Deconstructing Deficit Orientation: Teacher Perceptions of Lived Experiences of Young Children

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This conceptual paper explored the fundamental barriers to successful equity training and professional development for teachers. This was done to show the need for a professional development series, based on Ting-Toomey and Chung's (2012) cultural value pattern analysis. Using the theoretical lens of post-colonial theory, the authors posit the need for professional development that begins with teacher positioning (Davies & Harré, 1990) for purpose of disrupting deficit-oriented epistemes of sociocultural differences. The conceptual framework contains activities for participants, as well as future recommendations for further training.

Keywords: professional development, cultural proficiency, marginalized populations, school improvement

Setting the Scene: Contextualizing Deficit Thinking

Deficit ideology is a well-researched construct (Menchaca, 1997; Valencia, 2010) It occurs when student's from historically marginalized backgrounds are seen as deficient, and blamed for difficulties and inequity they experience (Katasaru et al., 2010; Sharma & Portelli, 2014; Valencia, 2010). Students who are divergent from the mainstream culture are students of color, students who live in poverty conditions, or who have support needs due to a disability or a learning difference (Sharma, 2018). This can also include any other identity marker that might lend itself to difference from a typical student. Students from minoritized, marginalized backgrounds are immediately perceived as disadvantaged when they arrive at school. Schools located in inner-city, urban settings are likely sites for systemic and endemic deficit thinking due to socioeconomic and sociocultural differences between the community and the educational practitioners who work in the school district (Flessa, 2009; Sharma, 2018). Deficit thinking leads to lowered expectations for student learning (Hyslop-Margison & Naseem, 2008) and pathologizing of students' behavior and their lived experiences (Shields et al., 2005; Valencia, 2010). Lowered academic expectations lead to tracking which places minoritized students in groups receiving low-level, basic instruction and curriculum. This placement ensures that students will continue to fall farther behind as they are not engaged in critical challenging curriculum (Bertrand & Marsh, 2021; Dudley-Marling, 2015). Pathologizing student behavior leads to overrepresentation of minoritized students for special education with more extreme exclusionary placements (Fierros & Conroy, 2002). Another disparate outcome of pathologizing behaviors is disproportionate and harsher disciplinary action taken against minoritized students (Kennedy & Soutullo, 2018). This not only results in hours of missed class time, but also contributes overrepresentation of African American and Latinx students in the school to prison pipeline (Castillo, 2013). The next section situates a local context for the purpose of highlighting an urgent need for disruption of ontological and epistemological deficit ideology in one community.

A Local Context

The authors of this paper are educators in South Texas who are pursuing doctoral degrees in education. One author is a special education specialist who works for a regional education center office. She also taught special education for 10 years. The other author is a graduate assistant at a regional university who has taught PreK in a rural community, and worked for a local early childhood program.

South Texas schools face challenges in serving a culturally and economically diverse population of students. In 2020, 75.2 % of students enrolled in our region were Hispanic (Texas Education Agency, 2020). Schools in South Texas endure poor rankings on accountability measures, and constant top-down pressure to improve student achievement. Students are viewed as problematic to the rigor of mainstream curriculum, and they are labeled as underachieving and at-risk. Gaps in access to high quality education for students of color, and other marginalized populations continues to be problematic in our community, as well as in academic conversation among educational researchers. As schools implement various interventions and research-based curriculum, there remains an evidence base of negligent educational practices for our marginalized students close to the border in Texas (Chapa, 2002; Maril,1989; Murillo & Schall, 2016). These negligent practices include lowered expectations which serve as excuses for not educating students to their fullest potential (Cioe-Pena, 2020, Author, 2019; Meier, 2002). Furthermore, there is a preponderance of evidence that assimilative school culture and practices cause students of color to feel the need to delete their cultural identity, or make their home culture invisible when they are at school (Flores, 2013; Hatt & Urietta, 2020; Ladson-Billings, 1995; Salazar, 2013). Not only is assimilative cultural invisibility an existing threat to human diversity (Fernandez, 2018), it is also damaging to the development of students' academic identity (Ladson-Billings, 1995). Given the intersection of disparities that appear to be occurring in South Texas schools, one would think there must be a sense of urgency to remediate these issues. Deficit ideologies remain prevalent in schools within the South Texas community.

