

THE ROLE OF RACE AND INCOME ON AFRICAN AMERICAN YOUTH PARTICIPATION  
IN SUMMER PROGRAMS

By

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(Under the Direction of June Hopps)

ABSTRACT

Out-of-school time programs (i.e., after or before school and summer programs) supplement formal education and support working parents to minimize youth involvement in risky activities (Mahoney et al., 2009). However, programs meant to serve youth purposely blocked African Americans from participating in developmental programming (Halpern, 2002). Generally, participation in OST programs is low (Gillard & Witt, 2008). There is also little documentation of the perspectives of minoritized youth experiencing intersectional oppressions (Ladd, 2012; Orfield et al., 2014; Watson, 2014). Also, missing from the literature is a comprehensive study examining multiple stakeholders' perspectives and research examining the specific factors impacting the involvement of high school-aged youth (Lewalter et al., 2021). Therefore, the purpose of the current study was to explore high school-aged African American youth, parents, and OST employees' perspectives on the influence of race and income on high school-aged low-income African American youth participation in summer programs.

Critical Race Theory guided the examination of four research questions: (1) What are African American youth (i.e., high school age), parents, and OST employees' perspectives of the role race plays on high school-aged low-income African American youth participation in summer

programs? (2) What are African American youth, parents, and OST employees' perspectives on socioeconomic status's role in high school-aged low-income African American youth participation in summer programs? (3) What are African American youth, parents, and OST employees' perspectives of compatibility (i.e., program fit with youth interests) of summer programs with high school-aged low-income African American youth interests? (4) What are African American youth, parents, and OST employees' perspectives on the impact of current socioeconomic conditions since COVID-19 on high school-aged low-income African American youth participation in summer programs? Data collected from 44 participants were analyzed using the constant comparative method and narrative thematic analysis. A total of seven individual and collective themes per subgroup emerged for an overall total of nine themes and represented the singular and collective experiences of the subgroups in the current study. Results indicate that race and income are relevant aspects of youth participation in summer programs. The study outlines implications and recommendations for social work and further research.

INDEX WORDS: Race, Socioeconomic status, Critical Race Theory, Out-of-school time, Youth, Counterstorytelling, Multi-perspective, Qualitative research, Social work

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## DEDICATION

I dedicate this body of work to my mother. Now that I have children, I recognize the tremendous sacrifice you made in order for me to have the opportunity to pursue and experience my dreams. Without your sacrifice, this work would not have been possible, and my pursuit of justice, equity, and advancement for People of Color would have been stifled. To you, I owe much more than words of gratitude.

## COVID-19 IMPACT STATEMENT

The onset of COVID-19 has impacted this study. Face-to-face activities were discontinued or limited due to safety concerns. Therefore, instead of completing qualitative interviews in-person, data collection efforts were shifted to conducting online interviews. In addition, I relied on my community advisory committee and community connections to recruit OST employees, parents, and youth via phone or email and limited socially distanced community outreach efforts. Finally, I added the following research question to capture the impact of COVID-19 on study participants: What are African American youth, parents, and OST employees' perspectives on the impact of current socioeconomic conditions since COVID-19 on high school-aged low-income African American youth participation in summer programs? To mitigate disruption to research, I made efforts to collaborate and adapt research activities as appropriate.

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## **CHAPTER ONE**

### **INTRODUCTION**

When examining elusive issues plaguing society, it is vital to provide a context for which conditions developed. Examining circumstances impacting participation in out-of-school time (OST) programs necessitates this same approach. Therefore, the following chapter will include a brief historical backdrop with emphasis on the origin and different societal influences on OST programs and summer education, the exclusion and perseverance of African Americans, and examples of different social and political influences on the sustainability of OST programs; afterward a discussion of education and OST programs in Georgia will be included; next, a statement of the problem and description of the purpose of the current study will follow; finally, this chapter will conclude with an explanation of the significance of the current study and the research questions will be outlined.

#### **Historical Background**

##### **Historical Influences on OST Programs and Summer Education**

Receiving a quality education correlates to positive long-term outcomes. However, disparities in access to quality resources and opportunities exist among socioeconomic and racial groups (Milner, 2012). Even OST programs that supplement educational disparities have historically contributed to inequity (Gardner et al., 2009; St. Clair & Stone, 2016). The OST field consists of programs offered outside school hours (i.e., before or after school or during the summer) and encompasses place, time, and approaches that primarily serve young people in primary and secondary education (grades K-12; Malone, 2018, p. 2). Following is a brief history

of education and OST programs, the concurrent role of summer education, and the historical exclusion and perseverance of African Americans.

During the 1850's urban superintendents were fearful that the exertion of "too much energy towards learning for too long a period of time" (Gold, 2002, p. 82) adversely impacted youth (i.e., students in K-12 education). At the same time, educators and medical personnel emphasized the importance of play, thereby limiting the pressures of learning (Halpern, 2002; J. Lee, 1927; Mahoney et al., 2009). School administrators responded by eliminating Saturday classes, shortening the school day, and lengthening summer vacation (Gold, 2002, p. 84). Eliminating time in school resulted in exacerbating disparities in access to summertime activities for low-income and immigrant populations. Therefore, to address the circumstances of the immigrant poor, vacation schools (i.e., summer education) were established (Halpern, 2002). However, African Americans were excluded from vacation school access until a Chicago school was established in 1908 explicitly for African Americans (Gold, 2002).

In addition to the expansion of summer education, OST programs emerged in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century as boys' clubs (Halpern, 2002). Concurrently, the settlement house movement unfolded and contributed to youth development by providing enrichment spaces for boys and girls. Like vacation schools, OST programs hardly assisted, and settlements contrived ways to avoid serving African Americans (Halpern, 2002; Lasch-Quinn, 1993). Despite inequity in OST programs and settlements, two key influences contributed to the desirability of enrichment programs: the decline in child labor and the growth of schooling. The decreased time youth spent in labor resulted in them having 'idle' time after school (Mahoney et al., 2009). Many adults were concerned that the unoccupied time youth spent after school allowed youth to get into trouble

(Halpern, 2002). However, many progressive reformers viewed this time as an opportunity to invest in and develop youth (Halpern, 2002).

### **Perseverance of the African Americans**

Although during the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries, several examples of efforts to exclude African Americans from educational opportunities exist, there is a counter perspective demonstrating their resiliency. As the mainstream settlement house movement was underway in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, there was an outright dismissal of the plight experienced by African Americans. Many settlements closed, followed White immigrants out of neighborhoods where African Americans were migrating to, or facilitated segregated activities (Lasch-Quinn, 1993). Based on an underlying belief that the 'Black race' was deficient and foreign from European races, settlement practitioners excluded African Americans from efforts (Anderson, 1988). Many believed that African Americans were served best by attempting to progress independently. Therefore, they turned to spaces and individuals where they were accepted to address African Americans' debilitating circumstances. However, lack of access to funding and social and political resources resulted in many African American settlement houses remaining unequal (Lasch-Quinn, 1993).

Historically, mainstream enrichment opportunities have excluded African Americans. Exclusionary practices exist in established public education institutions and supplemental programs. Despite the substantial efforts to ignore African Americans' plight, they persevered through self-help and collective contribution (Anderson, 1988). However, the foundations of educational inequality continue to plague African Americans today. Consequences of discriminatory practices are apparent in the disproportionate educational outcomes on

standardized tests, discipline rates, and educational opportunities African American students experience (Bottiani et al., 2017; Bradshaw et al., 2010; Milner, 2012).

Historically African Americans have been deliberately blocked from educational advancement, which is linked to later economic and social well-being (Midgley, 2014). Presently, researchers and practitioners are equally working to identify academic approaches that are culturally and racially relevant for African American students (Despard, 2016; Gardner et al., 2009; St. Clair & Stone, 2016). Identifying more inclusive practices is especially important today as the effects of COVID-19 on student learning and OST participation and access remain unknown.

### **Historical Social and Political Influences on OST Programs**

Educators during the progressive era had an opportunity to provide quality education to all youth, regardless of race. However, the circumstances of the late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries were a missed opportunity. Therefore, to entirely understand the experiences of African Americans, it is imperative to include an examination of the social and political influences on OST programs. Below includes a discussion of policies and social conditions influencing the growth and sustainability of OST programs.

The increase in women's labor, single-earner households, and the diversification of American society have contributed to the expansion of OST programs (Mahoney et al., 2009). When alternative childcare is unavailable, allowing children to stay home and provide their own 'self-care' (i.e., time after school when youth are without direct adult supervision) has been a growing option for families (Mahoney et al., 2009). Early findings support that the most common reason for self-care occurs because parents work, or alternative care is unavailable or unaffordable (Fosarelli, 1986). Of the available childcare options, self-care offers the least

amount of adult supervision, with children spending an average of two to three hours per day alone (Bassett & Winsler, 2004; Fosarelli, 1986). When school is out, vulnerable youth are at increased risk of engaging in adverse behaviors such as early sexual encounters and fighting (K. Lee et al., 2018; Pradhan, 2018). However, OST programs struggle to retain youth more susceptible to exhibiting high-risk behaviors (Lauver et al., 2004; Weisman & Gottfredson, 2001).

In the late 20<sup>th</sup> century, the proposal of policies to make childcare more equitable for the most vulnerable communities began. Federal policies today provide limited financial support to OST programs (Mahoney et al., 2009). Since the enactment of the No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB), funds have essentially remained stagnant. The enactment of NCLB emphasized the necessity of evaluation to determine the effectiveness of OST programs, stressing the prevalence of Evidence Based Practice's (EBPs), and increased focus on academic activities (Mahoney et al., 2009). In response to COVID-19, the American Rescue Plan was established and outlines funding for OST activities such as summer enrichment, learning recovery, and childcare (Afterschool Alliance, n.d.). However, many private donors and state and local governments have developed initiatives to support OST programs to counter funding inadequacies (Aarons, Hulburt, & Horwitz, 2011; Despard, 2016; Mahoney et al., 2009).

