

Fall 8-16-2017

## **Culturally Responsive Classroom Management in an Urban After-School Program**

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Marcie Duez-Curry

*Concordia University - Portland*

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Concordia University—Portland

College of Education

Doctorate of Education Program

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Culturally Responsive Classroom Management in an Urban After-School Program

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Concordia University—Portland

Dissertation submitted to the Faculty of the College of Education

in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

Doctor of Education in

Educational Administration

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Concordia University- Portland

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## **Abstract**

This action research study used the Guskey Model (2000) to evaluate the effects of a professional development program on an urban after-school program staff. The purpose of the 15-week professional development was to increase staff self-efficacy in classroom management, to improve student-staff relationships, and to decrease serious discipline events at the program. The impact of the professional development program was investigated with a diverse sample of seven after-school program staff participants who were studied through semi-structured interviews, surveys, class observations, and aggregated student behavior and academic records. The variety of data sources were concurrently triangulated to find that the professional development program had a positive impact on staff self-efficacy and student-staff relationships. During this professional development period, student disciplinary behaviors showed a downward trend. A paired sample t-test revealed no statistically significant difference in student achievement pre- and post- staff professional development. Qualitative data from the interviews produced the following results as crucial elements to successful urban classroom management: community immersion by the staff, longevity by the staff, ongoing staff accountability and supervisory support, and parent and community engagement. Future research should further evaluate the effects of culturally responsive classroom management through increased sample size and/or multi-site study.

*Keywords:* culturally responsive classroom management, urban after-school programs, program evaluation

## **Dedication**

This dissertation is dedicated to two exceptional educators who inspired the topic of my dissertation originally. The first is the late Nettie Bailey, who was the first educator to demonstrate to me what it means to be a *warm demander*, and that has made a drastic impact on my classroom management approach. In addition, this dissertation is dedicated to the memory of a young teacher and friend, London D. Johnson, who passed away from cancer before I could finish my degree. London, you opened my eyes to the need for cultural proficiency in the classroom. I know that you are cheering me on from heaven and probably singing to Stevie Wonder. I miss you.

## **Acknowledgements**

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To my wonderful faculty chairperson and reader of my “shitty first drafts,” Dr. Sally Evans. You are an amazingly patient and encouraging person and mentor. Also, a special thanks to my committee members, Dr. McKenna and Dr. Dillard. The encouragement and support I received from these three academics at just the right time kept me going through some last minute twists and turns. A special thanks goes out to Gynger Garcia, my friend and research assistant. Thanks for helping keep all my data organized and secure.

Last, to all who may read this dissertation, I sincerely hope it challenges your thinking about cultural differences in the classroom and compels you to approach classroom management differently because of it.

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## **Chapter 1: Introduction**

Discipline disproportionality continues to plague minority students in America, especially Black males (Gregory, Skiba, & Noguera, 2010; Irvine, 1990; Skiba, Michael, Nardo, & Peterson, 2002; Wallace, Goodkind, Wallace, & Bachman, 2008). Black students are three and a half times more likely to be suspended or expelled than their White peers, and one in five Black boys and one in ten Black girls have received an out-of-school suspension (Lewin, 2012). In addition, there is a notable achievement gap that persists in the United States. Since the controversial Coleman Report was published in 1966, researchers have been searching for a plausible cause for why Black and Hispanic students have been lagging behind their White and Asian peers academically.

Some have blamed socioeconomic factors, yet others have focused on the opportunity gaps that exist for students of color (Editorial projects, 2011). Both of these arguments were disproven. Regardless of the cause of the achievement gap, the fact remains that students of color are unfairly disadvantaged. The blame does not rest with the students, minority communities, or even poverty; teachers and schools must adapt to provide an equitable education for all students.

A factor that may contribute to the achievement gap is the cultural mismatch between minority students and their teachers. Reports from the National Center for Educational Statistics indicate that 81.9% of public school teachers are White; however, 49% of children enrolled in our public elementary and secondary schools are students of color (2015b). These racial and cultural gaps require that teachers make adjustments to understand, connect with, instruct, and develop their diverse students. The theory of culturally responsive teaching provides strategies for teachers to operate their classrooms in a way that empowers diverse students intellectually,

socially, emotionally and politically (Ladson-Billings, 2009). Teachers who are culturally responsive are better equipped to challenge their students of color to reach their academic potential. In addition to pedagogical skills, teachers will need to expand their classroom management skills. This requires training in culturally responsive classroom management (CRCM), which is a way of running classrooms that benefits everyone regardless of race, ethnicity, gender, socioeconomic status, or sexual orientation (Bondy, Ross, Galligane, & Hambacher, 2007; Brown, 2004; Monroe, & Obidah, 2004; Weinstein, Tomlinson-Clark, & Curran, 2004).

Teachers must recognize the cultural mismatches that occur in classrooms and encourage differences. Understanding that cultures vary in their views of behavior, discourse, motivations, and participation will allow teachers to view students' culture as an asset to learning rather than as a deficit. Forced assimilation into White culture inhibits minority students from using their cultural strengths in the learning process (Emdin, 2016; Ladson-Billings, 2009). As teachers celebrate and build upon students' strengths, classrooms will become a welcoming place for all learners.

This action research study begins by focusing on past research on cultural proficiency, culturally responsive pedagogy, culturally responsive classroom management, teacher self-efficacy, and teacher professional development with the purpose of training teachers to be equipped to manage diverse classrooms. The study will evaluate the effectiveness of a professional development program delivered to an urban after-school program staff. Ideally, the staff who were trained in CRCM will experience a growth in personal self-efficacy and cooperative, achievement-focused classrooms. They will build strong student-staff relationships,

a connection to the local community, and most importantly, a decrease in discipline disproportionality.

### **Background of the Problem**

The culture gap can be damaging to students academically and psychologically (Delpit, 2006). Gay (2000) and Ladson-Billings (1994) pioneered the theory of culturally responsive pedagogy. According to the theory, there are certain dispositions that teachers must have to successfully educate minority students. These dispositions are an ethic of care, community building, and social consciousness. They include having assertiveness in the classroom and high expectations for students (Brown, 2004; Gay, 2010; & Ladson-Billings, 2009). Culture definitely matters in the classroom (Gay, 2010).

Research stresses that personal exposure to diversity greatly affects a teacher's attitude toward interacting with diverse students in classrooms (Powell, Sobel, Hess, & Verdi, 2001). Skepple (2014) found that a great majority of American preservice teachers had still not been exposed to diversity by time they entered college. In a study of 82 preservice teachers, Skepple (2014) noted that in Kentucky 98% were white and non-Hispanic, 73% acknowledged growing up in a nonracially diverse hometown, and 89% reported that the high school they graduated from was not racially diverse. Skepple's 2014 focus group of preservice teachers revealed that most were feeling underprepared to teach racially diverse students even after methods courses. Their biggest concern was classroom management, noting that their training in the university had been too theoretical in nature to prepare them for the realities of the classroom.

Due to insufficient approaches to multicultural training, many novice teachers arrive for their first teaching positions with little to no knowledge on how to teach outside of the mainstream, White, middle-class methods in which they have been raised and trained (Villegas

& Lucas, 2002). Some progress has been made in preparing preservice teachers for multicultural classrooms. One example is the Urban Teacher Pipeline Program at Illinois State University. Here candidates get hands-on urban teaching experience throughout their courses. Many teachers go on to successfully integrate into urban school districts such as Chicago, Decatur, and Peoria. However, there is still a significant gap between teacher education programs and urban schools (Celik, 2012).

Teachers successfully implementing CRCM are categorized by cultural synchronization, using humor, emotional connections, teasing, and signifying, a common African-American style of discourse (Monroe & Obidah, 2004). These teachers were observed having authentic personal, caring relationships with their students, and their classrooms felt much like a family (Milner & Tenore, 2010; Weinstein, Tomlinson-Clarke, & Curran, 2004). They were also authoritative. The ideal mix of caring and authoritativeness has been captured in the phrase, *warm demander*, which means the teacher cares too much for her students to accept less than their best (Kleinfield, 1975).

The classrooms were managed in an orderly way, with structures, routines, and procedures; some classrooms were even described as business-like (Bondy, Ross, Galligane, & Hambacher, 2007; Brown, 2004). Because teachers did not spend all of their time dealing with behavioral issues; the classrooms were also characterized by high expectations and a focus on achievement (Ware, 2006). While most of the successful, culturally responsive classroom managers have been African-American, as noted by Ford and Sassi in their studies of cultural responsive classrooms, teachers from other cultures can successfully implement these types of classrooms with some reconceptualization and training (Ford & Sassi, 2014).

A major concern for teachers who are attempting CRCM is self-efficacy, or the belief in ones' abilities to succeed at a task (Bandura, 1997). Because culture is so deeply personal, there is a threat of teachers becoming discouraged when exploring new cultural norms and immersing into an unfamiliar community. The cultural pre-competence stage is a notoriously difficult stage and requires introspection and questioning ones' upbringing (Lindsey, Robins, Terrell, & Lindsey, 1999). Because self-efficacy is cyclical in nature, once a teacher's self-efficacy becomes diminished, other areas may also suffer, which can cause the teacher to doubt his or her abilities (Brouwers & Tomic, 2000). Therefore, professional development must include ways in which teachers can experience success in both real and manufactured settings (Bandura, 1997).

### **Gap in the Research**

Weinstein, Tomlinson-Clark, and Curran (2004) encourage the research to continue in the area of culturally responsive classroom management. They point out that a great deal of research has been done in the areas of pedagogy because of its obvious connection to student achievement, but fewer researchers have focused on how culture affects school discipline. Weinstein, et al., (2004) recommend a research agenda focusing on training teachers in CRMC. An area that they exposed as being relatively untapped is how we can best prepare teachers for organizing and managing culturally diverse classrooms.

Gregory, Skiba, and Noguera (2010) are concerned with researchers learning more about what interventions will be effective in reducing the discipline gap that faces many students of color. They suggest future research focused on how the tenants of CRCM, such as caring teacher-student relationships, will affect the disproportionality of behavioral referrals. These gaps in the research point to the need for the current study to examine how professional

development in CRCM strategies can affect both staff and students in an urban after-school setting.

### **Statement of the Problem**

The problem is that a cultural mismatch between teachers and their students contributes to the discipline and achievement gaps for students of color. There is very little research to document how to effectively train teachers and youth workers in cultural responsiveness. Also in doubt is the effectiveness such training is in mitigating this cultural gap in schools.

### **Purpose**

The purpose of the action research study is to examine the effects of a professional development program. The instructional content is aimed at training after-school program staff in the theory and stance of culturally responsive classroom management. Further, the study will investigate the changes in staff self-efficacy and student-staff relationships as a result of the training.

### **Significance of the Study**

The study presented here will benefit urban youth workers who desire to eliminate the discipline gap in their organizations, community centers, after-school programs, or other youth groups. The study will provide a valuable professional development resource for those who wish to train their staff in CRCM. It will be especially useful for those youth workers who are new to multiculturalism or culturally mismatched from their students.

### **Research Questions**

Two research questions will guide this study. Both questions seek to measure the impact of the CRCM professional development program.

## **Research Question 1**

Based on each of the five concepts of the Guskey Evaluation Model (2000), how effective was the culturally responsive classroom management professional development?

## **Research Question 2**

What are staff's perceptions of the impact of the professional development on student-staff outcomes, specifically, staff self-efficacy, student-staff relationships, and discipline related incidents at the youth center?

## **Research Design**

An action research design will be employed for this study in order to best answer the research questions. The five-step Guskey program evaluation model (Guskey, 2000) will be used to fully evaluate the effectiveness of the professional development program. This five-step, hierarchical model will use a variety of data sources to assess program outcomes (Guskey, 2000).

The subjects of this study will be seven urban youth workers employed in a community-based after-school program. These youth workers are not trained educators, although most have earned a bachelor's degree in another field. Of the staff, half are permanent employees and half are teaching fellows. The fellows program is a two-year residential internship program for recent college graduates who desire to gain the professional experience to equip them to enter into the employment market. The racial makeup of the staff is diverse. The majority of the staff lives in the immediate community; although a few are lifelong residents, most are fairly new. The youth center also utilizes many committed volunteers who invest their free time into building relationships with urban youth. Most of these volunteers are White college students who do not reside in the immediate community.

This after-school program enrolls 120 youth, grades kindergarten through eighth grade, who reside within 32 square blocks of the youth center. Ninety-five percent of the students are African American and attend one of five local elementary schools. Registration preference is given to students who reside in the immediate neighborhood. The program is year-round and operates for three hours each school day and seven hours on non-school days. There is a nominal fee to participate in the program. Activities in the program include homework help, literacy and math instruction, social emotional learning, science, technology, engineering, math and arts programming (STEAM), and sports and fitness classes. The program has been in operation for 17 years and has recently moved into in a brand-new 42,000 square foot community-center complex.

Qualitative data such as classroom observations and participant interviews will be the primary sources used for this study. They will be used to determine the value that staff place on the professional development, how staff feel about their relationships with students and the changing climate of their classrooms. Interviews will also probe into staff's successes and challenges with implementing CRCM strategies.

In addition, three different surveys will be analyzed to provide support for the qualitative data. The Culturally Responsive Classroom Management Self-Efficacy Scale (CRCMSE) will be given to staff before and after the 15-week professional development program (Siwatu, Putman, Starker-Glass, & Lewis, 2015). This survey will be used to provide further evidence to the staff's change in self-efficacy after completing the training. Pianta's (1992) Student Teacher Relationship Survey (STRS) will be used as a pre- and post-survey to capture the change in staff's perception of their relationship with students after completing the professional development program. A two-part participant survey, the Professional Development Assessment



Survey (PDAS), developed by the researcher, will be given upon completion of the professional development to allow participants to give insights into their perceptions of the usefulness of the training as well as to gauge their change in knowledge. Pre- and post-student discipline records will be used to determine the effect that the training had on student behaviors in the youth center. Pre- and post-student achievement data will be analyzed to further investigate the effectiveness of the professional development.

### **Assumptions, Limitations, and Delimitations**

As with any research, there are several assumptions and limitations based on the methodological design. One assumption for this study is that staff participants will respond honestly in their surveys and interviews. Also, the researcher assumes that the staff will value the professional development and make a strong attempt to implement the new strategies in their classrooms. There is an assumption that the student discipline and academic records of the youth center will be accurately and carefully tracked.

A limitation in this study will be the small sample size. The study will focus on one after-school program employing ten staff members, of which seven agreed to participate in the study. Because there are only seven participants in this study, the quantitative survey data results will only be valuable in conjunction with qualitative interview and observation data. Taken alone, the survey data will lack internal validity. The small sample size also limits the generalizability of the findings.

Another limitation is the length of time in which the study was conducted. The study took place over a six month time period during the 2016–2017 program year. Because of this, student discipline and achievement data were only analyzed during the program year rather than

compared to data in prior years. The researcher did not have access to accurate and equivalent data from prior program years; thus limiting the strength of the data comparison.

To control some of the potential problems that could arise due to the limitations, the researcher has chosen action research for the study's methodology. Action research designs are well-suited for combining qualitative and quantitative data. This will allow a variety of data sources to be used for concurrent triangulation. Triangulation combines methodologies to study the same phenomenon (Denzin, cited in Jick, 1979). Because of the variety of data sources, both qualitative and quantitative, the trustworthiness of the study is increased.

### **Definition of Terms**

#### **Achievement Gap**

In the context of this study, *achievement gap* is used to describe the fact that in America, White and Asian students continue to outperform their Black and Hispanic classmates (National Center for Education Statistics, 2015b).

#### **Black or African American**

In the context of this study, *Black or African American* is defined as having origins in any of the Black racial groups of Africa (U.S. Census Bureau, 2011a).

#### **Cultural Mismatch**

In the context of this study, *cultural mismatch* refers to a disconnect between aspects of the student's home culture and the school's/teacher's culture (Bardon, 2007).

#### **Culturally Responsive Classroom Management**

In the context of this study, *culturally responsive classroom management* is an approach to managing classrooms that ensures all children are able to act, learn, and achieve within their

own cultural norms (The Metropolitan Center for Research on Equity and the Transformation of Schools, 2008).

## **Culture**

In the context of this study, *culture* refers to the learned patterns of behavior and thought that allow a group to adapt to their surroundings (Oregon State University, 2014.). Gay (2013) broadens the term by equating the word to values, attitudes, beliefs, customs and traditions, heritages and contributions, or experiences and perspectives.

## **Discipline Gap**

In the context of this study, *discipline gap* refers to the disproportionate rate of school discipline sanctions for students of color (Gregory, Skiba, & Noguera, 2010).

## **Guskey Model of Evaluation**

The *Guskey Model of Evaluation* is a five-step model created to evaluate teacher professional development. The five steps are hierarchical and become progressively more complex. The five steps in the evaluation process are *participants' reactions*, *participants' learning*, *organization's support and change*, *participants' use of new knowledge and skills*, and *student learning outcomes* (Guskey, 2000).

## **Professional Development**

In the context of this study, *professional development* is defined as specialized training focused on improving a staff members' professional knowledge, performance, and effectiveness.

## **Self-Efficacy**

In the context of this study, *self-efficacy* is the belief in one's ability to succeed at something (Bandura, 1997).

## **Student of Color**

In the context of this study, a *student of color* is defined as any student who is non-White (Safire, 1988).

## **Student-Staff Relationship**

In the context of this study, *student-staff relationships* refers to the positive interactions and feelings of trust between students and adult staff members in the after-school program.

## **White**

In the context of this study, *White* is defined as having origins in any of the original peoples of Europe, the Middle East, or North Africa (U.S. Census Bureau, 2011b).

## **Summary**

Chapter 1 provides an overview of the problem, as noted in the literature, of discipline disproportionality for minority students due, in part, to a cultural mismatch between staff and students. The chapter contains a review of methodological approaches taken in prior research and a summary of the study's purpose as well as the guiding research questions. Limitations are disclosed, as well preemptive measures taken to avoid inaccuracies or misinterpretations. The chapter also defines key terms used in the study.

The next chapter, the literature review, discusses relevant research associated with CRCM and explains the conceptual framework, both methodological and theoretical.

## **Chapter 2: Literature Review**

The incorporation of culturally responsive classroom management (CRCM) practices in urban classrooms provides a solution to address the achievement and discipline gaps facing many minority students in American schools (Weinstein, Curran, & Tomlinson-Clark, 2003). Without CRCM skills urban teachers report low levels of self-efficacy in classroom management and minority students are disproportionately referred for behavioral sanctions leading to academic underperformance (Gay, 2010; Gregory, Skiba, & Noguera, 2010; Siwatu, Starker-Glass, Putnam, & Lewis, 2015). The benefits of CRCM have been not been fully explored in literature studies (Weinstein, Tomlinson-Clark, & Curran, 2004).

Intuitively, teachers recognize the importance of classroom management as it relates to student achievement, but little has been done to document just how important or what strategies are most useful in urban settings (Ballenger, 1999). Urban teachers face both environmental challenges and high expectations for achievement. Children come to classrooms with a variety of obstacles: poverty, homelessness, special needs, language barriers, dysfunctional homes or abusive environments; classroom teachers must find ways to manage all these challenges to ensure that the students cooperate and learn (Haberman, 1995).

Urban teachers more often report frustration with classroom management than other teachers, mostly because of the mismatch between teacher and student cultural norms, a lack of multicultural training both in university programs; and insufficient, ongoing professional development (Matsko & Hammerness, 2013). This leads to urban schools' insistence upon high control and compliant students (Emdin, 2016, Irvine, 2002; Ladson-Billings, 2009; Milner & Tenore, 2010; Monroe, 2006; Weinstein, Tomlinson-Clark, & Curran 2004).

Urban teachers wishing to mitigate the academic and discipline gaps that exist in schools must explore their ethnocentrism and adopt a mindset of social justice and antiracist practices in the classroom. Once this milestone has been reached, the teacher will begin to desire not a controlled classroom but rather a cooperative and cosmopolitan one (Emdin, 2016). Weinstein, Tomlinson-Clark, and Curran (2004) warn teachers that approaching classroom management through the lens of diversity can be a very distressing and extensive process.

The purpose of this literature review is to discuss research on CRCM and other interrelated fields, the conceptual framework that grounds this study, as well as the methods employed in prior research. For the review, keywords such as *urban*, *classroom management*, *cultural responsiveness*, *diversity*, *race*, *school discipline*, *teacher expectations*, and *teacher self-efficacy* were used in order to identify relevant and recent literature related to the research questions. Several databases were accessed, including ERIC, Google Scholar, JSTOR, ProQuest, Sage publications, and Taylor and Francis. Articles were scanned for discussions relevant to the four key concepts of this research study: *cross-cultural student-teacher relationships*, *culturally responsive classroom management*, *the discipline gap*, and *urban teacher self-efficacy*.

### **Conceptual Framework**

The methodological framework chosen for this research study is an action research design. Action research methodology is a suitable approach for this study because its aim is to generate actionable knowledge for the organization being studied as well for comparable programs (Coghlan, 2007). The goal of action research, according to Zuber-Skerritt and Perry, is to solve a problem within an organization while at the same time generating new knowledge and understanding (2002). Action research methodology is a strong choice due its use of a variety of

data collection sources for the purposes of concurrent triangulation (Wiśniewska, 2011). The type of action research used here is emancipatory, which aims for the transformation of the organization through a collaborative approach (Zuber-Skerritt & Perry, 2002). In this case, the organization seeks to improve its after-school staff's classroom management practices by means of a professional development program. Through this action research study, the expectation is that not only this program but also programs with similar staff, students, goals, resources and challenges will benefit from the findings.

The theoretical framework for this study is based upon the philosophy of culturally responsive classroom management (CRCM). CRCM is an approach to managing classrooms in way in which all children are able to act, learn, and achieve within their own cultural norms (Metropolitan Center for Urban Education, 2008). Teachers employing culturally responsive classroom management identify that their personal bias influences their expectations for student behavior and learning, and behavioral expectations vary across cultures (Metropolitan Center for Urban Education, 2008).

CRCM, developed by Brown (2004); Weinstein, Curran, and Tomlinson-Clarke (2003); and Weinstein, Tomlinson-Clarke, and Curran (2004) was grounded in the related theories of culturally relevant pedagogy (Ladson-Billings, 1994) and culturally responsive teaching (Gay, 2000). Cultural responsiveness is a way of teaching that empowers students intellectually, socially, emotionally, and politically by using the students' unique cultural referents to impart knowledge, skills, and attitudes (Ladson-Billings, 2009). Students' unique cultural backgrounds are seen as assets to learning rather than deficits to be circumvented (Boykin, Coleman, Lilja, Tyler, et al., 2004). CRCM extends the theory of culturally responsive teaching and applies it to classroom management.

Although there are certain management techniques to acquire, CRCM is more of a pedagogical approach, a mindset, for operating a democratic classroom (Metropolitan Center for Urban Education, 2008). This approach can provide urban teachers with the tools they need to build strong personal connections, welcome diverse thoughts and behaviors, and successfully educate their students. Weinstein, Curran, and Tomlinson-Clarke (2003) suggest five prerequisites that are essential to implementing CRCM: *recognition of one's own ethnocentrism and biases; knowledge of students' cultural backgrounds; understanding of the broader social, economic, and political contexts of our educational system; willingness to use culturally responsive classroom management strategies; and commitments to building caring classroom communities.*

Brown (2004) advocates that teachers employing CRCM must have a caring attitude, establish assertiveness and authority, establish congruent communication processes, and demand effort from students. Central to CRCM is the capability of teachers to understand equity and equality. They must understand power structures among students, be immersed into student's life worlds, understand the self in relation to others, grant students entry into their worlds, and conceive school as a community with family members (Milner & Tenore, 2010). The framework of CRCM is rooted in social justice theory and critical race theory.