Although we are only offering anecdotal evidence of this in our community, the construct of deficit thinking is well researched in United States American schools. For example, Valencia (2010) outlines a history of hereditarianism and neo-hereditarianism in the United States of America. He explains the ways in which educational and psychological research have embraced studies that intelligence and limitations to intelligence to race and genetics. Although neo-hereditarianism has received plenty of criticism and push back from scholars, heredity and eugenics science has contributed to oppressive policy and decision making (Valencia, 2010). In this case we see students' behavior and academic ability pathologized through genetic study, which leads to dangerous outcomes for minoritized students. According to Sharma and Portelli (2014) this is the pseudo-scientific measure used to legitimize deficit thinking and the biased educational practices that come part in parcel. Teachers who attribute academic ability to talents, gifts, or good genes are more likely engage in biased approaches to education that ostracize difference (Baker, 2002; Lalvani, 2013). Educators who pathologize linguistic abilities are more likely to refer English Language Learners for special education services and segregated placements (Arehart, 2007; Cioe-Pena, 2020). Pseudo-scientific authority exonerates the practice of pathologizing cultural differences which leads minoritized students to be overrepresented in remedial behavior placements, disciplinary action, low-level academic tracks and segregated special education placements (Harry & Klinger, 2007). Deficit minded practices backed up by pseudo-scientific evidence allows schools to avoid their obligation to provide all students with rigorous challenging instruction and curriculum (Harry & Klinger, 2007). Lowered expectations for students of divergent backgrounds also becomes an excuse for not providing rigorous in the general education setting for which the authors will provide an anecdotal example.

The authors have witnessed a particular push to prioritize the provision of special experiences in South Texas schools. These special experiences include celebrations, that school practitioners deem culturally appropriate, and enriching to the lives of marginalized students. Teachers seem to view the experiences of minoritized students who live in poverty conditions as pitiful. The goal of providing fun experiences at school is to counter the predisposed perception of disadvantage that teachers

see in their students. To illustrate how special school experiences are operationalized from deficit perspectives a testimonial from one of the authors provides an example.

In one instance the teachers decided that the students should all decorate a box to look like a car for an art project. The students were all to bring their box cars to school on a Monday. Most of the students did this activity at home with their parents, but some students showed with no box car, so I had to use class time to create a box car for these students so they would not feel left out. On Monday, teachers allowed two hours of instructional time to be interrupted in order to provide the student with the experience of going to a drive-in movie. The teachers thought this would be an enriching experience for our students of low-socio economic status. The kids all sat in the gymnasium, in their boxcars, and watched the movie, *Cars*. On Friday, teachers decided that the students needed to experience a parade. Two more hours of instruction were interrupted so classes could take turns walking down the hallways with their box cars while the rest of the school watched.

The problem is that while special experiences at school are well intended, they are not educational, and the amount of instructional time that can be interrupted is detrimental to learning (Kraft 2020; Masci, 2008). In addition, although the intention of special school experiences is to be inviting and enriching, celebrations and events can be culturally ostracizing to students who do not fit in with mainstream culture (Sapp, 2009). Given the evidence that Hispanic students receive inadequate education, and face cultural invisibility at school, the act of wasting hours of instructional time to provide students with culturally homogenizing experiences associated with privilege seems almost despicable.

This specific context exemplifies why the authors of this article see an exigent need to disrupt the teacher held onto/epistemological deficit perceptions of students and families in their community. The authors of this conceptual research paper take the position that endemic and systemic deficit ideologies make a compelling demand for the disruption of an unquestioned, unchallenged status quo that is damaging to student outcomes. The allowance of lost instructional time combined with lowered expectations, and the threat of cultural deletion are acts of violence toward students.

