. They identify it as unexpected because the researcher is Black, and they expect her to speak AAVE exclusively. The surprised reaction has been from individuals of all races. The researcher identifies her vernacular as an amalgamation of Standard American English, New York City English, and AAVE. This could have potentially impacted the participants' perspective of the researcher. It is challenging to identify whether this would have a positive or negative impact on data collection. Based on the researcher's perspective, it did not seem to have a negative impact.

Through bracketing of biases, the researcher used methods to lessen the impact of bias. The researcher asked impartial questions, wrote detailed notes, and made detailed observations. The researcher actively engaged the participants so that they can clearly express their experiences. The researcher made the study's intentions clear to the participants to keep the data collection on track.

Conclusion

The present phenomenological study was conducted with students at CCC and UBC community colleges. The participants in the study were students in developmental education courses who were currently or formerly enrolled in those institutions. The data was collected with this concept in mind: the participant is the expert. The researcher was as supportive as possible while deferring to the participant in a conscious effort to build a qualitative study that is accurate. The researcher was emotionally supportive to the participant during this time as these experiences could be challenging to discuss.

Students' emotional responses and perceptions to their experiences, including the interview, can have a strong impact on their data (Callahan, 2004; Fraenkel et al., 2012). The researcher was attentive to how students described their past experiences and how they reacted while participating in the interview.

CHAPTER 4: FINDINGS

The purpose of this phenomenological study was to gain an emotion-based understanding of students' experiences in developmental classes. The style of interviewing used in this study aligns with Callahan's (2004) application of Critical Theory and mindfulness to students' emotions. According to Critical Race Theory, storytelling is a pathway to identify and resist against oppression (Ladson-Billings, 1998). Employing consideration to study participants' emotions deepens the understanding of their perspective as a student. Each participant discussed their experiences, how their experiences impacted their persistence through college, how their experiences impacted their academic identity, and their overall perception of college. Using horizontalization, the researcher has identified four common themes among the students' experiences. The themes and subthemes presented with Research Questions 1 and 2 were developed with consideration to the students' perceptions of professors' actions. Research Question 3 is answered using a summary of the participants' experiential pathway through college. Each research question will be answered with consideration to the cultural capital that was shared from the educator to the student. These forms of capital include aspirational capital (the ability to maintain hopes and dreams); linguistic capital (intellectual and social skills created through communication in one or more language style); familial capital (cultural knowledge and kinship ties shared among families); and navigational capital (the skill of maneuvering through PWIs) (Yosso, 2005).

Research Participants

The participants in this study included eight Black and Latinx students who participated courses created for underprepared students at UBC and CCC. Both community colleges are a part of the Urban University System (UUS). All the students were recruited for the study with the assistance of administrative staff at the community colleges. Six participants were enrolled in the UUS Go program. On the UUS website, UUS Go is defined as an innovative program that helps prepare associate degree-seeking students to get a good start in college. The goal of the program is to help students prepare for college-level coursework and to meet UUS's proficiency milestones prior to starting credit-bearing courses. One student was enrolled in UUS Now program. UUS defines UUS Now as a program that helps eliminate systemic barriers by providing students with academic, social, and financial support to graduate with an associate degree in three years or less. UUS Now offers individualized course schedules, and personalized academic and career advisement. One student was assigned developmental courses as a prerequisite for the nursing program at CCC.

The participants in this study were all members of an underrepresented minority, and first-generation college students in the U.S., which are two common characteristics found among underprepared students (Capt et al., 2014). This pool of participants contains Black and Latinx students who were born in the U.S. and in other countries. Some of the participants enrolled in college within a year after completing high school. Others took breaks from school to work or take care of their family. All participants in this study are given pseudonyms to ensure that their anonymity is maintained.

Table 2

Participant Demographics

Name	Age	Race/Ethnicity	High School Location	College	Program
Bart	20	Black – Trinidad and Tobago	Trinidad and Tobago	CCC	UUS Go
Maggie	18	Latinx - USA	U.S.	CCC	UUS Now
Lisa	24	Black - USA	U.S.	UBC	UUS Go
Marge	28	Black - Ghana	U.S.	UBC	UUS Go
Homer	32	Latinx - Mexico	U.S.*	CCC	UUS Go
Selma	42	Black - USA	U.S.*	UBC	UUS Go
Patty	19	Black - Jamaica	Jamaica	CCC	pre-Nursing
Moe	19	Black - Senegal	Senegal	UBC	UUS Go

* *completed a high school equivalency diploma*

Bart is a Black male who was born and raised in Trinidad and Tobago. After he completed high school, he continued his schooling in the U.S. at CCC. At CCC, he took developmental math and writing courses through UUS Go. He was 20 years old at the time.

Maggie is a Latinx female. She was born in the U.S. and went to high school in the U.S. as well. Immediately after high school, she attended CCC. She was 18 when she took her developmental math course and participated in the UUS Now program.

Lisa is a Black female who was born and raised in the U.S. and attended high school in the U.S. as well. She took a break from school and worked after high school. At age 24, she enrolled at UBC. She took her developmental math and writing courses and enrolled in the UUS Go program.

Marge is a Black female who was born in Ghana. She attended high school in the U.S. After high school, Marge spent some time working. When she was 28, she began the UUS start program at UBC and took a developmental math class.

Homer is a Latinx male who was born in Mexico. After the educational equivalent of middle school in Mexico, he worked. When he moved to the U.S. at age 32, he passed the high school equivalency exam and began the UUS Go program at CCC. He took one developmental math and one developmental writing course.

Selma is a Black female who was born in the U.S. and attended high school in the U.S. She did not graduate at that time because she had to take a break from school to work and raise her kids. About 20 years later, Selma passed the high school equivalency exam and joined the UUS Go program at UBC. She took one developmental math and one developmental writing course.

Patty is a Black female who was born in Jamaica. She attended high school in Jamaica, and she briefly attended college there as well. When she was 19, she enrolled at CCC. She took a developmental math course which served as a refresher for the pre-nursing program.

Moe is a Black male who was born in Senegal. He graduated from high school in Senegal. Afterward, he came to the U.S., enrolled at UBC, and joined the UUS Go program. He took a developmental math course and a developmental writing course. He was 19 years old when he took these courses.

Findings for Research Questions 1 and 2

(1) How do underprepared students describe their experiences? (2) How did underprepared students justify their emotional responses to their experiences?

In this analysis, Research Questions 1 and 2 will be expressed together due to the nature of the questions. They will be combined because it is not possible to separate the emotional responses from their experiences in an effective analysis. This phenomenological analysis found that students' perceptions of their experiences with professors have an impact on students' academic identity, persistence, and perspective on college overall. Four themes have been identified: (1) presence of individualization; (2) style of motivation; (3) use of deficit thinking; and (4) demonstration of emotional awareness. Each of these themes are centered around perceived actions and behaviors from professors.

Theme 1: Presence of Individualization

Studies have shown that whole-person learning is more beneficial than the standard pragmatic style of education. Whole-person learning considers all aspects of the student, individualizes instruction, and personalizes classroom interactions to uplift each individual student. The traditional pragmatic education style requires students to do all the heavy lifting in terms of acculturating themselves to the college environment. The presence of individualization can positively or negatively impact a student's college experience. All participants in this study described: (1) individualization that attended to their specific needs and (2) individualization that gave the student leeway with course expectations and still held students accountable. Most participants in this study reported experiences of individualization that had a strong positive impact on their developmental course experience, their academic identity, and their overall college experience. Two students' experiences exemplify a lack of individualization that negatively impacted their experience.

Understanding Each Students' Specific Needs. In this study, the predominant form of individualization from professors entailed understanding what each individual student needs and providing resources and advice. Through interactions with the student, the professors were able to identify clear methods of support that both they and the student agree would benefit the student.

Three of the four students who attended high school outside of the U.S. (i.e. Homer, Bart, and Moe) had differences in their linguistic cultural capital in terms of education. All of Homer's previous schooling took place in Mexico and was all in Spanish. Homer expressed that prior to attending CCC and in the beginning of his college career, he was nervous about speaking in class. During several points throughout the interview, Homer mentioned that he did not feel confident in speaking English. Homer said, "Because English was not my first language and I had to learn that language when I was already an adult, which is more difficult. So, that was the challenge that I went through in college and the grammar." Homer's professors were always open to him for support. Homer described this experience saying

> And when they approach me saying, "What else can we do for you." And I always say, "Well, I'm afraid of my pronunciation." I always let them know that I don't have confidence in speaking in class because of my pronunciation.

They told him to "never hesitate to speak in class." The professors told him that if he continues to speak in class, over time, his pronunciation will improve. As he explained the impact of his professor's understanding and individualization, he smiled. Homer said:

> And they never make me feel like, "Oh we don't understand what you're saying. Can you repeat it again?" Because some people do that, you know. Like, "What

> are we saying we can't understand you?" And that makes me - when people say that, they make you feel like, "Now I'm not gonna talk because I don't manage to explain myself." But in CUNY Start, it was the opposite. I felt like, "I had to talk, so I talked." I had that support. I mean, I really really speaking sincerely in that because it was really really good. I really like to recognize when something is good and when something is not just. I really know the difference.

Homer truly valued that advice, because prior to that recommendation, he felt that he should speak less in class. He took his professors' advice to keep speaking in class so that he could speak English more fluently in the future.

Bart attended high school in Trinidad and Tobago. The math that they learned was represented differently than the math taught in the U.S. Bart had always regarded himself as a great student. He stated that he "would describe [himself] as a hard working student." When Bart took the entrance exam for CCC, he was disappointed to find that he was recommended to take a remedial math course. Bart said:

> The stuff that was on the exam, I did when I was about age 10. Ten years old. When I actually entered college, my first algebra class, that was [covered in school when I was] like 12 years old. So, you see the math I was doing for precalculus, I did when I was 13-14.

When Bart described this situation, he was visibly annoyed about it. He was surprised because he knew that he was familiar and comfortable with the math content. Upon further investigation, Bart realized that he answered questions incorrectly on the entrance exam because of the differences in symbols and mathematical syntax that he had previously learned. Bart said:

> I did see why I failed first try because back home you call parentheses brackets. And you have the curly ones and you have the regular ones. And those are the ones that I made a mistake with on the exam.

He was grateful to have a professor who was familiar with this challenge and able to help him learn math as it is represented in the U.S. He felt that he "had a close connection with the math professor." Bart's developmental math professor helped him translate his math knowledge to U.S. math knowledge so that he could pass the exit exam. "She was really nice because she was from the Caribbean as well, and the thing is she understands how to translate everything from back home to here." Bart felt that is professor understood what he needed. As Bart described his transition from the entrance exam into his remedial math class, his initial annoyance dissolved into a calm joy. He recounted, "She tells you 'Ok, bracket is parentheses,' (…). So, she would put both ways on the board and explain it so the Caribbean kids can understand." His experience with his math professor made Bart feel more connected to his professor. He shared, "And even up to this day, I still talk to her." Bart appreciated this class because he was moving on to begin his coursework as an engineering major. Math was very pertinent to his major.

Moe had a similar experience to Bart because he attended high school in Senegal. He learned math in French and regarded himself as a confident math student. Similar to Bart, Moe had the realization that he would need to translate his knowledge of math from French to English. Moe's professor gave him individualized attention by helping him translate his math knowledge from French to English. She taught multiple methods of problem solving and encouraging the class. Moe had any easy time in his math class because he was so familiar with the content. He sees math as "just formulas" so it was

easy for him to make the connections. He also noted that he learned faster methods to solve math problems than he did before. Moe said, “It taught me math more and English. She taught me new ways to solve math equations. That’s the second thing that I was taught, also. Like that very fast way to solve the equations.” Moe especially appreciated when his math professor would commend him for it's great work. He shared, “She would give me a lot of compliments like, ‘You’re doing a great job.’” Moe did note that although he felt more efficient as a math student, but he did not feel that those math skills correlated to his next math course, which was statistics:

> But when I took this statistic classes, I felt like I was on my own because it was way too different from that class. And I don’t know if I was the only person to pass the class in the math. I was on my own. I was actually on my own.

This, however, may only be related to the differences in curriculum and not the quality of the professor's teaching.

Homer and Patty expressed moments of individualization that were specific to what they were experiencing as people. Both of them described a moment where their professors saw them as people and as independent students. The professors then used that clarity to connect with the students in a way that made them feel seen and important. These interactions also had an impact on the students’ persistence through the course and through college.

During Homer's time in UUS Go, he took a writing developmental course. It was customary for the professors and the advisors to meet with the students to discuss their progress. Homer recounted feeling nervous before the first of these meetings because he was accustomed to meetings with educators having a negative connotation. Homer said,

"I was kind of intimidated because some of us were like, 'What now? What are they going to tell us? What we have to do? How do we have to behave?' At the end, it was easy." He was pleasantly surprised to find that his professors were reviewing his progress and making recommendations for the future. When Homer originally entered CCC, he intended to major in political science. His professor told him that he was an excellent writer with a very poetic perspective and that he should consider majoring in writing. This was more than a compliment for Homer. He explained that:

> …they always approach you by the way they notice your talents. Because, you know, we all have different kinds of talents. I guess that my other classmates were also supported by that. Like telling us, "You're good at this. You should keep it up. If you like it, you should keep on track." Or they give us like advice like, "You could do this."

Homer smiled as he recounted this moment. It meant a lot to him. The advice that Homer received included recommendations of literary works that Homer could read that would feed into his already poetic writing. His professor also identified specific skills that he could work on to improve his writing. Homer was extremely grateful for the individualized advice and the resources that his professor provided. When asked how he felt after this meeting with his professors, he said:

> Good because first, like I said, I was learning English. I already knew some English and writing. Honestly, that was why I was in UUS Go. Because my writing was not appropriate for college level. So, that made me feel very good because they like my style.

He liked the idea of being a writer, but he did not know where to start. Not only did the professor and advisor compliment his skills, they also gave recommendations to boost those skills and a sense of direction academically.

Prior to college and in early high school, Patty identified herself as a good math student. As high school progressed, she felt that the math was more difficult. Patty said, "…in the past, I liked math. But when I got to higher level math, I was like, 'Uh, I don't like math that much.'" When Patty started her developmental course in math, she was a little nervous. Her nerves also came from a previous discomfort with math and her experience attending college in Jamaica. Patty said, "In Jamaica, my experience was really different my first year. It was not a nice experience the way the professors would welcome you to the class." According to Patty, the professors at her college in Jamaica expressed that the students were "just an ID number." To Patty, this meant that she should not expect any individualized help or support in college. When she began college at CCC, she expected the same interaction. Patty was pleasantly surprised when she found that her professor gave individualized attention to support each student. Patty's tone of voice grew from neutral to excited as she continued to describe her professor. Patty said, "It was like refreshing your memory like, 'Wow we didn't have that in my country. It's either you know the basics or you don't.'" Patty described her experience and her responses by saying:

> But once I got into that math class, I got so comfortable. I felt at home. It no longer seemed like I'm going to have a challenge in understanding what the professors are saying. Or having a fear to go to them and ask a question. I felt super comfortable with asking questions. If I didn't understand, I would raise my

> hand and say, “Professor, can you go over that.” And it was his pleasure to do it over again. Even after class, he would stay, he would explain stuff, he would send us emails – or even text messages – with past papers, practice materials.