The CRCM theory circumvents common behaviorist practices such as punishment and reward systems, and seeks instead to build a caring, cooperative community of learners (Weinstein, Tomlinson-Clarke, & Curran, 2004). CRCM requires a mix of both assertiveness by the teacher and, at the same time, a democratic sense of cooperation amongst the students. This framework also requires that the teacher believe that the goal of classroom management is not to tame and train (Emdin, 2016) or to achieve compliant students, but to provide all students with



equitable opportunities for learning (Weinstein, Tomlinson-Clark, & Curran, 2004). In this way, CRCM also is based on social-constructivist theory of learning rather than the more prevalent behaviorist theory of learning.

The phrase *social justice* has been frequently used in recent years to describe the need to recognize human equality. Sturman (1997, as cited in North, 2006) argues that the meaning of the phrase is not yet settled. For the purposes of this study, a dualist perspective framework is used to include the theories of both redistribution and recognition (Fraser & Honneth, 2003). Fraser and Honneth (2003) argue that the two main approaches to social justice theory—redistribution and recognition—have been thought to contradict one another. The contradiction can be best explained through the lens of macro and micro levels of interpretation.

At the macro level, all people groups (often classified by race, gender, sexual preference, etc.) differ from mainstream society in some way. Recognition demands that all people receive the dignity and respect in order to succeed economically. At the micro level, the focus of redistribution is that each individual has the autonomy and freedom to choose his or her own path to a happy life (Rawls, 2001; North, 2006).

The dualist approach argued by Fraser and Honneth (2003) applies to the field of education and thus classroom management. Using the theoretical framework of social justice theory in classroom management, teachers will have dual goals as well. First, teachers must work within the school community and political structures to ensure that minority student groups experience equal citizenship participation. Second, teachers must acknowledge the individual distinctions within those groups and strive to provide students with an empowering learning environment (North, 2006).

There are two theories that form the foundation for the CRCM approach. They are the critical race theory and the social constructivist theory. The critical race theory is designed to confront racist practices in society (Delgado & Stefancic, 2001). It can provide teachers a method for challenging unfair practices in schools and create safe spaces for individuals to express their diversity of thought and experiences. The social constructivist theory focuses on how individuals and groups learn new concepts. The theory recognizes the social aspect of the learning process, which balances cognitive, behavioral, and environmental influences (Bandura, 1997). According to the theory, the balance of these three influences makes up the framework for a culturally responsive classroom.

### **Critical Race Theory**

Critical race theory (CRT) originated with activists and scholars seeking to understand the link between power, privilege, race, and racism (Delgado & Stefancic, 2001). In the 1970s, when it became apparent that the accomplishments of the Civil Rights Movement were beginning to stall, critical race theory was developed as a way to continue racial reforms (Taylor, 1998). There are five tenants of CRT: intercentricity of race and racism, dominant ideology challenge, commitment to social justice, centrality of experiential knowledge, and utilization of interdisciplinary approaches (Yosso, 2006).

Taylor (1998) simplifies the tenants into two sobering understandings. First, racism is a normal part of American society and has become normalized and expected as evidenced in housing discrimination, employment practices, and educational opportunities. Second, America is founded on the premise of White self-interest. Bell (cited in Taylor, 1998) coined the term *interest convergence*, which suggests that racial equality will only be tolerated if it can be done while maintaining current economic, educational, and social needs.

Yosso (2006) questions the concept that a lack of social capital is what has kept students of color from reaching high levels of attainment. Instead she highlights the wealth of cultural capital that communities of color hold, but which has not been recognized as valuable assets by school systems. These areas of community cultural wealth are *aspirational capital*, *familial capital*, *linguistic capital*, *navigational capital*, and *resistance capital*, and *social capital* (Yosso, 2005). These assets often result in the development of an ability to navigate in hostile and unsupportive environments, assertiveness, bilingual skills, healthy connection to extended family, motivation to overcome oppressive structures, a network of support, and resiliency (Yosso, 2006). Researchers have utilized the powerful tool of narrative to challenge the dominant mindset in America by highlighting people of color's experience in order to acknowledge and contest racism (Taylor, 1998).

### **Social Constructivist Theory**

Another theoretical consideration for implementing culturally responsive classroom management is the social constructivist theory. Constructivist theories relate to the learning process. Lev Vygotsky, a Soviet psychologist (Social Constructivism, n.d.), formulated the social constructivist theory. His theory varied from Piaget's (an early constructivist). Vygotsky believed that all cognitive functions are products of social interactions, and that learning is not simply the assimilation and accommodation of new knowledge by learners: it is the process by which learners are integrated into a knowledge community (Social Constructivism, n.d.). The main premise of social constructivist theory is that learning is a collaborative process.

Motivation is also a factor addressed by the theory. Social constructivists see motivation as both extrinsic and intrinsic. Students are motivated extrinsically by rewards provided in the

immediate learning community. Intrinsic motivation involves an internal drive to endure the learning process by the learner (Social Constructivism, n.d.).

A similar theory that is important to this study is Bandura's Social Learning Theory. According to the theory, humans learn things through observation, imitation, and modeling. Authentic learning takes place when there is a reciprocal balance between cognitive, behavioral, and environmental influences (Bandura, 1997). Social learning theory has been considered a bridge between behaviorist and cognitive theories. This theory promotes Vygotsky's belief that learning is a social event.

The social learning approach is characterized as being student-centered, inquiry-based, complex, interactive, and unpredictable (Windschitl, 2002). Teachers who employ a social constructivist style will be seen using collaborative groups, project-based learning, and student-led activities. Many novice teachers struggle with how to manage their classrooms while at the same time encouraging student-generated inquiry. This theoretical stance puts the teacher in a nontraditional role as facilitator and often requires some re-culturing in the classroom since few teachers utilize this approach (Villegas & Lucas, 2002). Culturally responsive teachers must understand that a constructivist education is more suited to preparing children to be critical thinkers, collaborators, and capable participants in a democratic society (Villegas & Lucas, 2002). A constructivist approach towards learning resembles an evolutionary process where knowledge is continuously recreated, recycled, and shared by both teachers and students (Ladson-Billings, 2009). Classrooms operating in this way allow students to work collectively toward both academic and cultural excellence (Ladson-Billings, 2009).

Social constructivist theory gives teachers the framework for appreciating students' unique cultural contributions to the learning community. Bailey and Pransky (2005) argue that

constructivist theories are not the complete answer. There are times when a constructivist approach may actually be contradictory to students' cultural beliefs. For example, Bailey and Pransky (2005) explained that Cambodian-American students' cultural upbringings are in direct contrast to constructivist view. Constructivism celebrates mistakes as part of the learning process, but Cambodian culture believes that mistakes in front of others cause one to lose face (Bailey & Pransky, 2005).

### **The Discipline Gap**

According to a 2003 national study that utilized parent reporting, almost one in five African-American students had been suspended compared with one in ten White, Asian, or Pacific Islander students (Wallace, 2008, cited in Gregory, et al, 2010). Identified in a similar national study of 10th graders were even more alarming levels of disproportionality. Fifty percent of African-American students reported that they had been suspended or expelled compared with just 20% of their White counterparts (Wallace, 2008, cited in Gregory, et al, 2010).

Discipline sanctions result in missed instructional time. Students with reduced instructional time are at risk of underperformance in academics. School suspension has been found to be a moderate or strong predictor of students dropping out of school or being off-track to graduate on time (Simmons, 2013).

There is a disturbing trend related to the different reasons that White and Black students are being referred to the office (Skiba, Michael, Nardo, & Peterson, 2002). For example, White students tended to be referred for objectively observable offenses such as vandalism, leaving without permission, or obscene language. African-American students were more likely to be referred for more subjective behaviors—loitering, disrespect, excessive noise, or defiance. Behaviors of African-American males have been wrongly characterized as dangerous, and this

has caused apprehension and overreaction among many teachers and school personnel (Irvine, 1990).

Schools, recognizing this trend, have invested time and resources to implement research-based behavior programs like positive behavior intervention and supports (PBIS) or effective behavioral support (EBS; Silva, Langout, Kohfeldt, & Gurrola, 2015). These programs are characterized by students receiving positive behavior cards for demonstrating fairness, respect, safety, understanding, and responsibility or negative cards for deficiencies in the same areas. Emerging trends about the EBS program show a discrepancy based on both race and gender (Silva, et. al, 2015). Girls are more likely to receive a positive card for respectful actions while boys and African-American students were more likely to receive a conduct report for bad behavior (Silva, et. al, 2015). African American girls, however, have similar struggles as boys with discipline disproportionality. A recent study by Georgetown Law Center on Poverty and Equality found that African-American girls are five times more likely to be suspended than White girls and twice as likely to be suspended as White boys (Epstein, Blake, & Gonzalez, 2017). The study attributes this to the “adultification” of Black girls by adults as a cause for this phenomenon. Adults were found to view Black girls as older than White girls their own age, therefore needing less nurturing, protection, support, and comfort than White girls. This perception carries over into assuming that Black girls should be more responsible and culpable for their misbehaviors in school (Epstein, Blake, & Gonzalez, 2017)

### **Cultural Mismatches**

The cultural mismatch between teachers and students has been suggested as one explanation for the over-sanctioning of African-American students for discipline referrals (Gay, 2010; Gregory, Skiba, & Noguera, 2010; Irvine, 2002). Cultural mismatches occur in

classrooms where the teacher and the students are from different cultures (Delpit, 2006; Irvine, 2002). These differences are reflected through speech, dress, behaviors, self-expression, class participation, views of authority, body language and many other factors that affect the learning environment (Ballenger, 1999).

The first step to creating a culturally responsive environment is to address the cultural mismatch that exists between many urban teachers and students by having the teacher examine his or her own ethnocentrism (Weinstein, Curran, & Tomlinson-Clark, 2003). Teachers view student behaviors through their own cultural biases. This can lead to confusion and misinterpretation (Weinstein, et al., 2003).

The majority of preservice teachers continue to be White, middle-class, and monolingual females, often with very limited intercultural experiences (Haddix, 2016). Reports from the National Center for Educational Statistics indicate that 81.9% of public school teachers are White. However, 49% of children enrolled in our public elementary and secondary schools are students of color, 21% live below the federal poverty level, 44% are considered low-income, and over 9% have limited English proficiency (National Center for Educational Statistics, 2015c).

Often teachers respond to student behaviors through the perspective of mainstream, sociocultural norms rather than seeing behaviors as a reflection of cultural norms in the local community (Weinstein, Tomlinson-Clark, & Curran, 2003). A cultural mismatch between teachers and students can result in teacher discrimination against students of racial and ethnic backgrounds—alienating and marginalizing some students while privileging others (Weinstein, et al., 2003). Mirror neurons in our brain recognize actions that are similar to our own. The students who fall outside of this familiar expectation may be perceived as disruptive, unintelligent, or disengaged (Emdin, 2016). Students who are different from the teacher have a

tough choice to make: either assimilate towards her expectations or be dismissed as a troubled student (Emdin, 2016).

Variations in ethnic discourse styles can lead to misunderstandings in the classroom (Gay, 2010). In a passive-receptive style of communication, the students listen while the teacher talks. Contrarily, a participatory-interactive style is characterized by active, vocalized engagement while the teacher talks (Kochman, 1985, cited in Gay, 2010). White students are accustomed to passive-receptive discourse, whereas African Americans, Latino Americans, and Native Hawaiians have been observed preferring a more participatory-interactive style (Gay, 2010). The participatory-interactive style is the common discourse style found in African American churches as evidenced by call and response between minister and parishioners (Gay, 2010). In call and response, the speaker issues statements (calling) and the listeners are obliged to respond in an auditory and expressive way. Responses include smiling, vocalizing, looking about, moving around, or ‘amenning’ (Dandy, 1991; Smitherman, 1986).

The cultural disconnection between teacher and student causes clashes in classrooms (Irvine, 2002). The variations between home and school frameworks can be so vastly different that it leads to marginalization for students of color (Delpit, 2006). Cultural encapsulation, a term used by Banks (1994), indicates a lack of awareness of racial identity. Teachers must connect with students’ unique and wonderful cultural styles but also teach them to code-switch for a variety of circumstances (Delpit, 2006; Emdin, 2016).

The stress a student feels in a culturally mismatched environment has been quantified (Stephens, Townsend, Markus, & Phillips, 2012) and may lead to difficulty. Students may have trouble coping with demands, academic challenges, and aversive psychological states (Stephens, et al., 2012). Lowering stress should improve students’ ability to cope with difficulties.



## **Cultural Proficiency**

There are prerequisite understandings that a teacher must reflect upon to grow in cultural proficiency (Weinstein, Curran, & Tomlinson-Clark, 2003). It is imperative to understand that not all cultures hold the same value systems as the White, middle class orientation that dominates our schools (Weinstein, et al., 2003). Teachers should acknowledge that there are cultural, racial, ethnic, and class differences that exist among people (Weinstein et al., 2003). They must also understand that schools are microcosms of the larger society in that they reflect and perpetuate the same discriminatory practices that are found in the world around them (Lindsey, Robins, Terrell, & Lindsey, 1999).

In order to interact effectively in a culturally diverse environment cultural proficiency must be reflected in a school's policies, practices, and procedures as well as the values and behaviors of the staff (Lindsey, Robins, Terrell, & Lindsey 1999). There are six points along the cultural proficiency continuum that indicate unique ways of seeing and responding to difference: *cultural destructiveness*, *cultural incapacity*, *cultural blindness*, *cultural pre-competence*, *cultural competence*, and *cultural proficiency* (Lindsey, et al., 1999). A culturally proficient educator is able to effectively assess culture, value diversity, manage the dynamics of differences, adapt to diversity, and institutionalize cultural knowledge (Lindsey, et al., 1999).

## **Culturally Responsive Pedagogy**

Teachers must adapt their instructional methods to build upon students' strengths, interests, identities, and norms. This way of teaching is called culturally responsive pedagogy (Ladson-Billings, 1994). The terms culturally responsive teaching, culturally relevant teaching, and diversity pedagogy have been interchanged at times, but the terms are synonymous (Gay, 2010; Ladson-Billings, 2009; Sheets, 2009).

Culturally responsive pedagogy is a student-centered teaching approach that nurtures the students' unique cultural strengths to promote student achievement and a sense of wellbeing in the world (Lynch, 2012). Culturally responsive pedagogy values social consciousness and critique, cultural affirmation, competence, community building, individual self-worth and abilities, and an ethic of caring (Gay, 2010).

Color blindness is a myth that stems from confusing equality and equity (Ladson-Billings, 2009). Unconscious racism or dysconsciousness occurs when teachers ignore the realities of how race has deprived many of equal opportunities in America (Ladson-Billings, 2009). Culturally responsive pedagogy empowers minority students by cultivating their cultural integrity and individual abilities for academic success (Gay, 2010).

Standardization of curriculum and testing has supplanted efforts in cultural responsiveness (Sleeter, 2012). Achievement data shows that minority students are actually worse off with standards-based reforms than they were during desegregation (Sleeter, 2012). Reading scores for 8th and 12th grade African American and Latino students dropped when standards-based reforms began in 1990, rebounded slightly and then flattened out. Some believe this is a result of the dominant cultures' racist persistence to maintain control over resources and power (Sleeter, 2012). These discriminatory practices go far beyond the teacher in the classroom, but trickle down from national and state guidelines, through the superintendent's office, to the principal and into the classroom (Milner & Tenore, 2010).

Culturally responsive teaching can be successfully implemented by creating strong and caring relationships with students. Such relationships should be based on mutual respect and high expectations. They should also assess student thinking regarding their own learning needs and

their cultural backgrounds to inform the curriculum, as well as teaching metacognitive skills and strategies in multiple formats (Houchen, 2013).

It is important to give students a voice in how the class will operate, have authentic dialogue with students about their perspectives on the class structure and teacher's style, and incorporate popular trends, such as hip-hop music, into instruction and assessment (Emdin, 2016; Houchen, 2013; Ullucci, 2009). As an example, the project Science Genius B.A.T.T.L.E.S. (Bring Attention to Transforming Teaching, Learning and Engagement in Science) combines the power of hip-hop music and battle culture to excite students about the world of science (Emdin, 2016).

Teachers who have utilized these culturally congruent teaching strategies have a deeper understanding of their students' strengths and have reported improved classroom participation and student performance (Emdin, 2016). Culturally responsive teaching is a multidimensional effort, encompassing curriculum, classroom climate, student teacher relationships, instructional techniques, classroom management, and performance assessments (Gay, 2010).

### **Culturally Responsive Classroom Management**

Culturally responsive classroom management (CRCM) includes provisions for urban classroom management support in order to effectively produce a cooperative, yet rigorous, environment for the diverse students (Bondy, Ross, Gallingane, & Hambacher, 2007; Brown, 2004; Monroe & Obidah, 2004; Weinstein, Curran, & Tomlinson-Clark, 2003; Weinstein, Tomlinson-Clark, & Curran, 2004). The literature that exists on classroom management has ignored cultural diversity (Weinstein, et al, 2003). Conventional classroom management is presented as if it were culturally neutral (Bowers & Flinders, 1990).

African American teachers are a great source of knowledge about how to effectively teach and manage African American students, but often their voices are not heard (Ladson-Billings, 2009). By carefully studying successful African American teachers, researchers have learned that cultural synchronization minimizes disciplinary actions in urban classrooms (Monroe & Obidah, 2004).

Cultural synchronization refers to the quality of fit between the teacher's and the students' culture (Irvine, 2002). There are five components of CRCM: *recognition of one's own ethnocentrism and biases; knowledge of students' cultural backgrounds; understanding the broader social, economic, and political context of our educational system; willingness to use culturally appropriate classroom management strategies; and commitment to building caring classroom communities* (Weinstein, Curran, & Tomlinson-Clarke, 2004).

The Chicago Teacher Educator Pipeline (CTEP) program at Illinois State University (ISU) seeks to prepare its students for the challenges of the urban classroom and has designed its program to explore all five aspects of CRCM. Aspiring urban educators at the university take redesigned coursework to explore educational issues related to the urban context. Through these courses, students can explore their own biases, learn about the history of oppression in public schools, gain first-hand experiences with urban communities, and actively participate in creating solutions to provide equitable educational opportunities to students of color (Chicago Teacher Education Pipeline, n.d.).

ISU students can learn about other cultures as they frequently travel to nearby Chicago to observe the realities of urban communities and classrooms. As these preservice teachers gain more experience, they relocate to an urban neighborhood for a four-week summer exposure called Step-Up. During Step-Up, students are required to reside with a local family for the

duration. This deepens the exposure to real life in the community (Chicago Teacher Education Pipeline, n.d.). Throughout this program, Illinois State University students are able to examine all five components of CRCM and are more prepared as they enter their careers as urban teachers.

The final step in the pipeline is that ISU facilitates a two-year induction and mentoring program for their newly placed teaching professionals to ensure a successful start to their careers (Chicago Teacher Education Pipeline, n.d.). This cutting-edge university program has shown that a comprehensive, community-based approach to teacher education is needed to improve the success rate of novice urban teachers (Lee, Eckrich, Lackey, & Showalter, 2010).

A culturally responsive teacher is dedicated to building relationships with the students, the parents, and the surrounding community (Brown, 2004; Monroe & Obidah, 2004; Ullucci, 2009). Teachers who are new to a community must immerse into the worlds of their students to learn from the context of their new environment (Emdin, 2016). This intentional relationship building will help mitigate the cultural misalignment between school and community (Emdin, 2016). Teachers who took the time and effort to immerse into the lives of their students were able to bring this sense of family and care into the classroom (Brown, 2004).

Cultural synchronization goes beyond community immersion and is also demonstrated by the teacher's culturally congruent actions and speech (Brown, 2004; Monroe & Obidah, 2004). Cultural humor, joking, terms of endearment, and demonstrations of strong emotions have a positive effect on classroom discipline (Monroe & Obidah, 2004). Veteran teachers from a similar community and racial make-up as their students have used this technique very appropriately and effectively (Monroe & Obidah, 2004). Along with humor, effective urban

teachers also are directive, assertive, straightforward, and firm (Brown, 2004; Monroe & Obidah, 2004).

Culturally responsive curriculum is both rigorous and relevant (Ullucci, 2009). Teachers have high expectations for their students' behavior and achievement, and do not accept apathetic efforts (Brown, 2004; Ullucci, 2009). Classrooms have an orderly, business-like environment with clearly defined rules and procedures (Brown, 2004; Bondy, Ross, Galligane, & Hambacher, 2007). Teachers consistently hold their students to these standards firmly and insist on student compliance (Bondy, et al., 2007). The physical layout and décor of the class is also important to encourage positive student interactions and productive group work, and also to reflect the diversity of the students (Ullucci, 2009).

### **Warm Demander Pedagogy**

An important theme that emerges from the research of CRCM is the teacher style termed *warm demander* (Ware, 2006). Kleinfeld (1975) coined the phrase warm demander to describe a teacher who was successfully educating students of color, but it has come to mean teachers who provide a tough, no-nonsense, structured, and disciplined classroom environment for students of color (Irvine & Fraser, 1998). Warm demanders can be identified in three classroom contexts: *warm demanders as authority figures and disciplinarians*, *warm demanders as caregivers*, and *warm demanders as pedagogues* (Ware, 2006).

The word insistence has been used to describe this authoritative style that promotes clear behavioral expectations for students (Bondy, Ross, Galligane, & Hambacher, 2007).

Authoritarian teachers require obedience, because "I said so," while the authoritative teacher creates an atmosphere that appeals to students' affiliation or desire to belong (Delpit, 2006).

African American students expect their teachers to act with authority (Ware, 2006). The

caregiver-teacher is an extension of the child's family, and because of this, the style has been described as *other mothering* (Ware, 2006). Teachers have successfully used culturally responsive approaches in direct instruction, student inquiry, project-based learning, and even computer-enhanced instruction (Ware, 2006).

Teachers' racial identities influence their conception of authority (Ford & Sassi, 2014). Classroom authority is demonstrated when the students acknowledge the legitimacy of teachers' directives and accept it as necessary part of their education (Pace, 2003). White teachers seem less willing to directly assert authority, expecting that students will simply respect them because of their position as teacher (Cooper, 2003).

For African-American students, authority is earned by personal efforts to establish meaningful relationships and incorporate features of African-American communication in daily classroom interactions (Delpit, 2006). African American teachers expect authority to be granted based on confirmation by the community (Ford & Sassi, 2014). There are some limitations to White teachers use of other-mothering (Ford & Sassi, 2014).

White teachers do not always have the same results as their African American counterparts when attempting to go hard on their students (Ford & Sassi, 2014). Students may not interpret the teacher's "meanness" as a positive or familial, but instead it may turn them away. The use of signifying, a discourse style known in the African-American community, relies on wit and indirection to make commentary on someone's behavior (Smitherman, 1986). Another difference between the warm demander approach of White teachers and teachers of color is how they deal with the realities of racism (Ford & Sassi, 2014).

In a comparative study featuring a Black and White teacher, the African-American teacher related to the students because of their shared racial frame of reference. The White

teacher in the study reported that she needed to develop positive, trusting relationships with her African American students before she would be comfortable discussing provocative issues such as racism in the classroom (Ford & Sassi, 2014).

To effectively lead conversations about race in the classroom, the White teacher needed to convince her students that she was an ally with them against racism (Ford & Sassi, 2014).

While it is more difficult for the White teacher to broach the subject of racism in classrooms, it remains an important part of being culturally responsive (Ullucci, 2009).

