

THE CULTURAL DISCONTINUITY HYPOTHESIS:
A CRITICAL REVIEW OF LITERATURE

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Abstract

Researchers that study cultural and psychological influences on learning and development have proposed that differences between the socialized practices of European Americans and those of particular racial and ethnic minority youth are, to some degree, potentially responsible for persistent Racial and ethnic minority youth underachievement in America. This phenomenon, known as Cultural Discontinuity, has great potential for identifying sources of difference between majority and minority educational experiences and more importantly, for finding particular methods for teaching students of various cultural backgrounds. The goal of this paper is two-fold: First, a review of the literature on the Cultural Discontinuity hypothesis (much of which can be found in the Tyler, et al. (2008) work) is discussed. Secondly, a discussion of next steps is offered, providing insight into what should also be considered with future study of this hypothesis.

KEYWORDS: Cultural Discontinuity, Socio-cultural Conditions, Education, Marginalization

Multicultural Education Researchers have challenged an American educational system that perpetuates stereotypes and hinders opportunities for members of marginalized groups, arguing not only that the system excludes the contributions of marginalized groups to the American educational framework, but also, that schools often teach and socialize from an ethnocentric and Eurocentric lens (Banks, 2006, 2008a.; Gay, 2000; Nieto, 1999; Sue & Sue, 2003). Indeed, researchers have called for a radical transformation in what we teach that includes understanding the self and others, embracing the unique cultural characteristics of the diversities of people that exist in this world, and using said characteristics to enhance the educational experiences of all (Banks, 2006, 2008a., 2008b.). In an attempt to better understand schools as agents of maintaining the social positionality of oppressed groups in the U.S., academics have posited that schools impart the values of the mainstream U.S. culture upon all students, defining “success” by the ways in which students adhere to those cultural imperatives (Banks, 2006, 2008a.; Gay, 2000; Nieto, 1999; Sue & Sue, 2003; Spradlin & Parsons, 2008).

Further study has demonstrated that students of marginalized populations in the U.S. often experience clashes in expectations of their home and school environment, a kind of *cultural discontinuity* that may make demonstrating success in American educational settings mean acculturating oneself, or giving up, important values and behaviors imparted from social settings and home communities in adherence to the values and behaviors expected from mainstream America (Dehyle, 1995; Gay, 2000; Ndura, 2004; Nieto, 1999; Parsons, 2001, 2003; Parsons, Travis, & Simpson, 2005; Solano-Flores & Nelson-Barber, 2001; Webb-Johnson, 2003). This process whereby ethnic minority students have to discontinue the cultural practices of home while at school, scholars argue, has implications not only to psychological factors of

learners in the school context, but also, to the subsequent measures of academic success had by ethnic minority students in the public schools (Boykin , et al., 2005; Gay, 2000; Sue & Sue, 2003; Tyler, et al., 2008). To date, however, little empirical work has been conducted to assess the influences of cultural discontinuity on the psychological and academic well-being of racial and ethnic minority youth (Tyler, et al., 2008). Further still, the study of the cultural discontinuity hypothesis has almost exclusively equated racial and ethnic status differences with culture, ignoring other ways in which social groups have culture and how those cultural differences may be linked to psychological variables or educational outcomes.

Although researchers are careful to note that no cultural group is static and that there is a great amount of variability of practices and behaviors within any given group (Gutierrez & Rogoff, 2003; Tyler, et al., 2008), for the study of the cultural discontinuity hypothesis in education, it seems as if the literature, to date, has been less careful in its consideration of what it means to be a group with culture generally and how other cultural groups defined outside of race and ethnicity might be marginalized in American educational settings, specifically. To this end, this paper outlines some of the major literature contributions to the cultural discontinuity hypothesis, examining not only the cultural groups studied in the literature, but also, the ways in which cultural discontinuity was assessed in these scholarly investigations. Although the Tyler, et al. (2008) provides such review, highlights of that review are necessarily needed here, for the purpose of establishing context regarding the hypothesis. Next, a discussion of what is missing within the literature, particularly as it relates to the idea of *culture* and assessment of the cultural discontinuity hypothesis is provided. Finally, an offering of appropriate next steps for the investigation of cultural discontinuity is provided, focusing on additional ways to understand

cultural discontinuity by broadening the implications this phenomenon might have on groups of individuals heretofore not linked with the concept.

Cultural Discontinuity Literature: The Values, Behaviors, and Assessment

Values and Behaviors

Tyler, et al.'s (2008) paper on the quantitative investigation of cultural discontinuity provided much in the way of clarity for those educational researchers that intend to investigate the presence and potential effects of cultural discontinuity for students in the nation's schools. Tyler, et al.'s work not only provided examples of research that approached the study of this home-school disconnect, but also, laid groundwork for understanding the cultural discontinuity hypothesis by examining the values and potential value-based behaviors that might emerge from already studied student populations given their racial/ethnic background. Moreover, the paper provided information about the values orientation discussed with respect to Eurocentric or mainstream U.S. values (Tyler, 2008). In order to critically discuss the literature on cultural discontinuity, it is necessary to lay the foundation of understanding of these values and potential value-based behaviors as they emerge in the traditional public school setting. In other words, cultural discontinuity cannot exist unless there are cultural clashes to be discussed; therefore, determining what the cultural clashes between home and school might be is of paramount importance in reviewing what the literature has already offered in the study of this cultural discontinuity phenomenon (Tyler, et al., 2008). To this end, a statement of the U.S. mainstream cultural values is provided, followed by the cultural discontinuity literature for the populations thus far studied within the hypothesis: African American, Asian American, Latino American, and Native American. Within each of the populations discussed, a statement of the literature

based cultural values and value-based behaviors, as well as a description of the studies and their assessments of cultural discontinuity are provided.

Mainstream cultural values.

Individualism. Tyler, et al. (2008) contend that although many genres of individualism emerge in the literature of culture studies, Moemeka (1998) and Spence's (1985) conceptualization of individualism as "one's disposition toward fundamental autonomy, independence, individual recognition, solitude, and the exclusion of others" tends to capture the essence of this cultural imperative as manifested within mainstream America (p. 284). Further, Tyler, et al. distinguish vertical individualism from horizontal individualism, noting that vertical individualists "espouse autonomy and independence, particularly through competition" (p. 284), whereas horizontal individualists are concerned with self expression but are also concerned with "maintaining equal relationships with others" (Kommarraju & Cokley, 2008; Tyler, et al., 2008 p. 284). From these distinctions, it would seem that the prominent value in mainstream America is that of vertical individualism as it focuses on competition (Tyler, et al., 2008).