The individualized attention made patty feel “admiration” for her professor and “accepted and welcome” at CCC overall.

Bart described an experience with a developmental writing professor who provided a noteworthy lack of individualization. Bart exhibited visible frustration as he recounted this experience. Bart expressed that his writing professor would give him excessively long writing assignments with little or no feedback. His professor would also require “six page essays” that were significantly longer than the requirement for the exit exam for the developmental course.

> He would just skip answering you, but not give you feedback or nothing, you know. And if you do read out your essay, he would just say, ‘Oh that’s so wrong. That’s boring. That’s not what you write about.’ And we (Bart and his classmates) would be like, ‘Hey, that’s not a college essay. That’s a UUS Go Essay.’ UUS Go – the exam doesn’t require you to write nothing crazy, but he expects you to write a six-page essay. One case, I wrote like three pages.…his feedback was worthless because there was none.

When Bart said, “that's not a college essay,” he meant that the assignment the professor gave was too long and beyond the expectations for UUS Go. Bart was very thankful for the writing center at CCC because he felt that he was not learning enough from his professor to improve the quality of his writing. Bart said:

> Trust me, the writing center is one of the best things they have in the system because they will critique your work. And the thing is, they have top of the line students that work side by side with the people who helps you. So they learn too and then they help you. They would not help you to write the paper, but they would critique you and say that was rough. Put a circle on it. Come back in a couple days and they would do a follow up email and help you out. So, the writing center was really helpful to me.

Bart's description of the writing center was in direct comparison to the lack of support he would get from his developmental writing professor. When he moved on to take other English courses at CCC, he found them to be significantly easier, through no help of his developmental writing professor. He found that the developmental writing course did not give him the skills that he needed, particularly for his engineering major, which did not require lengthy writing. Bart described his experience in his writing developmental class as "a waste of time."

Bart, Homer, and Moe were extremely grateful to their professors who gave them the linguistic capital that they needed to be successful in their developmental courses and in college overall. Homer and Patty were grateful to have professors who recognized their individual needs and gave them advice and resources to help them develop their skills. In these examples, the professors' individualization had an impact on the students' persistence through college. Both Homer and Patty's experiences exemplify moments where educators share navigational capital with students by helping them understand their skills and goals. Unfortunately, Bart's experience exemplifies how challenging it can be for a student when a professor is unable to support their needs despite being able

to recognize the need. Bart continued to persist as the other participants did, but he had to take on significantly more effort because he wasn't receiving the support in the classroom.

Giving Leeway and Maintaining Accountability. All participants in this study either described themselves as students who valued education and were determined to succeed. Sometimes, however, students have experiences outside of the classroom that impact their work. Moe, Maggie, Selma, and Lisa's experiences offer examples of how professors can appropriately assist students who may have missed class or assignments.

Moe was simultaneously taking classes and working full time while attending UBC. He found it challenging to keep up with the amount of homework because typically, in Senegal, he did not receive as much homework. He said,

> The homework she was giving us – it was a lot. I never knew – because I'm not used to that – the homework that college gives us. It was a lot of homework. I was not used to that. Back in my country, the way they gave us homework it was like one homework per day. But here, they give multiple texts. They give you a lot of homework.

His writing professor recognized that he was tired and working very hard. She made sure to check in with him frequently.

> …I was getting home at 1am. And after that, I would take a shower and then do my homework until 4am. I didn't have very much sleep. But all the time, she would make sure that I was okay. 'Moe, how did you do? You didn't get to do that.' And she would say, 'Keep the hard work. Keep the hard work.' That's

> something that I will never forget. Like the way she cared about us. She wasn't just related to the classes. She would know to care.

Moe stated that, "she was making sure that I was doing everything and managing my time." Although Moe was not prepared for the amount of homework in conjunction with his work schedule, he felt "cared for" and "motivated" because he could see that his professor was looking out for him. Even while describing this interaction, he expressed joy and gratitude. Moe's professor shared navigational capital with Moe by helping him maintain his goals and understand college-level expectations. She also shared aspirational capital because he was motivated (although extrinsically motivated) by his professors' actions. He was motivated to persist through the course.

Maggie attended CCC and took a developmental math course. She had a strong appreciation for her professor because he paid attention to all the students and made sure everyone understood the content presented. In one instance, Maggie turned in an assignment late. Her professor noticed the late assignment and had a conversation with her. Maggie stated that, "He wasn't upset. He was just like, "Okay, just try to do it next time." And I was like "Ok I'll try." And he was like, "Don't say you'll try, say you'll do it." Maggie was appreciative of his deliberate approach. Maggie said, "It was a really nice approach he had." She also appreciated that the professor didn't "baby" her. The term "baby" refers to the professor holding her to a lesser standard and doing things for her. In Maggie's case, her professor was holding her to the adult standard of an independent student. She was expected to turn her assignments in on time, at all times. Similar to Moe, Maggie's math professor was sharing navigational capital by teaching her the standards and expectations of college level work. Maggie smiled a bit as she

described this experience because it had such an impact on her. She appreciated this approach because it held her accountable and gave her room to make mistakes. She felt that this approach "set [her] up for other classes like in terms of managing homework and having to be more independent than high school." In other words, his actions gave her the tools to persist through college.

When Selma began her developmental courses at UBC, her mother had become very sick. After a while, her mother was in Hospice care. Selma realized that she should notify her professors and counselors at the UUS Go program of her situation because it would impact her participation. When asked how she thought they would respond to her request, Selma stated, "It's either that you can accept it or you can't. Like, 'You tell me yay or nay' but I'm gonna do what I'm gonna do anyway." Selma was prepared for a positive or a negative response, but regardless of the response she would always prioritize her family. She was pleasantly surprised to find that her professors and counselors were very supportive of her decision. Selma described her surprise by talking about her previous experiences:

> [The educators] actually care about their students. Because a lot of people, including in jobs, a lot of jobs and with school, they don't factor in that unexpected things do happen. And sometimes it's the pressure of, 'Oh I can't come.' And if I can' t come, 'You're gonna flunk your class.' Or if you can't come to work, 'I'm going to have to write you up.'

Selma's educators gave her additional time to complete assignments and allowed her to come in late and miss class when she needed. Selma was also happy that she was given grace at this time because she understands that leaving and returning to school can end up

taking more time than one anticipates. Selma left high school to take care of her children and return to college over 20 years later. This time, she wanted to continue her education without breaks. Selma credited her successful transition and persistence to her counselor's and professors support saying:

> But with the teachers being so understanding and everything. It keeps me like, ' I gotta do that. I gotta do this.' It makes me not want to give up because I see how understanding and willing to help that they are.

Prior to her time in UUS Go, Lisa was struggling at UBC. She was dropping courses to avoid failing them and losing her financial aid. She was recommended to join UUS Go. In the beginning of her time in UUS Go, Lisa met with her counselor with the hopes of redirecting her trajectory in college. Lisa happily recounted her relationship with her UUS Go counselor. They met weekly to discuss next steps and goals for Lisa. Lisa was extremely appreciative of this help because the counselor was "…really taking the time to say, 'Hey what is this student's needs?' Because one size doesn't fit all. And really going through that process." Lisa especially enjoyed that the counselor would "work with [her] on [her] mindset and shifting [her] thought process to refocusing and reidentifying who [she is]. So that was just - that combo was a power combo." She appreciated being held accountable as an independent student and she was also felt "admiration" toward her counselor for assisting her. This "power combo" motivated Lisa to continue through college despite having a challenging first few semesters. Lisa's counselor shared the navigational capital with Lisa so that she could understand the necessary perspectives she needs to be a successful college student. Lisa was glad to have

a counselor who helped her figure out what she wanted out of college and assisted her with a game plan on how to move forward.

Moe, Maggie, Selma, and Lisa where each having challenging moments in their own way. They were very grateful to their professors and counselors for recognizing what they needed in the moment, giving them the leeway to do well or improve, and continuing to hold them accountable as independent students. Each participant expressed gratitude for this experience. All participants noted that these moments that they shared with their professors and counselors had a strong impact on their persistence. Maggie and Lisa also attributed a positive change in their academic identity to the help from their professor and counselor, respectively.

Theme 2: Style of Motivation

Effective motivation from a professor to a student precipitates an exchange of social and cultural capital from the professor to the student. This capital exchange increases the students' sense of belonging and subsequently, positively impacts their persistence. All participants in this study discussed moments that they felt motivated by their professors, whether it was to attend class, persist, or simply to respect the professor's time. The motivation occurred in the form of an overall motivating classroom experience and moments where their professors had enough emotional awareness to recognize that the students needed motivation and offered it to them in the form of capital.

Developing a Motivating Classroom Experience. Half of the participants in this study described professors who created a motivating classroom environment. They described professors that made them feel comfortable in the classroom by building habits,

maintaining expectations, and understanding the power of emotional crossover. The participants who experienced a motivating environment noted how valuable this experience was for themselves and their classmates. This section will discuss the experiences of three of those participants.

When Bart was informed that he would have to take a developmental math course via UUS Go, he was very surprised and disappointed. His math professor made the experience easy and enjoyable. Bart said, "She would come around the classroom to ask you if you understand. She would sit down and give you one-on-one attention to help you figure it out." His math professor also motivated the class by focusing on the goal of passing the exit exam and doing it quickly. Bart said,

> She just wanted us to be out as soon as possible. We had the opportunity to do it in 8 weeks. Other kids had like 12 weeks. So, she tried to push us in 8 weeks, and she pushed us, and her entire class passed. I was happy because I wanted to start college as soon as possible.

When asked how he felt before class, Bart responded by saying,

> I did (look forward to it) because at first I was like, "Hm, I don't want to do this. Back then I was too lazy to go to class. And then as she's helping you and she's pushing you. She's preparing you for college, the college life. It became a joyous thing to attend class every day. I made it a priority to attend, you know. Because she was so energetic, and she always liked to help. She was really nice. She wanted to see all her students pass. She didn't want to see no failure."

Bart's math professor motivated the class with her infectious energy and genuine care for each student success. She effectively communicated that she shared the same goal as the

class, and she made the experience comfortable and encouraging. Bart felt that his professor gave math more value overall. He said, "She made it seem like this can benefit you. This can really help you." Bart's math professor was able to extrinsically motivate Bart to come to class regularly through her enjoyable classroom environment and motivational speech. Bart was glad to come to a class that he originally did not believe that he needed, and she showed him the value of math inside and outside of the context of college. Bart was already intrinsically motivated to persist through the course on his own, but his professor helped him maintain that motivation to complete the course by sharing aspirational capital (i.e. giving him hope that he would pass the exit exam early).

When Patty started her math course at CCC, she was very nervous. Her previous experiences in college led her to believe that she would not receive a significant amount of support, so she was bracing herself and mentally preparing herself for that negative experience. She was pleasantly surprised to meet a math professor that obviously cared very deeply for the success of his students and made her feel "accepted and welcome." Patty said,

> My professor was excellent. He was the best. Everyone passed the class. He would come in early and there were students who were not getting the topics and stuff, he would take extra time before the class begins to show you, to explain to you one on one. He was a gem.

This professor gave extra time to his students for tutoring and asking questions. In general, Patty described the motivational messages that the professor would share with the class. For example, according to Patty, he said "I believe in all of you. All of you will get into the nursing program. You'll do well. And even if you're not here for nursing."

Patty's math professor left a very strong positive impression on her. Patty was motivated to go to class early in the morning in the winter with no qualms because she knew that on the other side of her commute with someone who cared just as much as she did. She appreciated this math class so much that she had told her family about it. They all felt very happy for her that she could have such a wonderful experience. Patty described the impact of this experience by saying,

> But, what it did, it made me feel like I am in the right place at the right time. And that fear that I had coming into a new country to study. Because I went to college in my country. I just did one year there. And here, I had that fear like, "It's going to be different. I'm not going to know anyone. It's a different population of people. The setting is different." I think that class kind of eliminated my fear of attending college here in the US.

Patty's experience in her math class alleviated her fear of attending College in the U.S., and left her feeling exceptionally prepared for the nursing program. When she joined the nursing program and took her next math class, her other classmates were very impressed with how much she knew and even asked her for tips.

> Like I remembered exactly what I was taught. I was able to do it. Even though a lot of students, they struggled. I just stuck to what he told me and it worked. […] I met one guy in that [developmental math] class who ended up going into the nursing program the same time as I did, and we both were taking the same [nursing] class. We both had the same experience with the same professor; we both loved the professor. When we got to nursing, […] the way [the developmental math professor] taught us to do the math, we were showing some

> of our nursing colleagues how to do it. They didn't learn all of that in the class that they took with their professor.

Her developmental math professor motivated her to persist through the nursing program with no fear. Regardless of how the course went, Patty would have likely always persisted because she is intrinsically a dedicated student. This course experience made everything easier and gave her the aspirational capital to believe that her college experience will be much easier than she thought.

Prior to participating in UUS Go, Lisa viewed herself as being bad at math. She had accepted it as part of her identity since the 2nd grade. When she joined UUS Go, she had the opportunity to engage with a developmental math professor that changed her perspective on herself as a math student. She felt that her professor cared about the class in a very visible way. The professor would regularly encourage the students. Lisa also appreciated his teaching style and curriculum. She felt that the curriculum was "specific to" the students. She felt that the professor "was very well versed in how to communicate [the curriculum] and teach [the curriculum] as well." She enjoyed the real world examples that were presented because it made the content more easily comprehensible. She shared,

> So, one thing I feel like UUS Go understands is that there is the educational component, with the math and making sure that students get the materials and learn work. But there's also the mental component. So, the course was counseling, the mental – working on the mindset part of it. So, we would talk about progressive thinking. […] It was like more of a growth mindset versus being stuck in these self-limiting beliefs. It was really helping us to work on shifting that.

Lisa appreciated her time in UUS Go and described the program because she felt it considered the whole student. Overall, she was very grateful for her UUS Go experience. Because her professor shared that aspirational capital, she felt the joy of realizing she was good at math, and the joy of having a professor that pays attention.

The participants who described their experiences in a motivating classroom environment expressed that their professors created shared goals with the students and emphasized those goals throughout the course. The professors would share navigational and aspirational capital with the students to help them keep focus on their goals and persist through college. The professors would also show emotional awareness by regularly reminding their students that they will succeed and that someone (i.e. the professor) believes in them. The participants responded to these experiences with feelings of appreciation, acceptance, comfortability. The participants also described feeling alleviation of their fears or a positive change in their mindset regarding class or the subject.

Motivating Students Based on Their Individual Experiences. More than half of the professors described in this study found ways to motivate their students based on the students' specific experiences and exchanging necessary capital. Two will be exemplified in this section. Both students mentioned in this section connected these motivational moments to their persistence at their respective colleges. They had a strong appreciation for how attentive and emotionally aware their professors were.