We begin this article with theoretical perspectives on deficit thinking related to post-colonialism followed by an overview on salient literature related to teacher trainings designed to promote equity and cultural proficiency. This will help build context for a conceptual framework for professional development which is aimed at disrupting deficit thinking through application of positioning theory (Davies & Harré, 1990). In doing this we also establish our purpose for designing an actional research approach to professional development for cultural proficiency using Ting-Toomey & Chung's (2012) analysis of cultural value patterns.

Coloniality

The lens of post-colonialism allows perspective of the power dynamics in regards to student and teacher relationships. Post-colonial theory as applied to pedagogy by Pratt (1991) examined the role of literacy sponsorship by the dominant European bourgeois, and extended this application to the school as a cultural and linguistic contact zone. Coloniality is the legacy of oppressive colonial relationships of dominance that remain present in social structures today (Ndlovu-Gatsheni, 2013). The knowledge and literacies within the social world of the school are homogenized in respect to the teacher/colonizer who decides the rules and order which should be assumed by all members of the organization (Pratt, 1991). Similarly, deficit perspectives of minoritized students perpetrated by

educational practitioners represents a sponsorship of mainstream identities and experiences which are deemed appropriate and enriching by the dominant culture. Despite a push for multiculturalism and cultural representation, the majority of teachers prescribe to the dominant Eurocentric culture resulting in wide sponsorship and agency of the dominant culture within schools (Sleeter, 2011). As Sleeter (2011) pointed out, the representation of cultural diversity in schools is limited to acts of appropriation and superficial designation of time and space for celebratory recognition. These acts of appropriation rudimentarily celebrate heroes and holidays (Fernandez, 2018) of divergent cultures/identities on specific days and times, placing cultural knowledge as an afterthought to the existing curriculum. Efforts to combat teacher held deficit perspectives and promote cultural understanding of difference are often presented in professional development covering cultural proficiency and cultural responsiveness. Teacher trainings which fail to critically probe discomfort and disequilibrium in participants present watered down approaches to cultural understandings, and result in more reproductions of cultural essentialism (Fernandez, 2018).

The foundation of school improvement efforts aimed at cultural proficiency and equity should seek to interrogate the ways in which traditional power and dominance in relation to class, race, and ethnicity are showcased in pedagogy and educational practice (Olsen, 1998). Colonial power structures and dominant values reside at the outset of teacher held deficit perspectives of marginalized students, however, these values are submerged and difficult to locate and identify. Even when educators are able to locate and identify dominant values and power structures, the task of developing solutions to change inequitable practices is often overlooked. Suleri (1992) impressed the importance of understanding the complicated and intimate relationship between colonizer and the colonized beyond the simple binary of center and margin. The relationship is not always as simple as dominant/oppressed because sometimes there grows a level of dissonant caring for the concerned parties. This relationship is paternalistic, and hegemonic. This relationship can appear harmless when we are talking about small children. However, JanMohamed (1985) warned, this can be a dangerous situation wherein the teacher is withdrawing from the discomfort of otherness and retreating to the comfort of their own perspective. The teacher then ultimately reinforces agency of the dominant culture and ignores the value of student difference and identity. The literature review that follows covers the ways in which fail to effectuate change in inequitable practices, and fall short of helping teachers develop cultural proficiency.

Why Does Cultural Proficiency Training Fail?

There is an abundance of literature and professional development (PD) which aim to improve cultural responsiveness in pedagogical practices. The following sections review some of the reasons why professional development (PD) sessions on cultural responsiveness are ineffective, and explore some of the ways in which researchers are attempting to rectify these problems. The purpose of this literature review is to reveal what is problematic in equity professional development (PD), and to impose what is needed in order to make equity PD a successful effort toward cultural competency for teachers.