Competition. Researchers have articulated that competitiveness appears as an important cultural imperative in mainstream America (Boykin, Tyler, & Miller, 2005). These imperatives include the value of competition at the individual, interpersonal, and group level (Boykin, Tyler, & Miller, 2005). The research distinguishing among competition at all of these levels as they have been shown to be distinct from one another, depending on the cultural group investigated (Boykin, et al., 2005). Finally, group competition is manifested when one team tries to be better than another (Boykin, et al., 2005). Regardless of the specific type of competition that manifests, the value of competitiveness is one that permeates the Western thinking of mainstream America

(Tyler, et al., 2008). This competitiveness leads to a focus within the U.S. on being superior to others (Tyler, et al., 2008).

Literature on cultural discontinuity with African American students.

Much of the literature on cultural discontinuity in education focuses on work completed with respect to the African American student population. The need to offer credible evidence that would prompt program changes (i.e. support culturally inclusive practices—see Parsons 2003; Webb-Johnson, 2003) in schools is definitely needed for this population, as National Association of Educational Progress (NAEP) data indicate that African American students are behind their Caucasian peers with respect to national measures of reading, writing, mathematics and science (Darling-Hammond, 2007). Understanding that there is evidence of disproportionate educational performance between the African American and Caucasian American student populations (i.e. an achievement gap), the next step in advancing the cultural discontinuity hypothesis would be to link a cessation of a home-based value driven behaviors of African American students to the mental precursors of or actual measured assessment of learning in a school context (Tyler, et al., 2008). In other words, to support the cultural discontinuity hypothesis quantitatively, one would have to show that African American students with higher rates of cessation of the home-based values driven behaviors had corresponding deleterious differences with respect to measures of cognitive factors or actual academic outcome measures at school (Tyler, et al., 2008).

As discussed in Tyler, et al. (2008) much of the work dealing with African Americans students, cultural values, and education has been conducted through the research of Dr. Wade Boykin and his associates over decades of time. Through this large body of work, Tyler, et al. extrapolated the following cultural values as repeated in the research for African Americans and

education, each of which would need to have associated behavioral characteristics that would be ceased once at school if cultural discontinuity is said to have existed: *communalism*, *movement*, and *verve*.

Communalism. Although there is some debate over the degree to which this value is like collectivism, Moemeka (1998) articulated that at the core of the communalistic value is the need to act in accordance to what is best for the group as a whole, not merely acting with others to pursue individual interests. For students that live from this perspective, activities that are for the benefit of all involved would likely be of more importance than activities that are only for self-preservation or one's own interest.

Movement. Tyler, et al. (2008) uses the work of Boykin and contemporaries to indicate that African Americans are more likely socialized toward a movement orientation, whereby engagement in activity is enhanced with body movement, rhythm, and dance. Individuals adhering to this cultural value are likely to engage in or want to engage in more movement based activities throughout important daily tasks (i.e. learning in school).

Verve. Verve is conceptualized from the Boykin literature (as cited in Tyler, et al., 2008) as the drive to be engaged in high levels of sensory or physical activity. Again, individuals that subscribe to this value may be likely to want to engage in or learn better in situations in which multiple activities are occurring at once or high levels of activity are involved (see also, Boykin, Tyler, & Miller, 2005).

Literature findings and assessment. As stated by Etta Hollins (1990), "African American parents certainly do not experience the society in the same ways as white middle-class parents" (p. 91). Although Hollins includes class distinctions in her statement (a point worthy of discussion later in this paper), it seems clear that there has been a well established history of

difference in perspective between the experiences had by African American and Caucasian Americans in the U.S. (Banks, 2006, 2008 b.; Delpit, 1988; Gay, 2000; Hollins, 1990; Mehen, 1998; Nieto, 1999; Tyler, Boykin, Miller, & Hurley, 2006; Tyler, et al., 2008). With this in mind, it should be no surprise that researchers aim to assess differences in the ways in which cultural values and behaviors for African American students are displayed between home and school settings as school settings likely provide different cultural expectations for African American students as compared to the socialized experiences of many African American youth at home (Hollins, 1990; Lovelace & Wheeler, 2006; Mehen, 1998; Webb-Johnson, 2002).

These differences in cultural value-based behaviors are often noted from other perspectives (i.e. teacher beliefs and practices) as well. For example, one study concluded that teachers from their public school sample were more likely to assume African American students demonstrating movement styles associated with their culture were less likely to be academically successful, more likely for special education services, and more hostile, only by watching them on video (Neal, McCray, Webb-Johnson, & Bridgest, 2003). Such lines of study only serve to strengthen the idea that expectations for the behaviors of African American youths while at school may be different from and not aligned with the behavioral demonstrations had in their home situations. They do not, however, necessarily link those value and behavioral differences with differences in school performance. That would be the ultimate litmus test for the cultural discontinuity research currently extant. Tyler, et al. (2008) have already established that such quantitative investigations of cultural discontinuity have not yet occurred; yet it seems that this expectation could still serve as an important referent for assessing the degree to which the current literature has advanced the argument of this important conceptual idea.

Qualitative and mixed method literature. When examining the assessment format of the literature discussed in the Tyler, et al. (2008) work, it is readily apparent that qualitative work has been conducted with respect to the cultural values and behaviors of African American students, examining not only the presence (or lack thereof) of these value driven behaviors in classrooms (Boykin, Tyler, & Miller, 2005), but also, the ways in which African American students were engaged in learning tasks during observations (Webb-Johnson, 2002). In Boykin, Tyler, and Miller's (2005) qualitative work, it was determined through the interpretation of statements into coding schemes that African American students were engaged in mainstream cultural patterns to a large degree while in schools and that still further, most of those engagements were in response to mainstream oriented behaviors and statements made by classroom teachers. In this same study, African American students were revealed to have engaged with one another in ways endorsed in the cultural values research of African Americans. In the work of Webb-Johnson, (2002), field notes, observations, and interviews of teachers of African American students determined to have emotional and behavioral disabilities were gathered to look for the presence of cultural value-based behaviors demonstrated by the youth that are familiar in home socializing experiences, but not aligned with expectations of mainstream values and expectations had in schools. Findings from the study revealed not only that African American children demonstrated behaviors consistent with the "dimensions of African American culture" (Webb-Johnson, 2002, p. 657) discussed in the literature base for African American students and culture, but also, that African American students were more likely to be sanctioned in school for demonstration of these behaviors, whereas Caucasian students were most often ignored. The authors of this work also indicated that academic engagement in this elementary school was very passive, and as such, behavioral problems

seemed to be higher than what might be expected when students are actively engaged in learning. Finally, a mixed-method study conducted by Parsons, Travis, and Simpson (2005) reported that African American students across public school grade spans reported (via surveys and interviews) higher preferences for communalism, movement, and vervistic activities in the classroom and that the African American students studied had “a higher quality of improvement” when observed in the contexts in which African American cultural-value based instructional activities were taking place (p. 194). This is further supported by the work of Lee (2001), which qualitatively demonstrated how African American high school students previously known as “struggling readers” were capable of interacting with read text in complicated ways with a change to a more culturally aligned process of teaching the lesson.