Throughout the interviews with Marge, she mentioned how important encouragement was to her. When she had a bad experience with her math professor, she wished that he could be more encouraging. When asked what changes she would like to

see in the UUS Go program, she recommended that alumni visit the program and speak to current students to encourage them and discuss the benefits of the program. Marge did find the encouragement she was looking for in her UUS Go counselor and program coordinator. She had a strong connection with both educators. She described her counselor as the "one person who really had an influence on [her]." Marge went to her counselor for everything. She described her counselor as "kind of strict," and regarded her as a very sweet person. Marge said that her counselor would motivate her by saying things like, "Yes, you can." Whenever Marge was unsure about how to navigate aspects of college, she went to her counselor. There was a time where Marge wanted to defer starting her next semester. Her counselor guided her through the process and directed her to the appropriate people to help her. When she wanted to apply to a nursing program, her counselor assisted her with the application and acquiring scholarships. Marge went to the program coordinator when she had questions we just needed to talk. The program coordinator even read over her essay for her application to nursing school.

Marge appreciated the support and motivation from her counselor and the UUS Go program coordinator. She was extremely satisfied with her experience and felt that it prepared her appropriately for college. Marge described her experience saying,

> At graduation, [my counselor] was there, and I had a picture with her, and a picture with [my counselor] and [my professor]. It was the best. I could just look at it. I saw it and teared up thinking about how I came in and I was so lost at the time. And they came in and kinda held my hand and helped me through the whole thing. And graduating with scholarships still if I wanted to take it with me or whatever. And actually being able to graduate with honors was like, "Okay."

Marge said, “Okay,” with a sigh of contentment. Marge’s counselor and the coordinator made her transition from high school to college a lot smoother, therefore supporting her in persisting through college. They motivated her with kind words, encouragement, and being there for her. Marge was already intrinsically motivated to persist, and the UUS Go educators she worked with gave her the aspirational capital and navigational capital to make it easier.

As mentioned previously, Homer’s UUS Go developmental writing professor and counselor gave him significant motivation to become a writer. They noticed skills in him that he did not notice in himself. After informing him of his skills as a writer and congratulating him, they gave him advice and resources to improve his skills further. Homer recalled that his developmental writing professor would tell him “‘…read this book. Or read about this person who became a writer.’ Because I remember Richard Wright was in jail, but he managed to learn writing and became this very good writer.” Homer’s developmental writing professor gave him a story that he could relate to. Homer’s professor gave him linguistic capital through the exemplary texts to improve his writing and aspirational capital to help him understand and direct his goals. Homer said that their support made him feel “optimistic” about his college career and he also felt “acceptance” from his professor and counselor. From Homer’s perspective, the support motivated him significantly and even changed the trajectory of his college career.

Moe and Maggie had similar experiences where their professors motivated them in a way that resonated with them. As previously mentioned, when Moe was taking his developmental writing course, he was also working full time and getting home After

midnight. His writing professor recognized that he was having a bit of a hard time. Moe said,

> She would give me a lot of energy for me to keep the work [up] and to make her proud of what she's doing. That would make me feel – it gave me a lot of energy. She would give me a lot of energy. That would give me a sense in my mind that I'm going to make her proud. I'm gonna make her feel like she just accomplished [something].

Moe expressed that this experience gave him extrinsic motivation to succeed to make his professor proud of him. Maggie's developmental math professor realized that she had missed an assignment. He gave her the opportunity to complete the assignment. When she said that she would "try" to get the assignment in, he corrected her to say that she "will do it." Maggie found a caring sternness in his response to her. Maggie was already an intrinsically motivated student, and she was glad to have her professor boost her motivation by showing her what it meant to be an independent student. Both Moe and Maggie were appreciative of their professors for sharing navigational capital with them in form of showing them how to maneuver college standards and manage their time. They were grateful to be recognized by the professor in moments that they needed help. They also both wanted to be treated like capable independent students. They expected to be held accountable to give in their work on time, and they were grateful for the moments of forgiveness they received for their missteps.

Each of the students felt motivated because they were all receiving cultural capital from their professors and counselors that extrinsically or intrinsically motivated them to persist through college independently and with pride. The cultural capital of college can

exist in many forms. In Moe and Maggie experiences, for example they were being taught the cultural expectations of college and completing assignments in a timely manner.

Theme 3: Use of Deficit Thinking

Professors who utilize deficit thinking focus on what students lack or the students' perceived likelihood to fail. The deficit-based lens is often placed on Black and Latinx students. As shown in the current study's interview data, race and ethnicity based deficit thinking can be perpetrated by professors of the same race or different races. Deficit thinking is not exclusive to any race. Some professors' perspective of all students comes from a deficit. This can be done through reminders of punishment for failure to complete work, reminding students to be independent without helping them develop the skill, and calling out shortcomings that they perceive in the student. The participants in this study experienced two types of deficit thinking: (1) the assumption that they have deficits based on their culture or race; and (2) "prophets of doom" with good intentions, but poor execution. Only three of the eight participants expressed experiences of being viewed at a deficit.

Perceiving Cultural and Racial Deficits. Two of the participants in the current study described instances where they were seen at a cultural or racial deficit by their educators. They perceived how their professors viewed them through what was said to them directly or indirectly. The professors' words let them know that they were less valuable in the academic space due to their culture or race. The participants expressed how those experiences made them feel and how that impacted their perspective about college and their professors.

Bart is from Trinidad and Tobago and spoke with a Trinidadian accent. Where he is from, they speak Trinidadian Patois and write in standard British English. Bart's developmental writing professor, who was White, would criticize Bart's and his other classmates' abilities to speak English because they spoke with a Caribbean accent. Based on this deficit-based criticism, it was clear that Bart's professor was able to recognize that Bart may need additional support writing in standard U.S. English. Rather than offering support, the professor chose to criticize him and prophesized Bart's failure in the course, just as a *prophet of doom* might do. Bart expressed frustration that he was being insulted and not receiving any feedback to help him develop his writing skills. He said,

> …but the English guy was a jerk because he felt that we speak broken English, or Patois. But you know, we speak Patois! So, he would pick on us. He was being a douchebag in a way, the English guy, because he speaks proper English, and we don't. But we can't help it. That's how we grew up. […] We (Bart and his classmates) can write proper English, but when we're speaking, you're not thinking "Hey let me form this sentence properly." You're just speaking bad English.

Bart expressed visible frustration when recounting this experience. From his perspective, his professor was more interested in pointing out any of Bart's deficits that he perceived. Bart said that he would have preferred more corrective feedback instead of focusing on his perceived shortcomings. He described his overall experience in the course by saying, "So, it was never a good environment for the English class. So that was kinda bad. I didn't feel to attend the class. Because I did a lot of outside reading myself."

Prior to joining UUS Go, Lisa had a college advisor at UBC. In Lisa's previous experiences, she found that sometimes educators of color assume a very negative perspective on the academic potential of students of color. She described how race-based deficit thinking is not exclusive to White educators. She said, "I think a little more prevalent, sometimes, in the Black and Brown professors versus, I guess, the Caucasian or White professors. They're just like, 'Ah whatever, let's just get through this.' It's kind of all in a strange way." Lisa meant that these Black and Brown professors approached students with apathy. Lisa said the following to describe her experience with her college advisor,

> And the advisor was like, "Well Black and Brown – y'all are known to be…" […] And there are certain people who reach a certain level of status and degrees it's like, "If you're not doing this, you're not doing that…" There's this switch that goes off and it's kind of like, "If my status is up here, I know more, and now I'm looking down on you because you're not doing XYZ." Like we're not that different. And they maybe just have a few more degrees. And it just turns into this weird knowledge of, "Even though I'm Black, I think all the rest of you are lazy because you're not doing this, you're not doing that. And my journey was this…" Or whatever the case may be. But I don't know what happens where there's a switch of the support goes up and you become a different person.

Lisa described that her Black professor approached Black and Brown students with less sympathy to any challenges they were facing. Lisa believed that this perspective stems from the professor looking at their own achievements and expecting all Black and Brown students to do the same with no assistance. She said,

> It goes back to that notion that we (Black people) have to work twice as hard. We have to break our back, legs, hands, everything. […] And I think professors, especially African American and Black and brown to carry with that as well. Like, "I broke my back. I worked twice as hard and you're not doing that and you're lazy."

According to Lisa's experience, she felt angry at the higher standard expected of Black and Brown students. She wanted to be treated with the same level of sympathy that she perceived White students to get.

"Prophets of Doom" with Good Intentions but Poor Execution. Both students who experienced prophets of doom perceived that their professors wanted them to succeed. However, they were not happy with the educator's decision to motivate them using "tough love" or focusing on their deficits. This section discusses Lisa and Marge's experiences with their professors who were well-intentioned, but negatively impacted their academic identity or perception of college.

Lisa's experience doubles as a perceived cultural deficit and an interaction with a prophet of doom professor. During her time in UUS Go, Lisa attended a college readiness class with an African American developmental writing professor. Lisa described her professor as saying, in an angry tone, "Just do the essays. If the essay's not in on time, you fail." She felt that her professor viewed her as "lazy" and a "slacker." Lisa understood the importance of turning her assignments in on time, but she said that "there's a lot more that could have been elaborated on" by the professor. During that time, Lisa was having trouble with her confidence, depression, anxiety, and the transition from being a teenager high school student to "an adult now in the big world." She had to

take care of her parents, her home life, and work. She had a hard time balancing all her responsibilities, and the challenge was weighing on her. She was hoping that her professor would be more understanding. Lisa said,

> I believe in any relationship, whether it's a professor, personal life, it should – it's a one on one. Even just us talking right now. There's an availability that needs to be there. There's an understanding that there's an energy being shared in this experience. I think some people are disconnected from that.

Lisa said that her professor made her and her classmates feel like they didn't want to be there. The professor's perspective affected the classroom environment and caused the students to reflect that same perspective. Lisa described the situation saying,

> [The professor's attitude would read as], 'Y'all just need to do what you need to do and get through this.' And we would kind of pick up that attitude too. Like, 'We just want to do what we need to do to get through this.' And it took away the experience.

In the past, Lisa had experienced White, Black, and Brown professors taking on a deficit perspective when it came to Black and Brown students. The professors would approach them with demands and ultimatums rather than understanding and advice.

> I feel like I've had African American professors who are like...they see, like, my class was predominantly Black and Brown kids. It's mixed, but in the time I was [in the class], it was predominantly Black and Brown. Like, 'I'm gonna be like this with y'all because y'all are Black and Brown kids.' You're missing the mark, though. It's counterproductive, counterintuitive. Like this is not what we need.

Lisa understood that her professor didn't want her to fail. But she did not enjoy the fact that the professor tried to use the idea of failing as a deterrent and motivator. Lisa would have preferred that her professor develop a relationship with her and offer her more understanding of her situation, similar to what Moe and Maggie received when they fell behind on assignments. In this situation, Lisa's college readiness professor could have shared aspirational or navigational capital with Lisa to help her deal with her challenges.

Marge participated in a developmental math class during her time in UUS Go. She did not enjoy this class because she felt that the professor's choice to use "tough love" was not beneficial to her growth as a math student. She said,

> Usually when people come from different backgrounds that I have found, they tend to be very – they give the tough love. Being African, I see that a lot – in my African community. So that, I would say would have been very encouraging at that point in my life.

The professor would regularly give quizzes to measure the students' progress. After she took one of those quizzes, the professor said that he doubted that she would pass the exit exam. Marge was accustomed to tough love from her African culture. Marge described her experience with receiving tough love from her math professor. She shared,

> You know personally, I just struggled the whole almost two years of being there. And it was not academically. It was just personally. I just – there was so much going on that – I think a little encouragement would have been good from his end. Like, "You can do this – you may be going through stuff. But people have done it and you will do it. It will pass. Put your mind to it. Put your all into this." You know. So, it wasn't really positive. Usually when people come from different

backgrounds that I have found, they tend to be very – they give the tough love. Being African, I see that a lot – in my African community.

Marge noticed that her professor wanted her to do better, but she found his efforts to be from a deficit perspective. Ultimately, she ended up passing the exit exam. This surprised her because she took what her professor said to heart, so she did not expect to pass. During the interview, when asked if she passed the exit exam, Marge said wearily, "Yes, barely. I barely made it."

Lisa and Marge were subject to the banality of evil. Their professors seemed to have an interest in the students passing the exit exams, so they threaten them with failure to motivate them. Their attempts have the opposite intended effect. Lisa, and Marge do not credit these professors for their success. They succeeded despite their professor.

Theme 4: Demonstration of Emotional Awareness

Building emotional awareness into community college policy and the classroom is a cost-free way to support underprepared students, students of color, and students from low socioeconomic backgrounds. The transition into college was challenging for all the participants except Bart. Those seven participants expressed that they were not familiar with collegiate cultural capital and uncertain how to navigate the environment. When the participants described professors that were emotionally aware, they described professors who took the opportunity to learn about their students and explore the students' experiences. Once the professors had a sound understanding of what their students are going through, they knew how they could uplift them. Emotional awareness gave these professors the opportunity to identify and share necessary cultural capital with students.

Maggie and Patty valued the encouraging environment that their educators created. Maggie appreciated that her developmental math professor would share joyous moments with his students. He created an environment where the students believed that they would succeed with him by their side. Maggie's professor shared the navigational capital with his class that would show them what it looks like to be independent goal oriented students. With this positive and emotionally aware environment, he was able to communicate to his students that they all shared a common goal for the class to pass the exit exam. Maggie's response to this experience was, "Our hard work was recognized, and it was great." Patty started her time at CCC with a lot of fear and anxiety around being a new college student in the U.S. Her developmental math professor was continually emotionally supportive. Similar to Maggie's math professor, he would connect with students by communicating a shared goal in the classroom. In Patty's words, he said, "I believe in all of you. All of you will get into the Nursing program. You'll do well. And even if you're not here for nursing." He also bonded with the students' using efforts that the students could perceive and appreciate. Patty described him by saying:

> I think it's a personal thing because not every professor is that way. Maybe teaching is his passion. He cares and that was very obvious in the way he talks and the things he would say to the class, the way he motivated us.

Patty recognized that her professor's helpful abilities may come from his own personal skillset and was not necessarily attributable to the college or program. Patty's math professor was able to communicate aspirational and navigational capital with his students to motivate them to persist through college.

Marge's relationship with her counselor and the program coordinator was filled with attentiveness and encouragement. Marge would consistently go to them in need of emotional support, and they would alleviate those fears and give her helpful resources. Marge said, "…they came in and kinda held my hand and helped me through the whole thing." Marge's counselor and the program coordinator clearly demonstrated an awareness of Marge's need for support. Twice during her interview, Marge described herself as "lost" during that time, but when she went to them for advice, they were always able to help and share navigational capital. Marge felt very happy knowing that she always had this safety blanket in the UUS Go program.

Homer had a special moment where he connected with his math professor. Homer described this conversation fondly saying,

> And sometimes my math professor told me, "Yes, Homer, I'm here. I hope you're not afraid of speaking in class." She put herself as an example. She said, "Look at me, I speak English badly and my pronunciation is different than yours is." I said, "Yes." [She said,] "So then don't take it as an obstacle for you to continue." That was very helpful to me too because it made me realize that yes, it doesn't matter about your pronunciation or anything. What matters is your input. All that matters is what you bring to class and what others learn from you through your experience, through your ideas, or through your opinions…Don't be afraid of speaking. So that's when I started raising my hand all the time. And I liked that because it made me feel confident, and I was not afraid because I already knew my classmates and my professors.