Lack of Metacognitive Awareness

When educators lack metacognitive awareness and critical consciousness, they may have a hard time identifying their own biases and working on developing better practices. An analytic essay by Tucker-Smith (2021) examined this phenomenon which leads equity professional development for teachers to be ineffective. Using the Dunning Kruger Effect (1999), she explains how individuals are

unaware of their own cultural incompetence, indicating that most individuals lack metacognitive ability to recognize that they lack cultural competence. Tucker-Smith further explains equity PD that merely defines, describes, or points out implicit and explicit cultural and racial biases does not resonate in feelings of humility or willingness to explore one's own prejudices and biases. Providing teachers with training on defining and identifying cultural and racial biases. According to Tucker-Smith there is good news that increasing actual knowledge, leads to a decrease in self-perceived competence, resulting in humility and a willingness to examine one's own short-comings. The key to promoting self-awareness of cultural biases is to bring the pupil to metacognitive awareness of a gap between their existing knowledge and the new knowledge they are gaining (Kruger & Dunning, 1999). This brings the teacher/pupil to a critical point where they are open to the possibility of exploring their cultural competence.

In addition to promoting metacognitive awareness of gaps in knowledge, equity PD sessions ought to promote self-reflection. Reflection is an integral piece of successful equity PD for bringing participants to critical consciousness of their own cultural biases, and also to reflect on bias in curriculum materials and policies (Tucker-Smith, 2021). Through reflection participants are also able to demonstrate metacognitive transformation in the ways they perceive cultural diversity (Florio-Ruane, 2011). Without the extension of self-reflection into exercises that promote critical thinking about solutions, participants will get stuck in the thought pattern of merely recognizing their own biases without learning how find solutions to inequity.

Focus on Achievement Data

Equity PD will often use student achievement data to highlight disparities in performance based on disaggregated categories of race and socio-economic status. When student achievement data shows poor performance on accountability measures, a typical reaction is to blame the parents or resort to deficit-oriented reasoning in relation to students' home lives (Lasater et al., 2021; Miranda & Jaffe-Walter, 2018). Guerra and Nelson (2008) developed a series of articles on how to provide cultural proficiency PD to teachers, in which they recommend that administrators begin with an assessment of district student achievement data. This analysis of disaggregated data along the lines of race, language, socio-economic status and ethnicity serves the purpose of illuminating the presence of inequitable practices in the district. Most likely this data will show the presence of inequity manifested in practices related to these measures in student achievement. Administrators are encouraged to use this data in their PD sessions to illustrate the need for cultural proficiency among their teachers, however Guerra and Nelson (2008) warn that this information will easily lead educators in the PD session to resort to deficit talk. Simply showing disaggregated achievement data to teacher will not reframe their deficit thinking about inequity. For example, teachers may blame students' failure on coming from a broken home or having parents who don't care about education (Bertrand & Marsh, 2021). Teachers may also feel that their students lack enriching experiences and come to school deprived of background knowledge. Like Tucker-Smith, Guerra and Nelson recommend self-reflection exercises, coupled with new knowledge, to promote critical awareness of systemic inequity that is embedded in all aspects of the school's function. Although the authors suggest self-reflection to help overcome deficit perceptions of marginalized students, deeply held deficit beliefs are difficult to overcome, even with reflective exercises.

Alternatively, a study by Garza and Garza (2010) revealed that high level performance on student achievement measures can mask an absence of culturally responsive practices in schools. Four teachers were identified due to their success in teaching Mexican American students, and this was

determined because of their students' ability to perform well on the state accountability exam. Although all the teachers in the study demonstrated commitment and dedication to their students' passing the state exam, the researchers found no indication that these teachers were practicing culturally responsive pedagogy. The participating teachers defined successful students in terms of concepts such as resiliency and persistence, and held regard for students who they considered college bound. Garza and Garza (2010) found that the teachers dismissed the notion that they could learn from their Mexican American students, and consistently reinforced the practice of imposing their values upon their students. The participating teachers also blamed a lack of parental involvement on a lack of education, but also indicated that they didn't really want the parents bothering them anyway. This means that teachers are still imposing their personal values on students instead of validating the lived experiences and values of their students. Passing state accountability exams is important but research has also shown that cultural invisibility is damaging to student identity (Ladson-Billings, 1995).