Taken together, these works provide evidence that a. African American students that demonstrate behaviors aligned with those values discussed in the African American education literature (Allen & Boykin, 1992) while at school are perhaps more likely to be sanctioned for inappropriate behaviors and receive less than effective education; b. African American students may be less likely to demonstrate those behaviors in some educational contexts, perhaps in order to avoid the sanctions imposed by those perceived to be authority figures in the classroom; and c. African American students that are in culturally compatible classroom environments might prefer and be more academically engaged than those students that have to be in classrooms that are not culturally inclusive.

Although these studies do provide evidence of the existence of African American cultural-value based behaviors by students as well as suggest that these behaviors might be reduced while at school to conform to mainstream paradigms, they do not provide quantitative data necessary to a. link the discontinuity phenomenon directly to other important educational

variables (i.e. cognition, motivation, actual G.P.A.) or b. provide for the necessary generalization that can result from well designed quantitative investigations. For these reasons, the qualitative and mixed-method investigations of cultural discontinuity have thus far fallen short of what is needed to substantiate the claims of the cultural discontinuity hypothesis.

Quantitative investigations into cultural discontinuity and African American students.

In addition to the qualitative work conducted with respect to the cultural discontinuity hypothesis and African American students, several quantitative investigations have also looked to capture and assess the cultural discontinuity phenomenon. In some studies, researchers attempted to assess aspects of cultural discontinuity via teacher perceptions (Boykin, Tyler, Watkins-Lewis, & Kizzie, 2006; Tyler, Boykin, & Walton, 2006) and in other studies, data were gathered from students' perspectives (Boykin, et al., 2005; Sankofa, Huley, Allen, & Boykin, 2005; Tyler, Boykin, Miller, & Hurley, 2006; Tyler, et al., 2008b). Still yet, experimental designs were employed in trying to measure student performance outcomes in various culturally-situated contexts (Boykin, Lilja, & Tyler, 2004; Dill & Boykin, 2000; Hurley, Boykin, & Allen, 2005; Serpell, Boykin, Madhere, & Nasim, 2006). In all of these studies, researchers were focusing on the comparison of the mainstream values discussed above with African American cultural values—more specifically, most of the studies focused on individualism and competition vs. communalism and verve. The results of these investigations all lend support to the cultural discontinuity hypothesis, but to various degrees and with various methods of assessment.

For example, in the studies that utilized case scenario and survey question measures to ascertain perceptions of teachers, analysis of variance (ANOVA) procedures indicated that teachers reported utilizing classroom practices that were individualistic and competitive at

significantly higher rates than those that were based on the values of communalism or verve (Boykin , et al., 2005). Further, Boykin , et al. (2005) reported that African American teachers reported significantly more use of practices that are rooted in competition than the European American teachers (via surveys). Tyler, Boykin & Walton (2006) utilized “learning orientation scenarios” rooted in the mainstream and African American cultural values to measure teacher perceptions regarding hypothetical students’ classroom motivation and academic standing. Data from this study indicated not only that teachers perceived students that were individualistic and competitive in behavior as the most academically motivated, but also, that teachers assumed their level of academic achievement would be higher than those students that demonstrate those behaviors aligned with communalism and verve (Tyler, et al., 2006). These studies do show support for the idea that mainstream behaviors are endorsed in public schools and preferred by teachers working with students, but they are only teacher perceptions from a small sample and as is pointed out in the limitations of these studies, actual practices of students and teachers are not recorded.

The same limitations (i.e. small samples and only perceptions-based results) can be applied to the work that examines student perceptions of cultural values and behaviors to be endorsed at school and home as well. In the Boykin , et al. (2005) study, hypothetical case-scenarios depicting students achieving through the mainstream and African American value-based behaviors explained above were read by students and it was determined that African American students highly favored peers who achieved success via communalistic or vervistic behaviors and disliked those students who achieved success via individualism and competition. Furthermore, the data analyses revealed positive correlations between the communalism and verve measures and the individualism and competitive measures, respectively. In addition, an

inverse correlational relationship between the African American based values and the European American values existed, suggesting that there are cultural divides that separate the value-based behaviors used for the case scenarios (Boykin, et al., 2005).

Other studies utilized assessment procedures that were similar to the Boykin, et al., 2005 study. For example, Sankofa, Hurley, Allen and Boykin's (2005) work was similar to the Boykin, et al. (2005) study in that it utilized case scenarios of hypothetical students achieving via mainstream and African American centered cultural values-based practices, except Sankofa, et al. also gathered the students' perceptions of what behaviors their parents and peers would endorse from the hypothetical students. Results again indicated that African American students preferred children that achieved via the use of African American values-based behaviors but, in addition, these findings indicated that African American students perceived that their parents and peers would feel similarly about the hypothetical student achievers (Sankofa, Hurley, Allen & Boykin, 2005). The work of Tyler, Boykin, Miller, and Hurley (2006) also utilized the case scenario and questions method, only this time, data collected by the researchers ascertained the students' evaluations of the culturally based behaviors, as well as the students' perceptions of their teachers' and parents' evaluations of the behaviors displayed in the case scenarios. Again, results supported the idea that African American children endorse African American cultural value-based behaviors at school and home, and that they perceived that their parents did the same (Tyler, et al., 2006). Additionally, these researchers found that students' perceived that their teachers preferred students to act in accordance with the mainstream values of individualism and competition and that they felt students who demonstrated communalistic or vervistic behaviors were more likely to be punished at school than at home (Tyler, et al., 2006).

Although much information is garnered from these studies in that they show support for cultural value-based preferences for behaviors by African Americans and that they show that these value-based preferences are not perceived to be supported by teachers or accepted from students while at school, the greatest weakness in these works is in the fact that they only ascertain *perception*. In other words, these studies did not seek to assess actual student behaviors at home and school, nor do they address actual measured parenting practices as compared with cultures promoted by teachers in schools (Tyler, Boykin, Miller, & Hurley, 2006). In fact, a study conducted by Tyler, et al. (2008b) revealed that parents that were African American were significantly more likely to socialize their children toward competitive and materialistic behaviors. Although this findings may seem contradictory to some of the results in the Tyler, Boykin, Miller, and Hurley (2006) study, when one remembers that the 2006 study assessed from the students' perceptions whereas the 2008b study assessed from parent survey data, one can see that the findings are, in fact, not contradictory. Further work is needed to clearly delineate *perception* from *practice*—not only from the students while at home and school, but also, from the parents at home and the teachers at school as well. Additionally, these studies still do not link any cessation of cultural value-based behaviors (i.e. students choosing not to demonstrate the behaviors) to actual student cognitive or academic performance factors, thus still falling short of the evidence necessary to really support the cultural discontinuity hypothesis claim.