In this conversation, the professor was able to relate to Homer's situation and share aspirational capital so that Homer could understand that his pronunciation is only a temporary barrier. This conversation meant a lot to him because it improved his confidence and alleviated the fear that he felt. She noticed what he was going through and told him exactly what he needed to hear. After taking her advice, Homer maintained this confidence through his college experience. He was grateful to have the opportunity to relate to his professor.

Maggie, Patty, and Homer appreciated that their professors could demonstrate the emotional awareness required to support them when they were not feeling confident or were feeling lost in the classroom. Because their educators were emotionally aware, they were able to identify that their students needed additional support in the form of a boost of confidence or distribution of the college's capital. Each of these three students credited their professors for helping them make significant positive developments to their academic identity and independence as students.

Findings for Research Question 3

How does the experience impact underprepared students' perceptions of college and themselves?

The current study's analysis of this Research Question 3 will summarize the participants' experiences in community college in the context of the third portion of the conceptual framework, the emotional outcomes. The conceptual framework offers a visual representation of what characteristics and interactions can impact a student's academic identity in college. Before students begin college, they have their own developed cultural capital, previous experiences, potential educational trauma, and a

support system. When students begin college, they experience the college environment and develop their own perceptions of those events and perceptions of available supports. The students' previous life experiences combine with college experiences to create their academic identity in college. Their academic identity includes their perspective of their skills, ambitions, potential, and persistence.

Positive Outcomes

All the participants who perceived positive outcomes from their classroom experiences describe instances where their educators shared necessary capital with them or used emotional awareness that was evident to the student. The participants described actions by their educators that they attributed to their success as independent academic learners.

Positive Impact of Professors Sharing Capital. All eight of the participants in this current study described instances where their professors shared highly beneficial capital with them that positively impacted their persistence through college. Each participant was readily able to explain how these experiences positively affected their perception of themselves and the community college they attended. They also expressed gratitude toward their educators for sharing this capital. Educators that shared capital were credited with specific knowledge that students valued. In this section, three students' experiences of receiving beneficial capital will be discussed.

Before college, Maggie described herself as a "lazy, unproductive high school slacker." Maggie explained this feeling by saying:

> I guess I just didn't want to be there, you know? It was like, "Oh I have to be there," compared to college with is a lot more flexible. But, I was looking forward to more college than high school. I was just very anxious to get out.

She also said that math was something that she "struggled with." Maggie described how appreciative she was to receive aspirational and navigational capital from her developmental math professor. She received aspirational capital in the form of motivation and creative teaching. Maggie said, "I remember him encouraging us to participate. So even if we didn't know the answer for sure and encouraged us to participate with us which is good." Her professor also celebrated their successes with them in the classroom, "Once we got our results, I think all of us passed, and he was so happy and encouraging which was great. Our hard work was recognized, and it was great." Maggie described her professor's teaching style by saying:

> I guess he explained things that helped me understand more easily…He did a lot of physical examples. Like he would draw things out in a way that is much simpler than just telling us, which was really nice.

Her professor also shared navigational capital by maintaining college-level expectations. Maggie discussed her professor by saying, "He was like stern, which was like what a lot of college professors are. They don't baby you. They're very much like, 'Do what you gotta do.' And if you don't it's kind of just on you."

Maggie was extremely appreciative of her experience. She felt "excitement" when she realized that she was better at math. She felt "trust" in her professor because she appreciated "having someone really take the time to explain thing and trying to make sure the class was all on the same page." Maggie's appreciation stemmed from the positive

outcomes that she saw from her time in the class. She said, “It was a really nice approach he had because that kind of set me up for all the other classes, you know. Like in terms of managing homework and having to be more independent than high school.” Maggie also described the impact of this course by saying:

> Since it was my first college class at CCC, I feel like it really set the tone for the rest of my time there. After that, I had great professors. I really liked the people. It was a really good steppingstone, which I feel like community college is as a whole. Because right now I am at [4 year college], which I really like so far. I’m kind of liking CCC a little better.

Maggie recognized the value of the aspirational and navigational capital that her professor shared because she could readily identify that this experience helped her persist through college and helped her understand how to be a successful college student.

Like Maggie, Lisa expressed appreciation for the capital that she received from her educators. Prior to college, Lisa expressed that she was not a good math student, which negatively affected her aspirational capital. Lisa said, “‘She’s not a good tester. She’s not good at math.’ So that kinda started to shape my identity of how I viewed myself in math specifically. Like, ‘Oh, I’m not good at math. It’s my identity in the classroom.’” When she enrolled at UBC, she enrolled in classes without participating in developmental education. This interaction emphasized her previous negative perspective on her abilities as a student. Lisa said:

> I got to a point where the information wasn’t resonating, and I’d get to a point in the semester where my grades were not looking good, so I would just drop the course. And instead of failing, I would just keep dropping, dropping, and

> dropping. And eventually, financial aid was like, "No, we're not gonna do this with you anymore."

Lisa was at a low point in her college career, and she described it by saying, "And it was hard on me because I felt like I was really trying, but I didn't feel seen or heard or understood. It was like, 'Well you have no other option.'"

When she began her time with UUS Go, her developmental education program, she was very appreciative of the aspirational capital she received from her math professor and her counselor. She described her professors teaching style by saying, "He was very well versed in how to communicate that and teach that as well." Her counselor offered aspirational capital by helping Lisa focus on her goals as a student.

After Lisa's experiences, she was a significantly more confident student. In terms of outcomes, she felt that UUS Go was pivotal to her academic identity. She expressed this by saying:

> When I came to UUS Go, it was like, "No, you are good at math. […] You needed to let go of that identity that you were carrying for all these years." And also, the complementary fact that there were educators who, again, listened and were in tune with the needs of the students, and it wasn't about rushing. It wasn't about trying to fit in everything into the curriculum. So, my takeaway was basically, I'm not a bad student. And my identity is shaped by me.

Homer described his academic journey prior to college as filled with "many, many hardships." He said,

> I lost my father when I was 11, just when I got into secondary school. And that was a traumatic event to lose my father and then be alone. And especially because

> he was the only one that was taking me to school [and] taking care how I was dealing with the school. And then from there I was like alone. […] I [had] this willingness to succeed - this willingness to continue. […] I managed to graduate to finish my primary school while I was also working in studying since my father passed away, but I couldn't afford to go for high school in Mexico. So, uh, I was, I was feeling very, very disadvantaged on resources.

After Homer came to the U.S., he completed his GED so that he could enroll in college. Homer had not been in a formal classroom for over a decade. He said, "I was like afraid, just getting into an English [speaking] school." Homer did not receive as much support from his family as he would have hoped. He gave his reasoning by saying, "Maybe I guess they wish to, but they don't know how to. They don't know how to approach me." After describing this difference in capital between himself and his family, his eyes began to well up. When he enrolled CCC, he felt nervous about his linguistic capital and was in search of the support that his family couldn't offer him. He experienced professors who were very supportive and shared the aspirational, navigational, and linguistic capital that he attributed to his success.

Homer's professors shared aspirational and navigational capital with him by maintaining college-level standards and recognizing his talents. Homer expressed his appreciation for the college level standards by saying:

> Many of my classmates also complain. "Why do they have to do all of this and work too much and too much work." But the goal of the program was to get us students ready. So, when we get to college, we will be ready for that pressure. And it really paid off.

His writing professors also shared the aspirational and navigational capital with him to become a writer. Homer described the aspirational capital by quoting his professors and saying, "She always told us to remember, 'Don't worry about it. We got you. We got you covered because this is from another level.'" When Homer said, "another level," he was referring to the fact that his professor worked at a prestigious 4-year college and was sharing her knowledge from that institution. Homer also said, "'You're good at this. If you like it, you should keep on track.' Or they give us like advice like, 'You could do this. Or read this book. Or read about this person who became a writer.'" They also shared navigational capital by sharing recommending books to read and ways to practice writing. Homer's math professor helped him improve his linguistic capital by motivating him to speak more English in the classroom. In Homer's words, she said, "Right now you are learning, and you will see your development and your improvement and just in this program. So, imagine how you will become later doing a few years in college. You will improve."

Homer appreciated these interactions and expressed that by saying, "So, some might say that it was strict, but I always love strict professors because they are the ones that want you to do good." He expressed his gratitude for the exchange in capital by saying,

> I'm very grateful for CUNY Start because it really prepared me. It gave me the insight of what's to come in terms of the college experience…And I start to begin to get more confidence with my writing and my speaking even though my pronunciation was not as I wish compared to my other Native English students.

With this successful exchange in capital, Homer was a more confident student and English speaker. He was also motivated to change his major from political science to journalism.

Maggie, Lisa, and Homer all described strong appreciation for the capital that their educators shared with them. Before they enrolled in their developmental education programs, they were aware that they we're in need of some capital to participate successfully in the college environment. When they enrolled in college, their caring and attentive educators had the skills to successfully identify and share the different forms of capital that each student would need to be successful.

Positive Impact of Professors' Emotional Awareness. All eight of the participants in this study described experiences where their professors exhibited emotional awareness. Each participant expressed gratitude and connection to their professors that emotional awareness. Educators that were emotionally aware of students needs were credited with acknowledging the students' needs in a caring way and recognizing students as whole individuals inside and outside of the classroom

When Marge enrolled in college, she was nervous and felt "really lost" when she enrolled at CCC. She was not confident in her abilities, but was prepared to push forward. Marge discussed the UUS Go coordinator and advisor that helped her during the time she felt lost. Marge described their emotional support by saying:

> One person who really had an influence on me would be [the UUS Go Coordinator]. I could go to her at any time. With that, another person of BCC also had a really positive influence on me was [my UUS Go advisor]…I've had a kind

> of personal relationship with these two people that I felt kind of aided me even after UBC. They are people that I could reach out to and ask them.

She described her counselor by saying, “When I met her, she's kind of strict. You would see how as a strict person maybe someone you couldn't approach, but once I did, I started talking. She was really the sweetest person. She helped me transition into college.” Marge’s counselor helped her through challenging moments by providing aspirational and navigational capital by recognizing her emotional needs, redirecting her toward her goals, and giving her the navigational capital to achieve those goals. For example, her counselor helped her figure out how to deal with deferring a semester with positive emotional support. Marge said,

> She would motivate me, “Yes you can during my last semester.” I really wasn't working. Not really. I wasn't working at another point. I just wanted to defer this semester and come back because it was really hard to graduate. And she talked me through it. “You could.” If it got hard, she probably the first person I go to.

Both of her educators demonstrated the emotional awareness and support to motivate Marge and make her feel much more comfortable overcoming her challenges in college. Marge credited her counselor and the coordinator for helping her by saying, “They came in and kinda held my hand and helped me through the whole thing. And graduating with scholarships still if I wanted to take it with me or whatever.”

Marge felt so much gratitude toward her educator. She looked at a photo she took with both educators and said, “I saw it and teared up thinking about how I came in and I was so lost at the time.” Because of this support, she felt more confident in her abilities as an independent student. Marge said:

> If I could get through that, at that point, and register these first semester class that I was doing well – doing my prerequisites for nursing. I was like, "Ok, I can do it." So that was like a yardstick to measure how I was doing in these classes I said. That was a really tough time. So if I could do that, I could do this.

Marge's educators' emotional awareness to her concerns helped her significantly. She felt "joy" because she had such attentive educators to "hold [her] hand" through the process of transitioning into college.

Prior to college, Selma described herself as an "A, B student" who was "eager to learn." She described school as her "getaway" from challenges in life. She struggled with math, but she always appreciated the challenge. Selma dropped out of high school so that she could raise her children. Selma mentioned that the last time she attended high school was the late 90s. She was in her 40s at the time of the interview. She mentioned this because she suspected her differing experience with college's navigational capital would cause her to face challenges in school. Selma said, "I was in high school in the 90s, so writing back then is different than it is now." Selma got her high school equivalency diploma and enrolled at UBC. She was motivated to go to college for her children because family was very important to her. Selma described it by saying, "So I could show my kids that no matter how old you are, you can always do what you wanted to do. You can still fulfill your dreams."

During this time, her mother became ill, which took precedence over college. Selma informed her professors and counselors in UUS Go. She did not feel nervous about informing her professors and counselors about her situation. In Selma's words, she said, "I decided to communicate, because I feel like if you communicate, then they can go the

extra mile if they need to. Or they can find avenues around to help you continue." She was emotionally prepared for her educators to accept or deny her request for accommodations. Her educators understood and demonstrated emotional awareness to support her through this challenging time. Selma described their support by saying:

> Through that process, they were real understanding and they really, really worked with me. With them working with me, that helped me actually complete the course without just leaving because my mom was real sick. And there was days that I couldn't come because I had to tend to my mom. So, with that, they helped me a lot with that alone helped me get the work done I needed to catch up on the days that I was missing. So that was a big, big help.

Selma was very appreciative and expressed that by saying, "I've always been eager to learn because that's my personality, but it's amazing when you have all of the teachers as eager as you for you to learn." She explained why she thought her educators were supportive by saying "I think it was moreso they saw the potential that I had to pass. That's what I got from them. Because when I'm focused, I'm all in."

Selma felt gratitude toward her educators' emotional awareness and ability to support her. They recognized that she needed help and were tactful about their approach. She said:

> I would say that was to let me know that they're not teachers. They actually care about their students. Because a lot of people, including a lot of jobs and with school, they don't factor in that unexpected things do happen. […] And I feel that, they wanted to show me that even though you're having a rough patch, you can still pull through, you can still make it. And as long as you communicate, then

somebody's always there that can help you maneuver whatever situation it is that you're going through.

The emotional support the Selma received helped her persist through her courses and pass successfully. Her educators understood that this was sensitive time. They also showed that they cared about Selma as a person as well as her academic development.

Moe attended school in Senegal through high school. He describes himself as an "A student." Moe was not accustomed to the navigational capital of colleges in the U.S. When Moe enrolled at UBC, he expected to enroll directly in his classes. He was notified that he would need to take a developmental math course and a developmental writing course before enrolling in standard level college courses. Writing at UBC made Moe nervous because English was not his first language. He described his experiences in developmental writing class in the U.S. by saying, "But [in the developmental writing course], it's different. The way she taught me was different. You would start from an introduction and it's way more simple than that, simpler than the way I was taught."

Moe was felt underprepared to engage in his writing class. In his words, he said, "I was not prepared for that, but she was making sure all the time that I was doing everything and managing my time." Moe's developmental writing professor demonstrated emotional awareness by regularly checking in on him in terms of his work and how he was doing personally. Moe appreciated that his professor recognized his needs as a student and took the steps to motivate him. In Moe's words, "I just wanted to make her proud. What she's saying, it can be. And I'm able to do it. I gotta keep the hard work. That's what she would say, 'Keep the hard work. You can make it.'" Moe was appreciative to see a professor that cared this deeply about their students. He said, "She

would give me a lot of energy. That would give me a sense in my mind that I'm going to make her proud. I'm gonna make her feel like she just accomplished." Moe felt "cared for" by his professor, and this experience gave him optimism, which he described by saying, "I was feeling like, in maybe in the future, I wouldn't be afraid of what I'm doing and what I gotta do. I just like go quickly with no fear"

After his writing class, he went from being nervous about writing to feeling confident in his standard level college courses. Moe felt significantly more prepared for writing assignments. He described the assignment by saying,

> It was my first day in college, in person. They gave me something to write. I felt like I was prepared for that. I was prepared. I was not overwhelmed. I just looked into it the way she told me. Take the pencil, take the first paragraph talking about this, the second paragraph talking about that. I was prepared for that. I was not afraid. I was ready for it.