There are a variety of social and political factors that have contributed to the growth of OST programs. The development of OST programs was necessary to accommodate the changing needs of the American family (Halpern, 2002). Families, practitioners, and politicians have contemplated the safest and most developmentally appropriate settings for youth following the hours after school (Pettit et al., 1997). For some youth, there is a block of time after school that they spend in self-care (Mahoney & Parente, 2009). Stakeholders have and continue to

deliberate whether allowing youth to participate in self-care versus enrollment in enrichment programs results in the best developmental outcomes for youth (Mahoney & Parente, 2009). However, OST program access is limited because of inadequate government funding and a lack of policies supporting OST programs (Afterschool Alliance, 2012; Mahoney et al., 2009).

### **Education and OST Programs in Georgia**

Two centuries ago, students in the state of Georgia schools were racially and economically homogeneous compared to schools today. The 1700s and 1800s included inequitable practices excluding economically and racially marginalized populations. Today outcomes for minoritized- “process [action vs. noun] of student minoritization” (Benitez, 2010, p. 131), which reflects minority status as socially constructed (Stewart, 2013) - populations remain disparate. OST programs can be an asset to formal education; however, the impact of contextual factors on the most vulnerable youth can be deleterious. Below includes an explanation of the above features.

Walker (1991) divided the history of the state of Georgia education into three time periods: the developmental, established school, and equalization period. In the late 1700s and mid-1800s, during the developmental period, education in Georgia was considered a privilege of White, wealthy families. The law excluded enslaved people from public education during early developments. However, following the Civil War, under the Freedmen’s Bureau, 2,500 schools for African Americans were supported by federal government funds. During reconstruction, the Georgia Teachers Association was formed and worked to establish a public education system. Conversely, due to increased biracial youth, education, and taxes, no adequate state appropriations were made for public education.

The denial of adequate educational institutions for African Americans persisted during the established period. African American and White students received unequal education in separate schools. At this time, many citizens felt that taxes paid by African Americans should support their schools. This policy would have excluded many African Americans from public education if enacted. The policy did not pass, and during the equalization period, the segregation of schools legally ended; however, there were efforts to repeal integration. Under the Quality Basic Education (QBE) Act in the 1980s, states assumed more of a role in policy decisions and increased state funding for education (Walker, 1991).

In the 21<sup>st</sup> century, early discriminative education practices impact Georgia's low-income and minoritized students. Effects are apparent in disproportionate school discipline, graduation, and dropout rates. The United States Government Accountability Office (2018) found that Georgia, among other states, had disproportionate disciplinary rates adversely impacting African American, male, or disabled students. In addition, during the 2015-2016 school year, African Americans graduated at a lower rate (72%) and were more likely to drop out (7.3%) in comparison to their White peers (85%; 5.9%, respectively; McFarland et al., 2018).

In 2007, Georgia received \$441,475,846 in 21CCLC, ESEA Title 1, and CCDF funding for afterschool and school-age childcare (Mahoney et al., 2009). However, according to the Afterschool Alliance (2020), although Georgia families reported positive perspectives regarding OST programs, there remains a significant gap in available services. If a program were available, programs could accommodate an additional 590,278 youth in Georgia (Afterschool Alliance, 2020). In Athens, Georgia, 84% and 77% of youth participants from two low-income communities reported that 1-5 of their peers attend clubs, organizations, or activities after school. However, youth also reported a lack of interest, the uncertainty of available activities, and friends

not participating as some of the critical factors for non-participation in OST activities (Matthew et al., 2017).

The social and economic conditions within neighborhoods impact youth. Youth living in neighborhoods with high poverty rates are vulnerable because socioeconomic status (SES) is linked to the quality of opportunities youth have access to (Engle & Black, 2008; Farrell et al., 2019). St. Clair and Stone (2016) found that low-income youth experienced significantly less emotional and instructional support from OST providers than more affluent youth. In addition, Bandy and Moore (2009) discovered that lack of neighborhood support and unsafe surroundings were significantly associated with OST program non-attendance. The divide in resources and neighborhood quality between economic and racial groups in Athens, Georgia, is glaring. According to a U.S. Census Bureau report released by Weinberg (2011), Athens, Georgia, was ranked sixth in income inequality out of the 269 cities with populations of 100,000. In addition, the median household income in 2017 was \$39,825, and 25% of children reportedly lived in poverty (Census Reporter, 2017).

Exclusionary practices were at the core of the founding of Georgia education and other states (Walker, 1991). Disproportionate outcomes remain pronounced for disadvantaged youth in Georgia in academic outcomes (McFarland et al., 2018). OST programs can supplement education's adverse impact; however, funding, availability of quality programs, and contextual factors limit program success (Farrell et al., 2019; Weinberg, 2011). Thus, more comprehensive practices, policies, and programs are necessary to increase education equity for all youth.

## **Problem Statement**

### **The Impact of Race and Racism on African Americans**

Majoritarian (i.e., White) perspectives have and continue to dominate the narrative(s) around educational inequality framing discussions that give preferential treatment to the achievement of White students. For instance, although Asian students perform higher on some achievement tests than their White peers, dialogue related to such ‘gaps’ does not result in viewing White students as academically incompetent (Love, 2004). On the contrary, when examined based on current standardized measures, African Americans have been viewed as having academic deficiencies compared to their White peers (Howard, 2010; Milner, 2012). Consequently, other perspectives that provide a complete account of students' experiences and examine comprehensive approaches beyond the school context are necessary (Ladd, 2012).

Throughout history, African Americans have experienced inequitable treatment. However, the concept of race has taken on different meanings throughout history. For example, in the 1660s, to address the growing number of mixed-race children, challenging the strict color line distinctions between Black and White individuals, resulted in an informal one-drop rule. Any person with a trace of Black blood was considered Black and enslaved (Khanna, 2010). Delgado and Stefancic (2012) describe race as a social construct and product of social thought that is dynamic, created, and adapted to fit the changing needs of society. For this study, race is the “notion of a distinct biological type of human being, usually based on skin color or other physical characteristics” (Delgado & Stefancic, 2012, p. 170).

Viewing race as a social construct highlights the ability of the dominant group to manipulate definitions that alter the treatment of groups of color for the benefit of the ‘majority.’ The maltreatment of racially minoritized groups manifests as racism, "any program or practice of

discrimination, segregation, persecution, or mistreatment based on members in a race or ethnic group” (Delgado & Stefancic, 2012, p.171). Racism can operate overtly and covertly. It also consists of conscious and unconscious action or inaction (Gillborn, 2008). Some argue that racism is entrenched within American society, resulting in racism being both surreptitiously self-reproducing and permanent (Bell, 1992; Roithmayr, 2014). Institutional racism is profoundly engrained in societal practices, policies, and organizations, and it operates covertly and perpetuates racism (Carmichael & Hamilton, 1992; Howard, 2008).

### **Summer Program Outcomes and Participation Among Youth**

OST programs exist to address risks associated with the hours youth are out of school. Youth are at risk of experiencing delinquent behaviors, early sexual encounters, and academic losses when school is out (Pradhan, 2018; Ready, 2010). Studies related to the time spent out of school during the summer have emphasized the necessity to address academic ‘summer learning loss.’ For example, Ready (2010) examined the link between social class, school attendance, and academic growth during kindergarten and first grade. It was concluded that more economically affluent students gained literacy during the summer faster than lower-income students, exacerbating inequalities at the point of school entry. Contrarily, Von Hippel (2019) found that early claims of summer learning loss in reading between low and high-poverty schools exist during early childhood and, instead of increasing, remain fairly consistent across students' schooling. Consistent with claims made by Ready, Von Hippel (2019) reported that summer learning programs may not reduce summer learning loss but may work to shrink gaps present at kindergarten admission.

A substantial amount of available research on OST program participation focuses on programs offered during the hours directly after school (Halpern, 2002; Tab et al., 2000).

However, when considering summer opportunities such as summer education, Smink (2012) identifies that summer education carries a stigma and often serves as punishment for poor academic performance, resulting in low student attendance. Unfortunately, few national studies report the percentage of youth participating in OST programs and break out the particular type of programs youth participate in and when participation occurs (i.e., after or before school or during the summer). However, it is known that participation is relatively low (10-20%) for all youth across OST programs and that participation rates drop off when children enter adolescence (Gardner et al., 2009; Lauver et al., 2004).

Examining OST participation using quantitative approaches is common (Mahoney et al., 2009; Simpkins, Little, & Weiss, 2004). Although quantitative outcomes have demonstrated that youth have identified factors such as transportation, lack of interest, and family responsibilities as reasons for non-participation, this approach is limited (Lauver et al., 2004; Matthew et al., 2017). It does not provide an opportunity for youth to voice, in their own words, specific factors they identify as problematic. In addition, OST programs must consider the desires of multiple stakeholders (Mahoney et al., 2009); however, OST studies examining multi-perspectives are limited. Therefore, it is imperative to examine non-participation from a multi-perspective approach.

Taken together, youth participation in OST programs is low (Gardner et al., 2009). In addition, research examining youth participation in OST settings focuses on younger youth (i.e., elementary, and middle school-aged youth) participation in programs offered after school (Lauver et al., 2004; Roth et al., 2010). Although summertime is a component of OST programs (Malone, 2018), little research has specifically examined youth participation rates during the summertime. Additionally, more attention to factors impacting OST participation of older youth

is necessary (i.e., high school youth). Therefore, a critical in-depth study that explores stakeholders' multi-perspectives on the issue of summer program participation among low-income minoritized high school-aged youth is necessary.

### **Purpose of the Study**

The purpose of this study was to explore older African American youth, parents, and OST employees' perspectives on the influence of race and income on high school-aged low-income African American youth participation in summer programs. An underlying goal of this study was to determine whether there were similarities or differences between the perspectives of different stakeholders regarding the role of race and socioeconomic status. Undergirded forces such as systemic and institutional racism and understanding that individuals are nested within and interact with systems impacted by these forces is the lens that guided the exploration of this study.