Damage Centered Narratives

In order to promote cultural competence and responsiveness, all current teaching modes need to be deconstructed and examined for colonial power structure that is reified through rhetoric, relationships, and common images. Educative measures for teachers offer images and descriptions of marginalized populations as broken, defeated, outcasted, and traumatized by systemic oppression. Eve Tuck (2009) has termed this portrayal as damage-centered, focusing the identities of marginalized populations into the subjugated position that was created for them, and the abuse that has been perpetrated on them by colonialism. Even when educators and researchers speak to the resiliency of the oppressed or marginalized, they are unintentionally reinforcing the power structures that were created by imperialism (Carter Andrews et al., 2019). Individuals would not need to be resistant or resilient if they were not functioning within a system of oppression. According to Tuck (2009), an important aspect of changing epistemological approaches to decolonizing educative practices is de-pathologizing the lives and experiences of the disenfranchised. Pathologizing the lives of individuals according to how they handle being in a system of oppression is a diagnosis that reinforces social hegemony. Individuals need to be viewed as more that conquered or resilient in reference to their performance in a system of oppression. Rhetoric, relationships and images should be taught that focus on the systems and structures of oppression, not the brokenness of the individuals who have lived in and experienced these systems. Carter Andrews and colleagues (2019) recommend an initial step as refocusing our language, for example, instead of using the term achievement gap, practitioners should use the term "access and opportunity gap" (p. 8). This shifts the onus from the achievement of the individual to the system which limits access and opportunities. Removing damage centered perspectives from equity PD sessions is an integral step to creating successful training on cultural competency because educators cannot reframe their epistemological orientation toward difference and Otherness if they are still using the rhetoric that reinforces oppressive structures. Successful equity PD ought to encourage education professionals to interrogate the systems of power and privilege oppression that create power and privilege. Shifting the choice of language used in PD sessions is one way to work against the nuances that tacitly reinforce oppression, however, it is not enough. Simply updating the terms that used to label diverse students will ultimately result in the same oppressive practices. Professional development and teacher education programs have not successfully disrupted the colonial structures of oppression and privilege which they have sought to dismantle (Dominguez, 2017; Harry & Klinger, 2007).

This review revealed some areas of need for equity PD and training on cultural proficiency and equity. In the sections that follow the authors describe a conceptual intervention for professional

development which will promote cultural proficiency and responsiveness through reframing the value of lived experiences of students who are members of marginalized groups. In order to explain the professional development intervention, the next section will operationalize Ting-Toomey and Chung's cultural value pattern analysis using Sharma and Portelli's (2014) conceptual framework for sociocultural deficit ideology.

Conceptual Framework

In the previous sections we have explicated the ontological and epistemic origins of deficit thinking, as well as some reasons why teacher trainings do not work. In this section we position the perception of sociocultural differences (Sharma & Portelli, 2014; Sharma, 2018) as the impetus for the conception and progression of deficit thinking.

In order to address a lack of metacognition (Tucker-Smith, 2020) we used positioning theory to help locate a starting point for training that will help teachers identify their social position as it relates to the way they perceive others. Positioning theory locates selfhood in the juxtaposition of conversation, social roles, and rules which make up the discursive elements of storylines (Davies & Harré, 1990). Although positioning theory views human identity as a protean concept which is constantly evolving through storylines, individuals can become trapped in their practices and roles. Discursive practices thwart individuals from moving beyond the ways of thinking (Davies, 1989) that need to be avoided education. Positioning theory has been used to examine the ways in which teachers position themselves amongst cultural diversity (Glazier, 2011; McVee et al, 2011). In the section that follows we describe Davies and Harré's (1990) processes of positioning multiplicities of self as the starting point for teachers to position themselves within Ting-Toomey & Chung's patterns.