Moe also had writing assignments in a criminal justice class. He felt more than ready to complete these assignments independently and successfully. Moe transformed from a student who was not comfortable with writing and nervous about writing in his second language to someone who felt prepared and unafraid when faced with writing assignments. His writing professor held him accountable for his work but showed the emotional awareness to understand that he was facing challenges in conjunction with attending class.

All three participants described in this section discussed how their professors were able to connect with them using emotional awareness. These professors recognized the participants emotional challenges. Then, they were able to provide support using kind

words or sharing capital based on their assessment of the students' needs. The participants recognized and valued the emotional awareness that their professors demonstrated. And a few of the examples, the participants noted that this interaction with their professor was above and beyond what they usually expect to receive.

Negative Student Outcomes

In the current study, only three participants had negative experiences with their developmental education programs. These negative experiences led to negative impacts on the students' academic identity or perception of the community colleges they attended. The participants had alternate solutions or preferences for how the educator would handle the situation. In this section, I will be highlighting those missed opportunities for emotional support and sharing of capital.

When Bart enrolled at CCC, he was a very confident student. He was surprised to find that he was placed in developmental education courses because he had different perceptions of the education system in the U.S.. In reference to the standard of education, Bart said, "[Caribbean students] come with such a high standard of education because we're British and we have a British education standard. Compared to the U.S. standard, we are way higher." although he didn't anticipate enrolling in developmental education courses, he was prepared to do the work to pass.

Bart found that his developmental writing professor was viewing him at a cultural deficit him for his Caribbean accent "because he speaks proper English, and [Bart did not]." The professor was also criticizing his work heavily and not giving any helpful feedback so that he could improve. Bart's described his perception of his professor by saying, "This guy is not preparing me for this. I'm just going there with a big shark in the

water and they're just dropping me." Bart went to the CCC writing center to make up for where his writing developmental professor could not meet his needs. Although Bart passed the developmental writing exit exam, he did not attribute his success to his writing professor. He also felt that the professor did not adequately prepare him for his subsequent engineering courses. "When I took English 101, English 102, and Engineering writing English, it was super easy. Super, super easy. Nothing compared to his 6-page essay." During the interview, Bart assessed his experiences with his writing professor by saying:

> I would think he should take some time, find himself, before he starts teaching people. Because if you're gonna waste kids' time, they put hours to come here. You don't know where they're coming from. We had kid that were coming from Brooklyn to Queens. You're talking about taking a train, two bus, and you're coming to class and killing the vibes from everybody. I would say he should take some time or not even be a teacher if he's going to be like that. Because you're there to help. The CUNY Start program is there to help. Not to bring you down. I would think the best position is for him to take some time, figure himself out, and see if he wants to work with kids.

Bart was a confident student before he enrolled at CCC, and he continued to be a confident student afterward. His experiences with his writing professor, however, did plant seeds of doubt in his perception of college. He was grateful for his time with his developmental math professor, but not his writing professor, so he finished his developmental program with mixed feelings. Bart said, "I guess I could say [UUS Go] was a good experience because I learned so much from [my math professor] even though

I felt it was a waste of time." He also wished CCC could, "have better professors in certain fields – [writing], especially, in my case." Bart could have benefitted from receiving navigational capital from his writing professor so that he could improve his writing successfully.

As previously mentioned, Lisa had experiences before college that resembled educational trauma. She expressed that she was bullied in school. In Lisa's words:

> I got bullied a lot in school and it was always usually in my math classes where the bullying would take place because nobody was listening, and it was tough. And so, when it would happen, it kinda was like throughout my middle school and high school was just – those were always the toughest classes.

Lisa described how she dealt with bullying in middle school and high school by saying, "So now I'm just like be small and fit myself in so that I can hide myself." During the interview, when she said "be small," she compressed her arms and head into her chest to show what she meant. Then Lisa said, "I do wish that the teachers were stronger for me, as a youth, and were better facilitators and advocates in helping to navigate."

When Lisa began her developmental courses, she still had negative experiences with professors who did not have enough time or capacity to attend to students individually. This experience resembled her negative previous experiences in middle and high school.

> Again, I felt like when I was taking the courses in the school, I just felt like the professors weren't really seeing me. If I wasn't moving fast enough, then I got left behind, and I had to figure it out. I guess they tried their best, but again I didn't

> feel seen. I didn't feel understood. I didn't feel like there was the approach that these are all individuals, and everyone has a different learning style.

Lisa described how she perceived her professors' behavior. She understood their words and actions to mean, "I'm just trying to make it through this period." She was very understanding that professors were under a lot of pressure, but she felt it negatively impacts the students. Lisa said, "That pressure definitely reflects on us. It's like you could easily feel like you're getting left behind. It's a hard and difficult place to be and feel." She also experienced professors who used what she described as "tough love." Lisa described her perception of her professor who said:

> 'Oh, make sure your essays are in on time because the professor's not gonna chase you, and I just want your essays to be in on time.' I mean – time management is absolutely an important skill. I got that. But I think it was a style of teaching that was not one size – one shoe fits all.

She also experienced professors who would express that they viewed Black and Brown students at a deficit. Lisa said, "I feel like it's been multiple professors that I've had, and I feel like there's this notion of like Black and Brown and you have to work twice as hard. You have to break your back. You gotta do more." Lisa was "angry" and "annoyed" with her negative experiences with her professors.

Toward the end of the interview, Lisa expressed that she participated in this study because she wants professors to change for the better. She still maintained her negative perspective on professors, particularly because their actions played into her previously mentioned educational trauma of bullying and lack of support by her former educators. She said, "I think about little Lisa who was in second grade and first grade and how my

experiences shaped my overall education. I do wish it was different. I feel like I'm also advocating for her. My little inner Lisa." Lisa would have preferred to receive aspirational capital in the form of motivation, or navigational capital in the form of advice on how to improve her work and transition into college successfully.

Marge had very positive experiences with her UUS Go counselor and coordinator, but her experiences were not as positive with her developmental math professor. She attended a different community college prior to UBC and was recommended to take developmental math. When Marge got to UBC, as she expected, she was given the same recommendation. "I wasn't really a great math student. The same thing happened with UBC. I went in to take it. I knew – even though I tried it – I knew that I wouldn't be able to pass the math."

Although Marge was self-conscious about her math abilities, she was prepared to try her best. Her experience and her developmental math class started positively, but then took a turn for the worse. She described her positive experience after taking a quiz that her professor used to determine her likelihood of passing the exit exam. Marge said, "My score was the highest. I don't know how that happened. I know I'm not that good. Looking at that, he felt that I had the most potential." Despite the fact that she got a good score, and her professor saw potential in her, she maintained the notion that she was a bad math student. Later in the semester, her quiz scores dipped. Marge said, "And then I came in and time after time as the topics got more challenging, he found that I was kind of going back. So, he didn't understand that." Marge said her professor said to her, "At this point, I don't think you're going to pass honestly. I don't think you're going to make

it.” when Marge was asked how she felt about that experience, she said that she felt “angry.” After that conversation, she remembered “coming home and crying.”

Marge was still able to “barely” pass her developmental math class. She was positively “surprised” because she did not expect to pass. She maintained that she still was not a good math student. She described it by saying:

> I felt like a failure. You know? Because I was very excited. I was going to college. I was going back again to school. But then I failed math. And I didn’t go as a youngster. I went in when I was a bit older. And this basic math that I didn’t have a grasp on. So, I was very embarrassed about that.

Marge was displeased with how her professor handled the situation. She said, “I think him telling me that made it worse. So, I don’t know. I passed. So that’s one of the encounters I had with him that weren’t really pleasant.” When Marge was asked what her professor could have done to help her, she said, “Encouragement. You know a lot of, ‘You can do this. You can do this. You can do that.’ rather than focusing on Marge’s failure, her professor could have shared a form of aspirational or navigational capital with her to help her persist through the class with a more positive perspective on her math skills.

In each example, the participants told stories of negative experiences in the classroom that caused them to maintain negative beliefs about themselves or the college. Based on the participants’ descriptions of their interactions with their professors, it was clear that the professors were able to identify where the students may need additional support. The professors made it clear that they were not knowledgeable regarding how to

share the appropriate capital to successfully support the student. Instead, they spoke to the students from a deficit perspective with little useful feedback.

Conclusion

The goal of this qualitative inquiry was to explore what students went through on an emotion focused perspective. The Black and Latinx participants in this study faced varying challenges transitioning into and acculturating themselves to college relating to differing cultural capital and preparation. The students in this study all expressed that they needed some form of individual attention to their specific needs. Even when the attention occurred in small moments, the students noticed and appreciated it. Many of the participants in this study show appreciation for how professors treated them and the class. They also appreciate motivation and professors who genuinely care about their experiences in college. That motivational effort was a good extrinsic motivator for the students' persistence and improved academic identities.

Deficit thinking often sticks with students and can have an impact on their academic identity. Some students, like Bart, entered college more confident in their ability to navigate the system. Students like Lisa and Marge, however, internalized deficit-based perspectives that they received from their educators. Although the goal of some deficit thinking can be to motivate, it causes students to focus on their shortcomings rather than their goals. Not all students are comfortable with tough love. While students appreciate support, they also want to be held accountable and grow into independent learners. The who students have participated in this study were usually looking for advice and resources rather than to dwell on their shortcomings.

All the students had positive experiences in their developmental courses, while only three had negative experiences. Most Black and Latinx students that participated in this study described moments of being marginalized in the community college environment because they had different capital or were unfamiliar with the capital utilized in college. The students who had positive experiences received at least one of Yosso's (2005) six forms of cultural wealth. The most common forms of shared cultural capital between educators and students in this study was aspirational capital, linguistic capital, and navigational capital. The students were grateful to receive advice, resources, and emotional support that they perceived to help them persist through college.

The students who had negative experiences describe moments where their professor caused them to feel worse about their abilities or trajectory through college. Based on the participants' descriptions, it seems that the negative responses were caused unintentionally. The professors intended to motivate the students to do something positive by bringing up something negative, just like a prophet of doom. The students did not respond positively to that perspective. They wished that their educators could share some form of capital with them to assist them in challenging or confusing times. The current study has noted multiple emotion-based responses that students have to their professors. The data consistently shows that students appreciate positive intentions paired with actions that they also perceive as positive.

CHAPTER 5: DISCUSSION

The purpose of this phenomenological study was to understand how Black and Latinx students who are underprepared for college-level work perceive their experiences in developmental education courses. The data was collected by interviewing eight students who attended CCC and UBC, two community colleges in New York State. The theoretical framework that influenced this study incorporates Critical Theory and Critical Race Theory with a focus on expressions of emotion. The conceptual framework shows the pathway of transition into community college and how students previous experiences influence their response to that transition. Research questions 1 and 2 focus on how participants described their experiences and explained their responses to their experiences. Research question 3 describes how the students' experiences impacted them as they persisted through college. This chapter provides a summary of the findings in the context of the theoretical and conceptual frameworks defined in chapters one and two. This chapter also discusses the findings and relationships to prior research. Chapter 5 closes with limitations of the study, recommendations for future practice, and recommendations for future research.

Implication of Findings

This study gave previously underprepared college students the opportunity to tell their story and share their emotions about their experiences. Based on the participants responses, the whole-person learning style of teaching prevailed over the standard classroom expectations. Whole-person learning is successful because educators attend to both academic needs and socioemotional development of the student. The standard pragmatic education, designed by John Dewey, requires students to operate using solely

logical thought, void of emotion (Sloan, 1979; Yorks & Kasl, 2002). This is not possible because emotions are a vital part of information processing for humans (Callahan, 2004; Dirkx, 2000; Wolfe, 2006). Students who felt that their needs were recognized or were treated with the respect of a competent individual spoke more favorably of their developmental education experiences. Students who were viewed through a deficit lens or approached with prejudice reported emotions such as anger, rage, and annoyance regarding their developmental education experiences. As expected, positive perceptions have a positive impact on students transition into college, and negative perceptions have a negative impact.

Connection to Theoretical Framework

The theoretical framework of this study is comprised of Critical Theory with a focus on emotional responses (Callahan, 2004; Horkeimer, 1972; Ladson-Billings, 1998). Critical Theory translates individuals' voices into action by understanding their critical thought and intentionality of consciousness surrounding their experiences through storytelling and using that information to challenge dominant structures. Listening to and understanding a story from another person's perspective creates space to understand how they are impacted by a culture or a system. Callahan (2004) stated that Critical Theory is most effective when the participants emotions are explicitly considered. In the context of this current study, Critical Theory was applied to understand the positive and negative experiences of Black and Latinx students in developmental education courses. Using Critical Theory and CRT, the researcher compiled and centralized the stories of students to identify methods to improve the dominant structure present in community college classrooms. Through their stories, students identified a variety of educator actions that

positively or negatively affected students' persistence, academic identity, and perception of college.

All the students told stories of enjoyable and beneficial moments where they experienced whole-person learning in the classroom. Whole-person learning occurs when an educator considers all aspects of the student's development, including sharing social capital, cultural capital, and paying attention to their socioemotional needs (Yorks & Kasl, 2002). Educators described in students' stories offered individualization to the students in the form of sharing necessary capital, forgiving mistakes, understanding that students have responsibilities inside and outside of the classroom, and holding students accountable. The students felt that these actions helped them prepare to participate in the college environment as independent students. Educators who shared linguistic capital helped students feel more comfortable developing their knowledge of standard American English. Educators who shared aspirational capital reinforced the value of student's goals through motivation and helped students understand their goals in the context of college. Educators who shared navigational capital shared resources and connections to help students develop themselves students or surmount academic challenges. When the participants described positive experiences with their educators, they described educators that created a safe space in the classroom to allow students that comfort to learn and develop into independent students. The educators ensured a safe space often by demonstrating emotional awareness, verbally communicating shared goals between the educator and student, creating a motivating environment, and motivating students individually. The students perceived each of these actions as beneficial to their academic identity, persistence, and perception of college.

Capt et al. (2014) and Kozeracki (2005) recommended avoiding the deficit point of view when considering student emotions and to focus on the pragmatic use that emotions provide. Of the three students who had negative experiences in their developmental education courses, all describe instances of deficit thinking that negatively impacted their perception of college or their academic identity. Educators that utilize deficit thinking had a negative perception or association with the students' culture, race, or academic skills. These educators were able to identify students' potential challenges, but they were not able to share capital to help the students surmount those challenges. Marge's developmental math professor, for example, identified that Marge may be struggling with the content in the curriculum. Instead of sharing navigational capital in the form of institutional resources or aspirational capital in the form of motivation, he responded by telling her that she would likely fail the class. Marge did not feel that her math professor's actions helped her succeed. Although some professors use deficit thinking with the intention of helping students surmount challenges, the students do not necessarily perceive or value the intention. The three students in this study found deficit thinking to be detrimental to their persistence and academic identity. Those three students, however, spoke very highly about instances of positive motivation and receiving capital from their educators.