### **Research Questions**

To explore African American youth, parents, and OST employees' perspectives on the influence of race and income on low-income African American youth participation in summer programs, the following questions guided the study:

1. What are African American youth (i.e., high school-age), parents, and OST employees' perspectives of the role race plays on high school-aged low-income African American youth participation in summer programs?
2. What are African American youth, parents, and OST employees' perspectives on socioeconomic status's role in high school-aged low-income African American youth participation in summer programs?

3. What are African American youth, parents, and OST employees' perspectives of compatibility (i.e., program fit with youth interests) of summer programs with high school-aged low-income African American youth interests?
4. What are African American youth, parents, and OST employees' perspectives on the impact of current socioeconomic conditions since COVID-19 on high school-aged low-income African American youth participation in summer programs?

### **Significance of the Study**

America's racial composition is shifting, resulting in a more diverse youth population (Cruzado-Guerrero & Martinez-Alba, 2018). From 1980 to 2015, there has been a shift in demographics, with the non-Hispanic White population decreasing while Latino, African American, and Asian populations increased (Teixeira et al., 2015). Understanding this shift in demographics is relevant to OST research. Over the last several decades, access to OST programs has improved for low-income, minoritized youth (Hynes & Sanders, 2010). However, it is well-documented that access to quality programs differs among racial and socioeconomic groups (St. Clair & Stone, 2016). In addition, programs struggle to recruit and retain high school-aged youth and those most 'at-risk' of being exposed to crime, drugs, and academic failure (Dearing, Simpkins, et al., 2009). Focusing on youth voice, attendance incentives, intentional programming, family involvement, and recruiting friends have been proposed strategies to increase recruitment and retention. However, a more in-depth understanding is essential to examine the limited involvement of older vulnerable youth (Gillard & Witt, 2008). In addition, although summer programming is considered an aspect of OST programs, current literature on OST participation lacks a racially focused examination of older youth summer program participation. Therefore, the current study addresses gaps in the OST literature by

examining the role of race and income on the participation of high school-aged, low-income African American youth in summer programs.

Understanding the underlying reasons for low participation in OST programs, particularly during the summer among high school-aged, low-income, minoritized youth, is vital. Understanding the phenomenon of participation requires using different methodologies beyond quantitative approaches. In order to better comprehend underlying factors associated with non-participation, more qualitative research is pertinent to examine the nuanced experiences of marginalized populations (Dawes, 2018). Even more, it is crucial to understand the perspectives of a community intentionally excluded from quality educational opportunities (Halpern, 2002; Mahoney et al., 2009). The overall research on OST participation lacks a critical examination of the combined role of race and income and their relationship to OST participation. Therefore, the initiation of this study was to help fill this gap in the literature.

### **Chapter Conclusion**

History demonstrates that OST and summer education programs were not exempt from discriminatory and racist practices (Gold, 2002; Halpern, 2002). OST programs and research related to programs have grown (Blyth, 2018). Several efforts exist to identify more inclusive and equitable practices (Curry, 2017). Although funding for childcare and OST programs has increased accessibility for low-income and minoritized youth, participation rates among all youth remain low (Gardner et al., 2009). Thus, this study included the completion of multi-perspective interviews with stakeholders and their observation of the role of race and income on the participation of high school-aged, low-income, African American youth.

## **CHAPTER TWO**

### **REVIEW OF LITERATURE**

#### **Chapter Overview**

The following chapter will consist of several areas to provide a further background of OST participation and rationale for including the selected theoretical framework and concepts. This chapter will begin with a literature review of relevant research on outcomes from youth participation in summer programs. After that, a discussion will highlight the differences between younger and older youth program interests and the necessity to make race a central aspect of the investigation. An outline of the significance of contextual factors, socioeconomic and racial disparities, and their influence on youth participation is included. Next is a brief explanation of historical perspectives on youth development, relevant tenets from Critical Race Theory (CRT), and justification for its inclusion. This chapter will conclude with a presentation of the study logic model to outline the specific research plan and summarize the theory threaded throughout the current study.

#### **Youth Participation in OST Programs**

According to youth, summer program participation has benefits. Warner et al. (2021) completed a mixed-methods analysis of the similarities and differences between four summer camp types. Results indicated that regardless of the type of camp, former campers reported that involvement was critical to their development in areas such as independence, perseverance, willingness to try new things, self-identity, and appreciation for differences. According to Cooper (2001), summer programs to remedy learning deficits are grouped into four categories:

(1) assistance to help students meet minimum requirements for graduation or grade promotion, (2) students who retake courses they failed during the traditional school year, (3) free education for students with disabilities, and (4) supplemental education assistance for students residing in areas highly concentrated with poverty (p. 3). Beyond remediation, summer programs have adapted to provide students heavily involved in extracurricular activities during the school year the opportunity to take classes during the summer to ‘speed up’ graduation and participate in advanced intellectual opportunities for academically gifted students (Cooper, 2001).

Studies examining OST participation based on age highlight observable differences between younger and older youth's desires (Lewalter et al., 2021). Greene et al. (2013) completed a study examining program content, monetary incentives, and the link between youth demographic characteristics and engagement among 435 adolescents. The authors emphasized that participation rates increased when programs provided adolescents with activities focused on learning new skills, college, and jobs. In addition, according to Deschenes et al. (2010), older youth show higher levels of engagement in programs when offered a greater number of leadership opportunities, programs are located in community-based organizations, staff members have discussions about programs and have diverse means of keeping informed about youth, and programs have 100 or more youth enrolled per year. Lauver et al. (2004) argue that programs that provide work experience or compensation may be more apt to attract low-income youth who would like to participate but also need to contribute to their family's income.

There has been a growing emphasis on the impact of OST programs and the level of participation among low-income youth, with less emphasis on the experiences of racially minoritized groups (Epps et al., 2013; Hodges et al., 2017). Hynes and Sanders (2011) found that African American youth, compared to White youth, are twice as likely to attend OST

programs. In addition, they explain that children living in predominantly minoritized communities were more likely to attend. However, racially minoritized groups have access to opportunities with lower quality (Hynes & Sanders, 2011; Roth et al., 2010; St. Clair & Stone, 2016). Since no national studies track participation rates in OST programs, establishing specific participation rates between racial groups is problematic (Gardner et al., 2009). Therefore, the perpetual connection between racial identity and socioeconomic status makes it impossible to examine race and income independently (Garcia & Weiss, 2014; Reber, 2010).

### **Multilayered Disparities Impacting Summer Program Participation**

Youth live and engage in environments that may impact their access and exposure to various opportunities. In addition, racial identification, and socioeconomic status compound access to opportunities. Although environment, race, and income status alone can impact youth access to opportunities, their combined impact is even more substantial. A brief explanation provides the contextual (i.e., environmental), racial, and economic disparities that may influence youth summer program participation.

#### **Contextual Disparities**

Despite the progress of *Brown vs. the Board of Education*, the retraction of racial integration within schools has increased, and racial and socioeconomic segregation in schools is increasing (Orfield et al., 2014). Reardon and Owens (2014) completed a systematic review of school segregation 60 years following *Brown vs. the Board of Education*. They found discrepancies in the literature related to racial segregation within schools. They concluded that racial segregation depends on how it is defined and measured and that schools are more economically segregated today than in 1990. However, because poverty and race are closely linked, neighborhood racial segregation within groups remains significant (Garcia & Weiss,

2014; Reber, 2010). In addition, discontinuing school integration mandates (Reardon & Owens, 2014), White flight (Glenn, 2011), and School Choice policies (Bifulco et al., 2009; No Child Left Behind, 2009) have contributed to housing segregation (Reardon & Bischoff, 2011; Schwartz, 2010). As a result of shifts in policies and racial concentration within neighborhoods, schools are becoming increasingly more economically homogeneous and racially segregated. Hence, contextual disparities consequentially impact the availability and accessibility of resources within and outside of schools, such as summer programs (Garcia & Weiss, 2017; Ladd, 2012).

### **Socioeconomic Disparities**

Garcia and Weiss (2017) explained that input disparities and other external factors could affect school readiness. For instance, a person's socioeconomic status impacts the schools they attend, neighborhoods they live in, and opportunities they have access to (Ladd, 2012). In addition, minoritized populations are more educationally and economically disadvantaged than their White counterparts (Reber, 2010). In 2015 fewer African Americans (22%) and Hispanics (15%) held a bachelor's degree in comparison to non-Hispanic Whites (36%; Ryan & Bauman, 2016). Likewise, disparities are present when considering financial assets among different racial groups. In 2016, the net worth of African Americans (\$12,920) and Hispanics (\$21,420) in comparison to non-Hispanic Whites (\$143,600) was significantly lower (United States Census Bureau, 2019).

Economic disparities persist across asset acquisition and retirement savings. Available assets in financial institutions for African Americans (\$1,500) and Hispanics (\$2,000) in comparison to non-Hispanic Whites (\$6,300) are unequal. In addition, when considering retirement savings, African Americans' and Hispanics' Individual Retirement Accounts and 401K

accounts are dissimilar compared to non-Hispanic Whites (United States Census Bureau, 2019). Although education is a prominent mechanism to escape poverty (Mihai et al., 2015), low academic attainment (e.g., dropping out of school) disproportionately affects minoritized populations. It works as a blockade to lucrative employment opportunities (McFarland et al., 2018). There is an apparent link between economic advantage and access to quality resources, such as quality schools, adequate mental health, or employment services (Midgley, 2014). Contrarily, the consequences of low academic attainment are cyclical and marginalized groups are disproportionately disadvantaged.

### **Racial Disparities**

African Americans have been blocked from equitable educational opportunities. They once relied on Freedom Schools to provide high-quality education when equitable formal education was unavailable (Watson, 2014). Today minoritized students are participating in educational systems with curricula, policies, and practices designed to be exclusive (Howard, 2008). Exclusion is evident in the oppressive policies and practices that continue disadvantaging minoritized groups. For example, African Americans are disproportionately placed in special education classes, suspended, expelled, and are more likely to attend schools with fewer educational resources (Milner, 2012). Discriminative practices illuminate the existence of institutional racism embedded in schools due to the systemic oppression of People of Color (Simson, 2014). As such, OST programs are impacted by and may unintentionally implement similar discriminatory practices.