The final way that a White teacher can adapt warm demander pedagogy is by repairing interpersonal relationships with students (Ford & Sassi, 2014). After a teacher has corrected a student harshly, he must make it a point to go back to the student and follow up with kindness. This demonstrates the African American value of not being afraid to address conflict for the temporary benefit of avoiding a confrontation but still valuing the student-teacher relationship (Ford & Sassi, 2014). It is important to know the difference between the warm demander stance and the warm demander strategy (Bondy, Ross, Hambacher, & Acosta, 2013). Students intuitively know the difference between acts of love and genuine love (Bondy, et. al, 2013).

Another strategy is to establish cross-racial legitimacy (Ford & Sassi, 2014). Teachers who are perceived as White are not able to rely on a warm demander approach as a fixed identity but must accept that it will occur in a more fluid and often temporary way (Ford & Sassi, 2014). Faking warm demander is a threat to student's racial safety and can further exacerbate the cultural divide in the classroom (Ford & Sassi, 2014).

### **Teacher's Self-Efficacy**

Self-efficacy is the belief in one's capabilities to succeed in the task at hand (Bandura, 1997). The self-efficacy theory highlights the importance of persevering through obstacles



(Bandura, 1997). It is more than confidence; it is the belief in one's abilities as well as the strength of that belief (Bandura, 1997). Teacher self-efficacy has been linked to teacher effectiveness in several studies (Bergman, McLaughlin, Bass, Pauly, & Zellman, 1977; Campbell, Kyriakides, Muijs, & Robinson, 2004). A high sense of teacher self-efficacy led to higher student achievement gains, and a low sense of teacher self-efficacy led to lower student achievement (Campbell, et al., 2004). A teacher with low self-efficacy will produce lower levels of effort and persistence which will lead to lower performance which will in turn lower self-efficacy even further (Brouwers & Tomic, 2000).

Self-efficacy is related to the learning process. The social nature of learning that has been proven effective for urban students is also good for their teachers (Bandura, 1997). Self-efficacy is influenced by four sources: *mastery experiences*, *vicarious experiences*, *verbal persuasion*, and *physiological arousal* (Bandura, 1997). These influences are important to incorporate into CRCM training.

The journey towards cultural proficiency can result in feelings of inadequacy or lack of confidence affecting teacher self-efficacy. This is the cultural pre-competence stage (Lindsey, Robins, Terrell, & Lindsey, 1999). This stage is characterized by the awareness of limitations that a person has when interacting with other culture groups (Lindsey, et al., 1999). Individuals are reluctant to turn their knowledge into action if they believe that their chances of doing so successfully are slim (Bandura, 1997, as cited in Siwatu, Putman, Starker-Glass, & Lewis, 2015).

Studies have linked teacher burnout to doubts about self-efficacy (Brouwers & Tomic, 2000). In order to provide support for teachers on the path to cultural proficiency, Siwatu, Putman, Starker-Glass, and Lewis (2015) developed and validated a scale to measure teacher's self-efficacy related to culturally responsive classroom management. The purpose was to be able

to identify the areas where teachers were less confident and design interventions to address them (Siwatu, et. al, 2015).

### **Teacher Professional Development**

Professional development that targets increasing teacher self-efficacy in any new skill acquisition must be cognizant of the influences that affect teachers' self-efficacy such as practice through simulations (Bandura, 1997). Teachers gain confidence in simulations. They will move into a positive emotional state that will provide them the confidence to transfer their learning into their own classrooms (Brouwers & Tomic, 2000). An example is the CULTURES training program. The Emory University CULTURES program was held at The Center for Urban Leading/Teaching and Urban Research in Education and Schools from 1994-1998 (Irvine, 2002). The CULTURES program was designed to support teachers on their quest to become culturally responsive.

The program assisted approximately 120 elementary and middle school teachers through a 40-hour training consisting of class discussions, self-awareness activities, reflective learning, school visits, interviews, immersion experiences, microteaching, experiential learning, connection with community resources, projects, presentations, training, peer feedback and support (Irvine, 2002). A third party evaluator validated the CULTURES program's effectiveness and reported that 94% of the participating teachers rated their experience as very positive (Irvine, 2006).

Another promising professional development program has been developed at New York University-Steinhardt's School of Culture, Education and Human Development in partnership with the Metropolitan Center for Urban Education's Technical Assistance Center for Disproportionality (Metropolitan Center for Urban Education, 2008). The Metro Center

developed a three-year professional development series for school leaders in which the middle year focuses on culturally responsive professional development.

Training modules included principles of culturally responsive education, differentiated instruction, grouping students for instruction, and classroom management. These resources are open-source and can be adapted and used by local schools to train effective multicultural teachers and administrators. It is important for teachers to participate in professional learning communities (PLCs) to adopt culturally responsive practices. PLCs, as a method of teacher professional development, have proven effective (DuFour & Eaker, 1998).

### **Review of Methodological Issues**

In the prior research related to culturally responsive classroom management and culturally responsive teaching, case study methodology has been commonly employed. These case studies have given insight into behaviors of culturally responsive teachers and schools. From these studies, researchers have captured the stories of urban classroom managers, both their challenges and successes. These stories are the backbone of the theory. Case study research has some limitations, however. A common limitation of case study design is the difficulty of generalizing the results to other subjects, because of the small number of subjects that are investigated (Willis, 2014). Prior research has predominantly relied on qualitative data to describe cultural responsiveness. Because of this, research has focused on the “what” of CRCM, and has lacked the evaluative portion of research.

An evaluative study that stretched outside of the case study norm was Houchen’s (2013) action research study, which utilized a variety of data sources, both qualitative and quantitative, to examine the impact of CRCM in an urban, high school classroom. Houchen’s (2013) action research design used data collected from student focus groups, observations, her teacher

reflective journal, and student achievement data from standardized test scores to test the theory of culturally responsive teaching with secondary, African American students. This study strengthened the conversation on CRCM by providing an evaluative lens to the existing case studies.

### **Synthesis of Research Findings**

Cultural mismatch commonly occurs in American schools, and that is partly to blame for minority student achievement and discipline gaps (Delpit, 2006). Teachers must reflect on their own bias and ethnocentrism on the path to cultural proficiency (Weinstein, Curran, & Tomlinson-Clarke, 2003; Lindsey, Robins, Terrell, & Lindsey, 1999, 2005). They must understand the historical context of racism and how it affects the way our curriculum is presented, how codes of conduct are interpreted, and how schools operate in general (Weinstein, Tomlinson-Clarke, & Curran, 2004). CRCM also requires a belief system of high expectations for students of color (Ladson-Billings, 2009).

Teachers must also believe that building a cooperative, democratic learning community is possible and preferred for students of color (Emdin, 2016). There are many ways that culture can vary (Stephens, Townsend, Markus, & Phillips, 2012). Culturally responsive teachers show students that they care through their actions (Gay, 2010). By immersing themselves into the community, building relationships with parents, and standing in solidarity with their students against racial oppression, teachers demonstrate that they are committed and trustworthy (Ladson-Billings, 2009; Ullucci, 2009).

On a daily basis, teachers who use African American discourse and terms of endearment will be seen as culturally congruent (Brown, 2004). Students of color expect a combination of care and authoritarianism (Delpit, 2006; Ware, 2006). Teachers must demonstrate authority but

not in a coercive, punitive way. Expectations in a culturally responsive classroom are clear, routines are established, and the class is focused on academic achievement (Bondy, Ross, Gallingane, & Hambacher, 2007). Teachers from all cultural backgrounds can gain the appropriate perceptions, beliefs, actions, and techniques to create a warm, caring, yet rigorous, learning environment (Ullucci, 2009).

### **Critique of Previous Research**

Weinstein, Tomlinson-Clark, and Curran (2004) encourage the research to continue in the area of culturally responsive classroom management. They point out that a great deal of research has been done in pedagogy because of its obvious connection to student achievement, but fewer researchers have focused on how culture affects school discipline. Weinstein, et al., (2004) recommend a research agenda focusing on training teachers in CRMC. An area that they exposed as being relatively untapped is how we can best prepare teachers for organizing and managing culturally diverse classrooms.

Gregory, Skiba, and Noguera (2010) are concerned with researchers learning more about what interventions will effectively reduce the discipline gap that faces many students of color. They suggest future research focused on how the tenants of CRMC, such as caring teacher-student relationships, will affect the disproportionality of behavioral referrals. It is important to find ways to train teachers since classroom climate and positive teacher-student relationships are inextricably tied to student achievement (LaRocque, 2008).

### **Summary**

The cultural mismatch between teachers and students is common and causes conflicts in the classroom that can lower teacher self-efficacy. As a result, students are disproportionately referred for discipline problems. Concepts of culturally responsive pedagogy, culturally

responsive classroom management, the continuum of cultural proficiency, and warm demander pedagogy were explored and discussed as how they provide teachers with the attitudes and skills to build a strong, achievement focused classroom environment.

The following chapter describes the research methodology for this study and details the population, the tools, and the form of data analysis used.

### **Chapter 3: Methodology**

Because of cultural differences in urban classrooms, students of color are disproportionately referred for behavioral issues. Teachers in these situations report frustration and even burn out due to their classroom management difficulties (Emdin, 2016; Irvine, 2002; Ladson-Billings, 2009; Milner & Tenore, 2010; Monroe, 2006; Weinstein, Tomlinson-Clark, & Curran, 2004). Due to cultural behavior and discourse norms, students of color can feel uncomfortable and out of place in these learning environments and fail to engage in the learning process, thus jeopardizing their educations and futures (Gay, 2010).

Culturally responsive classroom management (CRCM) is a solution to this common cultural mismatch. Teachers who enact a culturally responsive approach to classroom management are able to create a rigorous learning environment that is comfortable and suitable for learners of all cultures to thrive. The focus of CRCM is engagement and connectivity rather than control and compliance. This study investigated the effects of a semester-long professional development aimed at reducing student behavior sanctions, improving staff self-efficacy, and improving student-staff relations through in-depth study of the stance and strategies of CRCM.

Chapter 3 describes the research methodology for this study, as well as the purpose and design of the study. The research questions that guided the investigation are explained, as well as the target population, site of the study, and programmatic specifics. In addition, the chapter explains the instrumentation, data collection methods, and data analysis procedures, and focuses on the study's limitations, the credibility and trustworthiness of the procedures, and the ethical considerations that were present during the study.

## Purpose and Design of the Study

*Action research* is the methodology that was chosen for this project because it was most suitable for investigating the impact the professional development program was having on the organization. Action research is a method of conducting research within a learning organization that benefits both the organization and the greater body of academia (Zuber-Skerritt & Perry, 2002). Action research study seeks to practically address a problem within the organization as well as contribute new knowledge to a topic (Zuber-Skerritt & Perry, 2002). In this study, the problem the organization needed to address related to staff's deficiencies and low self-efficacy in urban classroom management skills. The study sought to bring about change in the local organization while at the same time drawing conclusions that could benefit others in a similar context.

Lewin (2012, cited in Riel, 2017) set forth five steps of action research: *initial reflection*, *plan*, *act*, *observe*, and *reflect*. Similarly, Bakersville (1999) lists five phases of the action research cycle: *diagnosing*, *action planning*, *action taking*, *evaluating*, and *specifying learning*. For the purposes of this study, Lewin's steps were followed. The *initial reflection* phase consisted of identifying a problem within the organization and reflecting on possible solutions. The *planning stage* involved studying solutions from prior research and creating an intervention to address the problem. During the planning phase, the content for the professional development program was created. The third phase is called *act*. The action consisted of delivering the 15-week professional development program to the after-school staff in the form of a professional learning community. The intervention was based on the researcher's knowledge of the organization's needs as well as related, prior research studies. The fourth phase, *observe*, comprised a variety of data collection exercises: semi-structured interviews, classroom



observations, survey data, student behavior data, and academic achievement data. The fifth and final phase was *reflect*. The reflection phase consisted of data analysis. This included statistical analysis, thematic content analysis, data triangulation, member checking, and collaborating with colleagues. The phases of action research are cyclical in that once the process is complete, new ideas for inquiry often emerge and the researcher will continue to investigate.

The primary influence for the program evaluation was Guskey (2000). Guskey's (2000) five-level evaluation model (an adaptation of Kirkpatrick's four-level model) was utilized as part of the study because it was useful in evaluating a professional development program. The Guskey model provided the opportunity for teaching professionals to solve problems through action research professional development (Guskey, 2000). The Guskey model (2000) called for a hierarchical assessment of program outcomes. This started with evaluating learner/participant satisfaction, and then progressed to the other, deeper levels: learning attributed to the program, organizational change, participants' use of new skills, and the program's impact on students (Guskey, 2000).

Guskey (2000) modified Kirkpatrick's popular evaluative tool in order to best assess teacher professional development. Kirkpatrick's model was designed primarily to evaluate industry and business training; as a result, Guskey (2000) found that it lacked explanatory power. Guskey's updated model was a more appropriate version that applied to professional development for educators (Guskey, 2000).

Guskey's evaluation methods (2000) call for a variety of data sources to be utilized as evidence. Questionnaires, focus groups, interviews, personal learning logs, simulation and demonstrations, participant reflections, organizational records, student records, and portfolios are all examples are data collection tools recommended in the Guskey model (Guskey, 2000).

Guskey's model (2000) will be used to assess the effects of a 15-week teacher professional development program focused on CRCM for teachers in an urban, nonprofit, after-school program. The program's desired outcomes are growth in self-efficacy for staff, stronger relationships between staff students, implementation of knowledge and skills gained into daily practice, and reduction in student discipline events at the after-school program.

The five-level evaluation model developed by Guskey will be used as a basis for evaluating the overall effectiveness of the professional development program. Data was collected through focused, semi-structured teacher interviews, classroom observation records, survey data, discipline records, and academic records. Data was converged during the analysis process to explain how the training affected teacher self-efficacy, teacher-student relationships, and the corresponding levels of disciplinary referrals for students in the after-school program.

### **Emancipatory Action Research**

This study employed emancipatory action research methodology. This approach is ideal since the researcher is an active part of the organization being studied, both prior and during. Coghlan (2007) calls this Insider Action Research. This refers to a type of research where the researcher is immersed in the organization, having all the insider knowledge, internal jargon, and preunderstandings of the group. This intimate knowledge of the organization benefits the researcher by being able to draw on her own experiences, participate in discussions and observe freely without drawing attention or creating suspicion (Coghlan, 2007). This lived experience allows the researcher to engage with the organization in its truest form.

There are disadvantages to being an inside researcher. It is possible for the researcher to assume too much understanding and not probe enough into participants' thoughts and feelings. Coghlan (2007) warns that insider researchers may struggle to put aside current beliefs and

preunderstandings to be open to reframing or alternative explanations. An insider researcher must be diligent at reflection and introspection to examine assumptions (Coghlan, 2007).

The type of action research is emancipatory because it relies on collaboration from the team of staff members as they investigate together best practices to solve an identified problem. The professional learning community investigated the theory of CRCM for 15-weeks and discussed the rewards and challenges of the implementation of the theory in the program. Dick (2000) explains that the participatory nature of action research depends upon the researcher. Some studies consist of equal ownership between researcher and participants; the participants are co-researchers. Another emancipatory model involves participants as informants rather than full partners in research (Dick, 2000). This study considers the participants more as informants through discussions, observations, and interviews.

### **Research Questions**

Two research questions guided this study. Both focus on the evaluation of the professional development program, which was implemented with the after-school program staff.

#### **Research Question 1**

Based on each of the five concepts of the Guskey Evaluation Model (2000), how effective was the culturally responsive classroom management professional development?

#### **Research Question 2**

What are staff's perceptions of the impact of the professional development on student-staff outcomes, specifically, staff self-efficacy, student-staff relationships, and discipline related incidents at the youth center?

## **Research Question 1: Effectiveness of the Professional Development**

The first research question utilizes the Guskey Model (2000) for evaluation which contains five levels of inquiry and requires both qualitative and quantitative data collection and analysis. Using the Guskey Model (2000) for evaluation provided a thorough assessment of the professional development program and its effects on staff, the organization, and the students. Level 1 gathered information on the participants' reactions to the program. This was gathered through the Professional Development Assessment Survey (PDAS) and semi-structured participant interviews. The purpose of this level was to gather data on the participants' perceived value of the training as it related to relevance, practicality, and utility of the content (Guskey, 2000).

The second level addressed a critical component of the professional development—participant learning. This part of the evaluation determined whether or not the professional development experience led to any changes in the participants' knowledge, skill level, or attitudes and beliefs (Guskey, 2000). To determine the effectiveness of level two, data were collected through the PDAS and semi-structured interviews with participants.

The third level of Guskey's evaluation model called for an investigation into organizational support and change (Guskey, 2000). This phase examined major aspects of organizational support and change, such as organizational policies, resources, protection from intrusions, openness to experimentation and alleviation of fears, collegial support, leadership, recognition of success, and provision of time. Participant interviews were utilized to investigate this level.

The fourth level addressed the use of new knowledge and skills (Guskey, 2000). This phase sought to answer the question, what did participants learn through this professional

development experience? In order to effectively determine the answer, the identification of critical indicators of use were created (Guskey, 2000). The critical indicators, based on research studies, included creating a culture of care, utilizing culturally congruent speech and actions, developing explicit classroom procedures, developing an authoritative and directive approach, and having high expectations for academic achievement (Emdin, 2016; Gay, 2010; Howard, 2016; Irvine, 2002; Ladson-Billings, 2009; Ware, 2006; Weinstein, Tomlinson-Clarke, & Curren, 2004). These critical indicators were evidence of participants' learning and growing in cultural responsiveness. Data related to these critical indicators were collected through class observations as well as interviews with the participants.

The final level in Guskey's model called for an evaluation of student learning. While the unit of analysis for this study was staff, the overall purpose was for the betterment of students; therefore, student achievement had to also be considered as a measure of effectiveness. Several measures were used to determine student learning outcomes. Guskey (2000) recommended using cognitive, affective, and psychomotor outcomes to gather a complete view of student learning.

Cognitive data was collected through standardized test scores. The program determined student math and reading growth through a standardized measure called curriculum-based measures (CBM). These math and reading assessments were a quick and cost-effective way to document student growth. *Affective growth* refers to attitudes, beliefs, and dispositions (Guskey, 2000). This aspect of student growth was examined through teacher interviews. Students' levels of participation, motivation, and class relationships were an important aspect in evaluating their learning. Student learning could also be gauged through psychomotor outcomes. *Psychomotor*

*outcomes* describe the behaviors, actions, or practices that students acquire (Guskey, 2000).

These outcomes were investigated through staff interviews.

## **Research Question 2: Staff's Perceptions**

This research question investigated staff's perceptions of the impact that the professional development program had on classroom management self-efficacy, their relationships with students as well as changes in student behaviors.

**Self-efficacy.** The construct of self-efficacy was addressed both qualitatively and quantitatively. Qualitatively, data was collected and analyzed from teacher interviews that contained questions related to self-efficacy. Themes were examined from the interviews to draw conclusions about teacher self-efficacy related to classroom management. Quantitatively, teacher self-efficacy growth was measured through the Culturally Responsive Classroom Management Self-Efficacy Scale (CRCMSES), which was created and validated by Siwatu, Putman, Starker- Glass and Lewis (2015). The scale was found to be highly reliable with an internal reliability of .96 (Siwatu, et al., 2015). The survey data is presented both descriptively and inferentially to provide support for the quantitative themes.

**Student-staff relationships.** This construct of student-staff relationships has both qualitative and quantitative data points as well. Qualitative data were gathered from staff interviews examining staff's outlooks on their relationships with students. Quantitative data were collected from the Student-Teacher Relationship Scale Short Form (STR) which was created and validated by Pianta (1992).

**Student discipline incidents.** The construct of student discipline was investigated by analyzing aggregate student discipline records, both archived and current. In addition, data was gathered through teacher interviews and class observations.

### **The CRCM Training Program**

The professional development series lasted for 15-weeks during the first semester of the 2016-2017 school year (September 21st-January 13th). Each session was scheduled for 60 minutes, providing participants with 15 hours of targeted training. The professional development consisted of a learning community that investigated the theory of culturally responsive classroom management and its associated strategies. The trainings consisted of reading books and articles, group discussions, videos, reflective learning, micro teaching, observations, and other vicarious experiences. In addition to the group sessions, each staff member received five coaching sessions following each classroom observation, which gave the staff member an opportunity to contextualize CRCM to his or her unique situation.

### **The Urban Nonprofit Youth Center**

The site in which the study takes place is an urban, community-based, nonprofit youth center. The center is located in a large urban U.S. city and sits on a busy corner in one of the city's most challenged communities. After Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. was assassinated in 1968, the community was terribly damaged by riots and looting. Many long-term residents with financial means escaped to the surrounding suburbs; local businesses also relocated leaving the area economically weak with disinvestment.

Since that time, the community has continued to struggle with homelessness, unemployment, drugs, gangs, and violent crimes. Educational opportunities are scarce and although the local schools showed some improvement during the No Child Left Behind Era, the schools still fall behind the state and national averages. Community-based organizations, like this site, are crucial to the transformation of the community.

For over 17 years, the site at which this study took place has been serving the community youth and families. This was—and still is—done through early childhood education and after-school programs. These after-school programs focus on art, science, and technology enrichment; sports and fitness opportunities; and faith development. The intention is to help alleviate poverty and create a neighborhood where success becomes the norm and families prosper.

The program that will be featured in this study is a five-day-per-week after-school program that addresses child nutrition, academic support, social emotional learning, arts and science exploration, and sports and fitness opportunities. Currently, 120 local students in kindergarten through eighth grade are enrolled.

In 2016, 95% of the students were African American and the remaining 5% were White or Latino. Ninety percent of participating students qualified for federal free or reduced lunch. Due to a local school choice model, the students came from a variety of local public, private, and charter schools, but what unites them is that they all reside within the 32-square block community that the organization sought to serve.

The program operated for three hours after school. For the first hour, students socialized with positive adults and peers during semi-structured, free-time activities; such as basketball, dance, jump rope, and board games. A healthy, hot meal was provided through a partnership with a local children's feeding program. The second hour was dedicated to homework help. Students split into age-specific classrooms to complete daily homework with the assistance of staff and volunteers. The program consisted of 4 classrooms with up to 30 students and 5 adults each. Students who did not have homework or finish early, completed age-appropriate academic activities that had been created by staff in advance. The program strategy changed during the third hour and each day varied.



On Mondays, each classroom participated in age-appropriate, social-emotional learning. A variety of curricula were used for these lessons: Character Counts, Talking Tree Books, Common Sense Media, and others that addressed issues that students faced emotionally and socially. Students role-play, discuss, and interact with a variety of topics such as dealing with anger, bullying, telling the truth, having positive relationships, respecting others, and more.

On Tuesdays and Thursdays, K–3rd grade students participated in literacy activities using the curriculum *My Sidewalks* by Pearson. Students in grades 4 through 8 participated in Choice Academies that they had selected at the beginning of each quarter. The Choice Academies fell into these four categories: *arts*, *technology*, *fitness*, and *academic support*. Each quarter, students had the opportunity to sign up for a new academy based on their area of interest. The fall quarter of 2016, the Choice Academies were as follows: Accessory Design and Entrepreneurship (Arts Academy), Digital Photography (Technology Academy), 5K Running Club (Fitness Academy), and Mindbenders (Academic Support Academy).

Each of the Choice Academies operated for nine weeks and concluded with a final project or event. The accessory design class created their own products (e.g., jewelry, scarves, watches, and bags) and sold them at a local community bazaar. The digital photography class generated and edited photos to be hung in a display at the youth center. The running club completed two local 5K races. Mindbenders was a class created for students who had specific academic needs. Students set a quarterly academic goal and worked towards that goal during their Choice Academy time. For example, a student might have wanted to improve in math or reading and would dedicate this time to content-specific tutoring.