In the Tyler, et al. (2008) study, some of the referenced literature supporting the cultural discontinuity hypothesis with African American students is in fact more experimental in nature and does measure student performance outcomes on learning tasks while placed in randomized culturally-situated classroom contexts (Boykin, Lilja, & Tyler, 2004; Dill & Boykin, 2000;

Hurley, Boykin, & Allen, 2005; Serpell, Boykin, Madhere, & Nasim, 2006). In the Boykin, Lilja, and Tyler (2004) study, researchers found that African American students performed significantly better on two quizzes and a test from the teacher's edition of the social studies textbook when they learned and were quizzed communally as compared to those students that were placed in individualistic contexts during instruction and quizzing. Dill and Boykin's (2000) study indicated not only that African American students more strongly endorsed communalistic preferences as compared to individual preferences via a questionnaire, but more strikingly, that African American students that worked in groups on a reading recall activity out-performed students that worked in pairs and alone on subsequent reading recall questions individually administered by the researchers. Similar results were found with African American students that worked in groups in Hurley, Boykin, and Allen's (2005) study. After controlling for pretest performance, the researchers found that African American students that were in highly communally oriented learning contexts (worked together, shared materials etc.) significantly outperformed African American students that worked in low communalistic (more individualistic) contexts on a 15 problem math estimation task. Finally, Serpell, Boykin, Madhere and Nasim (2006) found that although Caucasian and African American students performed better on initial learning of the motion task when communally oriented (as compared to the control group), African American students were better able to transfer the learning to the later open-ended problem-solving task given to the students by the researchers if their initial learning took place in a communally structured context (Serpell, et al., 2006).

Although these studies varied in the academic content investigated, all assessed learning that was randomly situated by the researchers to be more communal and aligned with African American cultural values or more individual and aligned with Eurocentric values (Boykin, Lilja,

& Tyler, 2004; Dill & Boykin, 2000; Hurley, Boykin, & Allen, 2005; Serpell, Boykin, Madhere, & Nasim, 2006; Tyler, et al., 2008). Moreover, in every case, (social studies, math-estimation, transfer of learning in a motion acceleration task, and text recall), African American students were found to have performed significantly better when in communally oriented contexts (Boykin, Lilja, & Tyler, 2004; Dill & Boykin, 2000; Hurley, Boykin, & Allen, 2005; Serpell, Boykin, Madhere, & Nasim, 2006; Tyler, et al., 2008). These studies lend much support to the cultural discontinuity hypothesis in that they show the much needed empirical evidence of better academic outcomes when classroom contexts are aligned with those cultural practices and behaviors discussed in the African American literature, but they still far short in that they do not directly and quantitatively link any *cessation* of African American culturally endorsed values or behaviors to corresponding decreases in student performance. They do however, provide much evidence to show that learning is mediated by cultural practices (Luria, 1976; Vygotsky, 1962, 1978) in that students demonstrated better performance on all measures of learning when provided with a classroom context that was culturally aligned.

In turning to the literature supporting the cultural discontinuity hypothesis and African American students, one can see that much work has been conducted in examining cultural values and behaviors unique to African American students and the presence (or lack thereof) of these home-based values and behaviors in traditional public school settings. Although much work has been completed to support components of the cultural discontinuity process, the literature on the whole fails to fully substantiate the phenomenon. This is largely due to gaps in the literature including small samples (in many, but not all cases), lack of measurement consistency (what was measured and how—i.e. parents' beliefs vs. teachers beliefs, students beliefs about the beliefs of their peers and also if perception or actual performance was measured), and an overall lack of

quantitatively associating the cessation of cultural value-based behavioral practices directly to measures of psychological factors and/or academic data as proposed in Tyler, et al.'s (2008) conceptual paper. Future study in the area of cultural discontinuity and the relationship it might have for African American students' educational experiences might also benefit greatly from the consistency of establishing culturally valid scales for values and behaviors associated with the African American population to date (see Jones, 2003 for example of process) as cultural values and practices may change over time (Vygotsky, 1962), followed by determining the degree to which the culturally derived behaviors are present at home and school (or not) via a quantitative measure, and finally quantitatively investigating the relationship of the difference in behaviors from home and school to psychological precursors to and results of measured instruction in schools (Tyler, et al., 2008).

Literature on cultural discontinuity with Asian American, Latino American, and Native American students.

Although a full review of the literature that demarcates Asian American cultural values is outside of this findings and assessment review, and understanding that the Asian American population consists of a number of ethnicities (Gutierrez & Rogoff, 2003; Sue & Sue, 2003; Tyler, et al., 2008), the literature on Asian American cultural values has shown a relative degree of commonality among the following cultural themes expressed by Asian Americans in social contexts: "collectivism, conformity to norms, emotional self-control, humility, family recognition through achievement, filial piety, and deference to authority" (B.S.K. Kim, Atkinson, & Yang, 1999; B.S.K. Kim, et al., 2005; B.S.K. Kim & Omizmo, 2005; see Tyler, et al., 2008, p. 288 for full review).

Similar to the Asian American population, Latino American and Native American populations are comprised of various ethnic groups and as such, variability can be expected within each of these identified populations of study as well (Gutierrez & Rogoff, 2003; Sue & Sue, 2003; Tyler, et al., 2008). That said, there does appear to be scholarly support for common values held among Latino Americans including collectivism and spatio-temporal fluidity (Chavajay & Rogoff, 1999; Greenfield, et al., 2000; Oyserman, et al., 2002; Wrotham & Conteras, 2002) as well as support for common cultural values held among the Native American peoples “including sharing and cooperation, noninterference, harmony with nature, present-time orientation, and a deep respect for elders” (Dehyle, 1995; Garrett, 1995; Sue & Sue, 2003; see Tyler, et al., 2008, p.288 for full review of these cultural values). If the cultural discontinuity hypothesis is to be fully supported with respect to the Asian American, Latino American, or Native American student populations, research evidence would have to exist that demonstrates that a cessation of the culturally endorsed value-based behaviors of students from a particular racial/ethnic group occurred when students went from home to school and that any associated behavior changes were empirically related to cognitive factors that precede or subsequent indicators of measuring academic factors as proposed in the Tyler, et al. (2008) conceptual paper. In reviewing the literature relating to cultural factors in the education of these student populations (Asian American, Latino American and Native American), however, one can readily see that such evidence is even more absent than it is with respect to the African American student population.