The Starting Point

The following progression of activities are aligned with Davies and Harré (1990) processes for positioning the multiplicities of self. This was selected due its succinct description of positioning through discursive practices, and is progression from introspective analysis onto application of analysis to relationships. Positioning theory here is not concerned with personal identity, but selfhood which is developed from our perceptions of ourselves and others. Our positions of selfhood are constructed through dialogue and internal narrative storylines wherein we imagine ourselves and others (Davies & Harré, 1990). Through the processes of positioning the multiplicities of selfhood, participants clarify ambiguities of their beliefs and values, allowing them to make metacognitive transformations in the ways they perceive themselves and others (Florio-Ruane, 2011). Ting-Toomey and Chung's cultural value patterns were selected to guide positioning of the self specifically because they represent internal motivating factors as well as inclusive and exclusive categories.

The process of positioning the self begins with learning the categories to which some individuals are includes and others are excluded (Davies & Harré, 1990). In the PD session, teachers will begin by learning the cultural values patterns presented by Ting-Toomey & Chung (2013). The facilitators of the session will instruct the teacher participants to reflection their own values as they are learning Ting-Toomey and Chung's (2013) value patterns. The idea is that as teachers are learning the value patterns, they will begin an inner dialogue wherein they will identify aspects of the values that align with own values, and those that do not.

The second process in positioning the self is to engage in discursive practice to promote the attachment of definitions to exclusive/inclusive categories from the first step (Davies & Harré,1990). For this training, the cultural value patterns asserted by Ting-Toomey and Chung (2013) represent the exclusive/inclusive categories described in Davies and Harré's (1999) positioning theory. In this step of the process subjects and terms within the categories are also defined and expanded. Teachers will be given the opportunity to engage with fellow participants in a discussion of the value patterns they learned. In discussion groups, participants will be asked to share examples from their own lives relate to the value patterns they just learned. According to Davies and Harré (1990) the multiplicity of positioning is often aided by positionings posited by an additional speaker in the construction of a spoken narrative. The hope is this will allow participants to elaborate the inner dialogue they began in the first process.

Third in the positioning process, the individual positions themselves within the defined categories by constructing story lines (Davies & Harré, 1990). For the purpose of this professional training, participants will locate themselves within the cultural values framework, and construct a storyline for each value. Participants will commit to a position for each value. In this step teachers will write a brief reflection for each value pattern. Davies and Harré (1990) state that once an individual understands their position they will recognize those positions which are contradictory to their own. They go on to say that society conditions us to view contradictory positions as problematic and needing of remediation. However, positioning theory asserts that these contradictory positions, those which are different than our own, are actually sites for authentic learning about diversity (Davies & Harré, 1990; Huag, 1987). Positioning oneself provides an appropriate dynamic for discussing diversity and difference.

The intention of writing the reflection is to help participants clarify their commitment to a position within each value pattern, Researchers will collect these reflections as anonymous qualitative data for reporting and evaluation of the program. Teachers will be instructed not to ponder or diagnose the values of their students at this point, only their own values. This is done to begin the conversation with an intentional avoidance of focusing on students as the problem, and limit the possibility that this activity will turn into deficit talk (Guerra & Nelson, 2008). The purpose of avoiding deficit talk here is to begin with a positive dialogue. Research has shown that once it has begun, deficit-oriented conversations are difficult to recover from which thwarts meaningful learning of cultural competence (Lasater et. al, 2021; Miranda & Jaffe-Walter, 2018). We, the authors, believe that by beginning the session with participants focusing on themselves and their own position within the values framework will help to avoid blaming students and families for educational challenges.