After the first quarter of the school year was complete, students selected new Choice Academies to participate in. The Choice Academies were taught by a combination of industry

professionals, local volunteers, and staff. The purpose of the academies was to connect students to positive adults, provide opportunities for career exploration, and grow skills in a chosen area of interest.

On Wednesdays, students enjoyed getting exercise through class games in the gymnasium such as Johnny-Come-Across, Alphabet Soup, Flag-Tag, or team relays. Eighth-grade students focused on high school admission activities. They researched schools, wrote admissions essays, and prepared for enrollment tests. Fridays were dedicated to community-building activities in a large group session called “Rally.” Rally was used for celebrating and acknowledging student achievement and allowing students a chance to perform their talents in front of others. Students were seen performing dances and raps in front of their peers, and staff members performed silly skits. Rally was also the time when students were awarded for reaching behavior and attendance goals.

Through these varied weekly activities, the youth center served as a place where students could remain safe after school, meet their academic goals, explore career possibilities, make friends, exercise, connect with positive adults, and eat nutritious meals.

### **The Target Population**

The target population for this study was urban youth workers who agreed to participate in the research study. All ten youth workers employed by the after-school program completed the 15-week professional development program, and seven agreed to participate in the study. Each participant was asked to sign an informed consent form, included in the appendix. Staff were told that the study was voluntary, and that there would be no repercussions for opting out. The participants in the study were diverse in age, professional qualifications, experience, educational attainment, gender, and ethnicity.

The youth program employed both full- and part-time employees. Of the ten staff members who were dedicated to this program and participated in the training, only two were licensed teachers. Five staff members were fellows, meaning that they had signed up for a two-year commitment with the organization to bridge the gap between their educational career and full-time employment in the marketplace. The fellowship provided room and board, transportation, a stipend for living expenses, loan deferment, professional development, and work experience.

These fellows ranged in age from 20-25 years old. All had already completed their bachelor's degree. The other three staff members who participated in the study had not completed their bachelor's degrees but had credits towards one; however, their field of study was not education. Of the ten participants in the professional development, three were White, five were African American, one was Latina, and one was Asian. Two were long-time community residents, five were transplants into the community, and two lived in adjacent, urban neighborhoods. Two of the participants were male and seven were female. Teachers were partnered up in mixed-level classrooms as co-teachers. For example, kindergarten and first-grade students were grouped in one classroom, second and third grade students in another, fourth and fifth grade students in a third, and sixth through eighth grade students in a fourth. Two teachers led the classrooms; typically, the more experienced teacher served as the lead while the less experienced assisted. The exception to this was the second and third grade classroom, where a more equal co-teaching model was implemented.

### **The Professional Development**

A professional learning community (PLC) approach to learning was chosen for the professional development training (DuFour & Eaker, 1998). This approach was considered

because of its emphasis on staff collegiality, group dialogue, and shared leadership. The five attributes of a PLC are *shared leadership, collective creativity, shared values and vision, supportive conditions, and shared personal practice* (Hord, 1997). Professional learning communities are ideal for emancipatory action research because staff engage in intense reflection about what is working and not working for the benefit of the students (DuFour & Eaker, 1998).

The content for the professional development was a combination of material provided by the researcher and three book studies: *A Culturally Proficient Education: An Asset-Based Response to the Conditions of Poverty* (Lindsey, Karnes, & Myatt, 2010), *For White Folks Who Teach in the Hood . . . and the Rest of Ya'll Too: Reality Pedagogy and Urban Education* (Emdin, 2016), and *We Can't Teach What We Don't Know* (Howard, 2016). The staff read the assigned content before the weekly meeting and prepared to discuss it openly with one another. A conglomeration of material discovered during the literature review formed the basis for the training materials. The professional development content was delivered and developed by the researcher, who was a senior program director for the organization.

In addition to discussion, the group also built skills through practice. Classroom simulations were used to practice management skills in a manufactured setting before teachers were expected to transfer their knowledge into their actual classrooms. These practice sessions allowed staff to build confidence and self-efficacy in a low-stakes setting. Staff were also observed within their classrooms followed by feedback and coaching. Based on observed needs, the researcher adapted the professional development to address pertinent topics. The entire staff team took a field trip to a local elementary school to observe two teachers who had been identified as being strong in culturally responsive classroom management. This observation was followed with a discussion on what was observed.

## **Sampling Method**

This action research study utilized a convenience sampling method. In a convenience method samples are drawn when other sampling is not practical and one can get reasonably good information from units that are easy to locate (Balbach, 1999). This sampling method can be problematic because it cannot be representative of a larger population. In this case, the participants were selected from the staff of the after-school program. All staff were eligible for inclusion in the study. The sample was drawn from the staff and teaching fellows who agreed to participate in the study. The staff was diverse in ethnicity, age, and years of experience. The majority of participants were not licensed teachers, but each functioned in the role of a teacher during program hours.

## **Instrumentation**

### **Focused, Semi-Structured Interviews**

Focused, semi-structured interviewing is the interviewing technique that was used to collect qualitative data by allowing respondents the time and scope to talk about their opinions on a particular subject; in this case, the relevant subject was their experience participating in the professional development and subsequent attempts at implementing CRCM strategies in their classrooms (Sweeney & Pritchard, 2010). The goal of the interviews was to understand the respondent's point of view. It gave the participants an opportunity to express their opinions about the topic at hand. The interview had the feel of a conversation, and the researcher asked open-ended questions to guide the flow of the conversation. Although the questions were prepared in advance, the interview followed the lead of the respondent, so each interview was somewhat different in nature. The researcher interviewed each of the participants to gain insights on their experience participating in the professional development program, their

successes, struggles, and ideas for future training. Interviews were expected to take between 20 and 50 minutes, but the researcher was responsive to interviewee's needs. Interview questions can be found in the appendix.

The semi-structured interviews were expected to take place upon conclusion of the professional development program. Open-ended questions were asked based on the research questions in order to provide additional evidence to compare to the surveys and observation themes. The following topics were discussed during the interviews: participants' reactions to the training program, a self-assessment of the participant's learning, organizational support, use of new knowledge and skills, student learning outcomes, self-efficacy growth, changes in student-teacher relationships, successes and challenges in implementing culturally responsive classroom management. The interviews were the primary source of data used for this study.

## **Surveys**

Three survey instruments were used as data sources: The Culturally Responsive Classroom Management Self-Efficacy Scale (CRCMSES), the Student-Teacher Relationship Scale (STRS), and the Professional Development Assessment Survey (PDAS), a two-part researcher-developed exit survey.

Siwatu, Putman, Starker-Glass and Lewis (2015) developed the CRCMSES using Bandura's (2006) guidelines for developing self-efficacy instruments. CRCMSES was developed to elicit the self-efficacy beliefs of teacher aptitude to execute specific teaching practices that are associated with a culturally responsive stance. The instrument was based on concepts identified in research on culturally responsive classroom management practices. Through a thorough literature review, developers of the instrument determined culturally

responsive classroom management competencies. From there, the researchers generated self-efficacy items that corresponded to the competencies (Siwatu, et al., 2015).

The scale was initially validated to measure the self-efficacy of 380 preservice and in-service teachers in culturally responsive classroom management. The scale consists of 35 items in which participants were asked to rate their confidence levels on a scale of 0-100 (zero being *no confidence* and 100 representing *completely confident*) in their ability to employ the specific culturally responsive competencies.

Responses to each item were summed and divided by the total number of items to generate a CRTSE strength index. This index was a quantitative indicator of the strength of each preservice teacher's CRTSE beliefs. The scale was found to be highly reliable with an internal reliability of .96 (Siwatu, Putman, Starker-Glass, & Lewis, 2015). A correlational analysis was done with existing teacher self-efficacy measures and resulted in a confirmation that the CRCMSE Scale was indeed measuring teacher self-efficacy beliefs (Siwatu, et al., 2015). The survey developers granted permission for its use during this study.

Fitchett, Starker, and Salyers (2012) had similar findings when utilizing the self-efficacy scale with preservice social studies teachers. The interitem reliability was ( $\alpha = .98$ ). A slightly modified version of this survey was administered before and after the training to determine teachers' change in self-efficacy due to the training. The survey excluded five questions that referred to teaching limited English proficient (LEP) students due to the fact that the after-school program did not have any LEP students on its roster. A copy of the survey can be found in the appendix.

Because of the small sample size of this study ( $n = 7$ ), the CRCMSES were used in conjunction with participant interviews. The survey on its own lacks internal validity but can be

used to strengthen the trustworthiness of the study when paired with quantitative data sources, such as interviews.

Pianta's (1992) Student Teacher Relationship Survey—short form (STRS) was used to measure teacher-student relationships. STRS has been validated and is widely used as an effective indicator of the quality of student-teacher relationships in terms of conflict, closeness, and dependency (Pianta, 1992). The conflict dimension measures negative aspects of the student-teacher relationship, such as disruptive student behaviors. Closeness measures positive aspects of the relationship as demonstrated by warmth, engagement, and involvement. The dependency aspect measures the student's overreliance on the teacher, which can be an obstacle in school success (Settanni, Longobardi, Sclavo, Fraire, & Prino, 2015). The version of the scale that was used for this study was the short form, which measured only closeness and conflict. Staff completed the surveys on each of their students before the training began and again upon the conclusion of the training to show the change in the staff's perception of their relationship with individual students due to their participation in the CRCM training. A copy of the student-teacher relationship scale short form can be found in the appendix. This survey was used as additional evidence for purposes of data triangulation.

The Professional Development Assessment Survey (PDAS) is the final survey that was used to evaluate the professional development program and consisted of two parts. The first part was adapted from a questionnaire suggested by Guskey (2000) as an appropriate questionnaire to use to evaluate a professional development program. It measured the participants' overall estimation of the usefulness of the professional development program.

The second part of the PDAS was adapted from a general professional development learning evaluation form (Guskey, 2000). The purpose of part two is to ask the participants to



assess their knowledge and skills of the program's learning goals. Each learning objective was listed, and participants rated their perceived level of expertise for each. They could select that no learning took place, or that they were a novice, apprentice, or expert. This two-part survey was administered at the completion of the 15-week program. A copy of the PDAS can be found in the appendix.

### **Direct Observations**

An observation protocol was adhered to at each classroom observation to ensure that the data was being objectively gathered. The first step to creating the observation protocol was to generate critical indicators of use for what observable behaviors were expected from the teachers after completing the professional development program (Guskey, 2000).

The critical indicators for these observations were derived from a synthesis of the literature that exists on culturally responsive teaching and classroom management. The critical indicators for CRCM used for this study were as follows: a culture of care, culturally congruent speech and actions, authoritative and directive approach, orderly and clearly defined procedures, and high expectations for academic achievement. Once the critical indicators were developed, next descriptive examples of what each indicator looked like when properly implemented were developed (Guskey, 2000).

An observation tool has been created to capture the objective evidence from each observation and was also be used to provide feedback and coaching to the staff team. All staff participated in the observation and coaching as a part of their regular employment, but observation data were included in the study from those participants who have consented to participate. The observations that were included in the study were conducted by a staff person other than the researcher in order to keep the coded observation data unlinked to the participants.

The observation tool that was used was an adaptation of a tool created by the Coalition of Essential Schools (n.d.). A copy of the observation tool can be found in the appendix.

### **Discipline Data**

Student discipline data was collected upon conclusion of the professional development to determine whether a significant change occurred in number and/or severity of discipline events. Historical data from the first semester of the program year was compared the second semester (after the professional development program was complete). A progressive discipline model was used at the youth center. Students entered the day in the green zone and as behavioral events occurred, students could progress into yellow, red, and fire zones, respectively. Yellow zones represented warnings for relatively minor student misbehaviors; red zones required the staff person to contact a parent; fire zones result in a one-day suspension from the program. Discipline data was recorded in the organization's database hosted through Efforts to Outcomes. Daily behavioral incidents were logged into the database. Historical data from first semester was compared to historical data from the second semester. Data was provided to the researcher by the program administrator in aggregate in order to protect the privacy of the students and teachers. Behavioral data from prior years was too inaccurate to include in this study.

### **Student Achievement Data**

Pre- and post-curriculum-based measurement system assessments (Easy CBM) were given internally at the youth center to measure participants' progress in math and reading during the program period. Pre-tests were administered in September and post-tests were administered in May. Since this was the first year that the program utilized these assessments, there were no comparable test scores available from prior program years.

Easy CBM was developed by educational researchers from the University of Oregon to give teachers a quick and reliable tool to measure their students' growth in math and reading. There are a variety of leveled math and reading tests, and teachers could administer the test as often as they liked. There are two versions: a free version (lite) and a deluxe version (\$39.99/teacher) that comes with a variety of customization options. The free version of multiple choice reading comprehension (MCRC) tests were given in grades 2 through 8 and three math tests were given: *numbers and operations*, *number operations*, and *algebra and geometry*.

Easy CBM reading tests are based on 'Big Five' constructs of reading reported in the 2000 National Reading Panel report. Included are measures of early literacy (letter names, phoneme segmenting), phonics (letter sounds), fluency (word and passage reading fluency), vocabulary, and reading comprehension. Math tests are based on two measures: National Council of Teachers of Mathematics (NCTM) Curriculum Focal Point Standards in Mathematics and the Common Core State Standards in Mathematics (Easy CBM, n.d.).

### **Data Collection**

#### **Interviews**

All interviews were audio recorded with the participants' permission and transcribed by the researcher. Interview transcriptions were provided for the participant to member check, to review the statements to ensure they are accurate and truthful (Merriam, 1998). Each participant was given an opportunity to review his or her interviews and make corrections or clarifications. The interview transcripts were printed and filed for safe keeping for future coding. Interview data were analyzed using thematic content analysis.

## **Surveys**

The CRCMSE was administered as a paper-and-pencil survey at the first and last professional development sessions. Participants had as much time as they needed to complete the survey. Participants' surveys were coded by a research assistant using an alphanumeric system to maintain anonymity while at the same time allowing the researcher to accurately compare pre- and post-surveys. The surveys were stored in the research assistant's filing cabinet until the data analysis phase began. Codes linking the participants to the surveys were in a separate file and locked in a cabinet.

The STR survey was given as a paper-and-pencil survey at the first and last professional development sessions. The survey took approximately 2–3 minutes to complete and each participant completed between 20 and 30, depending on the size of their class roster. Participants were instructed to be as honest in the surveys as possible in order to provide the most accurate data. Participants had a week to complete a survey for each of the students in their classroom. Participants were instructed to deliver completed surveys to the research assistant and not the researcher in order for the data to be compiled in aggregate form. The completed surveys were stored in a filing cabinet apart from the aggregated data.

The PDAS was administered upon conclusion of the professional development through the use of Qualtrics, an on-line survey tool. Staff members received an email containing a link to the two-part survey. The results were anonymously collected in Qualtrics and retrieved by the researcher during the data analysis phase of the study.

## **Observations**

As a part of the program, each classroom was observed five times during the course of the daily schedule. The observations took place at different times within the daily program

structure to observe interactions during a variety of activities. These times included mealtime, homework help time, instructional time, transition times, and dismissal. These observations were used to inform the professional development and to provide a context to coaching and feedback. None of these observations was used during the study.

To mitigate any researcher confirmation bias as well as to protect the privacy of the staff, the researcher employed a research assistant, an experienced licensed teacher, to conduct 15–20 minute observation, one in each of the four classrooms. The coded observation forms were provided to the researcher without identifiers in order to prevent the researcher from linking particular observations to specific teachers or classrooms. These observations were used in the study.

### **Student Discipline Data**

Student discipline records were kept in the organization's database program, called Efforts to Outcomes. An aggregate, program-wide discipline report was generated and printed for the first semester of the program year and archived until analysis. Upon conclusion of the 2017 program year, the current comparable report was generated. Staff log discipline events weekly, and historical discipline records are available on the database. The program administrator provided the student discipline reports in an aggregated format with no staff, student, or classroom names. The specific details of the discipline events were not provided to the researcher.

### **Student Achievement Data**

Easy Curriculum Based Measures (Easy CBM) is the normative assessment that is used by this youth organization. Students take a paper-and-pencil pre- and post-test and scores are logged into the Easy CBM website. Reports are easily created and printed from the website.

Individual, class, or program-wide reports are available. Paper copies of each student's tests are kept in their student files in case the online database fails in any way. The program administrator provided the program-wide results of the pre- and post-CBM assessments for the researcher without student names or identification numbers.

### **Identification of Attributes**

Several attributes were investigated and measured during this study. The first was cultural competence, which reflects a person's ability to interact effectively in a culturally diverse environment (Lindsey, Robins, Terrell, & Lindsey, 1999). A related attribute was culturally responsive teaching, which was defined as teaching that empowered students intellectually, socially, emotionally, and politically by using the students' unique cultural referents to impart knowledge, skills, and attitudes (Ladson-Billings, 2009). Similarly, the attribute of culturally responsive classroom management was measured, which was defined as an approach to managing classrooms in way in which all children were able to act, learn, and achieve within their own cultural norms (Metropolitan Center for Urban Education, 2008). This study measured staff self-efficacy. Self-efficacy is the belief in one's capabilities to succeed at a task (Bandura, 1997). Last, student-staff relationships were measured. Student-staff relationships were defined by the social and emotional interactions between staff and students, either positive or negative, as evidenced by conflict, closeness, and dependency (Pianta, 1992).

### **Data Analysis Procedures**

The action research approach to data analysis allows for a variety of data sources to be rigorously analyzed. Qualitative methods were used to analyze classroom observations and staff interviews to determine themes and patterns. Quantitative statistical tests were used to compare pre- and post-surveys to determine if any change took place. Quantitative data will be used to

support the qualitative data. The following data analysis procedures were discussed through each research question. A visual representation of the data and procedures can be found in Table 1.

Table 1

*Summary of Data Types and Analysis Procedures*

Research Question	Data Collection Instruments	Data Analysis Procedures
Research Question 1: Based on each of the five concepts of the Guskey Evaluation Model (2000), how effective was the culturally responsive classroom management professional development?	PDAS	Descriptive statistics
	Participant interviews	Thematic coding
	Class observations	Thematic coding
	Student achievement data	Paired sample t-test
Research Question 2: What are staff's perceptions of the impact of the professional development on student-staff outcomes, specifically, staff self-efficacy, student-staff relationships, and discipline related incidents at the youth center?	CRCMSE survey (pre/post)	Wilcoxon signed ranks test
	STRS survey (pre/post)	Paired sample t-test
	Participant interviews	Thematic coding
	Student discipline records	Descriptive statistics
	Classroom observations	Analytical coding

### Qualitative Analysis

Thematic content analysis was the qualitative method used for this study. A descriptive approach, thematic content analysis focuses on capturing themes expressed by the participants (Vaismoradi, Turunen, & Bondas, 2013). Thematic content analysis is inductive and developed out of the grounded theory approach (Burnard, Gill, Stewart, Treasure, & Chadwick, B., 2008). The process of thematic content analysis comprises examining transcripts, identifying themes, and gathering examples of those themes (Burnard, et al., 2008).

The participant interviews were transcribed verbatim, followed by the procedure known as open coding. The researcher read each transcript and made notes in the margins about words,

theories, or short phrases that summed up what was being said in the text in order to summarize each element that was discussed in the transcript (Burnard, et al., 2008). Next, the researcher worked to reduce the categories by combining or removing redundancies, and looked for overlapping or similar categories. This reduced list became the final categories to be investigated. The researcher then returned to the interview transcripts and highlighted the categories that were found within (Burnard, et al., 2008). The results of this step are discussed in narrative form in findings sections.

### **Quantitative Analysis**

Two forms of quantitative analysis were used in the study: *descriptive statistics* and *inferential statistics*. Descriptive statistics were used to describe the basic features of the data (Trochim, 2006). More specifically, this study focused on the descriptive statistics of frequency distribution and measures of central tendency.

Inferential statistics such as the paired sample t-test and the Wilcoxon Signed Rank test were used in this study. Inferential statistical results must be used with caution because of the small sample size. In this study, inferential analysis was used for purposes of triangulation to help support or explain other types of analysis.

A paired sample t-test is a statistical test to determine if the mean difference between two sets of data is zero (Paired Sample T-Test, n.d.). Besides difference, a paired sample t-test can determine changes. Determining change was the focus of this study. The researcher detected change by looking at the means when the participants were measured on the same dependent variable, but at two time points, which is a common strategy in a pre-post study design (Laerd Statistics, n.d.). In this type of experiment, researchers measure participants at the beginning and at the end of some intervention. In this particular study, the two sets of data (the variables)



represented the means in the pre- and post-survey data. With quantitative data analysis such as the paired sample t- test, the researcher began with two competing hypotheses: the null hypothesis and the alternative hypothesis (Paired Sample T-Test, n.d.). The null hypothesis states that the mean score is zero and the alternative hypothesis states that the mean difference is not equal to zero.

The mathematical procedures for the paired sample t-test were computed using SPSS, a statistical software tool. A researcher considered statistical significance when interpreting the results. Statistical significance was determined by considering the p-value. Scientists use the term "p" to describe the probability of observing such a large difference purely by chance in two identical groups. An alpha level of .05 will be used for this study; therefore, the *p*-value had to be less than .05 to reject the null hypothesis. Additionally, the researcher reported a 95% confidence interval, which was also calculated by SPSS. The confidence interval addressed the margin of error that could be present in the study (Laerd Statistics, n.d.). Using a confidence interval of 95% and an alpha level of .05 assures the researcher that the statistical results are valid and reliable. A one-tailed or directional test will be used since the researcher is only concerned with growth.

A Wilcoxon Signed Rank test was used to compare the pre- and post-CRCMSES which measured self-efficacy. This statistical test was useful for analyzing this survey because it was nonparametric; therefore, it was more useful for a small sample size. As with the t-test, the p-value was set at .05 to reach significance. In a Wilcoxon Signed Rank test, the median, the number at the midpoint of a distribution, is the standard unit used to test a hypothesis.

## **Research Question 1**

Based on each of the five concepts of the Guskey Evaluation Model (2000), how effective was the culturally responsive classroom management professional development?

For level one of the evaluation, participants' reactions, two data sources were analyzed. The participant semi-structured interview was conducted seeking to gather details regarding which parts of the training were the most useful or were not useful. Interview data was analyzed using thematic content analysis. This is a descriptive approach to qualitative analysis that focuses on capturing themes expressed by the participants (Vaismoradi, Turunen, & Bondas, 2013). Results are reported in a written narrative form in chapter four.

To gain further data about the staff's beliefs about the effectiveness of the professional development, the seven questions on the Professional Development Assessment Survey (PDAS) were analyzed through a frequency distribution to be displayed by a bar graph (Figure 1 in Chapter 4). The PDAS fell into the category of Likert-type where each question will be reviewed individually rather than being combined for an overall score (Boone & Boone, 2012).

For level two of the program evaluation, changes to participants' knowledge or skill, two forms of data were analyzed. As with level one, questions were asked during the semi-structured interviews to address the participants' assessment of their own learning. Questions probing the participants' view of changes in their knowledge and skills were included during the interview process. Interview data was collected for level two evaluation through the process of recording, transcribing, and topic coding. Themes were determined through thematic content analysis and are reported in narrative form.

Next, part II of the PDAS was analyzed through descriptive statistics. The survey was a Likert-type that could be analyzed by calculating the mean score for each question (Boone &

Boone, 2012). Data was recorded in a table showing the percentage of responses for each level of knowledge or skill—novice, apprentice, or expert.

For level three of the program evaluation, organizational support, data was collected by asking explicit questions during the semi-structured interview about organizational practices, supports, and recognition during the professional development program. Data was topically coded, and themes are reported in narrative form.