Literature findings and assessment for Asian American students.

As was stated previously, it appears that much of the work supporting the cultural discontinuity hypothesis was conducted with respect to the African American student population,

as is evidenced by the somewhat smaller literature base concerning Asian American students' cessation of home-culturalized behaviors while at school and any association it may ultimately have with academic achievement by Asian American students in schools. That said--there have been some studies outlined in Tyler, et al. (2008) that, with others, provide some information concerning the role of culture in the learning contexts of Asian American students (K. H. Kim, 2005; B.S. K. Kim , et al., 1999; B.S.K. Kim , et al., 2005; B.S.K. Kim & Omizmo, 2005; Markus & Kitayama, 1991; Nguyen, Terlouw, & Pilot, 2006; Oyserman & Sakamoto, 1997; Park & Kim, 2008; Yeh & Huang, 1996). These studies include open-ended, qualitative and descriptive techniques of data collection (Yeh & Huang, 1996), as well as survey methods in which correlation, principal components analyses, and regression analyses were employed to understand the role of cultural values and associated behaviors in Asian American education and life as measured from those culturally situated and validated surveys (K. H. Kim, 2005; B.S. K. Kim , et al., 1999; B.S.K. Kim , et al., 2005, B.S.K. Kim & Omizmo, 2005; Oyserman & Sakamoto, 1997; Park & Kim, 2008).

Although Markus and Kitayama's (1991) discussion of culture and self-related psychological domains suggests that the traditional cultural values of many Asian Americans are encouraged as opposed to mainstream oriented values, it should be said that other work portrays a more complex view of the relationship of culture to Asian American identity and psychology (Tyler, et al., 2008). The 1996 work of Yeh and Huang utilized an open-ended "Ethnic Identity Development Exercise (EIDE)" in which 78 Asian American college students engaged in writing, drawing, and the completion of demographic information concerning their Asian American ethnic identity. Through content analysis techniques, these authors concluded that Asian American ethnic identity development is "a dynamic and complex process, emphasizing

collectivism, the impact of external forces in defining one's sense of self, and the power of shame as a motivating force in ethnic identity development" (Yeh & Huang, 1996, p. 653).

Although the above line of research depicts findings similar to the discussion had by Markus and Kitayama (1991), other studies reach different conclusions. In Oyserman and Sakamoto's (1997) study for example, surveys designed to assess cultural factors associated with Asian Americans were administered to 162 self identified Asian American college students. In this work, Asian American students were more aligned with individualism than collectivism; however, analyses also demonstrated that beliefs in collectivism (focus on group as opposed to self) was positively associated with identifying as an Asian American and in turn, predicted a positive perspective on being viewed as a model minority (Oyserman & Sakamoto, 1997). Further, these authors concluded that "collective self-esteem [was] negatively correlated with valuation of the model minority model" (Oyserman & Sakamoto, 1997, p. 449). As the model minority stereotype presumes that Asian American students are academically and intellectually superior by virtue of their shared ethnic origins, the authors of this study concluded that there are connections between "Asian American ethnic identity, perceptions about being a model minority, and stereotypes about Asian Americans more generally" (p. 450). Specifically however, the authors indicated that Asian American students may fall anywhere in a spectrum of cultural identity, ranging from more traditionally oriented and therefore accepting of the "positive" associations of the model minority label to more acculturated toward the mainstream cultural ethos, in which being labeled as a minority of any type minimized their own individual efforts and success (Oyserman & Sakamoto, 1997, p. 450). Further, the authors concluded that associations with collectivistic or individualistic values and behaviors may differentially

influence Asian American students, helping some and hindering others as they navigate their lives in America (Oyserman & Sakamoto, 1997).

B.S.K. Kim and Omizmo's (2005) work further illustrates the idea that for Asian American students, academic success and psychological health may be largely about being able to navigate the cultural space between traditional and mainstream values, even endorsing both simultaneously. Like Oyserman and Sakamoto (1997), surveys conducted with Asian American college students were analyzed, with results indicating that Asian American students who affiliated strongly with cultural values that were traditionally Asian and European American were more likely to have a positive feeling about their belonging to an Asian American group identity. Further, these authors concluded from their analyses of survey results that the Asian American students who reported higher associations to European American values also perceived themselves to be better able to adapt and cope to new situations and more likely to be successful at tasks in which they engage (B.S.K. Kim & Omizmo, 2005).

In a 2008 study conducted by Park and Kim, Asian and European Americans completed paper and pencil surveys in which the participants answered Likert-type questions from scales culturally validated to represent the traditional Asian values of collectivism, conformity to norms, family recognition via achievement, emotional restraint, and humility (Kim, Li, & Ng, 2005). The whole questionnaire was designed to measure not only the degree to which subjects' aligned with mainstream European American values (Hong, Kim, & Wolfe, as cited in Kim, Li, & Ng, 2005), but also, the sub-scales from the Survey of Asian American Communication (Gudykunst, 2001 as cited in Park & Kim, 2008) were designed to determine the styles of communication used by subjects. From these questionnaires, Park and Kim (2008) indicated that a positive relationship existed between emotional self-control, humility (traditional Asian values)

and a reported communication style that was less direct and more sensitive to others and the context in which communication is taking place (Park & Kim, 2008), thus lending more support to the notion that traditional Asian cultural values play a role in shaping the subsequent reported behaviors of Asian American students. In this same study however, there was a positive relationship between reported values of family recognition via achievement and a more direct, contentious communication style (Park & Kim, 2008), suggesting that for some Asian American students, behaviors such as communicating with others lean more toward those behaviors associated with mainstream value-based behaviors, even if motivated by traditional Asian values (i.e. family recognition via achievement).

As can be seen, the literature on Asian American traditional cultural values and the relationships said values might have to psychological (self-esteem, ethnic identity status, cognitive flexibility, self efficacy etc.) factors on the whole appears to endorse a model whereby cessation of traditional Asian values during school contexts may or may not be associated with negative psychological or academic outcomes. As a literature base to support the cultural discontinuity hypothesis, this literature falls extremely short not only owing to the conceptual failure to suggest a consistent pattern of negative outcomes (psychologically and/or academically) associated with the cessation of traditional Asian American values or values-based behaviors while Asian American students are at schools, but also, in that much of the research that is extant suggests that perceptions of success (beliefs of efficacy, cognitive flexibility) and feelings of ethnic identity and positive worth are mutually present not when students give up one set of value based behaviors for another, but rather, when behaviors are endorsed from both traditional and mainstream value sets. Future work that assesses cultural discontinuity with the Asian American student population would benefit from directly observing the behaviors

typically endorsed and expressed within the homes and schools that serve Asian American students across many grade levels (as opposed to mostly college students) to ascertain any evidence that differences in the behaviors expressed by these students might be related to values had with traditional Asian or European mainstream paradigms or to developmental differences that might occur across the lifespan.