The sections that follow include definitions for each value pattern (Ting Toomey & Chung, 2013). Descriptions include an example of how the value is operationalized in perspectives of students. This is included to help the reader understand the importance of the value as it relates to deficit thinking, and teachers would not be probed to reference these positions yet. It is also important to note that providing teachers with definitions of deficit thinking and sociocultural differences is not necessary. As posited by the Tucker-Smith (2021) and Kruger and Dunning (1999) providing participants with definitions and examples can lead to an inflated sense of knowledge absent of critical awareness. Participants should not be distracted by trying to remember definitions because the purpose of this exercise is to understand the metacognitive process that leads to perceptions of deficiency.

Initially, educators will learn about the cultural value patterns utilizing Ting-Toomey and Chung's (2012) analysis. In positioning theory, a person begins locating their position by defining categories which include some individuals while excluding others (Davies & Harré, 1990) The purpose of teaching the cultural value patterns first is to enable participants in the session) to begin defining where they are included and excluded within the values and beliefs presented in the value patterns. Then, participants will be given an opportunity to reflect on their own cultural and life experiences and analyze their own cultural values according to the following four patterns identified by Ting-Toomey & Chung (2012). Positioning theory posits that once the individual has defined exclusion/inclusion of particular categories, the individual then seeks and attaches meanings to the categories. For each value pattern teachers will be asked to locate their own values attach their own personal definitions to the values in the categories/patterns.

Individualism Vs. Collectivism. The predominant view of the United States is one of individualism where the achievements, uniqueness, talents, and resourcefulness of the individual are celebrated (e.g.- the American Dream). Those that share this value prize independence. Collectivist orientations are more concerned with the well-being of everyone within the family or community. Those that lean towards this orientation value harmony, family, and relationships. Schools in the United States demonstrate primarily an Individualistic set of values by embedding competition within Arts, behavior, attendance, academics, and athletics. The children from families who lean toward individualistic value patterns will experience more validation and representation within school environments. In school students are valued and measured individually, and students do not have a choice whether or not they are evaluated as a group or individually. Students from collectivist backgrounds may feel humiliated or commodified when attention is paid to them for their success or shortcomings.

Small Vs. Large Power Distance. Power distance refers to the amount of authority provided to those based on rank, age, status, etc. Individuals who value small power distances are unafraid to question authority and disagree with others around them. Those who were raised to value large power distances are unlikely to question their elders, bosses, or others their culture has designated to be of an esteemed position. Questioning others can be a form of critical thinking, but often in schools critical thinking is only welcome at designated times during instruction. This can be confusing to students who may wish to question things but fear getting in trouble. Students from marginalized communities are sometimes viewed as lacking critical thinking skills, however, it may be due to a perceived sociocultural value difference. Students with small power distance values may appear to pose behavioral concerns to teachers because they are less afraid to question authority. In contrast with large power distance values could be experience adversity in silence due to a fear of speaking out to authority.

Uncertainty Avoidance. Those with strong uncertainty avoidance frequently prioritize stability in home, career, and day to day activities. Families that stay in one location for many generations or who live in their houses of their parents and grandparents may also have strong uncertainty avoidance. For others, change and uncertainty may be more commonplace within their daily lives and/or it may represent opportunity and progress. In school settings, personnel may have negative things to say about families who frequently move between districts or across the state. Students who switch schools frequently are flagged as at risk for school failure. Teachers assume these students are behind their classmates who do not move frequently.

Locus of Control. Individuals with an internal locus of control may believe that they are in-control of their own destiny. That in the event of hardships they can change the future if they work hard enough. Those with values that align with an external locus of control may be more inclined to feel that something greater than themselves is in control and that they are meant to learn from or persevere throughout life's experiences. Schools prefer students who are self-determined, however, some individuals and their family believe that the circumstances in their life determine what they are capable of achieving. Schooling establishes the notion that each student could pass the state assessment, win the UIL trophy or bring home the sports title if they really wanted and work hard enough for it. Students who do not wish to pull themselves up by their bootstraps and overcome all of life's circumstances are often seen as lazy, unmotivated or apathetic.