Level four of the Guskey evaluation model addresses observable changes in the teachers' practice. This differs from level two in that level two is self-reported and level four is observable by an outside party. Archived data collected from class observation notes was reviewed and analytically coded to determine the practical usage of the theory of culturally responsive classroom management in classrooms. Analytical coding was used to make, celebrate, illustrate, and develop categories thematically. This analysis was not used simply to code what happened, but to allow interpretation of what happened or what was said, create new more insightful categories, and researcher awareness of new messages or themes (Saldaña, 2009). Notations were made on the class observation form when the staff member explicitly used the culturally responsive classroom management strategies and when they did not. The themes were summarized in a narrative format in the findings section. The classroom observation form can be found in the appendix.

The final level of the Guskey evaluation model refers to student learning. Pre- and post-math and reading CBM scores were compared using a one-tailed paired sample t-test. Mean scores from the pretests were analyzed with SPSS. To examine this quantitative data, hypotheses were tested:

- Null hypothesis: There will be no effect on achievement because of the professional development.
- Alternative hypothesis: There will be a significant positive effect on student achievement because of the professional development.

## **Research Question 2**

What are staff's' perceptions of the impact of the professional development on student-staff outcomes, specifically, staff self-efficacy, student-staff relationships, and discipline related incidents at the youth center?

**Self-efficacy.** Data were analyzed qualitatively through thematic content analysis of the participant interview transcripts. Data were analyzed quantitatively by comparing the participants' pre- and post-Culturally Responsive Classroom Management Self-Efficacy Surveys (Siwatu, Putman, Starker-Glass, & Lewis, 2015). The pre- and post-median scores were then compared statistically using a Wilcoxon Signed Ranks Test method of analysis.

- Null hypothesis: There will be no effect on teacher self-efficacy from pre-test to post-test because of the professional development.
- Alternative hypothesis: There will be a significant positive effective on teacher self-efficacy because of the professional development.

**Student-staff relationships.** The semi-structured interview addressed participants' beliefs about their relationship with students since completing the professional development. These transcribed interviews were coded using thematic content analysis and reported narratively. The Student-Teacher Relationship (STR) survey contains seven Likert scale questions that address closeness and eight that address conflict (Pianta 1992). The pre- and post-

closeness and conflict results were compared using a paired sample t-test. The two variables being measured in this test are the pre- and post-STR survey:

- Null hypothesis: There will be no effect on student teacher closeness or conflict as measured by the STR survey because of the professional development.
- Alternative hypothesis: There will be a significant positive effect of student teacher closeness and a significant negative effect on student teacher conflict as measured by the STR survey because of the professional development.

**Student discipline incidents.** To analyze the discipline records, a table was used to report the number of discipline referrals for both semesters and included in the findings. Results were reported using descriptive statistics and were tabulated in a table 10 found in Chapter 4.

### **Limitations of the Research Design**

An emancipatory action research study has several limitations. A common limitation of action research is the researcher's lack of control (Baskerville, 1999). In the research process, the group of participants has some control over theoretical developments. This could cause the research to go in a different direction than the researcher intended. The researcher may find her project scope widening due to staffs' interest in new theories or problems (Baskerville, 1999). In this study, the researcher and the participating staff members agreed upon the problem at the onset; therefore, this potential limitation was mitigated.

Most researchers consider action research to be cyclical by design; some call it a spiral structure. As a researcher moves through the cycle of initial reflection, plan, act, observe and reflect; it inevitably leads to another cycle of inquiry (Dick, 2000). For this study, the researcher only formally completed one full cycle of action research. However, there were many informal and incomplete cycles of reflection occurring throughout. Atkinson (1994) notes that incomplete

and simultaneous cycles are common for researchers and could be viewed as a problem with the action research design. Because of this limitation, there are many new questions that arose throughout the process, thus sparking ideas for future research.

The urban youth center that serves as the program site is part of a local nonprofit, unassociated with a national parent organization, which has no other sites for comparison. Because of this, the study is limited by a small sample size in a unique setting. The small sample size used can be subject to overgeneralizations and low external validity (Explorable, n.d.). Also, there is the issue of researcher subjectivity. Since the researcher is also the program lead for the organization, there may be an unknown confirmation bias that existed as the data was collected and analyzed. This insider researcher phenomenon can be a blessing and a curse, however. The beneficial side of this limitation is that the researcher was in tune with the actual needs and realities of the program. Since the program had only ten staff members, it was impossible to do random sampling to gain stronger generalizations. Therefore, results will be useful to a smaller audience in the research community. The student achievement and discipline data that was used is limited by the time of the study and the inconsistencies of data collection in prior years. Ideally, student data would be compared over a longer period of time than was possible for this study. Last, much of the data collected was self-reported by the participants, which can be subject errors due to selective memory, telescoping, attribution, or exaggeration (Mahoney, 1977).

### **Qualitative Measures for Quality Control**

Guba (1981) explains trustworthiness in qualitative research in four components: *credibility*, *transferability*, *dependability*, and *confirmability*. These terms are often interchanged with *internal validity*, *external validity*, *reliability*, and *objectivity* (Shenton, 2004).

Credibility or internal validity was attained in this study through the researcher's extended participation at the site to observe characteristic and qualities, as well as conduct frequent member checks. With this method, it is possible to collect robust data to capture the essence of the phenomenon being studied. Multiple voices were reported through the participant interviews in order to demonstrate a variety of viewpoints, similarities, dissimilarities, and redundancies (Shenton, 2004). Participants were given the opportunity to member check by reviewing their interview transcripts for accuracy. They were able to provide corrections or clarifications if needed. In addition, the participants had the right to withdraw from the study at any point.

The study gained credibility through the use of proven, specific qualitative and quantitative procedures in data gathering and analysis. Triangulation of different data collection methods helped overcome the shortcomings that each had on their own and added to the study's credibility. In addition, converging qualitative and quantitative data in the analysis further enhanced the study's credibility.

Last, the findings from this study were related to the existing body of knowledge in multicultural education to assess the degree of congruence between this study and prior studies. Silverman (cited in Shenton, 2004) considers this step a key criterion for evaluating a new qualitative study. While this study was unique in many ways, there were still several relevant studies that were identified during the literature review to use as source of comparison.

Transferability, or external validity, is defined as how well the study can be applied to other situations (Merriam 1998). The dependability, reliability, and stability of the data can be improved through triangulation and overlap, as well as by creating an audit trail. Ideally, if the

study were to be repeated under the same conditions with the same participants and the same methodology, similar results would be obtained (Shenton, 2004).

By using the research processes used in this study and keeping a clear audit trail of how data was collected, a future researcher should have enough information to replicate the study. Dependability was attained through the researcher's "reflective appraisal" (Shenton, 2004). After concluding the study, the researcher provided a brief evaluation of the effectiveness of the process that was used in order to provide suggestions for future researchers. Confirmability or objectivity cannot be guaranteed since we are human beings prone to error. However, Miles and Huberman (1994) believe that the key criterion for confirmability is the extent to which the researcher can admit biases. A clear audit trail as well as triangulation of data added to the study's confirmability.

### **Ethical Issues**

According to Merriam (1998), ethical issues are most likely to emerge in the two areas of data collection and dissemination of findings. To mitigate these concerns, the researcher took several precautions. In the area of qualitative data collection, it was made very clear to the participants who were being surveyed and interviewed that their participation was voluntary and could be ceased at any time. The participants were also given the opportunity to review their interview transcripts to correct any errors or misunderstandings. For quantitative data collection, creating the research questions and hypotheses before data collection prevents manipulation of results. The data was stored in a locked cabinet and will be destroyed after three years. A separate file was kept, linking the names with the codes. Participant names were not used, only pseudonyms.



Due to the researcher's various roles affecting this research project there are several potential biases that could have occurred. The researcher was also employed as senior program director at the organization in which the study takes place, primary leader of the professional development program being studied, supervisor of staff team being studied, and founder of the program being studied as well as researcher. Peshkin (1988) described these situations by using the phrase, *personal stakes*.

The following steps were taken to mitigate the possible bias for this study. All of the staff at the youth center were invited to participate in the research study. Using both qualitative and quantitative data provided a more accurate picture of the findings. Often qualitative data can be open to researcher interpretation, whereas quantitative data is more resistant to bias due to its statistical nature. Norris (1997) suggests that research demands skepticism, commitment, and detachment. Participants were informed of their right to withdraw at any time from the study without penalty. They were also provided with information on how to withdraw.

### **Expected Findings**

The objective of this research study was to examine the effect of the CRCM training on the after-school program. To do this, the study analyzed the staff's growth in self-efficacy, the staffs' relationships with students, and the staffs' use of the training strategies in the classroom. The expected findings were that the staff would report significant growth in their self-efficacy related to managing diverse classrooms and significant growth in their relationships with their students, and that there would be evidence of using culturally responsive practices in their classrooms. The researcher expected that the professional development program would effectively meet its outcomes.

It was also expected that there would be some changes in students as a result of their staff's participation in the professional development series. The expected findings were that there would be fewer serious discipline issues at the youth center and that student achievement would increase.

### **Summary**

The focus of this study was on examining the influence of the training in culturally responsive classroom management had on the after-school program. The purpose of this chapter was to explain what type of data would be collected and how it would be analyzed to answer the research questions. This chapter addressed the trustworthiness of the study and the risk of researcher bias.

An emancipatory action research method was applied in this study in order to examine the research questions using a variety of data sources. Participant interviews, class observations, survey research, and self-reported evaluations were all considered when evaluating the effectiveness of the professional development program. The next chapter focuses on the actual findings that were discovered using the instruments and data analysis methods explained here.

## **Chapter 4: Results and Findings**

Examined in this study were the effects of a professional development program aimed at training after-school program staff in the theory and stance of culturally responsive classroom management (CRCM). Further investigated are the changes in staff self-efficacy, student-staff relationships, and student discipline events because of staff's participation in the training.

Chapter 4 reviews the research questions, discusses the survey instruments, details the demographics of the study's participants, and summarizes the content of the professional development program. A systematic evaluation of the effects of the professional development was completed using the Guskey model. The Guskey (2000) five-level evaluation model calls for a hierarchical assessment of program outcomes. This process starts with evaluating learner/participant satisfaction, and then progresses to the other, deeper levels: learning attributed to the program, organizational change, participants' use of new skills, and the program's impact on students (Guskey, 2000). Chapter 4 ends with a summary of the results.

### **Research Questions**

Two research questions focused on the impacts the culturally responsive classroom management (CRCM) professional development program had on the urban, after-school program. The research questions are as follows:

#### **Research Question 1**

Based on each of the five concepts of the Guskey Evaluation Model (2000), how effective was the culturally responsive classroom management professional development?

## **Research Question 2**

What are staff's perceptions of the impact of the professional development on student-staff outcomes, specifically, staff self-efficacy, student-staff relationships, and discipline related incidents at the youth center?

### **Hypotheses**

This action research study primarily relied on qualitative data; however, quantitative data is also used for purposes of triangulation. Hypotheses were created for the quantitative data sources. The quantitative data is expressed in both descriptive and inferential forms. The inferential data lacks internal validity when taken alone due to the small sample size, but it can serve as support when combined with other sources. For research question 1, the Guskey Model (2000) primarily requires qualitative data except for level five, which investigates the effect of the professional development on student achievement. This stage required an analysis of student pre- and post- math and reading CBM assessments. For research question 2, a combination of qualitative and quantitative data was collected as well. Quantitatively, the CRCMSE and the STRS were analyzed statistically. The hypotheses for the quantitative data are as follows:

#### **Research question 1: Guskey Model, level 5: Student Achievement**

- Null hypothesis: There will be no effect on student achievement because of the professional development.
- Alternative hypothesis: There will be a significant positive effect on student achievement because of the professional development

#### **Research question 2: Staff Self-Efficacy**

- Null hypothesis: There will be no effect on staff self-efficacy from pretest to posttest because of the professional development.

- Alternative hypothesis: There will be a significant positive effective on staff self-efficacy because of the professional development.

#### Research question 2: Student-Staff Relationships

- Null hypothesis: There will be no effect on student-staff closeness or conflict as measured by the STRS survey because of the professional development.
- Alternative hypothesis: There will be a significant positive effect of student-staff closeness and a significant negative effect on student-staff conflict as measured by the STRS survey because of the professional development.

### **Instrumentation**

The instruments that were used to answer these research questions blended the qualitative and quantitative approaches for triangulation and provided a means for thorough analysis of the data. Qualitative sources included participant interviews and classroom observations. Each participant agreed to a semi-structured interview with the researcher. These interviews lasted between 20 and 50 minutes each. The interviews were then recorded and transcribed by the researcher. The interview questions were planned in advance, but some of the participants took the interview in slightly different directions, which is not only permissible in semi-structured interviews, but also useful. The interview transcriptions were coded using content analysis procedures. Several important themes emerged from this process. These themes will be discussed in detail in the analysis section. The original interview questions are included in Appendix D.

Quantitative instruments included the Culturally Responsive Classroom Management Self-Efficacy Scale (CRCMSES; Siwatu, Putman, Starker-Glass, & Lewis, 2015). This paper-and-pencil survey was administered before and after the professional development program.

Respondents were asked to rate themselves on a scale of 0–100 on 29 statements related to CRCM. The median scores were computed for both the pre- and post-survey and compared using a Wilcoxon Signed-Rank Test. The Wilcoxon Signed-Rank test is similar to the t-test except it is a nonparametric test (Ford, 2017). This ordinal statistical test allows a researcher to compare the median of two groups even if they are not normally distributed. In this study, the Wilcoxon Signed-Rank Test was chosen because it cannot be assumed that there is a normal distribution due to the small sample size.

Additionally, the Student-Teacher Relationship Short Form (STRS) was also administered before and after the professional development (Pianta, 1992). This 15-question survey required staff to reflect on their relationships with each of their students. Of the 15 questions, seven related to the closeness of the student-teacher relationship and eight addressed conflict in the relationship. The closeness and conflict factors were averaged independently, and the pre- and post-surveys were compared using a paired sample t-test.

The Professional Development Assessment Survey (PDAS) was the final survey given to the participants. This two-part survey was created on Qualtrics Survey Software and administered online. This survey captured participants' demographic information, their reactions to the professional development, and their perceived knowledge on topics related to CRCM. All the surveys were anonymous. A copy of the PDAS can be found in Appendix E.

Two forms of student data were collected for this study. Academic achievement was evaluated through the comparison of aggregate pre- and post-Easy Curriculum Based Measure Assessments (Easy CBM, n.d.), which were given at the youth center in September 2016 and again in May, 2017. The percentile scores from the pretest were compared to the percentile scores of the posttest using a paired sample t-test. Aggregate student behavior reports were also

analyzed. These discipline reports contain numbers of behavior warnings, suspensions, and expulsions.

Quantitative data instruments included classroom observation and participant interviews. The classroom observations were completed by a research volunteer who was trained to use the observation tool. Each of the participants was observed during an instructional session, and observations were noted onto the observation tool. The classroom observation results were coded as to be de-identified to the researcher.

The participant interviews were conducted and transcribed by the researcher. Each interview participant was given the opportunity to correct or clarify any of his or her interview after receiving a transcribed copy. The interviews were coded and re-coded using thematic coding process. Patterns and themes emerged from this process.

### **Participants**

Seven after-school program staff members were studied before and after their participation in the 15-week professional learning community, which focused on topics related to CRCM. To protect the identity of the participants, pseudonyms were used in place of their real names. Some employees are full-time staff and others are part of the Fellows program, a training program targeted at new college graduates seeking additional professional training and career guidance before entering the work force. For their service, Fellows earned a stipend for living expenses and housing. Table 2 summarizes the demographics and educational backgrounds of the staff involved in the study.

Table 2

*Demographics of the Participants*

Demographics	Category	Number of staff
Age	<25 yrs. Old	2
	25–30 yrs. Old	4
	>30 yrs. old	1
Gender	Male	2
	Female	5
Race	African American	5
	Caucasian	2
	Other	0
Education	Some college	2
	Bachelor's degree	3
	Master's degree	2
Residence	In community <1 year	3
	In community >1 year	3
	Outside community	1

Chloe leads the middle school class at the after-school program. She has been employed by the organization for three years beginning as a year-long volunteer, then a fellow, and later transitioned to a full-time employee. Chloe is a 25-year-old, African American female with a bachelor's degree. Her degree is not in education, but she aspires to become a licensed teacher at some point in her career. She did not grow up in the same neighborhood where the youth center is located but shares some cultural similarities to her students. For the past two years, Chloe has resided in the same neighborhood as her students.

Lance leads the fourth and fifth grade class at the after-school program. He has been employed by the organization for two years. Lance is a 25-year-old, African American male who has not yet completed his bachelor's degree. Lance relates well to the students in the after-



school program because he is a product of the program himself having attended the program during his youth. Lance believes that he has grown to appreciate other cultures outside of the neighborhood due to his life experiences and multicultural relationships, but he also loves and appreciates his local community and “sees the beauty in it.” After four years away, he returned to the neighborhood of his childhood. He says that he understands what the kids are going through—“the survival mentality”—because he lived it.

Tanya leads the kindergarten and first grade class at the after-school program. She has been employed by the organization for 4 years. Tanya is a middle-aged, African American female who has completed some college. Tanya did not grow up in the local community, but she has resided within it for the past five years. She believes that residing in the neighborhood helps her relate better to her students and their parents and caregivers.

Adam is the director of the after-school program. He has been employed with the organization for six years, working his way from an AmeriCorps volunteer to a director in a relatively short time frame. Adam is a 30-year-old, White male with a masters’ degree in education. Adam does not reside in the community but lives in an adjacent urban neighborhood with similar demographics.

Amber is a teaching fellow with the organization. This is her first year. She is the assistant in the fourth- and fifth-grade classroom. Amber is a 23-year-old, African American female who moved into the neighborhood as a requirement of the Fellows program. She has earned her bachelor’s degree in psychology.

Natalie is a teaching fellow with the organization. She is the assistant in the middle school classroom of the after-school program. Natalie is a 24-year-old, White female who resides in the community, for just one year. Prior to this, Natalie did not reside in an urban

community. Natalie has been at the organization for two years, having completed a year of volunteer service before becoming a teaching fellow. She has earned a bachelor's degree.

Brooke is a teaching fellow in her first year of employment with the organization. She provides reading remediation for students in kindergarten-third grade during the after-school program. Brooke is a 25-year-old, African American female who admits that the culture of the community is foreign to her since she was born and raised in suburbia.

These participants completed the professional development program and agreed to be a part of the study. Each completed three different surveys, and were observed and interviewed as a part of the data collection process. The participants were diverse in age, background, race, gender, residence, and years of experience. This diversity in experiences created a professional learning community in which a variety of points of view were expressed and valued.

### **Professional Development Program**

The professional development program began on September 21, 2016, and concluded on February 8, 2017. The 15 sessions followed the format of a professional learning community (PLC) in that it contained these five common elements: *shared leadership, collective creativity, shared values and vision, supportive conditions, and shared personal practice* (Hord, 1997).

The content for the PLC came mostly from these texts: *A Culturally Proficient Education: An Asset-Based Response to the Conditions of Poverty* (Lindsey, Karns, & Myatt, 2010), *For White Folks Who Teach in the Hood. . . and the Rest of Ya'll Too: Reality Pedagogy and Urban Education* (Emdin, 2016), and *We Can't Teach What We Don't Know* (Howard, 2016). Other resources were also utilized; such as articles, videos, and handouts. The staff was expected to come to the PLC having completed the assigned readings and prepared to discuss them with the group. Besides discussion, participants worked in groups to create visuals, practice strategies

through role-plays, view videos, observe at a local school, and complete self-evaluations. Table 3, below, lists the topics for each week of the PLC.

Table 3

*Schedule, Staff Presence, and Topics Covered*

Week	# Staff Present	Topics Covered
1	10	Pre-surveys Definition of Cultural Responsiveness (Howard, 2016) Cultural Proficiency Continuum (Lindsey, Karnes, & Myatt, 2010) Cultural Iceberg
2	8	Asset-based thinking vs. Deficit-based thinking (Lindsey, Karnes, & Myatt, 2010)
3	8	Culture of Wealth (Yosso, 2006)
4	10	Classroom management styles (What is your classroom management profile, n.d.)
5	8	Teacher as Warm Demander (Bondy & Ross, 2008)
6	10	Culturally Responsive Classroom Management (Metropolitan Center for Urban Education, 2008)
7	11	5 Aspects of CRCM:
8	10	Cultural discourse styles (Gay, 2010)
9	9	Neo-Indigenous discussion (Emdin, 2016)
10	8	Culture of Care discussion (Emdin, 2016)
11	9	Culturally Congruent Speech and Actions discussion (Emdin, 2016)
12	9	Orderly and Clearly Defined Procedures discussion (Emdin, 2016)
13	10	Authoritative and Directive Approach discussion (Emdin, 2016)
14	9	High Expectations for Academic Achievement discussion (Emdin, 2016)
15	10	Observation at local school, Discussion of observation and Self-Evaluation
16–18	8	Coaching

During the first seven weeks, the group explored the ideologies that lay the foundation for CRCM. These ideologies included cultural proficiency and the cultural continuum, the depth of culture and the cultural iceberg, asset-based thinking versus deficit-based thinking, the culture of wealth in communities of color, different classroom management styles, warm demander pedagogy, cultural discourse styles, and the five principles of CRCM. These conversations gave the chance for staff to discuss and explore cultural differences in a safe and supportive environment.

After building staff's background knowledge, the group read *For White Folks Who Teach in the Hood . . . and the Rest of Y'all Too: Reality Pedagogy and Urban Education* (Emdin, 2016). The group participated in weekly discussions and activities to connect the concepts in the book to CRCM. These conversations created opportunities for staff to share examples from their classrooms and get feedback and advice from the whole group.

The training culminated in a school visit at a neighboring, partner elementary school where the participants observed two teachers whom the researcher had previously enlisted due to their strong abilities in CRCM. After the visit, the group could debrief the strategies they observed. Finally, the participants completed a self-evaluation where they ranked their proficiency in the five elements of CRCM that were the focus of the PLC: *culture of care, culturally congruent speech and actions, orderly and clearly defined procedures, authoritative and directive approach, high expectations for academic achievement*.

Upon the conclusion of the 15 PLC sessions, staff received coaching from two experienced urban educators (the researcher and the research volunteer) to help the participants apply the content more effectively in their classrooms. The coaches first met with each staff member individually to evaluate the areas of CRCM that they wished to address in coaching.

Following the meeting, the coaches observed the staff member at least three times. Each observation was followed by a coaching session. During these sessions, the coach and the staff would discuss the observation and ways to better incorporate CRCM in their practice. The purpose of the sessions was solely for professional development; neither of the coaches was acting as a supervisor or performing a formal evaluation of the program staff.