Literature findings and assessment for Latino American students.

Tyler, et al. (2008) credit early works of Manuel Ramirez and Alfredo Castaneda (1974) for assisting in the development of the hypothesis upon which cultural discontinuity has emerged; however, there appears to be much less literature which assesses cultural value-based behaviors that are displayed by Latino Americans at home and dismissed at school, especially as compared to the literature that accounts for this phenomenon among the African American student population. As discussed in Tyler, et al., the more contemporary literature that discusses Latino American cultural values and their placement within daily life and schooling of Latino American students endorses cultural values of collectivism, or a fundamental focus on the group as opposed to the individual (Greenfield, et al., 2000; Rogoff, 2003) and spatiotemporal fluidity, or the involvement in multiple activities simultaneously (Chavajay & Rogoff, 1999; Rogoff, Mistry, Goncu, & Mosier, 1993; Wrotham & Contreras, 2002) in the home socialization experiences of many Latino American students. Although these cultural values are endorsed by parents and other family members in many home contexts, literature suggests that these values and associated characteristics are not necessarily endorsed in mainstream U.S. classroom settings.

For example, in a qualitative study conducted by Greenfield, et al. (2000), discourse analysis completed by the researchers assessed the ways in which particular expectations of

children's behavior varied between immigrant parents of Latino American children and their European American elementary school teacher. In this discourse analysis, researchers concluded that Latino parents focused more upon the manners and social behaviors of the child, whereas the European American teachers tended to focus more upon academic abilities of the children when discussing their expectations (Greenfield , et al., 2000; Tyler, et al., 2008). These findings do not demonstrate a lack of care for academic ability in children, but rather, a noted emphasis on the idea that the behaviors of Latino American children reflect upon the family as a whole and are therefore extremely important as well. Similar findings were found as part of a longitudinal study conducted by Reese, Balzano, Fallimore, and Goldenberg (1995). In this work, 121 Latino American families of kindergarten students were randomly selected from two school districts from which 32 families were randomly selected to participate in open-ended interviews with the researchers (Reese, et al., 1995). From the home and phone interviews conducted by the researchers with the families, qualitative analyses indicated not only that Latino parents valued teaching respect and right from wrong to their students in home settings as highly important, but also, that these parents did not differentiate the social educations of their children from their academic educations (Reese , et al., 1995). Instead, parents of these Latino American students viewed both as critically important and interrelated in the development of "good children" (Reese, et al., 1995).

Additional findings that support the idea that traditional Latino American values are not widely endorsed in traditional Eurocentric environments (including American schools and European American homes) were had in the qualitative works of Wrotham and Contreras (2002) as well as the works of Chavajay and Rogoff (1999) and Rogoff, Mistry, Goncu and Mosier (1993). For example, in their observational study and subsequent report, Wrotham and Contreras

described the work of a para-professional that worked with children of Latino immigrants in an ESL setting, commenting that although the paraprofessional embraced classroom practices relevant to traditional Latino values of collectivism and spatiotemporal fluidity (i.e. she allowed students to work together, engaged students in multiple activities at once, allowed students to complete work without being timed, and adopted a maternal attitude toward the students in her class) with much success by students in the class, her European American counterparts reported that her efforts were less than professional, and that her students did not engage in much learning in her classroom environment. In both the Chavajay and Rogoff (1999) and Rogoff, et al. (1993) works, researchers recorded the actions of toddlers and parents from Guatemalan Mayan communities and toddlers and parents from a middle-class European American community to determine if differences could be noted related to how the toddlers and parents attended to activities that occurred during the context of the interviews. In both of these works, coding schemes of the behaviors recorded revealed that toddlers and parents from the Latino communities were more likely to engage in and attend to multiple activities at once, whereas European Americans that were observed were more likely to attend to activities by alternating attention from one situation to the next (Chavajay & Rogoff, 1999; Rogoff et al, 1993.). The Rogoff, et al. (1993) study extended the findings of the first study however, most notably by demonstrating that the actual proportions of total episodes aligned with each attentional strategy, thereby providing evidence that Latino parents and children in the study did demonstrate simultaneous attentional strategies not influenced by any differences in the frequencies of the events provided during the interviews alone.

Taken together, the literature regarding Latino American cultural values and the educational experiences of Latino Americans in schools contemporarily suggests not only that

the home socializing experiences of Latino American students are often aligned with traditional Latino values of collectivism and spatiotemporal fluidity, but also, that Eurocentric U.S. schools and teachers therein often do not embrace these values and in fact may assume that behaviors consistent with these behaviors are not appropriate for the school context (Wrotham & Contreras, 2002; Tyler, et al., 2008). The literature is critically weak however in that most of the research is qualitatively based-- without many quantitative investigations of any cessation of the Latino American cultural value-based behaviors for students that arrive at schools in America, the literature base will not be sufficient to fully support the cultural discontinuity hypothesis. This next movement toward quantitative measures as proposed by Tyler, et al. (2008) is absolutely important for the Latino American group, particularly as national trends indicate that Latino American students, much like African American students, do have a measured achievement gap as compared to Caucasian Americans in many academic disciplines in schools (Darling-Hammond, 2007).

Fortunately, some of the work is beginning to emerge that quantitatively assesses traditional Latino American values with Latino American perceptions of and actual measures of academic achievement (Guzman, Santiago-Rivera, & Haas, 2005). For example, Guzman, Santiago-Rivera and Haas' (2005) study examined the relationships between cultural factors as reported by the Mexican American high school students (ethnic identity, association with out-group and association with the traditional Mexican value of fatalism) with perceptions about education and their actual G.P.A. (as reported from school). From the students' answering of surveys that included culturally validated scales to measure the theoretical constructs above (see Guzman, Santiago-Rivera, & Haas, 2005), researchers concluded that, for the Mexican American students in this sample, alignment with ethnic identity was not related to reported values of

education or higher G.P.A. (Guzman, Santiago-Rivera, & Haas, 2005). Additionally, these authors concluded that alignment with the traditional value of fatalism was associated with lessened feelings concerning the value of education and that there was a positive association with out-group orientation, reported value of education, and G.P.A.(Guzman, Santiago-Rivera, & Haas, 2005).

Although the Guzman, Santiago-Rivera and Haas (2005) study does attempt to relate cultural values to academic outcomes and attitudes toward education, the values and attitudes reported are still *reported* via questionnaires, rather than directly observed as proposed by Tyler, et al. (2008). That said, these findings do still justify the need to conduct further research in the area of culturally mediated values and behaviors in education as the evidence from such studies only further support the idea that success in education for ethnic minority students may be significantly contingent upon their willingness to abandon some of the traditional values and associated behaviors within which they were raised.