By following the theoretical framework, this study was able to uncover emotion-rich descriptions of the participants perception of their experiences. Their stories explore the phenomenon of a variety of experiences of underprepared Black and Latinx students with their professors. These stories exemplified moments where, in the student's eyes, some educators excelled at supporting the students and some educators were unable to

provide support that was perceivable by the students. The stories compiled in this study through critical thought identify how educators can help and harm students depending on the educators' emotional awareness and ability to share capital in the classroom. The participants' stories challenge the culture of pragmatic standard classroom learning and ushers in a new culture devoid of deficit thinking and comprised of safe spaces, motivation, individualization, accountability, emotional awareness, and shared capital.

Connection to the Conceptual Framework

The conceptual framework of this study is divided into three parts: (1) prior to college; (2) classroom experiences; and (3) emotional outcomes. Prior to college, students develop their own perceptions, expectations, and cultural capital. The student's previous experiences and sense of self impacts how they perceive their classroom experiences. The combination of their sense of self and classroom experiences determines the students' emotional responses and outcomes from those experiences. The implications of the findings will be grouped using the three parts of the conceptual framework.

Prior to College. Students' perceptions of their experiences are created based on their previously developed cultural wealth and previous experiences. Yosso (2005) describes cultural wealth as six forms of capital: (1) aspirational capital; (2) linguistic capital; (3) familial capital; (4) social capital; (5) navigational capital; and (6) resistance capital. The participants in this study describe their previously developed aspirational, linguistic, familial, and navigational capital. Their aspirational capital was similar to the collegiate expectations of persisting through college and graduating. Typically, when linguistic, familial, and navigational capital were mentioned, the participants were

describing a perceived difference between their and the college's capital. Students described a difference in linguistic capital spoke a different language or a different dialect of English. Students who described a difference in familial capital did not have family support when it came to their collegiate endeavors. All students expressed concerns with navigational capital. They described uncertainty with the rules and requirements, confusion about locating resources, and concerns regarding their likelihood of success in this new environment. Each student's combination of developed capital informed the needs and expectations that each student would have for their time in college.

Some students describe experiences that resembled educational trauma. Educational trauma, as previously defined, describes little t traumas or big T Traumas that can occur during a learner's academic career. Educational trauma can be caused by interactions with educators, interactions in the classroom, or systemic requirements (Gray, 2019). Two of the eight participants described symptoms such as anxiety, depression, low self-esteem, and hopelessness regarding their academic experience. Gray (2019) lists these symptoms in correlation with educational trauma. The students were very uncertain and uncomfortable with the college environment and were struggling to find the resources they needed to meet their goals. These emotional responses were particularly prevalent when the participants initially enrolled in their developmental education courses.

The participants' cultural capital, educational trauma, and previous experiences informed how they would engage with their educators. Some students felt confident in their abilities and their preparation for college. Other students felt that they lacked the necessary capital to be successful in college. The students who felt that they were missing

capital were looking for additional support from their educators. The current study showed that educators who were prepared to understand their students' perspectives would be seen as more successful educators from the point of view of their students.

Classroom Experiences. The classroom experiences section of the conceptual framework exists in combination with the prior to college characteristics that a student has. Students' perceptions of their classroom experiences are comprised of how they saw their professors' actions and what they expected in those interactions. When students have experiences with their educators, they are perceiving their environment that contains new cultural capital, their interactions with their educators, and the presence of emotional understanding and support. These combined factors determine their response to the experience. People use their emotions to understand and function effectively in social situations (Gabriel & Griffiths, 2002). Emotional responses in college are prompted by capital, previous experiences, and educational trauma. In this study, participants were able to clearly connect who they were prior to college with how they responded to their experiences. The participants in this study described their professors' actions and how those actions affected them. The participants either described positive actions that they were grateful for or negative actions that they felt hindered their growth as students.

Students' emotions strongly impact their self-perception and persistence through college (Lundberg, 2018). Participants who described positive interactions expressed gratitude and joy regarding those interactions. They were also able to clearly connect the benefits of those positive interactions. For example, students would describe moments where their professors would share capital with them, such as a resource or a beneficial advice. The students would then explain how that capital positively impacted them

persisting through college or their academic identity. When students receive emotional understanding and support from their educators, they responded positively to that experience. These positive actions from educators also improve students' self-perception and does not exacerbate their educational trauma (Callahan, 2004; Gray, 2019; Jones et al., 2018; Lundberg et al., 2018).

Participants in this study also described negative interactions that they had with professors. Even though those interactions were in the past, the participants would still speak from a place of anger and frustration. Students who felt negatively about their professors' actions expressed the professor's role in holding them back from their goals or negatively impacting their academic identity. Each student that described a negative experience also described their professor viewing them from a deficit point of view. Deficit thinking occurs when educators engage with students with a focus on what they lack or a perceived likelihood to fail (Ladson-Billings, 1998; Patton Davis & Museus, 2019). The deficit model of thinking often gives students the impression that certain characteristics make them less intelligent or less capable than other students. Black and Latinx students, specifically, experience deficit-based thinking regarding their race, ethnicity, and cultural capital (Ladson-Billings, 1998; Marbley et al., 2013). Both students felt "disgusted" at their experience. Lisa, who experienced racial deficit thinking felt this way because this professor's perspective echoed previous experiences that she had with other professors. Bart, who experienced cultural deficit thinking, felt this way because he expected his professor to be more intelligent than to look at him that way. Both students disliked their time in the class and felt that they gained very little.

Emotional Outcomes. The third part of the conceptual framework, emotional outcomes, include their emotional responses, the impact on their academic identity, the impact on their perception of college, and the reduction or exacerbation of educational trauma. All participants in the study could connect how their interactions with their educators impacted their emotional outcomes. Previous studies have shown that when educators share cultural capital with students and use emotional awareness, it contributes remarkably to their success as independent students (Callahan, 2004; Museus & Neville, 2012, Wolfe, 2006).

Students who had positive experiences with their professors described emotional responses such as joy, gratitude, and positive surprise. Their academic identities were impacted in a way that made the students see themselves as more independent and more competent than they had previously thought. Oftentimes, the participants described intimidation and confusion when it came to their perception of college. After having positive experiences with their educators where the educators shared capital with them, they found college to be less intimidating and saw themselves as more capable in that environment. In the case of two participants (Lisa and Marge) who described experiences that resembled educational trauma, they described a reduction in their trauma responses after their time in UUS Go. They described less anxiety, depression, and fear in relation to their academic identity and college experience.

When participants in this study described negative experiences with their professors, they described emotional responses such as sadness, disappointment, annoyance, and anger. Each professor who was involved in a negative interaction considered students through a deficit lens. The professors could recognize that the

students were actively working towards their goal of persisting through the class, but they would try to motivate them with threats of failure and criticism without helpful feedback. One professor, for example, viewed a student's linguistic capital at a deficit and criticized him for it. The participants stated that these negative experiences reinforced negative perceptions that the student had of themselves and exacerbated emotional challenges that resembled educational trauma. In terms of the students' perspective of college, one participant reported a negative overall view of the college that he was attending. The negative experience led them to believe that they would not be receiving appropriate help in that environment. Because of the negative experiences, the participants anticipated continuing to struggle as they attempted to persist through college. They described taking additional efforts (i.e., seeking out tutoring, consulting YouTube) outside of the classroom to compensate for the limited help that they received from their professors. Although the professors may have had good intentions, the students did not have a positive experience. Using Critical Theory in this study has illuminated the student perspective on potentially well-intended deficit thinking by understanding how the students perceive these actions.

Two of the professors that utilized deficit thinking also approached the participants from a racial or cultural deficit perspective. The participants described professors who made comments that disparage the student for their differences in linguistic capital or for their race. The goal of CRT is to work towards social justice by challenging the dominant racial structure and questioning the use of deficit models (Ladson-Billings, 1998). CRT challenges systems by centering the narratives of the people who are experiencing the system. In the context of this study, CRT was used to

understand how students perceive their experiences in developmental courses. The study has shown that while each student had their own distinct experience, their experiences point to systemic issues that are greater than one professor's actions. It indicates harmful belief systems that some educators share. For example, in the positive context, professors who share aspirational and navigational capital show a sincere interest in the development of their students and are perceived positively. In the negative context, professors who communicate with their students through a racial or cultural deficit show a focus on punishment as motivation and are perceived negatively.

Ladson-Billings (1998) said, “Studies as far back as Coleman et al. (1966) and Jencks et al. (1972) have argued that family and individual effects are far more powerful than schools in determining poor school performance,” (p. 21). Using Critical Theory and students’ emotional responses, this study successfully identified examples of what students deem beneficial or detrimental to their college persistence. Critical Theory and phenomenology both regard participants as the expert in their experience because a person's perception defines how they construct their reality (Ladson-Billings, 1998; van Manen, 1990). Emotions, previous experiences, and cultural capital are the mechanisms by which people process and apply new knowledge (Callahan, 2002; Dirkx, 2001; Museus & Neville, 2012; Wolfe, 2006). This study is a reminder that the human experience is valuable through all perspectives. Students’ voices offer valuable insight into a true success or failure of a professor, course, or program. Moss et al. (2014) conducted a study of a developmental education program. Even though Black and Latinx did not succeed in the program, Moss et al. (2014) still deemed the program a success. It

is important to consider the perspectives of all students to truly understand the successes of a program.

Relationship to Prior Research

Participants' perceptions are a helpful way to understand their experiences (Andrade, 2007). Perception is particularly important for students participating in developmental courses because they are transitioning into college. The transition into college can cause pedagogical dissonance. Pedagogical dissonance occurs when a learner finds their academic environment jarring or inadequate (Schnee, 2014). This study supported the occurrence of pedagogical dissonance in the transition into community college. All the participants in this study expressed hesitation and uncertainty upon starting college. One student entered college feeling very confident, but after a few negative interactions, their confidence was diminished. Each student described an instance where an educator uplifted them by sharing the cultural wealth of the college with them. This distribution of capital eased each student transition into community college. Research questions 1 and 2 ask: (1) How do community college students, who attend developmental education classes, describe their experiences; and (2) How did underprepared students justify their emotional responses to their experiences? The students described their experiences as interactions between themselves and their educators that they could connect to their academic identity, persistence through college, and perspective of college. They justified their emotional responses by explaining past experiences or perceived differences in capital. Each of the themes discussed in the findings of this study were supported by the literature review.

Prior Research Relationships to Research Questions 1 and 2

Theme one is the presence of individualization. Students expressed joy and gratitude toward professors and educators that provided them with individualized attention to their needs. This included creating a safe and supportive space in the classroom. The findings of this current study supported the findings of Holley and Steiner (2005). Holley and Steiner conducted a study and found that a safe space is very important or extremely important to the students. They also found that a student's perception of safety can be based on two factors: self-awareness from members of the space and lack of judgment. Students in the current study responded negatively to educators that were overly critical. The current study confirmed Holley and Steiner's (2005) findings as the participants each described feeling safe with their educator. Two participants however did not feel safe in their classroom where their educator was overly critical.

Parker (2012) identified beneficial actions that educators could take to better support students. These actions include reading texts that summon emotional awareness to the students' current position (i.e., reading about Frederick Douglass learning to read despite his enslavement) and attending to students' personal experiences. Museus and Neville (2012) define educators who take action such as these as institutional agents. Museus and Neville (2012) discussed the value in institutional agents establishing common ground with students, providing holistic support, developing closure, and sharing proactive philosophies. Parker (2012) and Museus and Neville (2012) are describing sharing capital. The current study demonstrated a similar need for institutional agents who share capital, particularly to Black and Latinx students transitioning into

college. In the current study, emotional awareness appeared as social capital or aspirational capital that students could use to reach their goal. The participants also described institutional agents who passed on navigational capital to assist the students and understanding the systemic requirements and pathways of college.

Theme two discusses how professors choose to motivate their students. This can be through providing extrinsic motivation or helping students build their intrinsic motivation. Previous studies have shown that a professor's mood and emotional responses can have power over the emotional state of the classroom (Becker et al 2014; Callahan 2004). This is referred to as emotional crossover. Emotional crossover occurs when an individual's emotional responses are directly or indirectly elicited from the emotions of others. The data collected in this study supports the presence of emotional crossover in the community college learning environments and classrooms. Becker et al. (2014) identified that students' emotional responses were impacted by professors' emotional responses. Although professors' instructional behavior in the classroom impact students' emotions, the professors' emotions have a higher impact. In the current study, the students also experienced emotional crossover from their educators behaviors.

Lundberg et al. (2018) explored a developmental math program that provided a safe space for students. The programming and professors' support helped the students resolve their math trauma by bringing emotional awareness to the students' personal relationship with math. The students described successful persistence through the math program because they understood their relationship with the content and how to think critically about it on their own. The data in the current study supports the findings of Lundberg et al. (2018), which states that when students have a safe space to engage in

critical thought of their academic identity and persistence, they use that support to become independent learners. All participants in the current study showed appreciation to a professor or educator that created a classroom space where the participants felt motivated to try new things, explore their intentions independent students, and succeed in college. This student growth occurred because learning requires the student to make mistakes and to be comfortable making those mistakes. The students were each happy to have the inspiration of their educators because it helped them grow into more independent learners who had more collegiate navigational capital.

Theme three focuses on the negative impact that deficit thinking can have on a students' persistence, academic identity, and point of view on college overall. The data in this study supports the negative impact of deficit thinking on students. Deficit thinking occurs when educators focus on what students lack or a perceived likelihood that the student will fail (Ladson-Billings, 1998; Patton Davis & Museus, 2019). Two types of deficit thinking that are relevant to the study are: (1) prophets of doom and (2) culturally insensitive educators. Educators who practice the ways of the prophets of doom, a term coined by Smith and Jiménez (2014), seek to motivate students by focusing on failure. Prophets of doom use the banality of evil to defend their actions. The banality of evil is a combination of a set of rules, policies, or intentions that individuals use to evade the responsibility of negative actions. These characteristics include acting in the name of the rules or the law and acting with positive intentions (Arendt, 1994). The banality of evil helps members of a structure to intentionally or unintentionally maintain systems of oppression. Poisonous pedagogy is a form of the banality of evil in the academic space. Poisonous pedagogy is comprised of teaching strategies that harm students mentally or

physically with the intention to motivate or correct a student (Gray, 2019). Prophet of doom professors engage in the banality of evil and poisonous pedagogy by taking on a negative perspective of the student to influence them. Examples of poisonous pedagogy in this study include

1. Marge's professor repeatedly threatening her with failure of the exit exam because she did not get a high enough score on a quiz during the course,
2. Bart's writing professor telling him that his writing is poor with no recourse or feedback, and
3. Lisa's professor unenthusiastically telling the class that they "just need to get through" the class.