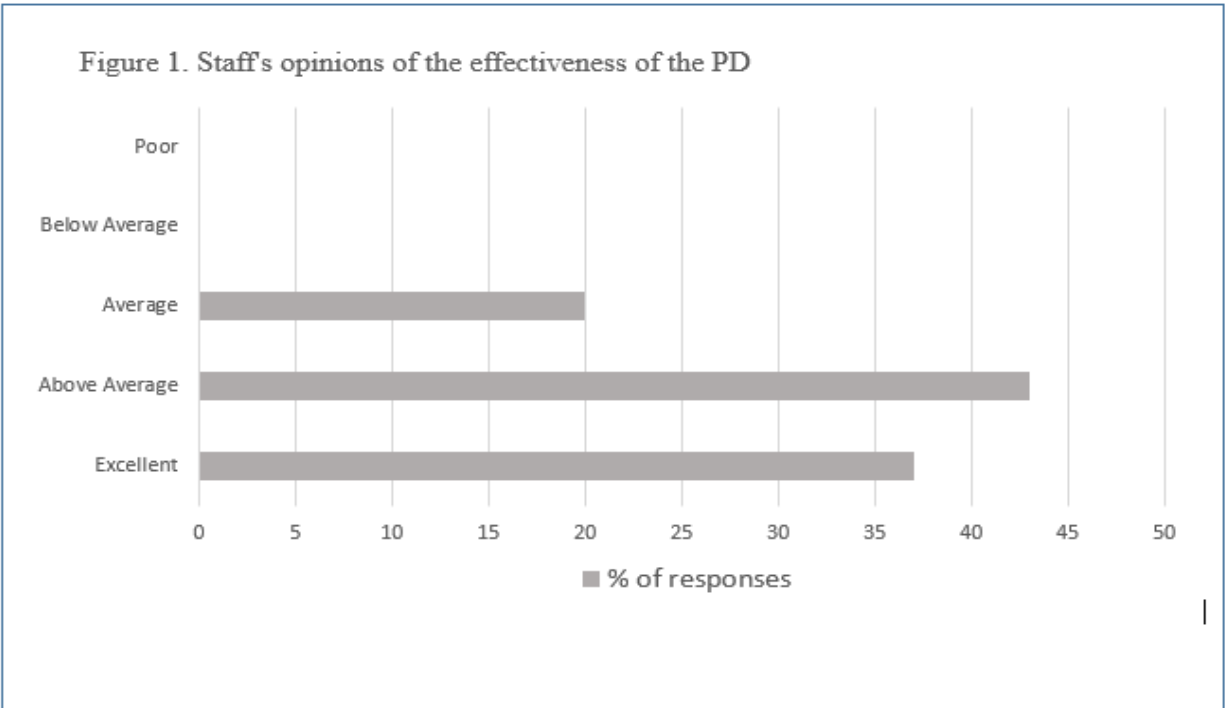
## **Data Analysis and Findings**

### **Research Question 1**

Based on each of the five concepts of the Guskey Evaluation Model (2000), how effective was the culturally responsive classroom management professional development?

To answer this research question, the researcher followed the five stages of Guskey's model of evaluation (2000). The Guskey method is a five-step model created to evaluate teacher professional development. The five stages are hierarchical and become progressively more complex. The five steps in the evaluation process are *participants' reactions*, *participants' learning*, *organization's support and change*, *participants' use of new knowledge and skills*, and *student learning outcomes* (Guskey, 2000). Each of these steps will be explored in order.

**Stage 1: Participants' reactions.** Staff were probed in part one of the Professional Development Assessment Survey (PDAS) to rank how effective they felt the professional development program was. The survey scale included ratings of poor, below average, average, above average and excellent. All seven participants responded to the seven questions and when summed the results were as follows: 20% of the staff ranked the training as "Average," 43% selected "Above Average," and 37% rated it as "Excellent." Results are noted in Figure 1 below.



*Figure 1.* This figure illustrates the staff’s self-reported opinions of the professional development training.

This overall ranking was based on the sum of the seven specific elements that staff ranked their effectiveness: *the objectives of the training were made clear, the leader’s instructional skills, the program held your interest, your questions/concerns were addressed, the ideas and skills were useful in improving your classroom, and the material was immediately useful to you and the overall value of this training.*

Table 4 represents the respondents' rankings in each of the elements.

Table 4

*PDAS Staff Survey Results (Part I)*

Question	Poor	Below Average	Average	Above Average	Excellent
The objectives of the training were made clear.	0 0%	0 0%	3 42.86%	3 42.86%	1 14.28%
The leader's instructional skills	0 0%	0 0%	0 0%	4 57.14%	3 42.86%
The program held your interest.	0 0%	0 0%	0 0%	4 57.14%	3 42.86%
Your questions and concerns were addressed.	0 0%	0 0%	1 14.28%	4 57.14%	2 28.57%
The ideas and skills were useful in improving your classroom.	0 0%	0 0%	2 28.57%	2 28.57%	3 42.86%
The material was immediately useful to you.	0 0%	0 0%	3 42.86%	1 14.28%	3 42.86%
The overall value of this training	0 0%	0 0%	1 14.28%	3 42.86%	3 42.86%
Summary Scores			10 20%	21 43%	18 37%

When staff were asked about the effectiveness of the professional development in the semi-structured interviews, more details emerged as to which aspects were effective and which were not. Six out of seven staff mentioned that the Emdin book was a very effective aspect of the training. Five out of seven staff acknowledged that the school observation was very effective. Other commonly mentioned positive aspects were working together as a group, group



discussions, and learning from each other's perspectives and experiences. The discussion topic that was most mentioned was Yosso's Culture of Wealth Model (2006). In this model, the author describes the assets that exist in communities of color: aspirational capital, familial capital, social capital, navigational capital, and resistance capital. This topic was very meaningful and memorable to the staff, giving them tools for asset-based thinking. Additionally, several staff listed the articles, the videos, and the self-evaluation as being effective learning tools. Several staff mentioned that the length of time that had passed between the PLC and the interview was problematic in that they struggled to recall all the details of the training. Nine weeks had passed since the final session and the interviews.

Several themes were also apparent when staff discussed areas of the professional development that were lacking. Four staff members mentioned that they wished the training had more specifics on how to relate to and communicate with parents, especially when dealing with difficult conversations regarding student behaviors. Four staff members also said that there should have been more accountability after the training to ensure that the new content was being applied in the classrooms. Three staff members thought that there should have been more examples relating the training content to the specific context of an after-school program rather than a traditional school setting. Two staff members felt that the training may have been too complex for the less experienced staff, especially since it was the beginning of the school year. Other useful ideas for improvement included having more teacher observations at a variety of grade levels, including more role plays and peer observations, and employing guest speakers in the trainings.

**Stage 2: Participants' learning.** Participant learning was evaluated through part two of the PDAS. This survey was given nine weeks after the conclusion of the training. Participants

were asked to rate their current knowledge or skill in fifteen areas related to CRCM that were covered in the training. They were asked to rate themselves as novice, apprentice, or expert in each area. A choice of “never” was provided for staff who may have had no recollection of the topic. The results are in listed in Table 5 below.

Table 5

*Staff Survey Results (Part II)*

Question	Never	Novice	Apprentice	Expert
I demonstrate asset-based thinking.	0%	0%	86%	14%
I know the 6 types of capital found in communities of color.	0%	14%	57%	29%
I can name the 6 stages in the cultural competence continuum.	14%	14%	71%	0%
I know the difference between authoritarian, authoritative, permissive, and indulgent styles of classroom management and which is most effective with urban students of color.	0%	0%	28%	71%
I find authentic ways to connect to my students' community and home lives.	0%	0%	42%	57%
I create a culture of care in my classroom.	0%	14%	43%	43%
I use culturally congruent actions and speech.	0%	14%	29%	57%
I am comfortable with the active discourse style of call and response.	0%	29%	29%	43%
I can be directive and authoritative.	0%	14%	29%	57%
My classroom procedures and clear are followed in an orderly fashion.	0%	29%	29%	43%
I create a classroom environment focused on high academic expectations.	0%	29%	29%	43%
I give my students an opportunity to have voice in the way the classroom operates.	0%	0%	57%	43%
I connect my lessons to things the students already know and are comfortable with.	0%	0%	43%	57%
I find ways to connect to my students outside the classroom walls.	0%	0%	57%	43%
I find ways for my classroom to operate as a family.	0%	14%	57%	28%

According to the survey, staff felt strongest about knowing different classroom management styles, finding authentic ways to connect to students' communities and home lives, using culturally congruent speech and actions, utilizing the ability to be direct and authoritative, and connecting lessons to things the students already know and are comfortable with. Areas of biggest concern were having classroom procedures that were clear and followed in an orderly manner, having a classroom environment that was focused on high academic achievement, and being comfortable with the discourse style of call and response.

**Stage 3: Organization's support and change.** Stage three in the Guskey evaluation model, centers on the overall impact professional development programs have on the organization. The study employed this level so the staff could reflect upon what sorts of systems needed to be in place organizationally for an initiative to be implemented successfully. This stage focused on policies, procedures, and support that may or may not exist within the organization currently. Qualitative data was collected pertaining to this stage through semi-structured staff interviews.

An important theme that emerged because of this probing was related to the staff's need for support, accountability, and celebration. Many staff reported that they felt very supported by their peers. Phrases such as, "co-workers are very supportive and helpful through difficulties" were frequently expressed. Similarly, staff felt compelled to come to each other's aid when they saw a staff member struggling in classroom management, connecting with parents, or understanding local culture. Those staff members who had grown up in the community felt as if it was part of their role to help bring other staff and even volunteers along on a cultural journey.

Another common response from staff centered on their need for supervisor support in CRCM. In addition, the staff recognized their need to take more initiative with their supervisor

and seek out the support they needed. So, while the staff expressed a great deal of satisfaction with the support they were receiving from peers, it was apparent that they were inviting more support from their supervisor.

A common theme that fell within level three was staff's desire for increased accountability to implement the CRCM strategies that were learned in the training. Many staff members admitted to not employing the new strategies in their classrooms since their supervisor was not requiring it or asking about it. One staffer put it well when she said, "Staff needed to agree on the new strategies, try them out in their classrooms and then reflect together on what was working and not working." This sentiment was echoed by other staff who felt as though they sometimes struggled to implement the strategies fully into their daily practice.

Lastly, a theme that emerged was the organization's weakness in celebrating staff's accomplishments within CRCM. Staff did not feel very celebrated as they made progress in applying the new content. Two staff members, however, did appreciate having others notice their strengths in CRCM and asking for advice on how to bring certain techniques into their own classrooms. When prodded about their definition of "celebration" it became clear that staff viewed celebrations more as events and rewards and did not initially think of complements and affirming words as being valid celebrations. In fact, one staffer even mentioned passing out cookies and brownies as a preferred method of staff celebration.

**Stage 4: Participants' use of knowledge and skills.** To determine how staff were using CRCM in their daily practice, classroom observations were conducted by a research assistant. The research assistant was a veteran teacher who was trained to use the CRCM observation tool prior to completing the classroom visits. The observation forms were coded to protect the

privacy of the teacher and the students. Each participant was observed one time for approximately 30 minutes during regular after-school programming.

The observation tool required the observer to rank the participant in five specific CRCM skills: *culture of care*, *culturally congruent speech and actions*, *authoritative and directive approach*, *orderly and clearly defined procedures*, and *high expectations for academic achievement*. The codes that were used are as follows: N/A—Not applicable, 1—Ineffective, 2—Developing, 3—Effective, and 4—Highly Effective.

From the five CRCM skills that were being observed, staff overwhelmingly demonstrated culture of care the most. The mean score for culture of care was 3.29, which is just above “effective.” For the theme of culture of care, the observer noted the following behaviors that demonstrated a warm and caring classroom atmosphere: smiles, terms of endearment, a class incentive called “acts of kindness,” laughter, a class “huddle” before instruction began, patient tone of voice, welcoming students into the room, encouraging words, complimenting effort, physical touch, smiling, laughing, harmless teasing, asking students for permission before sharing their work with the class, students helping one another, referring to the class as a family, and mixed aged groups working productively. The least observed skill was culturally responsive speech and actions, with a mean score of 2.0—“developing.” The remaining three skills (authoritative and directive approach, orderly and clearly defined procedures, and high expectations for achievement) were similarly observed at just above “developing.” Table 6, below, details the observation results.

Table 6

*Classroom Observation Summary Data (Scale of 0-4)*

<i>Participant ID Number</i>	Culture of Care	Culturally Congruent Speech and Actions	Authoritative and Directive Approach	Orderly and Clearly Defined Procedures	High Expectations for Academic Achievement
One	3	3	3	2	2
Two	3	2	2	3	N/A
Three	2	1	1	1	2
Four	4	2	3	3	3
Five	3	N/A	3	N/A	2
Six	4	1	3	3	4
Seven	4	3	2	2	3
Mean Score	3.29 (highest)	2.0 (lowest)	2.4	2.3	2.6

*Note.* N/A = Not applicable or unobserved by the evaluator. These were not used when calculating the mean scores.

**Stage 5: Student learning outcomes.** The final stage in the Guskey evaluation model necessitated a deeper investigation into the effect the professional development had on the children who attended the after-school program. While the professional development was targeted at the adult staff members and their ability to manage classrooms in a culturally responsive manner, the underlying, long-term purpose of the training was to increase student achievement. It was unrealistic to expect that student achievement would drastically change after a 15-week teacher professional development, but it was valuable to investigate it nonetheless if only to create a baseline of student achievement scores to use in further studies.

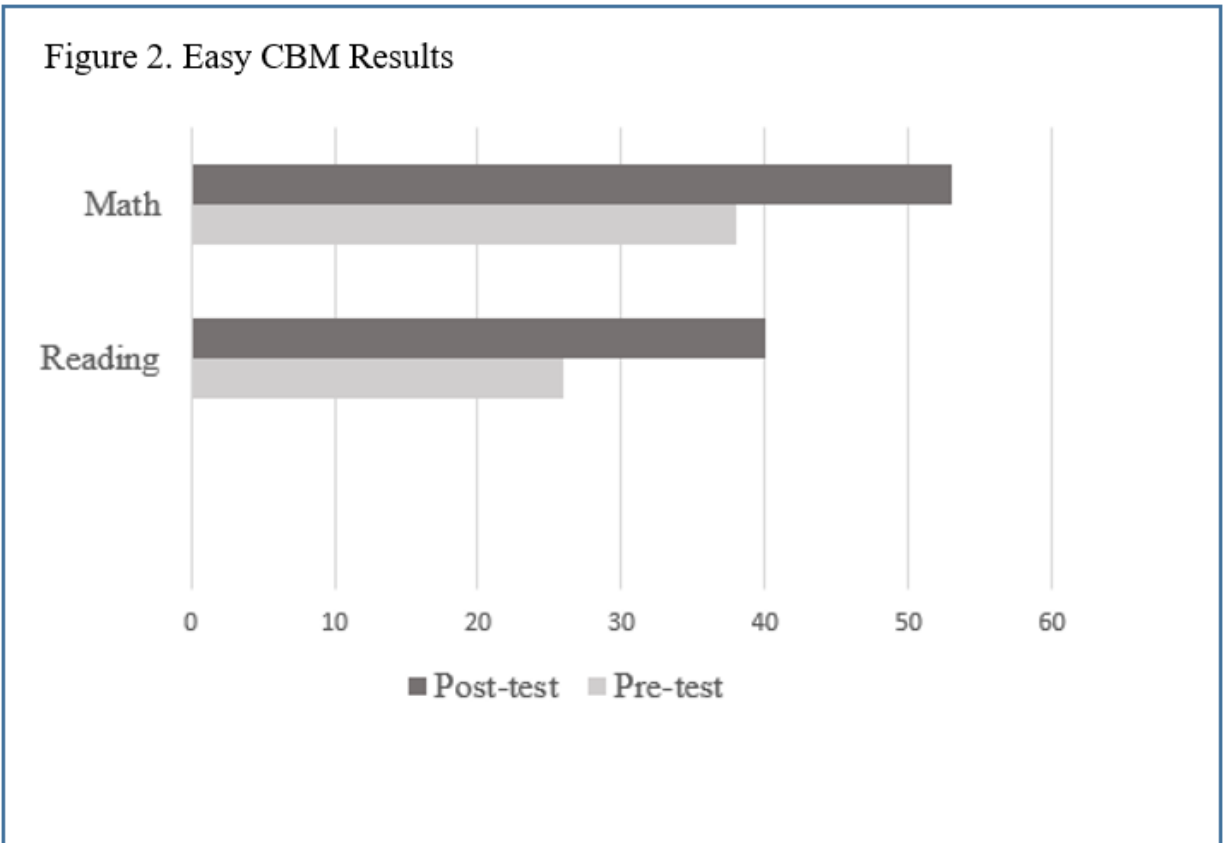
The academic performance of the students was assessed using the standardized test called the Easy Curriculum-Based Measure (ECBM). After-school program students took the pre-

ECBM in September of 2016 and took the posttest in May of 2017. Students in grades kindergarten through eighth grade were tested in reading and students in grades second through eighth were tested in math.

To analyze the student's scores, the researcher chose to focus on the percentile ranks rather than the raw scores since the ECBM scoring guide recommends this approach. Students are expected to grow academically throughout the course of a school year; therefore, a raw score of 15 might correspond to a percentile rank of 80 in the fall, whereas the same raw score might equal only a percentile rank of 67 in the spring. Because of this, raw scores were translated into percentile ranks using the ECBM detailed percentile tables for accurate analysis.

A total of 76 students completed the reading pre-test and the group's average score was at the 26th percentile with only 20 students scoring at or above the 50th percentile. Eighty students completed the reading posttest, and the average score was at the 40th percentile with 33 students reaching or surpassing the 50th percentile. Fifty-eight students completed the math pre-test and the average score was at the 38th percentile. Seventy students completed the post-test and their average score was at the 53rd percentile. Twenty-two students met or exceeded the 50th percentile in their math pre-test, and 37 students surpassed that goal in their math post-test. Figure 2 details these findings.





*Figure 2.* Easy curriculum-based measure results. This figure illustrates student achievement by showing the raw scores converted into percentile rank.

Since the after-school program has a rolling admissions policy, students do not always attend for an entire school year. Therefore, to determine the academic growth of the students who attended for the full-year, a paired sample t-test was conducted to compare the pre-test scores and the post-test scores of the students who completed the fall and the spring testing cycles.

The null hypothesis stated that there would be no effect on student achievement because of the professional development; whereas, the alternative hypothesis stated that there would be a significant positive effect on student achievement because of the professional development.

There were 58 students who completed both the pre- and post-reading test, and 43 students completed both the pre- and post-math tests. A one-tailed, paired sample t-test was conducted to compare pre- and post-reading assessments. There was no significant difference between the pre-test mean score ( $M = 37.14$ ,  $SD = 29.04$ ), and the post-test mean score ( $M = 42.40$ ,  $SD = 29.74$ ), conditions  $t(57) = 1.59$ ,  $p = .05809$ . The difference between the pre- and post-test means equaled 5.26. While there was student growth between the pre- and post-reading tests, it is not a statistically significant difference; therefore, the difference may have been due to chance. The null hypothesis cannot be rejected.

A one-tailed, paired sample t-test for math was also conducted to compare the pre- and post-math assessments. There was a significant difference in the pre-test mean score ( $M = 43.07$ ,  $SD = 33.52$ ) and the post-test mean score ( $M = 52.95$ ,  $SD = 28.02$ ), conditions  $t(42) = 2.13$ ,  $p = .01945$ . The difference between the pre- and posttest means equaled 9.88. The null hypothesis can be rejected in favor of the alternative hypothesis. There was a statistically significant increase in student math achievement at the after-school program. While the math growth results were statistically significant, it was important to also consider the effect size to determine the magnitude of the difference between the pre- and post-tests. The Cohen's D effect size test was conducted to determine the effect size of the increase. The effect size for this measure was relatively small (.32). Therefore, it could be concluded that while the students did make math gains from the pretest to the posttest, the magnitude of their growth was limited. Table 7 details statistical data related to the reading and math assessments paired sample t-tests.

Table 7

*Academic Assessment of Students Pre- and Post- Staff Professional Development (PD)*

Assessment	Pre-PD			Post-PD			<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>
	<i>n</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>n</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>		
Reading	58	37.14	29.04	58	42.40	29.74	1.595	.058
Math	43	43.07	33.52	43	52.95	28.02	2.13	.019

**Summary of Findings for Research Question 1**

The Guskey model has been useful in evaluating the professional development program deeply. The model started with inquiry into participants' reactions. The PDAS that staff completed showed that 20% of participants rated the training average, 43% rated it above average, and 37% rated it excellent. Staff spoke very highly of the text used during the training, which was *For White Folks Who Teach in the Hood . . . and the Rest of Ya'll Too* (Emdin, 2016). The training session dedicated to the Cultural Wealth Model (Yosso, 2006) was very memorable to staff. Staff also appreciated the discussions and sharing of ideas that took place during the training. Notable areas mentioned for future improvement include more training on communicating with parents and a deeper level of staff accountability to the newly learned CRCM strategies.

The second level of the Guskey model evaluates the professional development based on the participants' assessment of their gains in knowledge. Staff felt the strongest in their knowledge of classroom management styles, cultural assets in communities of color, connecting instructional content to student interest, and culturally congruent speech and actions. Areas of weakness include directly enforcing clear expectations in the classroom, using the technique of call and response, and having high expectations for academic achievement.

The third level evaluates the impact the organization had on the success of the professional development program. This level exposed a weakness in the organization related to celebrating staffs' achievement. Despite this weakness, it was found that the program staff themselves made up for this oversight as they strongly supported one another in their quest to be culturally responsive. Staff also took ownership in the fact that they often did not seek the support they needed from their supervisor, but rather turned to one another for assistance.

The forth level evaluates participants' actual use of CRCM skills. In summary, participants were observed demonstrating a culture of care in their classrooms the most. This critical indicator of CRCM was rated the highest by the observer at 3.29, which is just above "effective." The lowest score earned by the participants was the use of culturally congruent speech and actions where the mean score was 2.0, "developing." The other critical indicators of authoritative and directive approach, orderly and clearly defined classrooms, and high expectations for academic achievement ranged between 2.3 and 2.6, halfway between "developing" and "effective."

The final level evaluates the academic impact on the students who participated in the after-school program. Comparing the pre-math and -reading scores of the students with the post-math and -reading scores indicated that there was academic growth during the program year. The reading growth was not statistically significant, and the math growth was significant, although the effect size was small.

## **Research Question 2**

What are staff's perceptions of the impact of the professional development on student-staff outcomes, specifically, staff self-efficacy, student-staff relationships, and discipline related incidents at the youth center?

## **Self-Efficacy**

**Qualitative data analysis.** During the semi-structured interviews, staff were asked to reflect on which aspects of CRCM they were feeling most confident about and which ones they were not. Most of the staff had a very positive outlook on the implementation of CRCM strategies, especially demonstrating a culture of care and using culturally congruent speech and actions. Three different staff members mentioned that they were encouraged by the feeling of family that was growing in the program due to their newly created “Big Buddy Initiative.” In short, this initiative allowed middle school student leaders to be partnered with a primary student for relationship building and academic support. The staff felt very positive about this change and reported that both the older and younger students had responded well to it.

Much of the staff reported that they were growing in confidence in their use of CRCM strategies; nevertheless, they knew that it was going to take more effort of their part to make the strategies habitual in their daily practice. The staff felt that growth in confidence would require support from co-workers, continued practice, and accountability to their supervisor.

Two staff members, however, mentioned that they felt discouraged in the CRCM aspect of establishing an authoritative and directive approach in the classroom. Phrases like “I go home feeling defeated because of discipline problems,” and “The students don’t respect me as much as they do other staff” were red flags that some aspects of CRCM self-efficacy were still low. It may be important to point out that the two staff members who were reporting low confidence were also part of the Fellows program, and therefore still novices in the roles that they had recently acquired.

**Quantitative data analysis.** The slightly modified version of the CRCMSE survey allowed staff to report their feelings of confidence in 29 areas of culturally responsive classroom

management. The pre-survey was completed in September of 2016 before the professional development, and the post survey was completed in March of 2017 upon the conclusion of the professional development.