Literature findings and assessment for Native American students.

Although there are hundreds of different Native American tribes recognized by the United States (M.T. Garrett , et al., 2003; Safran & Safran, 1994) and likely others that have not been recognized by the government of the United States, Tyler, et al. (2008) indicate that the work of M.T. Garrett (2003) and others in his research program have uncovered cultural values that appear to be associated with many of the Native American tribes including a respect for elders, a focus upon “sharing and cooperation, non-interference, harmony with nature, a present-time orientation, and a deep respect for elders” (see M.T. Garrett , et al., 2003; M.W. Garrett, 1995; Sue & Sue, 2003; Tyler, et al., 2008, p.288 for full review). Again, if cultural discontinuity is said to exist and is actually measured with the Native American student population, there

would have to be measurable evidence that a. cultural value-based behaviors expressed by Native American students existed at home and were discontinued at school and b. that the cessation of the behaviors was related to academic problems or negative psycho-educational consequences (Tyler, et al., 2008). Just as is the case for the other ethnic minority student populations discussed, the evidence in the current literature does provide some information related to the relationship of traditional cultural values, behaviors of students, and educational concerns; however, the study of Native American students' educational difficulties does little to provide the direct quantitative support needed to generalize the cultural discontinuity hypothesis.

For example, much of the literature that addresses the relationship between cultural clashes and education for Native American students contains largely descriptive accounts or qualitative reports and as such, they provide descriptive, reflective accounts that cannot be directly quantified or generalized to support the cultural discontinuity in education hypothesis (Amerman, 2007; Brown, Gibbons, & Smirles, 2007; Bryant & LaFramboise, 2005; Charleston & King, 1991; Deyhle, 1995; M.T. Garrett et al, 2003; M.W. Garrett, 1995; Hermes, 2005; Lake, 1991; Pewerdy, 2004; Safran & Safran, 1994; Stokes, 1997). Taken together however, this literature base does provide a thorough account of the reports of cultural misalignment between Native American cultural values and Eurocentric schools, reporting not only the negative associations teachers often have about the practices and beliefs of Native American students (i.e. downward glance, focus on family, and lack of need to compete individually in class, among others, all being interpreted as deficits rather than strengths by mainstream teachers and schools) (Deyhle, 1995; Lake, 1991; M.T. Garrett , et al., 2003; Pewerdy, 2004;), but also, schools lack of implementing truly acceptable, culturally compatible, educational environments (Charleston & King, 1991; Deyhle,1995; Hermes, 2005; M.T. Garrett , et al., 2003; M.W. Garrett, 1995;

Safran & Safran, 1994). Native American students' behaviors are misinterpreted by teachers and schools and students report issues of alienation and racist practices that have happened to them while in schools, suggesting that their backgrounds and differences from the mainstream profoundly influence their experiences in schools (Charleston & King; Deyhle, 1995; Hermes, 2005; M.T. Garrett, et al., 2003; M.W. Garrett, 1995; Safran & Safran, 1994). These accounts stated however, none of these researchers quantitatively assessed the relationships of the behaviors (or cessation of traditional value-based behaviors) exhibited by the Native American students to their experiences or academic outcomes while in the nation's schools.

Some of the literature has turned to quantitative investigations which begin to empirically demonstrate the relationship between the demonstration of traditional values-based behaviors and positive educational outcomes for Native American youth (Cardell, Cross, & Lutz, 1978; Hilberg & Tharp, 2002; Hilberg, Tharp, & Degeest, 2000; Hopkins & Bean, 1999). In Cardell, Cross and Lutz's (1978) study, researchers used an attitude self-report measure and an actual measure of performance on arithmetic worksheets to determine if students that worked in self-selected groups would demonstrate more knowledge of math concepts, an overall more positive attitude about working with peers, and a more positive attitude toward the subject of mathematics as compared to students that did not adhere to this group work process addressed in the Native American cultural value literature. Although there was no statistically significant support of the changes of attitude hypotheses, the results did indicate that the students in the sixth grade did perform significantly better on the mathematics worksheets when working in groups (Cardell, Cross, & Lutz, 1978).

In their review of several studies, Hilberg and Tharp (2002) demonstrated that research in which Native American students were allowed to process information in culturally aligned

ways (global, holistic, reflective, visual and collaborative) tended to show that Native American students performed better in a wide variety of academic and psychoeducational assessments when taught and allowed to practice in ways associated with the practices taught via traditional Native American cultures. In Hopkins and Bean's (1999) action research work, Native American students that were encouraged to draw, discuss, and reflect upon a new strategy for teaching language concepts reported performed significantly well (in the 90% range) on classroom assessments and reported positive feelings toward the activities while in class. Finally, Native American teenagers that went to reservation schools were found to have outperformed a control group in an eighth grade mathematics unit on decimals and fractions (controlling for pretest differences—but only approaching significance due to small sample) while significantly retaining more information from the unit as measured from a retention test when placed in the group that demonstrated instruction aligned with standards and practices better associated with traditional Native American values and subsequent behaviors (Hilberg, Tharp, & Degeest, 2000). In this same study, students in the experimental group had a significantly higher increase in attitude about and enjoyment of mathematics (Hilberg, Tharp, & Degeest, 2000).

Although much more empirical work needs to be conducted in order to support the cultural discontinuity hypothesis in education, studies such as these do begin to illustrate not only the deleterious outcomes faced by Native American students in schools aligned with mainstream values and practices, but also, the positive outcomes that can emerge educationally from practices that are more culturally compatible with the home and socialized experiences of many Native American youth.

Shortcomings of the Current Literature: Assessment Process and Conceptual Gaps

As stated by Boykin, Tyler, and Miller (2005), “without an empirical appreciation of what is going on in such classrooms [classrooms that serve students of color], the energy expended by researchers and educators who want to prescribe what should go on in the classrooms will not be entirely beneficial” (p. 522). Although the focus of this statement was upon classrooms that served African American students specifically, it should be stated that this very notion should be considered when addressing the populations worthy of investigation under the cultural discontinuity hypothesis in education. As has been reaffirmed throughout this critical review, the cultural discontinuity hypothesis in education, if properly supported by further study, should not only quantify the *observed* cessation of cultural value-based behaviors by non-mainstream students when leaving home and attending schools by way of a “cultural discontinuity score” (Tyler, et al., 2008), but more importantly, that cessation should be quantitatively linked to those academic and psychological difficulties faced by non-mainstream students in U.S. schools as measured from academic records and culturally validated scales that measure psychological precursors to academic achievement (i.e. cognitive factors discussed throughout this paper) (Tyler, et al., 2008).