Moving Beyond the Self

Beginning this intervention with positioning the self is done purposefully to ease participants into a conversation about difference and avoid focusing on perceived student deficits. It is imperative that the facilitator who is providing this training impress that all cultural value patterns are valuable, and none are considered more desirable than others. The relationship between teacher participants and the facilitator needs to be one on understanding and compassion. In addition, the facilitator must understand that teachers need to be met in their in their zone of proximal development (Vygotsky, 1976) to scaffold them to deeper understandings of how sociocultural differences are perceived.

Following the three steps of intervention previously described, teachers will not simply identify value patterns held by students and families. They will be provided with a model of how sociocultural differences are weaponized as deficiencies in schools. In order to create a safe environment and encourage vulnerability, the facilitator will share at least one experience in their own career where sociocultural differences led to deficit thinking. The interventionist will provide a model for storying an experience of engaging in deficit thinking in response to a sociocultural difference. Individually, teachers will reflect upon a time in their career with they perceived a sociocultural difference as a deficit. It may be beneficial to have teachers talk with a partner to get the conversation going and ensure that the activity is being done with fidelity. The purpose of this exercise is for teachers to identify the metacognitive process of perceiving sociocultural differences as deficiencies.

In order to scaffold teachers' understanding of how deficit thinking systemically affects a variety of operations and ways of knowing within the school, we will engage in discussions using the following prompts:
1. How can individualistic values, held by teachers, impact education for students who come from families with collectivist value patterns?
2. How do teachers with high uncertainty avoidance value systems view families who are considered highly mobile or unstable?
3. What are the implications of power distance on our perceptions of roles of students and teachers, and other relationships in educational settings?
4. How does social positioning affect an individual's feelings of external locus of control?

Discussion

The authors understand there are limitations to the ideas presented in this paper. Glazier (2011) acknowledged that while exercises for positioning can work to transform participants' perceptions of

cultural diversity, it can also have the damaging effect of reifying existing biases, and we recognize this is a potential outcome. Social justice underpinnings of critical action research extend collaboration beyond those who are members of the organization, and invite the community to help build an authentic context for the issue (Bruce & Pine, 2010). It would be critical to invite community members to join this professional development in order to complete a cycle of action research that seek input from those outside of the school staff. Bringing in community members to share their experiences in school, both positive and negative, will afford teachers an opportunity to listen to divergent views of school. Another limitation is there is no evaluative criteria for determining the effectiveness of the conceptual training. Once the training is implemented, there would need to be a way of maintaining this conversation with teachers by doing check-ins or subsequent cycles of evaluation and intervention. While methodological approaches to research are not fleshed out in this particular paper, the authors feel that a critical action research approach would fit best using sequential cycles of data collection to inform the best way to move forward with intervention.

Aligning with the recommendations of Tucker-Smith (2021), the authors of this conceptual intervention would develop subsequent trainings which will allow participants to explore ways of applying Ting-Toomey and Chung's cultural value patterns to teaching practices. These subsequent trainings will help to effectuate change in inequitable practices. Extending the intervention beyond merely identifying bias is important for effectuating change. One following intervention will provide teachers with training on how to use what they have learned regarding cross cultural values to develop culturally responsive lesson plans. This work will be based on the work of Geneve Gay (2002). It is hoped that the cultural value patterns training presented in this paper will support teachers' understanding of their own social positioning as well as the positions and perspectives of students and parents. Doing so will help teachers understand how they have embedded their own values within their teaching practices. It will help expand their ability to teach diverse students and teach in ways that honor and validate multiple perspectives and values.

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