Studies have shown that Black and Latinx students often experience pedagogical dissonance when they join the college environment. This is often because they have differences in cultural capital and the institution is not prepared to share that capital (Barbatis, 2010; Marbley et al., 2013; Museus & Neville, 2012). The current study supports the findings from Barbatis (2010), Marbley et al. (2013), and Museus and Neville (2012). The students who participated in this study described being seen through a deficit lens and felt negative emotions such as annoyance, anger, and sadness. They strongly disliked their experiences with prophets of doom and culturally insensitive educators. They all felt that these experiences impacted their persistence through college, causing them to work harder despite their professors' negative influences. As previously mentioned, professors negative or positive emotions impact students' perception of themselves and the classroom space. Students who view themselves from a strength-based lens are more likely to be success oriented independent learners (De Castella et al.,

2013; Patton Davis & Museus, 2019). The current study confirms the value of a strengths-based lens. All students who described their experience as being seen through a deficit lens also expressed appreciation to the professors they had that saw them through a strength-based lens.

Theme four discusses the importance of professors' emotional awareness for themselves and their students. The participants in the current study were asked to name their emotions in certain scenarios that they described. They were given Plutchik's (2001) Wheel of Emotions, found in the literature review, as a reference in case they could not think of a word. The current study supports prior research that states that emotions determine individuals' responses to an experience and how much attention the individual will offer in response (Wolfe, 2006). The emotional experiences of both professors and students are relevant in the classroom. The data in this study supports Callahan's (2002) results endorsing the impact of emotional structuration. Emotional structuration occurs when and individuals' emotional reactions are defined by their place in a social structure. Students participating in the college environment must manicure their emotional responses to fit their educational environment. This can be challenging for students who are newly transitioning into the college and learning the necessary social capital. Participants in this study described professors exchanging social and aspirational capital that would help them redirect their focus toward their goal of persisting through school as an independent, prepared student.

Some students who enter college have educational trauma from their previous schooling experiences. Gray (2019) describe four forms of educational trauma: (1) spectral; (2) in-situ, (3) ex-situ, and (4) socioecological. The participants in this study

gave examples of scenarios that resemble three of the four forms of educational trauma. Patty described spectral trauma from the harsh expectations of her previous college. They were nervous to have similar experiences when she began community college at CCC. Lisa described in-situ educational trauma from being bullied by students and having her potential doubted by her educators. Initially, her community college experience exacerbated this trauma. Once she transitioned into the UUS Go program, the help from her professors and advisor seemed to alleviate the anxiety from this experience. Ex-situ educational trauma was exemplified by two participants, Lisa and Selma, who were confronted with very mentally and emotionally challenging experiences outside of college. Ultimately, all the participants in the current study were alleviated of their educational trauma by their educator's emotional awareness. The educators took the time to listen and understand the students' needs. They recognized that they may need a listening ear or motivation. The educators shared the capital that the students needed to increase their confidence in themselves and their ability to navigate college. The students who received this kind of support were very grateful to their educators for listening to and understanding them.

Prior Research Relationships to Research Question 3

The third research question in this study asks, "How does the experience impact underprepared students' perceptions of college and themselves?" Students who had positive experiences stated that the positive experience improved their academic identity and calmed their uncertainty about college. The current study's data research conducted by Capt et al. (2014), which found that students need the right teachers. The right teachers are defined as professors who already have patience, emotional awareness, and

the affinity for understanding students as individuals without training from the institution. This is particularly important because colleges do not usually require teaching preparation for faculty. Some of the professors described in this study did not show them to be the right professor. They demonstrated a lack of patience, emotional awareness of students' needs, and ability to motivate students. More than one participant expressed that that they were glad to have their professors because they did not always experience professors who were as caring. Although they had enjoyable experiences, they pointed out that this is not always the case.

Students' relationships with professors affects their confidence in their own abilities. It can be especially impactful in challenging courses. The data in the current study supports the findings by Quinlan (2006), which state that when students feel fear and anxiety in a class, it negatively impacts their persistence. The current study also supports research by Johnson et al. (2018), which found that students have a more positive response and greater satisfaction with their experience in a course when they have more interactions with their professors. This was true regardless of whether the course was online or in person. This was because students appreciate meaningful and emotionally aware interactions with their professors. Participants in the current study described how challenging their developmental education courses were. They described challenges such as the amount of homework, the speed of the curriculum, and the nature of the content differing from what they had learned previously. The participants expressed that they were concerned about their ability to complete some of the work. They had professors that helped to alleviate their fear and anxiety regarding the

coursework. Because of these helpful interactions with their professors, the participants felt more capable and motivated to persist through the course.

The data in this current research supported findings from Zumbrunn et al. (2014), which stated that a supportive classroom environment improves students' sense of belonging and self-efficacy in the classroom. Distribution of cultural capital also positively affected student sense of belonging. The professors who garnered positive responses from their students demonstrated awareness of the students' emotional needs and educational trauma. These professors achieved this by noticing students' emotional responses to their experiences and discussing it with them. They were also readily able to identify when a student is having a challenge and how to assist them in solving that challenge, usually by sharing capital. In other situations, they offered students understanding of any struggles they may be facing outside of the classroom. The professors did not have to engage in any trained practices of psychology to offer emotional support. Alternatively, they were understanding and respectful of the human experience inside and outside of the classroom. The professors recognized that their students were adults with individual goals and needs for support. Then, the professors made a perceivable effort to offer that support in the form of capital, resources, advice.

Limitations of Study

Creswell and Poth (2017) and Fraenkel et al. (2012) value the exploration of validation and biases. The researchers recommend techniques to maximize the validity and the trustworthiness of a study. By reviewing internal and external validity along with strategies to reduce threat, the researcher identified threats and biases that may impact the results of the study. The results found from this research should be considered with the

following limitations: (1) selection bias; (2) students' memory of events; and (3) generalization.

Selection bias is a threat to the internal validity of the study. The researcher cold called a list of students provided by the administrators at CCC and UBC. The participants were self-selected. Most of the participants who were interviewed in this study had a very positive perspective of their time in UUS Go or at CCC and UBC. Only one participant had an overall negative perception of their time in UUS Go at CCC. The researcher anticipates that the study could have had a different outcome if the students were selected differently.

This study recruited participants who enrolled in developmental education courses within the last four years. This time limit gave the researcher access to more potential participants, but also created a space where some participants may have less detailed memories of their course experience. Some participants forgot details of their course experience. This is expected because they took multiple semesters of courses since their developmental courses. During the study, participants made a conscious effort to only speak on aspects that they remembered. If they did not remember the details of an experience, they would state that.

Generalization is a threat to the external validity of this study. Generalization is defined as drawing broad conclusions for a population based on the study's observations (Polit & Beck, 2010). The results of this study can be challenging to generalize based on the setting and the participants. The participants were recruited in an urban area. CCC and UBC are identified as HSIs. Although the community colleges were not HBCUs, they also had a higher population of Black and Latinx students. Fifty percent (3

participants) of the students who attended high school, as opposed to completing a high school equivalency diploma, attended high school outside of the U.S. Fifty percent (4 participants) spoke standard U.S. English as a second language. All participants were self-selected. Seven of the eight participants (87.5%) were enrolled in academic programs developed to assist underprepared students. These characteristics of the institutions and the participants are challenging to generalize because they do not represent the majority of the population attending community college in the U.S.

Recommendations for Future Practice

The purpose of the current study was to identify positive and negative experiences that students have with their educators to understand what actions educators can take to better support the underprepared Black and Latinx student population. The data collected contains honesty from the student perspective. These recommendations discuss how to effectively assist underprepared Black and Latinx students through pedagogy and policy.

Community colleges and educators should reassess how they understand students' perspectives. End of class surveys are anonymous but can be limiting in the information provided. Studies such as this current study incorporate storytelling and emotions to gain a detailed perspective. To gain an accurate view of students' perspectives, community colleges must have a safe space to truly express themselves without judgment or consequence. The students that participated in this study, for example, were assured that their comments would not be shared and that it would not affect their enrollment in college. They also spoke to someone who was separate from the college. In this context, the students were comfortable describing their positive and negative experiences. Safe spaces give students the opportunity to speak freely, therefore giving useful feedback to

implement in pedagogy and policy. Community colleges can employ semi-structured interview assessments conducted by individuals removed from the students' experiences in a manner that helps students feel comfortable speaking honestly. For some students, safety comes from knowing that they can remain anonymous, or trust between the student and the researcher.

Institutions should also evaluate professors' cultural awareness. Students who participated in this study expressed concerns with the lack of cultural awareness from their educators. When working with professors, institutions would benefit strongly from evaluating their cultural awareness from a student perspective. True assessment of cultural awareness is best conducted in the context in which it typically occurs – the student-professor interactions. Critical Theory is useful or assessing cultural awareness in a space. Community colleges can speak to students in a safe space and genuinely consider their feedback to create a more honest and accurate evaluation of a professor's cultural awareness. It is important for institutions to consider their values when hiring and placing professors. If institutions do not have current and active knowledge of the professors' cultural awareness, then they will have no knowledge of the interactions professors have with students behind closed doors. As stated by Callahan (2002), it is common for people to engage in emotional structuration, which promotes limiting outward responses to follow the rules of the environment. Therefore, one cannot assume all students will report instances of racism, prejudice, or overall lack of cultural awareness.

Acevedo et al. (2015), Capt et al. (2014), and Museus and Neville (2012) all conducted studies that pointed to the importance of hiring the right professors. The right

professors for underprepared Black and Latinx students should exhibit patients, emotional awareness, and the ability to share capital with students. Black and Latinx students' predominant challenges with transitioning into college often begin with differences in capital. This can include, for example, navigational capital and the understanding of how to engage with this new collegiate environment. Hiring requirements should look at educators past experiences and utilize a brief thought experiment that shows the educators dedication to emotional awareness and distribution of capital. Community colleges can identify the right professors by assessing the professors' understanding that all students have different experiences and capital prior to college. The right professors should have the patience and emotional awareness to identify differences in capital and share that capital with the students. With this knowledge, the right professor can think critically about their students' experiences and offer them the right resources and capital to help them become independent learners and members of the college community. The wrong professors (i.e., prophets of doom) tend to expect the same behavior out of all students and give them an equally minimal amount of help. This distinction between the right and wrong professors can be made through scenarios presented in hiring interviews.

After hiring the right professors, community colleges can develop professional development that ensures that educators at the college are prepared with tools for emotional awareness and capital. Professional development should contain a curriculum that identifies the potential cultural capital of the students in the college's population and identifies the capital that comprises the college's cultural wealth. The curriculum should also share tools of emotional awareness that educators can use to support students' needs

for capital. For example, the curriculum can provide examples of verbiage that educators can use to get to know their students, examples of emotional responses students may give and what they mean, and methods to remember and monitor students' socioemotional progress. Institutions should take charge in creating a shared institutional knowledge among educators to help professors to consistently provide this type of assistance to the students. In this study, the most shared types of capital were navigational, aspirational, and linguistic. Institutions can begin by documenting the navigational capital required to complete all the tasks expected of a college student. Professors also need to understand the aspirational capital required to help students maintain and connect with their goals and the aspirational capital required to become skilled, independent learners in the collegiate space. Professors need to be made aware of linguistic capital that they can share with students or resources that students can use to better understand collegiate linguistic capital. If a college is opening to accepting populations of students, they should be prepared to assist them accordingly.

Recommendations for Future Research

The current findings and limitations of this study suggests that further research can be conducted regarding this topic. The current study found that Black and Latinx students who are underprepared for college have a keen understanding of their experiences with professors and how it impacts their perception of college, academic identity, and how it impacts their persistence through college. Future research can be conducted to improve participant selection, adjust the timing of the study, and to make the study more generalizable.

This study was conducted with selection bias. Students were self-selected. Some admitted to participating in the study because they were so excited about their experience and hope that it would help the college or the program they participated in. Future research would benefit from recruiting participants from the full class of one or more professors. The professors could be selected based on end-of-semester surveys to select professors that have more positive or more negative responses from students. The study would then assess multiple students' perspective of one semester. All the students discussed their classmates' responses to their experiences. Some classmates felt the same as the participant, while others did not. Incorporating multiple students' perspectives in their research can help researchers develop a fuller understanding of students' experiences with a professor. Another limitation to the current study was the amount of time that elapsed since some of the participants enrolled in their developmental education courses. Future research would benefit from interviewing students during or at the end of the developmental education course. Researchers can also request that students participating in the study keep a journal or diary of their experiences to ensure that they retain more detailed memory of those experiences.

To create a more generalizable study, these methods and procedures could be used as a program assessment. Utilizing this study as a program assessment can guarantee that it will be accurate to the population that is being generalized to. This study, for example, is not generalizable to the overall Black and Latinx community college population, but it can be generalized to the developmental education programs at CCC and UBC. A study with more specifically generalizable data would be conducted within

the same institution or developmental education program with the intention of utilizing the results from students' voices to improve the quality of programming.

Conclusion

The purpose of this phenomenological study was to explore the perspective is of underprepared Black and Latinx students in Community College. The study examined emotion-rich descriptions of students positive and negative experiences with educators. The research questions explored how they described their experiences, how they justify their responses to their experience, and how those experiences impacted their academic identity, persistence, and perception of college overall. The study found valuable conclusions from both positive and negative experiences that were described. Using Critical Theory, the researcher was able to amplify student voices and recognize their reality.

Students who described positive experiences talked about receiving support that they perceived as valuable. The most beneficial support included exchanges of capital that addressed student needs. Students connected these positive interactions with positive changes in their academic identity, persistence through college and overall self-efficacy as students. Previous research has found that sharing capital gives students the opportunity to connect with the collegiate community, therefore increasing their sense of belonging (Marbley et al., 2013; Museus & Neville, 2012). Students' self-efficacy is positively impacted by their sense of belonging. When educators help students feel a sense of belonging in the classroom by sharing capital and resources, they positively impact the student's self-efficacy (Zumbrunn et al., 2014). It is especially important that students can clearly perceive the educator's efforts as positive (Andrade, 2007). In this

study, the students expressed a variety of positive emotions when describing their favorite experiences with their professors.

When describing negative experiences with educators, the participants identified missed opportunities of growth. This was often due to professors viewing them at a deficit or approaching them as prophets of doom. Negative experiences with educators negatively impact students' retention and persistence (Andrade, 2007; Nora & Cabrera, 1996; Pritchard & Wilson, 2003). Deficit thinking has been shown to have negative impacts on students' sense of belonging and persistence as well (Ladson-Billings, 1998; Patton Davis & Museus, 2019). Students that described experiences where professors interacted with them using deficit thinking discussed moments where they felt separated from their aspirational identity as a successful independent college graduate. The deficit thinking categorizes them as students who are likely to be unsuccessful. When educators share negative or deficit perspectives, they will be more likely to hinder student success and negatively impact their academic identity. Educators and institutions should consider how educators interact with students and should take advantage of all moments to share cultural wealth.

Students' voices are extremely important because they offer valuable insight into the student experience. Reality is a social construct. It is created based on the individual's perspective and how their current experiences interact with that previously constructed perspective. People's perspectives are also developed based on their attained cultural capital (Horkheimer, 1972; Ladson-Billings, 1998). A participant in the study, for example, described that he thought his math class was easy, but acknowledged that his classmates did not. This is a clear example of two separate realities existing in the same

space. To effectively understand others' perspectives, it is important to hear their story. The intentionality of consciousness means that individuals define their reality. Alternative methods of measuring success can be helpful, but truth lies in students' voices and stories. Institutions and educators can learn from these students' perspectives and implement programming that benefits the population they serve, rather than offering goals with no direction on how to reach them. Higher education must continue to shift the perspective that all students who enter college are prepared with the same type of capital. Assuming what capital students have guarantees that the institution is maintaining an oppressive, Eurocentric standpoint. If this Eurocentric standpoint is held as the standard, underprepared students, especially Black and Latinx students, will often fight an uphill battle to succeed in the face of the systemic oppression built into higher education.