As evidenced in the critical review of the literature base related to the cultural discontinuity hypothesis in education, there have been very little scholarly investigations which have been able to provide the information required to empirically substantiate the complex dynamics that are argued to be happening with marginalized student groups via the cultural discontinuity hypothesis in education. In Tyler, et al. (2008) two studies were mentioned which attempted to provide such necessary evidence to support the cultural discontinuity phenomenon. In Hauser-Cram, Sirin, and Stipek’s (2003) work, teacher questionnaires designed to assess the

expectations teachers had about students' educational performances, observations of classrooms, and actual academic performance data (as assessed by trained examiners) of kindergarten students were collected and analyzed by researchers. It was concluded that, when controlling for socioeconomic status, teachers' beliefs about the future academic performance of kindergarten children was significantly related not only to their actual skills as measured by the independent trained examiners, but also, to the teachers' perceived belief that the parents of the children held different beliefs (different from the teachers) regarding the education of their children (Hauser-Cram, et al., 2003).

In Arunkumar, et al. (1999), surveys were administered to African American and European American students both in fifth and in sixth grade. The surveys (some created by the research team and some from the psychological and educational literature—see study for full review) assessed not only the perceived dissonances felt by students as they went from home to school, but also, many variables determined in previous psychological and educational literature as important for student learning (i.e. self-esteem, hopefulness, self-efficacy, levels of anger etc.) (Arunkumar, et al., 1999). The results of this study indicated not only that high levels of home-school dissonances were related to academic precursors such as self-efficacy, self-esteem, and well-being, but also, that the dissonances were related significantly to G.P.A. (Arunkumar, et al., 1999).

The cultural discontinuity hypothesis in education has been used by researchers to explain the academic and psychological issues many ethnic minority students face in mainstream U.S. schools; however, one reported issue with using this particular hypothesis is in the inability to explain the problems faced by those students in schools in a way that advances the scientific investigation of the cultural discontinuity hypothesis claim (Tyler, et al., 2008). There are a

variety of reasons why this is the case, one of which, in part, is due to the lack of appropriate assessment of the hypothesis (Tyler, et al., 2008). This issue has not only been recognized by researchers in the field, but also, addressed in the Tyler, et al. (2008) conceptual paper. Future work aligned with Tyler, et al.'s recommendation will assist greatly in appropriately assessing the cultural discontinuity phenomenon in the lived social and educational experiences of non-mainstream populations. That said, the quantitative assessment of the phenomenon is not the only hurdle that researchers of this hypothesis much address in future scholarly work.

Another major limitation to the current literature base is in the groups of students that have been studied related to the hypothesis. As is illustrated in Tyler, et al.'s (2008) conceptual paper, the cultural discontinuity hypothesis in education has exclusively been applied to ethnic minority student groups, most specifically, those outlined in this critical review. If the hypothesis is to be named the *cultural* discontinuity hypothesis in education however, an emphasis in the literature should contain any student group that has cultural values and practices that a. might be abandoned and not endorsed in schools and b. related to student under-achievement. It is widely articulated in the psychoeducational literature that groups with shared *culture* are social organizations of individuals with shared customs, beliefs, and practices that usually express those shared repertoires, at least during some developmental portions of life, often within shared physical space (Banks, 2008 b.; Gay, 2000; Liston & Zeichner, 1996; Nieto, 1999; Spradlin & Parsons, 2008; Sue & Sue, 2003; Vygotsky, 1962, 1978). With this definition of *culture* in mind, one can readily see that scholarly work that focuses only on shared cultural value-based behaviors learned from home and ceased at schools as expressed by racial and ethnic minority group students in the U.S. fails to account for other factors that may contribute to shared cultural experiences and behavioral manifestations of other student groups that do not thrive well in

schools (as compared to mainstream students). Many other such differences exist and include those that live in low socioeconomic conditions and those that are bound together by shared regional space (i.e. Appalachian American students), just to name a couple. Although some of the literature focused on racial and ethnic cultural discontinuity study has controlled for SES conditions as part of the investigation of the hypothesis (Hauser-Cram, Sirin, & Stipek, 2003), future work aimed at advancing the cultural discontinuity argument in education would do well to include other groups of students that do not historically perform as well as mainstream students in schools. This is particularly apt if researchers really plan to pursue the scholarly understanding of how cultural differences might influence the discrepancies in psychological factors or academic performance of marginalized students in education at all.

Another limitation, which has not so much been ignored as not purposefully addressed in some of the current literature, is in assessing the differential effects that may exist with respect to combinations of factors in individual and group student performance in schools. For example, although some of the literature that assessed racial and ethnic student underachievement via the cultural discontinuity hypothesis assessed main and interaction effects related to gender and grade of students, much of the literature, rather than purposefully examining the differences that may emerge in similar cultural space for boys vs. girls, rich vs. poor, older vs. younger, merely applied statistical analyses to demonstrate if differences existed with some or all of these distinctions after the data were obtained. Future work with the cultural discontinuity hypothesis may want to more carefully hypothesize and assess the effects of other person-centered variables as related to differences in cultural treatments and subsequent behavioral manifestations (see Oyserman, Bybee, & Terry, 2003 for an example of such a study). Future studies that purposefully address these issues together will do much to assist researchers and practitioners in

designing learning contexts that are culturally appropriate and inclusive of the individual needs of a wide variety of learners in America's schools.

As can be seen, although much work has been completed in the quest to understand the role of cultural influences on psychological precursors to and actual academic performance of students that have suffered from systematic discrimination in U.S. schools and society, much work must still be completed before researchers can hope to begin to unravel the effects that the mandated cessation of these cultural value-based behaviors might have on minority student psychological health and historic academic underachievement (Tyler, et al., 2008). In order to further advance the study of the cultural discontinuity phenomenon, researchers must not only work to consistently and quantitatively assess the effects of observed cultural discontinuity on psychological precursors to and subsequent academic achievement variables, but also, researchers should be more careful to consider all groups of students with shared culture that are not performing well in schools, rather than narrowly focusing only on racial and ethnic distinctions. Finally, researchers should be careful to not only control for interactions effects that may emerge due to gender, age, SES, and other such variables with the cultural group studied, but rather, include these distinctions in the hypotheses and subsequent assessment of cultural discontinuity understanding that these and other student related variables are influenced by and influence the expectations and behaviors manifested by individuals within shared cultural space (Oyserman, Bybee, & Terry, 2003; Tyler, et al., 2008). Taken together, these suggestions should not only strengthen the study of the cultural discontinuity hypothesis in education, but also, do much to allow those interested in providing equitable educations for all students to better understand the relationships that exist between cultural differences and educational outcomes for historically underrepresented and marginalized student populations.

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