A review of OST participation literature reveals a limited focus on youth participation in summer programs. In addition, investigating the impact of programming on high school-aged youth seems to lack a deep examination of youth perspectives. Although OST programs involve

parents, providers, and youth, the literature lacks a collective account of the multi-perspectives of the various stakeholders engaged in programs. Participation in OST programs for minoritized and low-income youth continues to be problematic. However, little research has examined the intersectional role of both factors. The literature can benefit from an in-depth analysis of multi-perspectives of the role of race and income on high school-aged, low-income, African American youth participation in summer programs. This study helped to fill this gap in research.

### **Historical and Current Theoretical Perspectives of OST Programs**

Following an explication of deficit-based perspectives traditionally used to examine outcomes in OST settings. After that, given is an explanation of the shift in OST research to include strength-based perspectives through Positive Youth Development (PYD) and developmental systems theories. Elements of deficit-based theories, PYD, and developmental systems theories did not guide the current study. However, the discussion on approaches historically used to examine youth outcomes in OST programs would only be complete by highlighting their significance to youth development research. Therefore, the elements of each theory will be briefly discussed but not included in the theoretical framework used to primarily guide the current study.

Deficit-based theories promote the belief that European culture, thinking, and communication are the norm (Howard, 2010). Such perspectives intentionally excluded African Americans from formal and supplemental educational opportunities (Halpern, 2002; Lasch-Quinn, 1993). Some argue that remnants of deficit-based thinking still exist in the unequal treatment of minoritized students in educational institutions (Milner, 2012). For example, low expectations of minoritized students demonstrated through the disproportionate placement of students in special education and lower track classes are evidence of deficit-based perspectives

(Howard, 2010). Although historically, OST scholars relied on deficit-based perspectives to study diverse populations; there has been a shift to studying the strengths that youth bring to activities from a PYD perspective (Simpkins, Liu, & Dawes, 2018). However, the field continues to need help with how to measure PYD and whether to emphasize promotion or prevention (Roth & Brooks-Gunn, 2016).

PYD is a strength-based perspective contrary to deficit perspectives of youth development (Shek et al., 2019). As an aspect of PYD research, the existence of or need for internal (e.g., bonding to school, integrity, among others) and external (e.g., family support, community values, among others) assets to support positive youth development is crucial (Search Institute, 2011). Lerner and colleagues (2000) propose that PYD consists of the 5 C's: Competence, confidence, connection, character, and caring/compassion. Lerner, Lerner, et al. (2005) argue that re-envisioning adolescence from a PYD perspective includes the view that youth are resources to develop and involves concepts of developmental assets, moral development, well-being, and thriving. This new vision and shift in language related to youth development have resulted in the growth of developmental systems theoretical models, which view human development as connected to dynamic and systemic relations (Lerner, Lerner, et al., 2005). OST programs and youth are connected to systems and impacted by structural and institutional factors that influence youth's ability to access OST programs (Dawes, 2018). Thus, scholars have used developmental-based theories such as developmental ecological and relational developmental systems theories to examine OST programs' impact on youth development (Lerner, Lerner, et al., 2014; Shek et al., 2019).

Developmental-system theories are applied to examine OST program benefits; however, it is necessary to include new approaches. Dawes (2018) focused on the issue of access to OST

programs for underserved youth and proposed “next steps for the research sector could include broadening the theoretical perspectives that we use to guide the development of research questions and analyses of relationships we observe in the various OST programs that serve underserved youth” (p. 57). Therefore, the utilization of CRT will expand research on OST participation. Including CRT in the assessment of participation in OST programs adds to the literature by providing a race-based examination of participation. Below is an explanation of CRT tenets.

### **Theoretical Framework**

The below section will include an elaboration of Critical Race Theory (CRT). This section will open with a brief history of the development of CRT. Followed by an explanation of CRT in education and OST research. A discussion of CRT tenets will follow, and how each tenet informed the current study will be provided except for counterstorytelling. An explanation of counterstorytelling to collect data is in chapter 3.

#### **Critical Race Theory**

CRT’s conception is linked to the post-civil rights era and was an outgrowth of critical legal studies (CLS; Ladson-Billings, 1998; Tate, 1997). Tate (1997) argues that CRT without a description of the relationship with CLS is incomplete: “In broadest terms, scholars within the CLS movement have attempted to analyze legal ideology and discourse as a mechanism that functions to re-create and legitimate social structures in the United States” (p. 207). Delgado (1987) contended that CLS was a misfit for the agenda of People of Color and objected to the rejection of incremental reform by CLS scholars, asserted that the CLS program is idealistic, and challenged the CLS concept of false consciousness (i.e., a person’s inability to recognize inequality). CRT builds upon and extends the activism that led to the civil rights movement

since the movement had slowed and opportunities were under attack (Tate, 1997). One key goal of CRT is to eliminate racial oppression as part of the larger goal of eradicating all forms of oppression (Matsuda et al., 1993).

Gloria Ladson-Billings and William Tate introduced CRT into education research in 1995 (Howard & Navarro, 2016). Ladson-Billings and Tate (1995) argue that educational inequalities “are a logical and predictable result of a racialized society in which discussions of race and racism continue to be muted and marginalized” (p. 47). Therefore, they underscore the utilization of CRT in education to challenge the mainstream paradigm of multiculturalism. The authors disputed multiculturalism as a paradigm in education because it offers no radical change to the current order. Instead, CRT is a “radical critique of both the status quo and purported reforms” (Ladson-Billings & Tate, 1995, p. 62).

The advocacy for including CRT in assessing educational outcomes has resulted in the completion of racially centered studies in areas such as exclusion and punishment in schools (Simson, 2014). Simson (2014) argues that school suspensions and discipline are racially disproportionate, with African American students suspended more frequently and receiving harsher consequences for similar behaviors exhibited by their White counterparts. Simson (2014) proposes using restorative justice as an alternative approach to disciplinary school policies to counter the historically punitive disciplinary procedures.

Educational research has advanced; however, an expansion of the use of CRT is necessary. Twenty years following CRT’s introduction to education, Howard and Navarro (2016) found that CRT has contributed by assisting researchers in exploring how the intersections of different oppressions (i.e., class, sex, and race) impact education. However, they argue that there is still “a need for a permanent focus on race” (p. 268) that does not minimize the inequitable

educational experiences of African Americans to alternative individual explanations. In addition, issues related to an executive order signed by President Trump prohibiting diversity and inclusion training that contain concepts alleged to be divisive (i.e., CRT) complicate the expansion of racially centered efforts. The current administration has since rescinded the order. However, the opposition and controversy related to CRT and how it should influence K-12 educational practices remain divisive among families and educators (Morgan, 2022).

In addition to using CRT to examine traditional educational practices, utilization of CRT extends to OST settings. For example, scholars such as Hess (2018) completed a critical ethnographic study and examined the songwriting practices of youth (12-15 years) in a 15-week afterschool songwriting class in Detroit. Youth songs countered and challenged deficit media narratives of Detroit and emphasized their intent to narrate an alternative account. Hess (2018) synthesized that participants' songs recount their realities, and their work was a call to action and a re-telling of negative discourses about Detroit.

According to Delgado and Stefancic (2012), race and racism are central to CRT analyses and consider the influence of historical oppressions by prioritizing the voices and experiences of the oppressed. CRT goes beyond individual explanations and emphasizes the evaluation of systemically oppressive practices and procedures (Delgado & Stefancic, 2012). The analysis of race and racism stems from a historical and contemporary context and challenges ahistoricism (Solorzano & Yosso, 2002). Although there are several other tenets associated with CRT, there are six basic tenets that are relevant to the current study: the permanence of racism, whiteness as property, intersectionality, critique of liberalism, interest convergence or White over color ascendancy (i.e., power), and voice-of-color (i.e., counterstorytelling; Capper, 2015; Delgado & Stefancic, 2012). Each theoretical component is discussed in further detail below.

### ***Permanence of Racism***

Racism is an ‘ordinary,’ not aberrant, experience, and white supremacy is entrenched in U.S. institutions and structures so profoundly that it is almost unobserved (Delgado, 1995). Racism is viewed as a ‘normal’ experience and a part of the everyday practices within U.S. culture (Delgado & Stefancic, 2017; Salter et al., 2018). Therefore, CRT theorists stress that “the strategy becomes one of unmasking and exposing racism in its various permutations” (Ladson-Billings, 1998, p.11). Roithmayr (2014) argues that racism is reproduced and locked in due to the early historical racism in the United States. The presented argument is that Whites have placed themselves in a self-reinforcing position of advantage in wealth and social networks through racial segregation and creating institutional rules that favor White advantage. She posits that the economic, structural, social, and political costs to Whites are barriers to unlocking inequality (Roithmayr, 2014). The underlying question is since “[W]hites systemically drove particular groups of people out of key markets- labor, education, housing, and political markets. How could such pervasive and long-lasting exclusion be disconnected from contemporary disparity?” (p. 125). The current study was conducted with the perspective that racism is permanent and pervasive. Therefore, all elements of American society, including OST programs, are impacted by racism.

### ***Whiteness as Property***

Ladson-Billings and Tate (1995) argue that “the ability to define, possess, and own property has been a central feature of power in America” (p. 53). Property ownership was a prerequisite for citizenship and strongly tied to a person’s eligibility to make decisions impacting the country (Ladson-Billings, 1998). In the U.S., racial domination and property rights are

linked, and “whiteness was an “object” of which continued control was- and is- expected” (Harris, 1995, p. 281). Harris (1993) further explains that:

Possession-the act necessary to lay the basis for rights in property was defined to include only the cultural practices of Whites. This definition laid the foundation for the idea that whiteness-that which Whites alone possess- is valuable and is property. (pp. 1721)

In addition, the property functions of whiteness include (1) rights of disposition (i.e., alienable); (2) rights to use and enjoyment (i.e., privileges of whiteness); (3) reputation and status property (i.e., differential labeling); and (4) the absolute right to exclude (i.e., exclusion of others deemed not White; Harris, 1993). Historically African Americans have been excluded from education, among other opportunities. The OST field is not immune to the early purposeful exclusion of African Americans (Halpern, 2002; Lasch-Quinn, 1993). Thus, providing a historical account of how whiteness as property has impacted the OST field is imperative. In addition, it demonstrates how White perspectives continue to be privileged through the offered opportunities.