APPENDIX A IRB APPROVAL

IRB-FY2022-37 - Initial: Initial Submission - Expedited - St. John's

do-not-reply@cayuse.com <do-not-reply@cayuse.com>
Thu 12/2/2021 9:43 AM
To: birringj@stjohns.edu <birringj@stjohns.edu>; Toni Foster <toni.foster17@my.stjohns.edu>

* External Email *

ST. JOHN'S UNIVERSITY

Federal Wide Assurance: FWA00009066

Dec 2, 2021 9:43:43 AM EST

PI: Toni Foster
CO-PI: Joan Birringer-Haig
Ed Admin & Instruc Leadership

Re: Expedited Review - Initial - **IRB-FY2022-37** *I SECOND THAT EMOTION: A PHENOMENOLOGICAL STUDY OF THE SOCIOEMOTIONAL EXPERIENCES OF BLACK AND LATINX STUDENTS IN DEVELOPMENTAL EDUCATION*

Dear Toni Foster:

The St John's University Institutional Review Board has rendered the decision below for *I SECOND THAT EMOTION: A PHENOMENOLOGICAL STUDY OF THE SOCIOEMOTIONAL EXPERIENCES OF BLACK AND LATINX STUDENTS IN DEVELOPMENTAL EDUCATION*. The approval is effective from December 1, 2021 through November 30, 2022.

Decision: Approved

PLEASE NOTE: If you have collected any data prior to this approval date, the data must be discarded.

Selected Category: 7. Research on individual or group characteristics or behavior (including, but not limited to, research on perception, cognition, motivation, identity, language, communication, cultural beliefs or practices, and social behavior) or research employing survey, interview, oral history, focus group, program evaluation, human factors evaluation, or quality assurance methodologies.

Sincerely,

Raymond DiGiuseppe, PhD, ABPP
Chair, Institutional Review Board

APPENDIX B LETTER OF INTEREST

Dear [Name],

My name is Toni Foster, and I am a doctoral student at St. John's University, Queens, NY, in the Department of Administrative and Instructional Leadership. I have received IRB Approval from Bronx Community College to conduct my dissertation study. I am very interested in conducting my study at BCC, as your programs are well-known to support students who require additional support with their academics.

The goal of this study is to explore the phenomenon of emotional responses of Black and Latinx students who currently are enrolled or have been enrolled in developmental education courses. Studies that incorporate the students' voice through interviews and discussion offer a more meaningful understanding of the students' perceptions of the experience. The students will have the opportunity to express how they feel about their experiences so that I, the researcher, can understand the positive and negative experiences, and their reactions to those experiences.
I will be observing how the student perceives the experience and how they describe their emotional responses. Students often have difficulty navigating the through the college experience and taking developmental classes sometimes puts extra pressure on these students. Allowing the students to speak about their experiences will add to my research which in turn will help to inform educators of how to better support these students at this time.

Please review the *Study Description* below for further details and let me know if I can recruit participants with the support of UUS Go and Math Start.

Study Description
Purpose of the Study: I will be very clear about the purpose of the study, exploring emotional responses when attending developmental classes, and the intentions of the interviews. In terms of ethics, clarity regarding the purpose of this study will give the student a detailed understanding of what they should expect. It is my moral and legal responsibility to communicate clearly and commit to the values of the students. I will acquire informed consent for the study, notify students of any risk of harm, benefits of the study, and ensure confidentiality and anonymity.
Participation, Confidentiality, and Risks: For students to give suitable informed consent, they will be assured that their participation is voluntary. I will create an open and honest environment that allows for the student to determine their level of comfortability and act accordingly. The students will be alerted that the conversation will be audio and video recorded. The students will be free to exit the study if they see it as necessary. The ethics of working with trauma survivors is relevant to this study because it is highly probable that students may describe experiences that resemble educational trauma. I will make it clear that they are the experts and leaders of this experience and that they are free to speak how they see fit. Please see the attached informed consent letter, which students will need to sign in order to participate in the study.

Interview Concerns: I will maintain consistent awareness of the student's experiences throughout the study. I will hold the perception of the students in high regard. I will also include time for a decompression conversation after the interview. The decompression conversation will give the student a space to express how they felt about that experience, ask questions, and I will address any concerns. The study will be conducted via a WebEx conference to give students the opportunity to schedule freely and attend comfortably.

Participants: I am looking for students who:

- identify as Black or Latinx
- have been enrolled in at least one developmental education course at a community college
- are 18 years or older, and any gender, and
- have the accessibility to attend a WebEx meeting.

Contact Information: I would like to schedule a brief phone call so that we could discuss my study further and answer any questions that you may have. Please contact me at toni.foster17@my.stjohns.edu, or at (551-557-7247) as soon as possible.
Thank you for your consideration and opportunity to conduct my research at your institution.
Sincerely,
Toni Foster

APPENDIX C LETTER OF INFORMED CONSENT

PARTICIPANT CONSENT FORM

Informed Consent Form

You are invited to participate in a research study on the emotional responses that Black and Latinx students experience while participating in developmental education courses. The purpose of this study is to amplify the voices of Black and Latinx students, and to use this data to inform best practices of how colleges can better support students. The study is titled *I Second That Emotion: A Phenomenological Study of The Socioemotional Experiences of Black and Latinx Students in Developmental Education*

Researcher: My name is Toni Foster, and I am a doctoral student at St. John's University, Queens, NY, in the Department of Administrative and Instructional Leadership. I will be conducting a study for my doctoral dissertation. My faculty mentor is Dr. Joan Birringer-Haig with the Department of Administrative and Instructional Leadership.

Description of the Study: The purpose of this study is to explore the phenomenon of classroom experiences and emotional responses of Black and Latinx students who have been enrolled in developmental education courses. Studies that incorporate the students' voice through individual interviews and discussion offer a more meaningful understanding of the students' perception of the experiences. The current research will be conducted to better understand your emotional experiences in developmental classes. Your experiences are valid and could add to this important topic.

Participants*:* The selection criteria for participation in this study are Black or Latinx students, ages 18 and older, who have participated in developmental education courses. Research has shown that Black and Latinx students voices are not typically given a platform in the college space. This doctoral study will focus on the voices and emotions of students in a descriptive and attentive way.

Description of Procedures: In this study, you will be participating in interviews. In these interviews, you will have the opportunity to discuss your experiences and emotional response in developmental education courses. The participation requirements for this study are less than 2 hours of your time divided into three meetings. The first interview about your experiences will last at most, 50 minutes. You will be expected to describe your experience(s), and the researcher will occasionally ask questions to better understand your story. You have the option to tell more than one story. The second 20-minute interview meeting will be used to ask follow-up questions about the experiences

from the first interview. The third 10–15-minute interview will be used to review my conclusions and understanding of the stories discussed.

Participation and Confidentiality: Your participation in this research is completely voluntary. You may refuse to participate with no penalty to you. You may withdraw from the study at any time. Your interview responses will be kept confidential. Only the principal investigator will have access to the information you provide. Any information obtained from this study will only be used for the researcher's dissertation study purposes.

The interviews will be conducted through a safe, St. John's University video conferencing application called WebEx. You will be confidentially audio and video recorded through a virtual chat. The recordings will not be shared, and any mention of your name will be removed from the recording. The recorded interviews will be transcribed and used for the study. You will have the opportunity to review the transcripts of the interview. The researcher will be the only person to know the real names and faces of the participants. All participants will be given an alias in the study to conceal their identity. All data will be kept on a locked and password-protected external hard drive and locked in a file cabinet.

Participants should be aware that (a) the researcher will encrypt all email correspondence to protect their privacy, and (b) all WebEx sessions will only be attended by the researcher and the participant for synchronous (face to face via video conference) interviews.

uncomfortable answering any questions, or if you find that the question does not apply to you, you can state that you do not wish to answer the question or that it does not apply to you. The researcher will provide you with a debriefing session at the end of the interview to talk about how it felt to discuss the information.

Benefits: There are no direct benefits to participating in this study. However, your participation will help community colleges to develop a better understanding of the Black and Latinx student experience in developmental classes.

The goal of this study is to understand how professors can be better understand and support Black and Latinx students, who may have had negative experiences due to deficit thinking of instructors. This study values students' voices over everything. You can expect to be heard and understood when you describe your experiences.

Contact Information: If you have any questions or ethical concerns about the study, do not hesitate to email me at toni.foster17@my.stjohns.edu or call me at (551) 227-7247. You may also contact my faculty mentor, Dr. Joan Birringer-Haig at St. John's University, 8000 Utopia Pkwy, Queens, NY 11429 or at birringj@stjohns.edu. For questions about your rights as a research participant or if any problems or issues occurred

due to your participation, you can report them to Dr. Raymond DiGuiseppe, IRB Chair, at (718) 990-1440, St. John's University.

Student Researcher:
Toni Foster, Doctoral Candidate,
St. John's University, The School of Education, Queens, NY,
Department of Administrative and Instructional Leadership
toni.foster17@my.stjohns.edu

SIGNATURES FOR CONSENT TO PARTICIPATE IN THE STUDY

I am enclosing a copy of my IRB approval and the list of interview questions that I will ask throughout the interview process. Below you will find an Informed Consent for your signature. Your signature acknowledges receipt of a copy of this consent form as well as your willingness to participate. Remember that you are free to withdraw your participation in this study at any point without penalty.

Name and signature of participant:

_____

Please print your name *(Participant)*

_____ ___/___/___

Signature of *student participant* Date

_____ ___/___/___

Signature of *Student Researcher* Date

SIGNATURES FOR PERMISSION TO BE AUDIO AND VIDEO RECORDED DURING INTERVIEW SESSIONS

If you have read and understood the study purpose, the procedures to be followed, and the benefits, risk, and confidentiality clause and have given consent ***for your interview sessions to be audio and video recorded as participants in this research study***, please sign below to complete this consent form. You may review these recordings and request that all or any portion of the recordings be destroyed or omitted. Your signature below indicates that you agree to be audio and video recorded during the interviews for this study, with the understanding that you are free to withdraw your participation in this study at any point without penalty. If you withdraw, all recordings of the interviews would be destroyed.

Check both boxes

I consent to being audio recorded during the interviews for this study.
I consent to being video recorded during the interviews for this study.

Name and signature of participant:

_____

Please print your name *(Participant)*

_____ ___/___/___

Signature of *student participant* Date

_____ ___/___/___

Signature of *Student Researcher* Date

APPENDIX D INTERVIEW PROTOCOL

First Interview

1. Rapport building small talk: Topics include (connecting about being in school; positive current events)

2. Introductory script to interview: First and foremost, I'd like to thank you all for participating in this focus group. As you may have read in the letter of consent, I am interested in studying how college students in developmental education courses view positive and negative experiences in the classroom. These experiences can be in currently or in school. This interview is based around classroom experiences specifically. I want to identify events and experiences that shape students' academic identity. Academic identity means who you are, and how you see yourself in the academic space. These experiences are also very helpful for schools to develop programs and policies that both they and the students agree are helpful. For example, I've been in programs in school that I was told should be great for me as a student, but I had the opposite experience. I've also had programs that were spectacular and helped me exactly the way they intended to.

3. Personal Example: (1) positive: experience in remedial writing; (2) negative: personal experience in elective course with professor

4. Space for questions: Before we begin our discussion, do you have any questions or thoughts? [answer any questions]

5. Interview Questions –

Research Question: How do Black and Latinx community college students perceive and emotionally respond to developmental education classroom experiences with educators**?**

	Critical Theory Focus on Emotion	CRT
Tell me about an experience with your professor that made you feel a strong negative emotional response. Negative emotions meaning sadness, angry, disappointed, hurt, etc.	X	X
Probe: Who was involved in this situation?	X	X
Probe: How did you feel about that?	X	X
Probe: Why do you think that happened?	X	X
Probe: Why do you think he/she/they said that?	X	X
Probe: What did you expect from this interaction?	X	X
Probe: How did he/she/they react to you?	X	X
What did you take away from this experience?	X	X
Probe: Did it impact how you feel about attending class going forward? [4]	X	X
How would you have handled the situation if you were the professor?	X	X
Would you be interested in sharing another positive or negative experience?	X	X

6. Decompressing

	Critical Theory Focus on Emotion	CRT
How did it feel to talk about that/those experience(s)?	X	X

7. Concluding the interview. Before we conclude the interview, do you have anything that you would like to add about your experiences? You can tell me anything you didn't get a chance to say earlier during the interview I will be sure to follow up to let you know how the study went.

8. Assurance: All information recorded from this interview will be stored safely and will not be shared with anyone. Anything shared will be done so anonymously and untraceably. All names will be saved as an alias. I can also email you an example of how

information will be shared. I want to thank you for being open and honest with me. It was great to hear about your experiences.

Follow-up Interview Protocol

1. Rapport building small talk: Topics include (participating in the study, school)

2. Introductory script to interview: Thanks for coming back for this follow-up interview. It will be doing me a great service so that I can clarify everything that was said and ask some follow-up questions. I want to make sure that I represent what you told me as accurately as possible.

3. Member Checking: [The researcher summarizes each story of an educator told by the participant to confirm accuracy.]

4. Space for questions: Before we begin our discussion, do you have any questions or thoughts? [address any questions/thoughts]

5. General Follow-up Interview Questions -

	Critical Theory Focus on Emotion	CRT
How would you describe yourself as a student before college?	X	X
Are you the first generation in your family to attend college? First generation means your parents, their parents, and their parents have not attended college.		
Do you feel like your race impacted how you interacted with your professors?		

6. Examples of Specific Follow-up Interview Questions (differed for each participant) -

	Critical Theory Focus on Emotion	CRT
e.g. Why do you feel like diversity affected your college experience?	X	X
e.g. Were these concepts that you thought about before?		
e.g. You said that "Miss K did everything for you." Do you have examples of what she did that was so helpful to you?		

7. Assigning Emotions to Specific Experiences (differed for each participant)

Pick at least one emotion to describe how you felt when:	Critical Theory Focus on Emotion	CRT
e.g. You realized everything you learned in the math class put you ahead in your nursing math class. e.g. You wanted to speak out but didn't want to seem to rebellious		
e.g. You receive tough love from professors		
e.g. You were recognized as a great and poetic writer		

8. Decompressing

	Critical Theory Focus on Emotion	CRT
How did it feel to review these experiences?	X	X

9. Concluding the interview. Before we conclude the interview, do you have anything that you would like to add about your experiences? You can tell me anything you didn't get a chance to say earlier during the interview I will be sure to follow up to let you know how the study went.

10. Assurance and closing out: All information recorded from this interview will be stored safely and will not be shared with anyone. Anything shared will be done so anonymously and untraceably. All names will be saved as an alias. I can also email you an example of how information will be shared. I want to thank you for being open and honest with me. After this, I will schedule a short follow up meeting to review my conclusions. This is a final step to make sure that I am properly representing the information you gave me. Thank you for participating in this interview. Your help has been amazing.

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