A Wilcoxon Signed-Rank test was conducted to compare the median scores of the pre- and post-CRCMSE surveys. This statistical test was chosen over the more common paired sample t-test due to the small sample size in this study ( $n = 7$ ). A Wilcoxon Signed-Rank test is nonparametric, meaning it does not assume a normal distribution, so it is more suitable for a smaller sample size (McDonald, 2014). The alpha level was set  $\leq .05$ , which is an acceptable level for statistical tests in social sciences. Since the data was expected to go in a positive direction, a one-tailed test was chosen. The Wilcoxon Signed-Rank test indicated that the post-CRCMSE median was statistically significantly higher than the pre-CRCMSE median,  $W = 1$ ,  $p \leq .05$ . The critical value of  $W$  for  $N = 7$  at  $p \leq .05$  is 3; therefore, the result is significant.

The results suggest that there was a statistically significant positive effect on teacher self-efficacy after the professional development. Therefore, it can be concluded that the null hypothesis can be rejected and the alternative hypothesis can be accepted. The growth in teacher self-efficacy from pre- to post-test is statistically significant; therefore, we can conclude that the professional development training had some impact on growing teacher self-efficacy. Table 8 describes the data from the pre- and post-CRCMSE.

Table 8

*Pre- and Post-CRCMSE Scores and Growth*

Participant	Pre-test score	Post-test score	Difference
1	53.10	70.52	+17.42
2	39.66	57.07	+17.41
3	76.86	88.10	+11.24
4	60.52	57.59	-2.97
5	71.03	80.00	+8.97
6	85.86	92.07	+6.21
7	62.41	89.66	+27.25
Median	62.41	80.00	+12.22
SD	14.29	13.80	

As evidenced in Table 8, six of the seven participants ranked their self-efficacy in culturally responsive classroom management higher upon the conclusion of the professional development. One participant decreased slightly from pre- to post-survey.

### **Summary of Findings for Self-Efficacy Construct**

Both the staff interviews and the CRCMSE show an increase in staff self-efficacy. Even staff who admitted they had a lot of improvements to make in their classroom management practices reported a strong sense of agency and confidence that they could reach a level of mastery in time. There were, however, a few areas where some staff were still feeling unsure of themselves and defeated with regards to their ability to manage their classrooms.

### **Student-Staff Relationships**

**Qualitative data analysis.** To investigate the staff's sentiments regarding their relationships with their students, themes from the semi-structured interviews were considered. Three important themes emerged related to student-staff relationships. First, staff felt very

strongly about the time that it took to build trusting relationships with the youth. Three different participants used the word “longevity” when asked what had been the secret to their success with building strong relationships with youth.

The second theme regarding relationships with students was building authentic relationships with their parents. Staff believed that they had stronger relationships and less conflict with students when staff were connected to their parents. Being “on the same page” with parents was a sure way to avoid problems with the student in class. A few specific strategies were mentioned related to building relationships with parents. Being intentional with communication, reporting good behavior and accomplishments by the students with their parents, and having a true friendship with parents were all considered priorities by staff.

Lance, a long-term resident and staffer, also valued reciprocal relationships with parents as a key to trusting relationships. He believed that the relationship should not be one-sided, with the staff member seen simply as a resource to the family. The staff should allow parents to meet some of the organization’s needs as well. Parents need to be provided volunteer opportunities to allow the relationship to be two-sided. In addition, he believed that simply interacting with parents about community events, local sports teams, and other nonprogram-related topics went a long way to building reciprocal relationships. Chloe related the effect of longevity in relationships with parents. She admitted that now that she was in her third year at the organization, the parents trusted her more and supported her decisions without question. This contrasted with her first year, where she had many incidents where parents were combative with her.

The final theme that emerged was the importance of staff taking the time to really get to know the students. Successful strategies reported by staff included playing with the students



during free time rather than just watching them play, sitting with the students during meal time, asking the students about their interests and finding commonalities, attending the students' events outside of the program, listening to the students when they wanted to tell them things about their lives, and using appropriate physical touch to show that you care and like them as people. The staff focused a great deal of their discretionary time on building one-on-one relationships with their students, which was a distinct advantage to working in an after-school program rather than a traditional school.

**Quantitative data analysis.** A paired sample t-test was performed to compare the mean scores of the participants' pre-STR surveys with the mean scores of the participants' post-STR surveys. The alpha level was set  $\leq .05$ , which is an acceptable level for statistical tests in social sciences. Since the data was expected to go in a direction, a one-tailed test was chosen. The STR survey (short form) consists of fifteen questions. Seven questions related to the construct of closeness—the closeness of the relationship between teacher and student. Eight questions related to the construct of conflict—the conflict between student and staff. Staff were to rate each item on a scale of 1–5. A score of 1 signified “definitely does not apply” up to 5 which signified “definitely applies.”

Staff completed an STR survey on each of their students in September and again in March. In total, 108 students had both a pre- and post-survey completed by a staff member. If a survey did not have its appropriate pair (either pre- or post-), it was not used for calculation purposes.

**Closeness.** Because the survey has two constructs, two paired sample t-tests were conducted. The mean score for closeness and the mean score for conflict were calculated for both the pre- and post-surveys. For the construct of closeness, there was a significant difference

in the pre-survey mean score ( $M = 3.59$ ,  $SD = .79$ ), and the post-survey mean score ( $M = 3.77$ ,  $SD = .84$ ), conditions  $t(107) = 3.22$ ,  $p = .000848$ . The difference between the pre- and post-survey means equaled .18 (+/- .064 with 95% confidence interval).

The results suggested that there was a statistically significant positive effect on the student teacher relationship in the closeness factor after of the professional development. Therefore, it was concluded that the null hypothesis could be rejected and the alternative hypothesis could be accepted. The growth in the closeness of the student-teacher relationship from pre- to post-test was statistically significant; therefore, we could conclude that the professional development training had some effect on growing teacher and student closeness. While the results are statistically significant, it is important to also consider the effect size to determine the magnitude of the difference between the pre- and post-surveys. The effect size for this measure was medium (.53). The results are shown in Table 9.

**Conflict.** For the construct of conflict, there was a significant difference in the pre-survey mean score ( $M = 2.13$ ,  $SD = 1.04$ ), and the post-survey mean score ( $M = 1.90$ ,  $SD = .97$ ) conditions  $t(107) = -3.52$ ,  $p = .000319$ . The difference between the pre- and post-survey means equaled -.23 (+/--.0.87 with 95% confidence interval).

The results suggested there was a statistically significant negative effect on the student-teacher relationship in the construct of conflict after of the professional development. Therefore, it was concluded that the null hypothesis could be rejected and the alternative hypothesis could be accepted. The decrease in the conflict in the student-teacher relationship from pre- to post-test was statistically significant; therefore, we concluded the professional development training had some effect on reducing student-teacher conflict. While the results

were statistically significant, the effect size was calculated as .50, which means the difference in the pre- and post-mean scores was medium. The results are shown in Table 9, below.

Table 9

*STR Closeness and Conflict Results: Paired Sample T-Test*

	<i>n</i>	<u>Pre-Test</u>			<u>Post Test</u>		<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>	<u>95% CI</u>		Effect size
		<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>		<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>			LL	UL	
Closeness	108	3.59	.79		3.77	.84	3.22	.000848	.12	.24	.53
Conflict	108	2.13	1.04		1.90	.97	-3.52	.000319	-.32	-.14	.50

*Note.* CI = confidence interval, LL = lower limit, UL = upper limit

### **Summary of Findings for Student-Staff Relationships**

The relationships between staff and students improved from the beginning of the school year to the end as evidenced by the STR surveys as well as the semi-structured interviews. Some staff admitted to still struggling in their relationships with some students, but they are still showed great hope and commitment to growing those relationships moving forward. Key to building strong relationships with students was building authentic relationships with their parents. Staff desired more training to build effective relationships with parents. Staff members who had developed bonds with parents benefitted greatly in classroom management.

### **Student Discipline Incidents**

The after-school program staff log discipline events in their customized database called Efforts to Outcomes. Upon conclusion of the program year, program discipline reports were generated to compare semester one and semester two discipline incidents. Raw discipline numbers are reported below in Table 10.

Table 10

*Student Discipline Incidents Summary*

Types of discipline referrals	Semester 1 FY17	Semester 2 FY17
# of reported yellow zones (minor discipline infraction)	639	604
# of reported red zones (parent contact)	396	282
# of reported fire zone (suspension)	51	37
# of reported expulsions	5	1

There was a decrease in each discipline category from semester one to semester two. Expulsions decreased by 80%, from five expulsions during the first semester to only one in the second semester. Fire zones (one-day suspensions) decreased by 28%, red zones (parent contacts) decreased by 29%, and yellow zones (minor discipline incidents) decreased by 6%. Based on the raw discipline numbers, we accepted the research hypothesis that discipline events would decrease after the CRCM professional development program.

To better understand the decrease in discipline events, it was important to look beyond the raw numbers to further explore why the incidents decreased during the program year. To further investigate the decrease, we considered the staff's thoughts on discipline through their semi-structured interviews. Triangulating the data concurrently provides validation of the findings as well increases the credibility of the results.

Based on the semi-structured staff interviews, staff believed that as their relationships with students and parents deepened, the severity of the discipline events decreased. Staff also noted that consistency in their approach to classroom management was another important factor. Staff admitted that when they consistently enforced classroom rules and procedures, student behavior improved—however, not immediately. As the teachers became more confident in

classroom management, they found themselves having more discipline infractions (not less) for a period. This could be attributed to a re-culturing of their classrooms, which teachers admitted “gets worse before it gets better” as students adjusted to the new expectations. All but one of the staff members reported feeling more confident in classroom management over time.

The staff was still challenged by student discipline in their classrooms due to two factors: *teacher emotions* and *inconsistency*. Several staff expressed that they could become overly emotional when dealing with discipline issues and could interpret problematic student behavior as disrespect or personal attacks. When this happened, the staff member would unintentionally escalate the situation. These emotional situations wore staff down and caused discouragement.

Staff also recognized that there was an inconsistency program-wide on how discipline situations were being handled. Some staff members were strict and some were lenient, which was causing frustration with students and teachers alike. Several staff members mentioned the phrase “being on the same page” with their co-workers when it came to enforcing rules and providing consequences. While the program did have a detailed progressive discipline behavior plan, it became evident during the interviews that not all staff bought-into it or believed that it was effective with all students. One area that continued to emerge throughout the professional development sessions as well as participant interviews was the idea of *restorative justice*. This will likely be the next action research professional development adopted by staff at this center.

### **Summary**

Detailed in the chapter were the data analysis and findings for the evaluation of the CRCM professional development program, which occurred at an urban after-school program. Both of the research questions were explored using a variety of data sources to deeply analyze the effectiveness of the professional development program. In this study, the qualitative data

provided through staff interviews and observations helped explain the quantitative data findings that were collected through surveys. None of the quantitative data contradicted the qualitative findings but served as validation for the findings.

Qualitative data sources such as classroom observations and semi-structured staff interviews revealed that the staff valued the training and were implementing many of the new strategies into their classroom practices. In addition, the participants could recommend several areas for improvement for future trainings to make it even more effective. Covered in the following chapter are the conclusions and implications for this study. Suggestions will be provided for future CRCM professional development efforts in urban after-school programs. Ideas for future research will be discussed as well.

Quantitative data sources such as the PDAS, CRCM self-efficacy surveys, student-teacher relationship surveys, and student-discipline and student-achievement records indicated that the CRCM professional development was effective in creating an environment at the youth center that was beneficial to staff and youth alike. Student achievement growth did not prove to be statistically significant for reading, but growth was significant for math. Teacher's pre- and post-surveys indicate an increase in CRCM knowledge and skill, increased self-efficacy, and improved relationships with students.

## **Chapter 5: Findings, Conclusions, and Implications**

This study was designed to examine the effects of a 15-week professional development program focused on culturally responsive classroom management (CRCM) for urban after-school staff. The problem that CRCM addressed was the cultural mismatch between teachers and students that is common in urban education. This mismatch leads to student of color being disciplined disproportionately as well as a notable achievement gaps for these students. The goal of the professional development program was to train after-school staff in the CRCM strategies for increased staff self-efficacy, strengthened student-staff relationships, deepened connections to the local community, and most importantly, decreased discipline referrals. Embedded in this study was a program evaluation using the Guskey Model to determine the effectiveness of the professional development program.

The research that was conducted at the after-school program is summarized in this chapter. The methods of research will be recapped as well as the findings from the data analysis. Conclusions and implications will be discussed and compared to prior research. Lastly, suggestions for improving the professional development program as well as ideas for future research will be presented.

### **Summary of the Study**

An action research study was conducted at an urban after-school program. The year-round program serves 120 students in grades kindergarten-eighth. The after-school staff differs in age, gender, education, years of experience, and places of residence. Seven after-school staff, who had participated in a 15-week professional development program focused on CRCM strategies, agreed to participate in the study.

Qualitative and quantitative data were collected to investigate two research questions.

Research Question 1: Based on each of the five concepts of the Guskey Evaluation Model (2000), how effective was the culturally responsive classroom management professional development?

Research Question 2: What are staff's perceptions of the impact of the professional development on student-staff outcomes, specifically, staff self-efficacy, student-staff relationships, and discipline related incidents at the youth center?

Qualitative data included semi-structured interviews with the participants as well as classroom observations. This data was coded using thematic content analysis to identify reoccurring or noteworthy themes. Quantitative data included three participant surveys, student achievement data and student discipline data. The data was analyzed using a variety of methods, including the paired sample t-test, Wilcoxon Signed-Rank test, and descriptive statistics. Taken together the data was able to answer the research questions and capture the effects of the professional development program including its strengths and weaknesses.

## **Findings**

### **Research Question 1**

This research question was designed to inquire into the effectiveness of the professional development program and was answered using the Guskey model of evaluation (Guskey, 2000). The Guskey model consists of five levels that progress from participants' reactions to the professional development to impact on student achievement; therefore, research question one is robust in nature, containing five evaluative levels.

Level one, participants' reactions, was explored using an exit survey called PDAS. Staff reflected on their experiences with the professional development rating the content, the instructor, and the methods. Results concluded 20% of the staff ranked the training as



“Average,” 43% selected “Above Average,” and 37% rated it as “Excellent.” To expand upon staffs’ reactions to the professional development, each was asked to provide feedback in the semi-structured interviews. During these, staff reiterated their satisfaction with the training including sessions that were most useful. These included Yosso’s (2006) Culture of Wealth Model, the classroom visit, and the Emdin (2016) text *For White Folks Who Teach in the Hood . . . and the Rest of Ya’ll too*. Conversely, the interviews revealed several areas needing improvement. These included strategies to better communicate with parents, more staff accountability for implementing new strategies, and more examples specific to after-school programs. The staff had a very positive reaction to the professional development program but was also able to articulate areas of improvement. These findings can be used to improve the professional development in the future.

Level two of the Guskey model addressed participants’ learning. This was investigated through a staff survey that contained 15 areas covered in the training. According to the survey, staff felt strongest in their knowledge of different classroom management styles, finding authentic ways to connect to students’ communities and home lives, using culturally congruent speech and actions, cultivating the ability to be direct and authoritative, and connecting lessons to things the students already know and are comfortable with. Staff ranked themselves the weakest in these areas in descending order: having classroom procedures that were clear and followed in an orderly manner, having a classroom environment that was focused on high academic achievement, and being comfortable with the discourse style of call and response.

Level three of the Guskey model addressed organizational support and change. This level was investigated through participant interviews. From the interviews, it was concluded that staff had mixed feelings about how supported or celebrated they felt as they participated in the

professional development. Staff felt strongly supported by their peers, but many expressed a desire for more support and accountability from their supervisor. Many believed that the organization could improve in employee recognition.

Level four addressed employees' use of their new knowledge and skills. This level was investigated through classroom observations conducted by a veteran, urban teacher. The observer was looking for evidence of CRCM strategies being used in classrooms. Observation notes were coded and then shared with the researcher. Findings from the observations identified a strength in staff to create a culture of care in the classroom.

The lowest ranking from the observations was staff's use of culturally congruent speech and actions. This is important to note, because when staff evaluated their own knowledge gains they rated themselves high in culturally congruent speech and actions. 57% believed themselves to be experts in that area, and 28% rated themselves as proficient. This contradicted what was observed during the classroom observations. This may be explained by considering the participant interviews where staff related times when they used culturally congruent speech and actions as occurring outside of the classroom—gymnasium, cafeteria, out in the community. Since the observations took place during instructional times, that may explain the lack of evidence.

Level five examined how the professional development affected student learning. This level was studied by comparing students' pre- and post-reading and -math curriculum based assessments (CBM) that were administered at the after-school program. The pre- and post-mean scores were compared using a paired sample t-test. The students improved in both math and reading between the pre- and post-tests, but only the math improvement was statistically significant. However, since student achievement data was only compared from pre- and post-

test rather than to prior years, the attribution of the growth to the professional development training cannot be made.

## **Research Question 2**

**Self-efficacy.** Research question 2, which studied the effects of the professional development on teacher self-efficacy, was investigated through qualitative and quantitative data analysis. Qualitatively, most participants reported a growth in self-efficacy in implementation of culturally responsive classroom management strategies in the classroom. Most participants expressed a growth in confidence in classroom management as well as a feeling of hope that they could succeed as strong classroom managers. There were two staff members who expressed discouragement and low confidence as classroom managers even after the training. Quantitatively, pre- and post-Culturally Responsive Classroom Management Self-Efficacy Scales (CRCMSES) were analyzed using a Wilcoxon Signed-Rank test. The results suggested there was a statistically significant positive effect on the participants' self-efficacy after of the professional development. It can be concluded from both the Wilcoxon Signed-Rank test and descriptive statistics that the professional development had a positive effect on teacher self-efficacy.

**Student-staff relationships.** Research question 2, which focused on the effect the training had on student-staff relationships, was examined through a pre- and post-Student-Teacher Relationship Survey, which measured the constructs of closeness and conflict. The mean scores were compared using a paired-sample t-tests. The results suggested that there was a statistically significant positive effect on the student-teacher closeness factor and a negative effect on the student-teacher conflict factor after the professional development. To sum up, the teachers reported a growth in closeness and a decrease in conflict with their students.

Through the interviews, staff expressed a positive outlook regarding their relationships with students. Notable themes included the importance of longevity and building strong relationships with parents, and prioritized getting to know the students by showing genuine interest in them. For this research question, the qualitative and quantitative data were congruent in explaining the growth in student-teacher relationships over the course of the professional development program.

**Student discipline incidents.** Research question 2 focused on the impact the professional development program had on discipline incidents at the youth center. A comparison of discipline data from the first and second semesters revealed a decrease in serious discipline events. Suspensions were reduced by 28% and expulsions decreased by 80%. While these changes cannot be directly attributed to the professional development training, that may be one explanation. It appeared that teachers did change their classroom management practices as a result of the training. Participant interviews also supported the data. Staff indicated that as their relationships with students grew, the severity of discipline incidents decreased. Most staff admitted that their consistency with enforcing classroom rules and procedures greatly affected student discipline. Each staff member also expressed a desire for continued improvement in managing behavior in classrooms and wanted more support in this area, which indicated that while a lot of progress has been made, the staff desired even more classroom management training.

While there is clear evidence that the staff's self-efficacy improved after the professional development program, student-teacher relationships grew and serious discipline events decreased, these changes cannot fully be attributed to the staff's participation in the professional development. There may be other confounding variables. Due to the lack of random sampling

and the time limitations of this study, other potential variables could not fully be controlled.

However, it is apparent that professional development had some positive effects on the staff and students.

## **Conclusions**

### **Immersion**

The conclusions from this study aligned with findings from prior research. Urban teacher training programs like Step Up (n.d.) at Illinois State University, as well as research by Brown (2004), Emdin (2016), Monroe and Obidah (2004), and Ullucci (2009) stress the importance of immersion into a community as a key component to successful urban classroom management. Emdin (2016) recollected his playing basketball with students at the local park after school as a turning point in his classroom management success.

This concept of community immersion surfaced often in the participant interviews that were conducted for this study as well. The after-school staff intentionally immersed into the community. Lance, an after-school teacher, grew up in the community, and he recounted with ease his understanding and comfort with local norms. Other staff members relocated to live near the youth center, which allowed them to experience life alongside their students and families. Because of physical residence, staff and families shopped at the same stores, worshipped at the same churches, frequented the same parks, suffered the same dangers, and collaborated to solve community problems. This purposeful community immersion allowed staff and student relationships to deepen, which benefited the climate of the youth center. Residence is not the same as immersion, however. Staff who resided in the community also made efforts to engage in the community in an active way.

Not all staff resided in the community, so they found other ways to immerse. Attending students' important events such as school plays, concerts, sporting events, prom sendoffs, graduations, and trunk parties were several immersive actions taken by the after-school staff. Sadly, the staff frequented bedside vigils, memorial services, and funerals for the many young people whose lives were cut short by violence as well. These actions familiarized staff with local cultural and behavioral norms, which reduced the cultural mismatch between teacher and student.

Community immersion allowed staff and parents to engage in authentic ways and helped build trusting relationships. Staff felt when they had a strong relationship with a parent, the discipline issues with the student decreased. The parent-teacher relationship demonstrated to the student that the teacher and the parent would communicate frequently; therefore, student behavior would be reported back and forth between them. In many cases, the staff member became an honorary family member because of this unique relationship. The staff members who reported strong bonds with the entire family also noted that this took time. Longevity in relationships was a commonly mentioned theme by after-school program staff. To summarize, staff noticed improved classroom management after immersing into the community, building trusting relationships with families, and faithfully committing to these actions over a period of years rather than months.

Most of the past research on CRCM described the qualities of a culturally responsive classroom manager. These were synthesized in this study into critical indicators of CRCM. These indicators informed the professional development, the classroom observations and the coaching. The critical indicators chosen for this study are not a comprehensive list of all the culturally responsive strategies, but these five were highlighted by founders of the theory, Ladson-Billings (1994) and Gay (2000). Later when Weinstein, Curran, and Tomlinson-Clarke

(2004) expanded culturally responsive teaching into classroom management, these five concepts remained. The five critical indicators are *building a culture of care, using culturally congruent speech and actions, having an authoritative and directive approach, developing explicit classroom procedures, and having high expectations for student achievement*. These critical indicators were explored with staff through the professional development sessions, the semi-structured interviews, class observations, and coaching.

Staff seemed most comfortable discussing creating a culture of care in the classroom. Based on the interviews and observation results, this was a very strong area for the after-school program staff. The other four areas still require improvement, the use of culturally congruent speech and actions being observed the least. Lance, the African-American staff member who grew up in the community, felt the most comfortable with culturally congruent speech and actions. This connected with findings from Ford and Sassi (2014) which noted that teachers of color demonstrated culturally responsive qualities more naturally, but that with exposure and effort, White teachers could successfully adapt to a more culturally responsive management style.

One important difference that emerged in this study was that not all teachers of color at the after-school program were able to demonstrate the culturally responsive classroom management critical indicators with consistency, which demonstrated that one's ability to manage classrooms stretches beyond the teacher and student sharing the same race. It became evident through the trainings and interviews that some teachers of color still experienced a cultural mismatch with their students even when they shared the same racial makeup. Local community immersion, which leads to authentic relationships, seems to be a bigger factor than race for the after-school worker's success in managing their classrooms.

## **Effectiveness of Professional Development**

The PDAS indicated the staff valued CRCM training. The staff recalled several topics that were meaningful and transformative to their thinking. They also valued the readings, videos, discussions, roleplays, group work, classroom visits, and the coaching sessions. However, most of the staff mentioned they needed more follow-up and accountability to transfer the new skills into their daily practice. Four of the participants noted they needed ongoing support beyond the 15-week training and the three weeks of coaching to make CRCM a habit. The research on professional development by Brouwers and Tomic (2000) emphasized the role simulations had in transferring new concepts into a classroom setting. The participant interviews seemed to concur with that research.