### ***Intersectionality***

According to Delgado and Stefancic (2012), intersectionality consists of the examination of “race, sex, class, national origin, and sexual orientation, and how their combination plays out in various settings” (p. 57). Although each category can cause disadvantages separately, they can also work together to perpetuate oppression (Delgado & Stefancic, 2012). Thus, Milner (2012) emphasizes that not all minoritized or low-income people are African American, and it is crucial not to generalize across groups. Instead, it is imperative to understand the varying experiences that people with multiple intersectionalities have. For example, Crenshaw (1995) argued that when considering the issue of violence against women:

where systems of race, gender, and class domination converge, as they do in the

experiences of battered women of color, intervention strategies based solely on the experiences of women who do not share the same class or race backgrounds will be of limited help to women who face different obstacles because of race and class. (pp. 358)

The framing of categories determines who has power, voice, and representation and, contrarily, who does not. Additionally, the desire is that if more attention is given to the multiplicity of social life and experiences, conceivably, societal institutions will better address problems that plague subordinated groups (Delgado & Stefancic, 2017). OST research risks limiting critical aspects of participants' identities by negating the significance of race and, more importantly, how multiple identities impact youth outcomes and participation. Therefore, participants' socioeconomic status and racial identification as African Americans are central components of the current study.

### ***Critique of Liberalism***

Liberalism includes concepts such as color blindness, meritocracy, equality, and neutrality of the law (Capper, 2015; Delgado & Stefancic, 2017). Tate (1997) underscores that CRT scholars assert that dominant legal claims of liberalism tend to operate as camouflage “for the self-interest of powerful entities of society” (p.235). Delgado and Stefancic (2017) explain that it can be problematic when institutions (such as the Supreme Court) believe “that it is wrong for the law to take any note of race, even to remedy a historical wrong” (p.27). Furthermore, reliance on liberal frameworks results in the avoidance of discussing race, racism, and systemic inequity and can act as a contributor to racial inequality (Marx & Larson, 2012). Critical race scholars are discontent with liberalism as a framework to examine racial problems (Delgado & Stefancic, 2017) because it ignores the relevance of history as it relates to individual and group experiences. In the current study, the focus on race countered liberalism.

### ***Interest Convergence/White Over Color Ascendancy (i.e., power)***

Delgado and Stefancic (2012) propose that advancements of minoritized groups have and continue to serve both psychic and material purposes for the dominant group (i.e., White). Therefore, achieving racial ‘equality’ for African Americans occurs when their goals are consistent or converge with the needs of influential White Americans (Capper, 2015). For instance, Bell (1980) argues that economic and political advances drove the decision in *Brown vs. Board of Education* to desegregate schools. First, it provided credibility to America’s struggle against communist countries; second, it reassured African Americans that equality and freedom might be given meaning in America; and finally, segregation was a barrier to further industrialization in the south (Bell, 1980). The concept of interest convergence demonstrates the linkage between the interests of dominant and oppressed groups and the potential impact on societal outcomes. Understanding how the advancement of African Americans essentially serves the interests of the dominant group provides a guide to frame the study and results. In addition, it provides a means to promote the dominant group's role to help improve marginalized groups' circumstances.

### ***Voice-of-Color (or Counterstorytelling)***

Tate (1997) argues that stories told by minoritized groups are essential histories that depict the contradiction of traditional legal analyses and arguments. According to Delgado (1987), most minoritized groups, in contrast to Whites, live in a world dominated by race. Narratives open White Americans' eyes to the realities of minoritized communities’ experiences (Taylor, 2006). Furthermore, counterstories function to deconstruct societal narratives about marginalized groups (Delgado & Stefancic, 2017). Narratives are used as a method to make “visible the distinctive experiences of [P]eople of [C]olor” (Taylor, 2006, p. 74) and to “push

back” against majoritarian narratives (Capper, 2015, p. 796). A description of counterstorytelling to collect data is in chapter 3. Although the above tenets are not new, they collectively represent an alternative to the current mode of OST scholarship (Solorzano & Yosso, 2002).

### **Study Logic Model**

A logic model is provided to demonstrate my research plan. This model will outline the study's key inputs, activities, outputs, and outcomes and highlight the threading of theoretical concepts throughout each aspect of the research plan. Outlined are the inputs that are currently available to support OST programs. Completing the current study will expand upon an understanding of high school-aged youth participation in summer programs through various activities. In addition, the immediate outputs are shared, followed by a description of the expected outcomes. Outcomes will unfold as short-, medium-, and long-term outcomes. This study will be one step in achieving some of the proposed outcomes as some changes will continue to occur over an extended time.

At present, OST programs have several characteristics that contribute to the integrity of their programs. Characteristics include funding and, to a limited extent, policies targeted at OST programs (Mahoney et al., 2009). However, current policies are not universal, and some states have more specific policies than others (Despard, 2016). Internally, community providers' expertise in community programs, program staff training, and collaborative partnerships among organizations are additional inputs (Pierce et al., 2010). Finally, another strength is the benefits of linked relationships derived from participation in programs and through partnerships (Burkhauser, Bronte-Tinkew, & Kennedy, 2008).

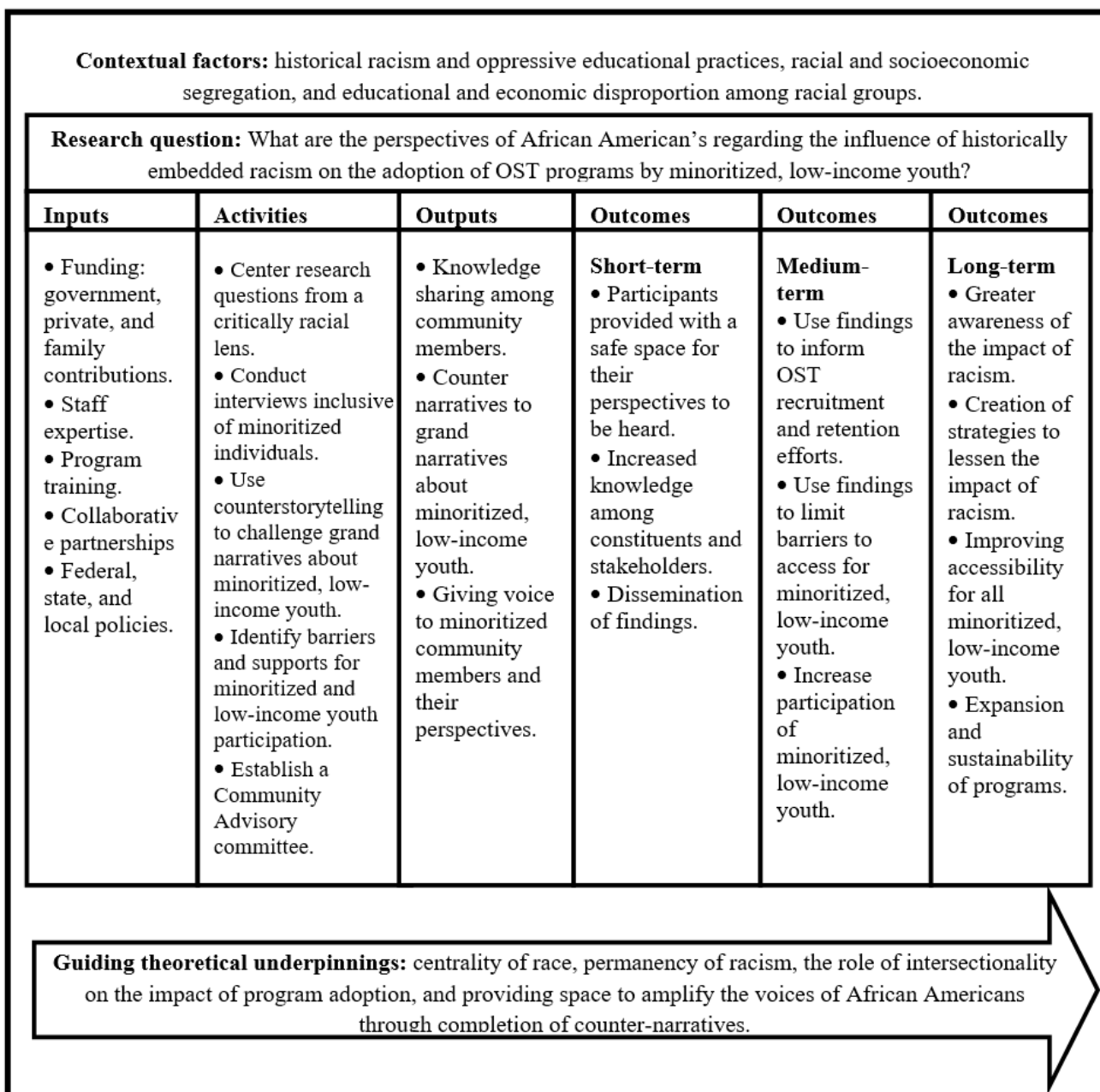
Theory guided the entirety of the study. Research questions were constructed from a critical race lens, placing the experiences of a marginalized community at the center of analysis

(Delgado & Stefancic, 2012). Because the research questions guided data collection, analysis, and presentation of results, questions were derived from and informed by the available literature related to the documented experiences of marginalized communities and tenets of CRT. In addition, questions explicitly emphasize historically oppressive characteristics (i.e., race and income). Completing in-depth interviews helped to gain the communities perspective on potential program deterrents and supports (Creswell, 2013). Specifically, counterstorytelling strengthen the current study by amplifying the voices of a minoritized community (Horsford, 2010). Lastly, the data gathered from this study will allow advocacy efforts to counter deficient areas and expand recruitment and retention efforts (Gillard & Witt, 2008).

The result of activities will be immediately evident in a few areas. More instantaneously, activities will provide opportunities for increased knowledge sharing among participants and community members (Gillard & Witt, 2010; Lauver, Little & Weiss, 2004). Participants and community members will have more direct access to information, allowing for information to be more readily available to them and assisting in developing program staff skills to retain and recruit high school-aged, low-income, minoritized youth (Farrell, Collier-Meek, & Furman, 2019). Lastly, through activities, outputs will include increased development of collaborative relationships and the opportunity for community participation (Gillard & Witt, 2010; Lauver, Little, & Weiss, 2004).

Combined efforts will accomplish short-, medium-, and long-term outcomes. Short-term outcomes include giving participants a space to verbalize perspectives, increase stakeholder knowledge, and disseminate findings (Capper, 2015). Medium-term outcomes include improving retention and recruitment efforts, limiting barriers to access for high school-aged, minoritized, low-income youth, and increasing participation among youth (Farrell, Collier-Meek,

& Furman, 2019; Gardner et al., 2009; Gillard & Witt, 2008). Lastly, long-term outcomes will include greater awareness of the impact of racism on youth participation, strategies created to lessen the impact of racism, improve accessibility for minoritized, low-income youth, and expansion and sustainability of summer programs (Aarons, Hurlburt, & Horwitz, 2011; Delgado & Stefancic, 2012; Despard, 2016). A synopsis of the logic model is in Figure 1.



**Figure 1***CRT: Examining Youth Participation in OST Programs Research Logic Model*

OST programs positively contribute to student development and support learning and cognitive, social, and emotional development (Afterschool Alliance, 2015). However, in low-income communities, quality OST programs are often limited and inaccessible. Sawhill and McLanahan (2006) argue that the government should be doing more to support minoritized students through funding and the provision of human investment strategies because students cannot control their economic, neighborhood, and family circumstances. In addition, OST programs are effective. However, they are perpetually cut and underfunded (Afterschool Alliance, 2012; Gardner, Roth, & Brooks-Gunn, 2009). Therefore, completing this study will help to identify, from the perspective of African Americans, factors that impede or support high school-aged, minoritized, low-income youth participation in summer programs.

**Chapter Conclusion**

The relevance of youth participation and the necessity to identify reasons for low participation rates, especially for high school-aged youth, is evident (Gardner et al., 2009). Although there has been a shift in the perspective of youth in OST scholarship, there remains a need to center the examination of participation from a critical lens that emphasizes race as a central component of analysis (Delgado & Stefancic, 2012). Therefore, CRT centralizes race and provides a lens to evaluate the decision-making process of youth to adopt or reject participation in OST programs (Horsford, 2010). Examining issues experienced by minoritized, especially African American populations, is limited when the intersectionality of oppressive social constructions is not considered (Solorzano & Yosso, 2002). Hence, it is imperative to emphasize the relevance of including racism, race, and SES in the current study. Therefore, the following

study contributes to the literature on youth participation in OST programs by critically examining the role of historically embedded racism in low-income minoritized youth participation.

## **CHAPTER THREE**

### **METHODOLOGY**

#### **Chapter Overview**

In the following chapter, I will expand on the methodology for the current study. Included is the research design and rationale for the design choice. Next, the specific method of the study will be provided, including the sample selection criteria and procedures for recruitment and site research. I will give a rationalization for using counterstorytelling as a method for data collection. Data collection and analysis will be outlined. This chapter will conclude with a summary of how data quality was assessed through strategies to ensure the trustworthiness of data, an explication of researcher subjectivity, and ethical dilemmas and how they were addressed.

#### **Qualitative Research Design and Rationale**

The purpose of this study was to explore high school-aged African American youth, parents, and OST employees' perspectives on the influence of race and income on older low-income African American youth participation in summer programs. According to Creswell (2013), qualitative designs are appropriate when there is a need to "hear silenced voices" (p. 48). It is common for African Americans' perspectives to be marginalized, but storytelling has been one method to carry on historical accounts, survive, and liberate African American communities (Delgado, 1989). According to Mohajan (2018), qualitative research is a form of social action that focuses on how people make sense of their experiences, and researchers are interested in people's experiences and perspectives (p. 2).

A qualitative design was employed to carry out the current study and capture African Americans' perspectives. Andrews et al. (2019) suggest that in order to incorporate a racial and ethnic perspective in research, five principles should be applied: (1) researchers should examine their backgrounds and biases, (2) make a commitment to dig deeper into the data, (3) recognize that the research process itself has an impact on communities and that researchers have a role in ensuring that research benefits communities, (4) engage communities as partners in research and credit them for their contribution, and (5) guard against the implied or explicit assumption that White is the normative, standard, or default position. Specifically, carrying out the above principles will be explained throughout the current chapter.

There are various types of qualitative research. For example, phenomenological, ethnographic, grounded theory, case study, and narrative research are all forms of qualitative research. Mohajan (2018) explains that narrative research occurs when the subject of the study is to represent an oral history of personal reflections from individuals or multiple people. In addition, the principal element of a narrative investigation is that narratives are the source of data, and that analysis leads to a better grasp of a research focus (Guest et al., 2013; Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). Furthermore, Creswell (2013) describes that “as a method, [*narrative research*] begins with the experiences as expressed in lived and told stories of individuals” (p. 70). Given the alignment between the underlying principles of narrative research and the purpose of this study, using a form of narrative research analyzed from a CRT lens was appropriate.

Attempting to understand the perspectives of minoritized community members, and to challenge dominant perspectives, necessitates a qualitative methodology drawing on CRT research traditions. The use of narrative research is one strategy to capture the community's perspective and to accentuate the voices of marginalized groups and their perspectives (i.e.,

counterstorytelling; Creswell, 2013; Solorzano & Yosso, 2002). Traditionally, 'privileged' perspectives often represent the accounts of historical events that dismiss those stories that deviate from the perceived norm (Horsford, 2010). Analyzing narratives from a counterstorytelling perspective provided a critical perspective to examine the experiences of individuals from a racially centered lens situated within a sociohistorical context. Using counterstorytelling creates space to amplify the voices of individuals from a marginalized community to challenge dominant perspectives. It also provides alternative insights into African Americans' experiences and perspectives (Solorzano & Yosso, 2002).

Solorzano and Yosso (2002) emphasize different types of counterstorytelling: personal stories or narratives, composite stories or narratives, and other people's stories or narratives. First, personal stories or narratives consist of accounts of an individual's experience with oppression (i.e., racism or sexism). This type of narrative presents as a first-person account in an autobiographical format. Next, composite stories or narratives draw on multiple forms of data to re-tell minoritized communities' stories related to experiences with phenomena such as racism, sexism, and classism. Finally, other people's stories or narratives tell another person's story and demonstrate experiences with racism and sexism. The telling of another person's story takes the form of a biographical analysis of minoritized people's experiences within a larger sociohistorical context. The current study carried out the telling of other people's stories.

Qualitative research questioning is flexible in that the interviewer can ask questions in various ways to ensure participant understanding. Therefore, responses are not artificially constrained to predetermined categories; instead, categories emerge through gathering data (Guest et al., 2013). Therefore, the use of narrative inquiry examined from a CRT perspective

was the impetus of the current study by critically examining multi–African American perspectives.

## **Methods**

### **Selected Community**

Definitions can vary from broad to more concise populations when describing a community. Some communities may be considered diverse, and others may consist of a small homogeneous group of individuals. In the current study, a definition of a community guided the selection of study participants and what characteristics define participants.

How a community is defined ranges from descriptions of systems to individual perspectives (Clinical and Translational Science, 2011). Traditional definitions of communities concentrated on locality (Berger, 1988); however, the advancement of technology has resulted in the dispersion of families and social networks (Wellman & Gulia, 1999). For some, the extensive use of technology exacerbates the disparity in access between racially and economically minoritized communities. KewalRamani et al. (2018) reported that 58-71% of children aged 3-18 years old in households with an income of less than \$10,000 to \$29,999 had access to a desktop, laptop, netbook, or notebook computer in comparison to 79-97% of children with incomes of \$30,000 or more. In addition, Black, Hispanic, and American Indian/Alaska Native children (75% and 69%, respectively) had lower access to computers in comparison to White (91%), Asian (96%), and mixed races (89%). Considering access issues, this study defined community as “a group of people sharing values and institutions; specifically, some social meaning, as well as some organizational structure, must connect the individuals to the community” (Thompson & Kinne, 1990, p. 31).

Although there are a variety of meanings to describe a community, the commonality between definitions is that some aspect links individuals to one another (Berger, 1988; Hardcastle et al., 2011). Defining a community based on shared values and institutions was selected due to the commonalities shared between participants and the cohesiveness of this description with the purpose of the study. Self-ascribed African American parents, OST employees, and youth are all connected through their affiliation with summer programs. Because each group is closely linked and has varying relationships with OST programs, each subgroup provides a unique perspective. In addition, self-ascribed racial identification as African Americans links the groups. Therefore, the selected community consisted of self-ascribed African American youth, parents, and OST employees with summer program experiences.

### **Sample Selection Criteria**

Gentles et al. (2015) define sampling as “the selection of specific data sources from which data are collected to address the research objectives.” A sampling technique allows for participants to be selected based on the purpose of the study. For the current study, the sampling technique included purposeful sampling (Gentles et al., 2015). Gentles et al. (2015) argue that purposeful sampling is the most commonly described technique used in qualitative research. However, they identify a lack of consistency among definitions and that researchers should describe what purposeful sampling means in their specific contexts. Therefore, for the current study, purposeful sampling is the intentional selection of specific participants or sites to generate an understanding of a particular problem or phenomenon (Creswell, 2013). Participants are selected based on their knowledge and experience with a particular social problem. Using purposeful sampling allowed the inclusion of self-ascribed African Americans from various subgroups (Gowder, 2015, p. 3159).