To ensure that staff members transfer new strategies learned in training into the classroom, simulations need to be emphasized. The professional learning community (PLC) format that this training relied upon did not provide enough simulation practice of new skills. Bandura's (1997) social learning theory also resonated with staffs' feelings about their transfer of skills. The theory states that authentic learning takes place when there is a reciprocal balance between cognitive, behavioral, and environmental influences (Bandura, 1997). During the 15-week training, the cognitive influences were emphasized more than the behavior and environmental, which may account for the staffs' lack of transference of some of the strategies. To increase the effectiveness of the professional development program more simulations, role plays, and modeling should be included.

## **Discipline**

Research has shown Black students, especially boys, are unfairly disadvantaged in schools both academically and behaviorally (Gregory, Skiba, & Noguera, 2010; Irvine, 1990;



Skiba, Michael, Nardo, & Peterson, 2002; Wallace, Goodkind, Wallace, & Bachman, 2008). To alleviate this disadvantage at the after-school program, the staff participated in professional development focused on CRCM. CRCM is an approach to managing classrooms in way in which all children can act, learn, and achieve within their own cultural norms (Metropolitan Center, 2008). The professional development was successful in reducing discipline events at the after-school program. Suspensions decreased by 28% and expulsions decreased by 80% after completing the training. The staff who participated in the study were never made aware that behavioral data would be analyzed as a part of the study because that may have resulted in pressure to underreport student discipline. From this study, it could be concluded that CRCM is a strategy that may have some effect on the discipline disproportionality predicament facing students of color. It is important to note that without comparing the discipline data from prior years at the youth center or to other similar youth centers weakens this conclusion. The youth center's discipline data from prior years was inaccurately kept, thus it was not useful for comparison. In addition, there was no other urban youth center with comparable students and staff who were tracking behavioral data in a similar way to use as a point of comparison. There could have been other reasons why the serious discipline events decreased after the professional development program, or it also possible that serious discipline events always decrease during the second half of a program year.

### **Academic Achievement**

Data has shown that African American and Latino students often lag behind their White and Asian peers academically (National Center for Education Statistics, 2015). Houchen's 2013 study presents how culturally responsive teaching—caring relationships with students, informing content with students' culture, and accessing student thinking about their learning needs—greatly

improved academic achievement. For this study, student achievement was not the primary focus since the site chosen for the study was an after-school program rather than a traditional school. However, that is not to say that student achievement was not important.

Ideally, all teacher professional development enhances student achievement (Guskey, 2000). In this study, the effect on student achievement was unremarkable. While the mean scores in reading grew from pre-test to post-test, the growth was not statistically significant. The mean scores for math also grew, and the growth was statistically significant; however, the effect size was small. Therefore, it cannot be concluded from this study that CRCM has a significant effect on student achievement in an after-school setting. This differed from the results gleaned by Houchen (2013); however, it is important to note that she was measuring student achievement in school rather than an after-school program. In addition, without comparing student achievement data to prior years, it would be difficult to conclude if the professional development program affected achievement at all. Student achievement is affected by a variety of causes such as curriculum, teacher quality, student motivation, or parent involvement; therefore there is no definitive association between the professional development program and the student academic outcomes.

The after-school program did not solely focus on academic achievement to measure its success with students. Goals such as building strong relationships; increasing positive, prosocial behaviors; and strengthening parent partnerships were also included in the goals measured by the program. The teacher professional development program also did not focus on student achievement explicitly. However, it was important to consider the impact that the training and the program had on student achievement since that is the end goal of all educational programs. From the results of the reading and math assessments, this is an area of improvement for the

program. Ideally, as teachers become more comfortable and capable in CRCM strategies, the student achievement growth will follow.

### **Implications**

This study revealed several implications for the after-school program's implementation of CRCM moving forward. The implications of staff longevity, parent and community engagement, ongoing professional development, supervisor support, and specific classroom management strategies will be discussed here. The organization also relied heavily on volunteers to manage programs; thus, implications related to volunteer training will be discussed as well.

#### **Longevity**

Important to staff success in CRCM is their longevity and commitment to the program and its participants. Participants who had worked with the program for more than two years reported higher self-efficacy and success with classroom management. Knowing this, the organization needs to prioritize retaining quality staff. Staff who engaged with the students, parents, and community over time began to understand and appreciate the community norms and see them as assets to student learning. This is an important factor because the organization utilizes low cost employees, like the Fellows, to staff the programs. The Fellows program by nature is short-term, so if longevity is the key to strong relationships between staff and families, the organizational workforce structure may be self-defeating.

Staff became more familiar with the students' active participatory style in the classroom and began to incorporate this into lessons. Staff became more authoritative over time—some backing down from their more authoritarian, controlling methods, and others stepping up their more *laissez-faire*, passive ways. The relationships with students deepened over time and contributed to more peaceful and productive classrooms. For those participants who had not

been in the organization very long, their comfort with classroom management took much longer, if it happened at all. Consequently, the organization needs to prioritize retention of quality staff as well as expect new staff to need time and training to gain confidence in classroom management.

### **Parent and Community Engagement**

The program needs to prioritize time and resources for staff to engage deeply with parents and the community. Currently, most staff use their own time and resources to do this, but since it is a crucial component to program success, it must be prioritized organizationally as well. This could include adding community engagement requirements to job descriptions and weekly schedules. Additionally, the budget should reflect this priority. Providing funds for staff to purchase tickets to school plays, sporting events, and other community events is needed. Reimbursing staff's cellular phone costs would be another way to encourage staff to communicate with families outside of program hours.

### **Ongoing Professional Development**

Fifteen weeks of CRCM professional development was a great start to addressing the staff's need to grow in classroom management. Follow-up sessions will be crucial in assuring that staff continue to grow in their skills and knowledge. Specially, the five critical indicators—*culture of care*, *culturally congruent speech and actions*, *authoritative and directive approach*, *clearly defined procedures*, and *high expectations for academic achievement*—need to be revisited often. The staff appreciated the discussions and observations, so those must be continued; however, it will be important moving forward to add more simulations and experiential practice to the training agenda. Tanya, a participant, suggested that there be more accountability for the new strategies by choosing one per week to focus on and discuss success

stories in weekly staff meetings. Lance suggested that guest speakers and more frequent school visits would help him gain more classroom management competence.

Most staff also requested more training on effective ways to communicate to parents. This could be added to the training in the future. Staff recognized that parent relationships were key to the classroom management success, so they desired to build relationships with all parents rather than just the involved ones. Some staff expressed feeling intimidated by some parents, and so strategies on parent communication could address that.

### **Supervisor Support**

Staff frequently mentioned how they desired more support and accountability from their supervisor in CRCM. Moving forward, it is suggested that the supervisor of the program include CRCM check-ins to the existing supervisory meetings. Also, the supervisor should be looking for evidence of CRCM during classroom walkthroughs and provide brief support and suggestions following those. Staff frequently mentioned the fact that some of the strategies did not make it into their classrooms long term because it was not required by their supervisor. For example, an important tenant of CRCM is having clearly defined procedures in the classroom. This was an integral part of the professional development.

Staff were given examples as well as tools to create their own procedures, yet even after 15 weeks of training, some classrooms still lacked clearly defined procedures. When staff would complain about classroom management, their supervisor would reiterate the need for procedures, and how important it was to teach procedures and keep reinforcing them all year long in the classroom. Without accountability and frequent check-ins, staff admitted to letting this slip away as more urgent needs materialized.

Staff also desired recognition from their supervisor. All staff suggested that they felt very supported and celebrated by their peers, but not as much by their superiors. Staff did not expect large rewards or even pay raises, just simple verbal recognition or even cookies to commemorate their success. Staff recognition for completing and implementing professional develop should be addressed by the organization as a whole moving forward. This should also be addressed in the organizations budget priorities.

### **Implications for Volunteers**

The organization utilizes a volunteer force of approximately 50 tutors to operate this program. Most of the volunteers come only once per week and very few were community residents. Almost half of the volunteers are university students who only volunteer for a short time. Since community immersion is so crucial to the success of the staff, it must also be highlighted with volunteer staff as well. It is suggested that the organization include in volunteer trainings a section on cultural competency and assets of the local community. This will help the volunteers as they begin to build relationships with students to look through a cultural lens when addressing learning or behavioral needs. The staff who manage the volunteers must also debrief behavioral incidents with volunteers as they occur to provide some context and support.

### **Future Research**

Based on the findings of this study, several areas for future research have emerged. Since being a culturally responsive teacher and classroom manager requires an understanding of students' cultural norms and local behavioral expectations, it is important to explore community norms more comprehensively through interviews with community residents, especially parents. Understanding what is considered disrespectful to parents and what behaviors are punished and how they are punished would be very valuable for teachers who come from different cultural

backgrounds. This would benefit the student because home and school expectations would align since parents and staff would approach problem behaviors in a similar manner.

Another area for future research would be to identify which teachers were the most culturally responsive to see if their students' achievement and behavior exceeded those students in a nonculturally responsive teacher. In this study, the student achievement data, behavior data, and classroom observation data were de-identified to protect the privacy of the teachers and students. A future study could quantify the impact of CRCM by comparing two groups.

Finally, it is evident this study focused on only seven after-school workers; therefore, a future study could expand the sample size to gain a more diverse population of participants. Teachers' years of service, gender, age, and race could all be investigated through the lens of CRCM to determine what other factors may influence a teacher's ability to enact cultural responsiveness to a diverse classroom. In addition, a larger sample size would increase the data's internal validity and transferability.

### **Conclusion**

This chapter focused on the findings, conclusions, and implications from the study investigating the effects of a 15-week professional development on culturally responsive classroom management with urban after-school workers. The professional development program was found useful in improving teacher self-efficacy, improving student-teacher relationships, and decreasing serious discipline events at the youth center. From the staff interviews, it was concluded that community involvement and even residency play a role in how successfully a teacher manages an urban classroom.

Staff also requested more training to effectively communicate with parents to improve their relationships with the families. Communication with parents was reported as an area of

low-confidence for the staff. Staff also reported needing more support and recognition from their supervisor to ensure that newly learned strategies become habitual in their daily practice. Many strategies fell by the wayside without supervisor accountability. These were highly recommended strategies for moving forward with this after-school program.

Also included in the chapter were recommendations for future research. Exploring parents and community resident's beliefs about discipline, comparing teachers' practices and student outcomes, as well as expanding the size of the sample of participants, are all recommended to further the scholarship on CRCM. This study has only scratched the surface of how CRCM can affect an after-school program staff and students. More work must be done to fully understand the impacts these methods can have on urban education.

This study has shown through the triangulation of qualitative and quantitative data that CRCM is an effective method for urban classroom management. CRCM was designed to provide a classroom environment for all students to be able to learn and thrive within their own cultural norms. Research has proven that providing a welcoming atmosphere for all children requires that teachers offer a culture of care, create and enforce clear expectations, take a directive and authoritative approach, use culturally congruent speech and actions, and expect academic excellence from the students. This study has corroborated these findings. In addition, this study has found that enacting culturally responsive actions requires that teachers prioritize authentic community immersion to fully understand and appreciate cultural norms, especially behavior norms. Staff who commit to the community for a period of years are more equipped to use culturally responsive classroom management to decrease student discipline issues in their classrooms. A teacher needs to become part of the community to effectively educate its children.



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## Appendix A: Culturally Responsive Classroom Management Observation Tool

Culturally Responsive Classroom Management Observation Tool			
Date of Observation:			
Class Observed:			
Staff Observed:			
<p><b>Progress codes:</b></p> <p><i>Highly Effective (4)- Mastery of the skill is demonstrated</i></p> <p><i>Effective (3)- Frequent, consistent evidence of the skill is demonstrated</i></p> <p><i>Developing (2)- Occasional or inconsistent evidence of the skill is demonstrated</i></p> <p><i>Ineffective (1)- Little or no evidence of the skill is demonstrated</i></p> <p><i>Not applicable: (N/A)- The skill did not apply to the setting of the observation</i></p>			
Critical Indicator	Descriptor	Evidence	Progress Score
Culture of Care	Staff have created a warm and inclusive environment where students are engaged and comfortable with the learning environment. Caring relationships exist between the teachers and students as well as between students. Teachers demonstrate care through smiles, physical touch, proximity, terms of endearment, encouraging words and compliments.		
Culturally Congruent Speech and Actions	Staff speak in phrases that are familiar to students. Staff use humor and appropriate joking with students. References to students' culture are used in instruction (music, community happenings, local flavor)		
Authoritative and Directive Approach	Staff give clear directives and maintain authority in the classroom. Firm speech is used.		
Orderly and Clearly Defined Procedures	Classroom procedures are clear. Students are productive and on-task. There is a business-like feel to the way the classroom operates. Students are working together appropriately.		
High Expectations for Academic Achievement	Students are focused on academic achievement. Staff create learning opportunities that are challenging and inquiry-based. Students are encouraged to question and argue their points of view.		

Staff observation tool

## Appendix B: Student-Teacher Relationship Scale – Short Form

1.	I share an affectionate, warm relationship with this child.	1	2	3	4	5
2.	This child and I always seem to be struggling with each other.	1	2	3	4	5
3.	If upset, this child will seek comfort from me.	1	2	3	4	5
4.	This child is uncomfortable with physical affection or touch from me.	1	2	3	4	5
5.	This child values his/her relationship with me.	1	2	3	4	5
6.	When I praise this child, he/she beams with pride.	1	2	3	4	5
7.	This child spontaneously shares information about himself/herself.	1	2	3	4	5
8.	This child easily becomes angry with me.	1	2	3	4	5
9.	It is easy to be in tune with what this child is feeling.	1	2	3	4	5
10.	This child remains angry or is resistant after being disciplined.	1	2	3	4	5
11.	Dealing with this child drains my energy	1	2	3	4	5
12.	When this child is in a bad mood, I know we're in for a long and difficult day.	1	2	3	4	5
13.	This child's feelings toward me can be unpredictable or can change suddenly.	1	2	3	4	5
14.	This child is sneaky or manipulative with me.	1	2	3	4	5
15.	This child openly shares his/her feelings and experiences with me.	1	2	3	4	5

Child: \_\_\_\_\_ Teacher: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Grade: \_\_\_\_\_

*Please reflect on the degree to which each of the following statements currently applies to your relationship with this child. Using the scale below, circle the appropriate number for each item.*

Definitely does not apply 1	Not really 2	Neutral, not sure 3	Applies somewhat 4	Definitely applies 5
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Student-Teacher Relationship Scale, Pianta, (1992)



## Appendix C: Culturally Responsive Classroom Management Self-Efficacy Scale

### Culturally Responsive Classroom Management Self-Efficacy Scale

Directions: Rate how confident you are in your ability to successfully accomplish each of the tasks listed below. Each task is related to classroom management. Please rate your degree of confidence by recording a number from 0 (no confidence at all) to 100 (completely confident). Remember that you may use any number between 0 and 100.

0	10	20	30	40	50	60	70	80	90	100
No confidence at all					Moderately confident					Completely confident

I am able to:

1. Assess students' behaviors with the knowledge that acceptable school behaviors may not match those that are acceptable within a student's home culture.
2. Use culturally responsive discipline practices to alter the behavior of a student who is being defiant.
3. Create a learning environment that conveys respect for the cultures of all students in my classroom.
4. Use my knowledge of students' cultural backgrounds to create a culturally compatible learning environment.
5. Establish high behavioral expectations that encourage students to produce high quality work.
6. Clearly communicate classroom policies.
7. Structure the learning environment so that all students feel like a valued member of the learning community.
8. Use what I know about my students' cultural background to develop an effective learning environment.
9. Encourage students to work together on classroom tasks, when appropriate.
10. Design the classroom in a way that communicates respect for diversity.
11. Use strategies that will hold students accountable for producing high quality work.

12. Address inappropriate behavior without relying on traditional methods of discipline such as office referrals.
13. Critically analyze students' classroom behavior from a cross-cultural perspective.
14. Modify lesson plans so that students remain actively engaged throughout the entire class period or lesson.
15. Redirect students' behavior without the use of coercive means (i.e., consequences or verbal reprimand).
16. Restructure the curriculum so that every child can succeed, regardless of their academic history.
17. Communicate with students using expressions that are familiar to them.
18. Personalize the classroom so that it is reflective of the cultural background of my students.
19. Establish routines for carrying out specific classroom tasks.
20. Design activities that require students to work together toward a common academic goal.
21. Modify the curriculum to allow students to work in groups.
22. Teach students how to work together.
23. Critically assess whether a particular behavior constitutes misbehavior.
24. Teach children self-management strategies that will assist them in regulating their classroom behavior.
25. Modify aspects of the classroom so that it matches aspects of students' home culture.
26. Implement an intervention that minimizes a conflict that occurs when a students' culturally based behavior is not consistent with school norms.
27. Develop an effective classroom management plan based on my understanding of students' family background.
28. Manage situations in which students are defiant.
29. Prevent disruptions by recognizing potential causes for misbehavior

Adapted and used with permission (Siwatu, Putman, Starker-Glass, & Lewis, 2015)

Name \_\_\_\_\_

## **Appendix D: Participant Interview Questions**

1. What aspects of the professional development did you find most effective?
  - a. What resources did you find helpful?
  - b. What strategies/topics resonated the most with you?
2. What aspects of the training could be improved?
  - a. Were there any topics not covered in the training that you wish had been included?
  - b. What kind of professional development would be helpful to you?
3. What specific skills/strategies or knowledge did you gain from the training?
  - a. How are these being used in your practice?
  - b. How are these affecting student progress?
4. What do you still find difficult about managing your classroom?
  - a. What supports do you need to improve in this area?
5. What specifically do you find helpful when building relationships with students/parents?
  - a. What changes have you noticed in relationships/interactions with the students/parents since the training?
6. How supported or celebrated do you feel by your supervisor/colleagues in the area of cultural responsiveness?
  - a. What evidence do you have of this?
  - b. How could your organization improve in this area?

## Appendix E: Professional Development Assessment Survey (PDAS)

### Exit Survey

Q1 How effective was the Culturally Responsive Classroom Management Training?

	Poor (1)	Below Average (2)	Average (3)	Above Average (4)	Excellent (5)
The objectives of the training were made clear (1)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The leaders' instructional skills (2)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The program held your interest (3)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Your questions and concerns were addressed (4)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The ideas and skills were useful in improving your classroom (5)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The material was immediately useful to you (6)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The overall value of this training (7)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Q2 How would you rate your current level of knowledge or skill related to Culturally Responsive Classroom Management?	Never (1)	Novice (2)	Apprentice (3)	Expert (4)
I demonstrate asset-based thinking. (1)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I know the 6 types of cultural capital found in communities of color (2)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I can name the six stages in the cultural competence continuum (3)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I know the difference between authoritarian, authoritative, permissive and indulgent styles of classroom management and which one is most effective with urban students of color (4)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I find authentic ways to connect to my students' community and home lives. (5)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I create a culture of care in my classroom (6)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I use culturally congruent actions and speech (7)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I am comfortable with the active discourse style of call and response in my classroom (8)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I can be directive and authoritative (9)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

My classroom procedures are clear and followed in an orderly fashion. (10)

☐☐☐☐

I create a classroom environment that is focused on high academic expectations. (11)

☐☐☐☐

I give my students an opportunity to have voice in the way the classroom operates (12)

☐☐☐☐

I connect my lessons to things the students already know and are comfortable with. (13)

☐☐☐☐

I find ways to interact with my students outside the classroom walls. (14)

☐☐☐☐

I find ways for my classroom to operate as a family (15)

☐☐☐☐

## Appendix F: Consent Form

Concordia University – Portland Institutional Review Board  
Approved: February 23, 2017; will Expire: February 23, 2018

### CONSENT FORM

**Research Study Title:** A Case Study Evaluation of the Effects of Teacher Professional Development in Culturally Responsive Classroom Management in an Urban After School Program  
**Principal Investigator:** Marcie Curry  
**Research Institution:** Concordia University- Portland  
**Faculty Advisor:** Dr. Sally Evans

#### **Purpose and what you will be doing:**

The purpose of this study is to evaluate the professional development program that was presented in the after school program on September 2016-January 2017. At least seven volunteers will be asked to participate in the study. There is no payment offered for participation in the study.

Your feedback, however, can help the after school program improve to provide the best environment for our students. As part of the study, you will also be asked to meet with me for an interview to discuss your perspective on the training and management practices. The interview will take approximately 60 minutes. You will be asked to complete three different surveys/questionnaires, which will take approximately 45 minutes in total.

#### **Risks:**

There are no risks to participating in this study other than providing your information and honest opinions, and I will take certain measures to protect your privacy. Your employment will in no way be jeopardized by your participation in this study. You will be able to choose a pseudonym that only you and I will know. In addition, your survey responses, your classroom observations, and your students' behavior and achievement records will not be linked to you as they will be anonymously provided to me by an administrator. The purpose is to help ensure that responses are not linked to your name or other identifiable information. No data will be reported in a way that risks you being identified as providing any particular response or perspective. All surveys and questionnaires that you complete will be locked carefully away in a file cabinet. We will record your interview so that we can create a transcript for you to review and then use to analyze the responses. The transcript will be made using your pseudonym, and then the voice recording will be destroyed, so as to protect your privacy. The other study documents will be kept for a period of three years and then destroyed.

You will not be identified by name in any publication or report. After the interview I will provide transcripts for you to review. You can strike information from the transcript if you wish, and you can stop participation and tell us that you do not want your data included as long as you do this within the time that we are collecting the data.

#### **Benefits:**

Information provided potentially benefits the after school program to improve the professional development offerings in managing diverse classrooms. Although there are not

direct benefits for participation in the study, your feedback responses can help our students and program as well as benefit other after school programs.

**Confidentiality:**

This information will not be distributed to any other agency and will be kept private and confidential. The only exception to this is if you tell us abuse or neglect that makes us seriously concerned for your immediate health and safety.

**Right to Withdraw:**

Your participation is greatly appreciated, but we acknowledge that the questions we are asking may be personal in nature. You are free at any point to choose not to engage with or stop the study without any repercussions. You may skip any questions you do not wish to answer. This study is not required and there is no penalty for not participating. If at any time you experience a negative emotion from answering the questions, we will stop asking you questions. To withdraw from the study contact or email Marcie at [REDACTED]

**Contact Information:**

You will receive a copy of this consent form. If you have questions you can talk to or write the principal investigator, Marcie Curry at [mduezcurry@gmail.com](mailto:mduezcurry@gmail.com). If you want to talk with a participant advocate other than the investigator, you can write or call the director of our institutional review board, Dr. OraLee Branch (email [obranche@cu-portland.edu](mailto:obranche@cu-portland.edu) or call 503-493-6390).

**Your Statement of Consent:**

I have read the above information. I asked questions if I had them, and my questions were answered. I volunteer my consent for this study.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Participant Name

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Participant Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Investigator Name

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Investigator Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date



Investigator: Marcie Curry email: [mduezcurry@gmail.com](mailto:mduezcurry@gmail.com)  
c/o: Professor Sally Evans, EdD.  
Concordia University – Portland  
2811 NE Holman Street  
Portland, Oregon 97221



### Appendix G: Statement of Original Work

I attest that:

1. I have read, understood, and complied with all aspects of Concordia University-Portland Academic Integrity Policy during the development and writing of this dissertation.
2. Where information and/or materials from outside sources have been used in the production of this dissertation, all information and/or materials from outside sources have been properly referenced and all permissions required for use of the information and/or materials have been obtained, in accordance with research standards outlined in the *Publication Manual of The American Psychological Association*.

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Digital Signature

Marcie Duez-Curry  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Name (Typed)

September 1, 2017  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Date