The primary sampling unit was individuals who self-ascribe as African American. Self-ascription allows individuals to express their racial identification instead of their race being applied based on others' observations (Gowder, 2015). Self-ascribed African Americans were recruited because, historically, they have experienced overt and covert marginalization due to their race (Roithmayr, 2014). Participants from a community surrounding Cedar Shoals High School were selected. I worked to recruit participants to obtain enough individuals to complete three varying levels of individual interviews that included: (a) OST program employees, (b) parents of students currently enrolled at Cedar Shoals High School, and (c) youth enrolled at Cedar Shoals High School. In addition to participants' racial identification, they required access to a smartphone, computer, or tablet with a camera, microphone, and capability of streaming Zoom (Salmons, 2012).

OST program employees who work for programs that at present or in the past have provided summer programs were recruited for inclusion. Youth enrolled in high school, specifically in the ninth and tenth grades, were the focus youth population. High school youth were selected because studies have shown that moving through transitional periods, such as the move from middle to high school, and OST participation of youth in later adolescence declines (Epps et al., 2013). Lastly, parents and students who identify as low-income were included to capture the intersectional experience of race and income on youth participation in summer programs. The 2017-2018 Georgia Department of Education standards of free and reduced-price meal income guidelines outline the various income levels based on household income. Participants self-reported their family income. Cedar Shoals High School has a high rate of students who qualify for free or reduced lunch (92.08%) and who identify as African American (56.1%), which is why the surrounding community was selected (Georgia Department of

Education, 2022; Schooldigger, 2020). See Table 1 for specific income levels based on family size.

**Table 1**

*Georgia 2017-2018 Free and Reduced-Price Meal Income Guidelines*

Family Size	Column I Free Meals if Family Income is within	Column II Reduced-Price Meals if Family Income is Within
1	\$0 to \$15,678	\$15,679 to \$22,311
2	\$0 to \$21,112	\$21,113 to \$30,044
3	\$0 to \$26,546	\$26,547 to \$37,777
4	\$0 to \$31,980	\$31,981 to \$45,510
5	\$0 to \$37,414	\$37,415 to \$53,243
6	\$0 to \$42,848	\$42,849 to \$60,976
7	\$0 to \$48,282	\$48,283 to \$68,709
8	\$0 to \$53,716	\$53,717 to \$76,442

*Note:* For each additional family member, add \$5,434 per year to the income level for free meals and \$7,733 to the income level for reduced price meals. Adapted from Georgia Department of Education. Retrieved from <https://www.gadoe.org/External-Affairs-and-Policy/communications/Pages/PressReleaseDetails.aspx?PressView=default&pid=549>

According to Gentles et al. (2015), smaller samples are generally used in qualitative research because the aim is to acquire helpful information for understanding a phenomenon rather than to represent a population. In addition, Butina (2015) proposed that sample size is ambiguous and depends on various factors such as time, answers sought, theoretical framework, resources, etc. On average, previous studies using counterstorytelling in education research included 15 to 66 individual interviews (Horsford, 2010; Solorzano, 1998). However, Creswell (2013) suggests including a minimum of 1-3 individuals when conducting narrative research. Patton (2002) suggests that a minimum sample size should be specified, and the design should be flexible and emergent. Moreover, he suggests making additions to the sample size as fieldwork unfolds. Therefore, consistent with suggestions by Creswell (2013), I conducted a minimum of 9 (3 participants from each subgroup) individual interviews. However, in keeping with qualitative

research on the ambiguity of sample size, the number of participants in the study was flexible throughout data collection, intending to complete enough interviews to obtain saturation (Guest et al., 2013).

Allowing for a flexible sample contributes to achieving saturation by increasing the sample until information becomes redundant and little or nothing new emerges in the study (Gentles et al., 2015). Saunders et al. (2018) broadly define saturation as a criterion for discontinuing data collection or analysis (p. 1894). They completed an analysis of research on saturation and identified four different models. They highlighted that saturation has been operationalized differently throughout the research and concluded that employing different theoretical and analytical approaches should influence how saturation is defined (Saunders et al., 2018; Sebele-Mpofu, 2020). *Data saturation* is the model used to conduct research and is the degree to which new data repeat previous data (Saunders et al., 2018). Thus, saturation helped to identify redundancy in the data.

### **Procedures for Recruitment and Site Research**

I created a community advisory committee before beginning recruitment. First, I reached out to prominent leaders in the community with whom I had existing relationships to inquire about their interest in collaborating with me as a committee member. I relied on my dissertation and the community advisory committee's recommendations to solicit additional members. I requested names of additional individuals they felt would be interested in participating and would add to the research process. A total of nine community leaders were contacted, and three either declined to participate or did not respond. A total of six (three male and three female) individuals agreed to be on my community advisory committee. I gleaned feedback from my advisory committee about the sampling framework and interview questions before the current

study's Institutional Review Board (IRB) submission. Those on my advisory committee (4) who met the study criteria were also participants in the current study.

To structure recruitment efforts of parents and youth, I utilized the Clarke County School District Street index to identify those streets that fall within the local high school attendance zone. From there, I created a separate list including only those streets within the selected area. Based on the streets identified, I completed internet searches to locate OST programs, predominantly African American churches, and community centers in the school district and generated a list of organizations identified. Due to limited online resources and only sometimes reflecting the most up-to-date, accurate, or complete information, I also solicited suggestions from my dissertation committee and community advisory committee members.

I first completed OST program employee interviews and requested recommendations for other providers, parents, and youth interested in participating. I expanded this approach by asking parents and youth about possible recommendations until data collection was complete. In addition, I coordinated with my community advisory committee to identify spaces where fliers could be hung or distributed to recruit parents and youth (see Appendix A). My contact information was included on the fliers for individuals to communicate interest. I distributed fliers during a local food drive and in two local low-income neighborhoods with assistance from one of my advisory committee members. In addition, I made three attempts to contact eight OST programs, four social service community programs, and 10 local churches. Lastly, I completed a proposal and received approval to collaborate with CCSD to receive assistance from school personnel to recruit Cedar Shoals youth and parents. Those who expressed interest in participating communicated the best date and time to complete online interviews via Zoom, and interviews were scheduled accordingly. If individuals did not respond to scheduling the initial

interview or were absent for the initial interview, I made three attempts to re-engage them in the study before I discontinued outreach efforts.

Though I have volunteered for local summer and afterschool programs, there is often ‘institutional mistrust’ among minoritized groups (Northridge, 2017). Additionally, completing online interviews limited my face-to-face interaction with participants. Therefore, partnering with community gatekeepers to negotiate community access and recruitment of participants was essential (Salmons, 2012). I collaborated with community members to garner support, assist in recruitment, and identify the best means to engage community members (Clinical and Translational Science, 2011).

## **Data Collection**

### **Demographic Questionnaire Scales**

Prior to conducting the interview each group of participants filled out a consent that included permission to participate in and record the interview. Also, participants completed a demographic questionnaire that consisted of gathering essential demographic characteristics (e.g., race, age, income, etc.); seven questions were adapted from the Adolescent Discrimination Distress Index (e.g., African American children were wrongly disciplined; Fisher et al., 2000) and included in the questionnaire to identify participants experiences with or observation of youth experiences with race. The index is rated on a 5-point Likert scale ranging from “Not at all” to “Extremely.” I adapted four questions from the Perceived Classism Scale (e.g., African American children were excluded from an activity because they could not afford it; Hernandez, 2013) to assess experiences with income. The scale is scored on a 5-point Likert scale ranging from “This has never happened to me” to “This event happened, and I was extremely upset.”

Additionally, overall program quality was assessed by one question on a 5-point Likert scale ranging from “Poor” to “Excellent.”

Additional features of program quality were assessed using different scales for each group. Eight questions were derived from a quality scale created by Russell et al. (2009) and included to assess OST employees’ experiences with professional development (e.g., In your role as an OST provider how often do you receive coaching/mentoring opportunities?) and frequency of their interactions with parents and youth (e.g., In your role as an OST provider how often do you communicate with parents?). Questions ranged on a 5-point Likert scale from “Never” to “At least 2 to 3 times a month.” The youth responded to thirteen questions related to program quality (e.g., overall, the activities really get me interested) from the same scale on a 5-point Likert scale that ranged from “Disagree a lot” to “Agree a lot.” Lastly, parents were asked seven questions from the Ohio Quality Self-Assessment Tool (QSAT; Ohio Afterschool Network, 2012) to gauge satisfaction with staff communication, opportunities to communicate with staff, information shared to support youth development at home, and program staff and administration level of professionalism, professional knowledge, development, and efforts to build a positive relationship with parents. The assessment tool ranged on a 5-point Likert scale from “Strongly disagree” to “Strongly agree.”

Parents and youth provided information about their participation or their children’s participation in programs commonly offered during the summer (e.g., arts, sports, academic support, etc.). The relevant results of the demographic questionnaire for each subgroup are presented in the following section.

## Data Collection through Counterstorytelling

According to Delgado and Stefancic (2012), counterstorytelling is a crucial aspect of CRT and can help disrupt grand narratives of minoritized communities. Grand narratives privilege White men, middle and upper classes, and heterosexuals by viewing these social constructions as normative (Solorzano & Yosso, 2002). Typically, majoritarian stories are not questioned because they are viewed as “natural” parts of everyday life (Solorzano & Yosso, 2002). “Counterstorytelling [is] a foundational precept and methodological tool of CRT, [that] scholars can [use to] capture, construct, and reveal marginalized experiences while challenging mainstream narratives that may be readily accepted as objective truths” (Horsford, 2010, p. 295). It allows individuals to recount their experiences with racism through storytelling to challenge dominant narratives and can emphasize the voices of communities that have been historically marginalized and excluded (Horsford, 2010). Counterstorytelling is one method that can provide an alternative perspective that contradicts the hegemonic notion that minoritized communities are deprived and educationally desperate (Yosso, 2005; Howard, 2008). Solorzano and Yosso (2002) define critical race methodology as an approach that:

- (a) foregrounds race and racism in all aspects of the research process. However, it also challenges the separate discourses on race, gender, and class by showing how these three elements intersect to affect the experiences of students of color;
- (b) challenges the traditional research paradigms, texts, and theories used to explain the experiences of students of color;
- (c) offers a liberatory or transformative solution to racial, gender, and class subordination; and
- (d) focuses on the racialized, gendered, and classed experiences of students of color. Furthermore, it views these experiences as sources of strength and
- (e) uses the interdisciplinary knowledge base of ethnic studies, women’s studies,

sociology, history, humanities, and the law to better understand the experiences of students of color. (pp. 24)

Using counterstorytelling as a methodology underscores the experiences of People of Color and that their experiences are “legitimate, appropriate and critical to understanding, analyzing, and teaching about racial subordination” (Solorzano & Yosso, 2002, p. 26). Majoritarian stories misrepresent and silence the experiences of People of Color (Solorzano & Yosso, 2002) by negating or dismissing their experiences. Therefore, it is imperative to provide space for the experiences of People of Color to be heard and validated.

The use of narratives to document the history and experiences of marginalized communities to challenge dominant perspectives has a long history (Solorzano & Yosso, 2002). The field of education has utilized counterstorytelling to understand the experiences of students and administrators of color. For example, Howard (2008) used counterstorytelling as a method to examine the experiences of African American male students. The study aimed to identify African American males' perspectives on the role race and racism played in their schooling experiences. The results indicated that students knew how race shaped teachers' and administrators' views of them and described how they fought against stereotypes of African American males. In addition, counterstorytelling provides space for students to discuss race-related issues in a manner many felt was lacking in their school environments.

In addition to examining the experiences of students of color, Horsford (2010) completed a study to examine how lived experiences of eight superintendents who attended all-Black segregated schools impacted their view of desegregation policy, programs, and practices. The findings served as counterstories to the view that (a) all-Black schools were inferior, (b) the encouragement of equal education, access, and opportunity because of the deleterious effects of

segregation on Black students, and (c) the support of integration, diversity, and inclusion in the post-Brown era. According to Horsford (2010):

Accounts countered the mainstream narrative that quietly questions the quality, value, and strength of Black educational institutions and the deficit-laden narrative of apathy and inferiority characteristic of Black families, schools, and communities. (pp. 299)

Superintendents emphasized their Black teachers' high-quality credentials, experiences, and education. Many acknowledged the benefits of racially integrated schools at the individual level. However, they regretted the system-level (i.e., displacement/demotion of Black teachers) and school-level (i.e., Black students assigned to low-ability tracks) problems that resulted from integration. The participants were not convinced that meaningful school integration ever occurred. Lastly, unanimously participants expressed that race will “always” (Horsford, 2010, p. 308) be a factor in the United States which is consistent with CRT’s assertion that racism is permanent.

Interest has grown in the education field to use counterstorytelling as an analytical tool in formal education settings to challenge majoritarian narratives of students of color (Howard, 2008; Horsford, 2010). To a limited extent, some scholars have used it to examine students' experiences in OST settings. For instance, Schultz et al. (2006) provided a diverse group of eighth-grade students with space after school to write about how race matters in their desegregated schools. The authors found that when students were provided with opportunities to write within and across multiple genres, students in a multiracial group could articulate their varied racialized experiences in school to each other. Students initially conferred with grand narratives that “we all get along” and were eventually able to verbalize the existence of

experiences with racism and that conversations about race/racism were absent from the traditional school experiences.

The above examples highlight the ability to use counterstorytelling as an analytical tool to examine People of Color's perspectives and challenge grand narratives related to their experiences. Although storytelling has historical significance to communities of color, their stories are often not validated or are resisted (Solorzano & Yosso, 2002). In addition, low-income, minoritized youth have been provided with limited opportunities to discuss how racism impacts their participation in OST settings. Therefore, the inclusion of counterstorytelling as an analytical tool to fulfill the purposes of this study was vital.

### **Features of Data Collection**

Due to proximity limitations, societal uncertainties, and restrictive precautions present as a result of COVID-19, online multi-perspective interviews were conducted (see Appendix B for a list of interview questions) (Schlegel et al., 2021). Salmons (2012) outlines eight aspects for understanding e-interview research: (1) aligning purpose and design, (2) choosing e-interviews for study, (3) handling sampling and recruiting, (4) positioning the researcher, (5) determining e-interview styles(s), (6) selecting ICT (information and communications technologies) and milieu, (7) conducting the interview, and (8) addressing ethical issues. Salmons (2012) argues that conducting online interviews is in accordance with ethical research guidelines (p. 5). Therefore, the use of technology is an additional modality for interviews to be conducted and can be a convenient means of collecting data that mitigates challenges related to geographic location, time, travel cost, and has the potential to increase anonymity (Krouwel et al., 2019; Salmons, 2012; Schlegel et al., 2021). Due to the overlap of the e-interview framework and the data

collection guide proposed by Creswell (2013), the data collection features relevant to completing online interviewing are integrated throughout.

Creswell (2013) outlines a specific guide to consider when collecting data in qualitative research. When collecting data using narrative inquiry, the following features should be considered: (a) selecting one or more individuals to study that are unique or illuminate a specific phenomenon, (b) gaining access and rapport through participant permission to engage in the study, and the researcher should explicitly explain the purpose of the study and reasons for choosing individuals to participate, (c) identifying a specific strategy to select participants (i.e., sampling strategy; see discussion on sample selection criteria for more details), (d) determine what form of data will be collected, (e) specifying the method of recording information, and (f) establishing a plan for storing data.

Self-identifying African Americans were selected to participate in the current study. Participants were selected to establish a holistic multi-perspective account of the impact of race and income on African American youth participation in summer programs. Multi-perspective interviews have been applied heavily in the medical field. They have been denoted as applicable when seeking to (1) understand relationships and dynamics among patients, their families, and professional carers, (2) explore similarities and differences in the perceptions of patients and their families and professional carers, (3) Understand the individual needs of patients, carers, and professionals, and (4) Integrate suggestions for improving services from patients carers, and professionals (Kendall et al., 2009, p. 196). A multi-perspective approach was adopted and applied within the parameters of the current study to complete first-order stories from self-ascribed African American OST employees, parents, and youth. Self-ascribed African

Americans' historical disadvantage provides them with a unique experience and necessitates their inclusion in the study.

Before advertising the study, I received IRB approval through the University of Georgia and approval from the Clarke County School District (CCSD) Office of Grants and Research. I submitted a proposal and received approval from CCSD to receive assistance with recruitment efforts. I virtually met with potential participants to obtain informed consent and explained the purpose of the study (see Appendix C). Seitz (2015) proposes that emailing participants several times prior to conducting the interview can contribute to rapport building. Therefore, I called or emailed participants to maintain remote contact until data collection was complete. The potential risks and benefits of participating in this study were also thoroughly discussed with participants. Participants were assigned pseudonyms and random IDs to protect their confidentiality. Including the above protocols helped to protect each individual involved and ensure compliance with the local school district and IRB standards of respect for person and beneficence (Dresser, 2012).

As previously mentioned in the sample selection criteria section, the sampling strategy consisted of purposeful sampling. The participants included African American OST employees, parents of students in high school, and youth who identify as African American and low-income. In addition, data collection occurred through various methods, a strategy for obtaining consistent and dependable data most congruent with participants' reality (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). Including multiple forms of data collection provided a well-rounded depiction of various African American community members. Data collection included the completion of in-depth individual interviews and field notes. I kept a journal to document epiphanies and perceptions and monitor my biases throughout all data collection and analysis phases. Janesick (1999) describes four

reasons to use journals in qualitative research: (1) to refine the researcher's role through reflection and writing, (2) to refine an understanding of participant responses, (3) to use it as an interactive tool to communicate between the researcher and participants, and (4) to serve as a type of connoisseurship (i.e., becoming an expert) about the researchers thinking and reflection patterns and understanding of their work as a qualitative researcher. In doing so, a much more in-depth reflective process related to participant responses, researcher roles, and thinking occurs.

Individual in-depth interviews are a common form of data used in narrative research (Creswell, 2013). The interview extends beyond a casual dialogue where individuals possess equal power; instead, the research interview consists of an asymmetry of power with the researcher directing the conversation (Qu & Dumay, 2011). The researcher directs dialogues to assemble information from study participants. There are various interviewing techniques; however, to fulfill the purpose of the current study, synchronous (i.e., occurring in real-time) online semi-structured interviews were conducted in a private online environment. A semi-structured interview format allowed me to be flexible with asking established questions and navigate away from scripted questions to engage in pertinent dialogue related to participants' responses. Completing semi-structured interviews with study participants provided insights about minoritized community members' perspectives and experiences (Creswell, 2013; Salmons, 2012). Additionally, individual interviews generated in-depth information from a single person's perspective (Edwards & Holland, 2013).

Interviews occurred via Zoom, and information, application sharing, and discussion were only available to invited participants (Salmons, 2012). In addition, Salmons (2012) identifies flexibility in conducting online interviews as the "utmost importance" when implementing the use of emergent methods (p. 26). Participants could participate in a phone interview if there

were connectivity, access, or software issues. With participant permission, in-depth interviews were audio recorded and, after that, transcribed verbatim and reviewed.

The interviews' goal was to understand better the community's perception of how race and income impact low-income African American youth participation in OST programs. Questions were compiled to elicit responses about the community's experiences with and perceptions of OST programs and their perspectives on the impact on youth participation. Throughout the interviews, I took field notes. Phillippi and Lauderdale (2018) recommend that notes taken during the interview should assist with memory but not interrupt the interview flow or distract the participant. In addition, they outline what information to document in field notes. Researchers should start by notating identifying information, including interview date and time, researcher name, and participant pseudonym. Next, notes can proceed by capturing the following in any order: details regarding the location and setting of the interview, description of the demeanor and appearance of the participant, participant's non-verbal response to the interview and any changes to interview questions and lastly, a critical reflection of the whole interview and researcher performance as an interviewer. I embedded the recommended content guide into the interview question guide (see Appendix D). I utilized it throughout interviews by taking small notes to recall my memory but not in such quantity that it distracted me from the real-time interaction with the participant. Additionally, participants completed a demographic sheet (Appendix E) to obtain general information regarding descriptive participant characteristics.

Identifying safeguards to protect the confidentiality and privacy of participants is a crucial feature of e-interviews (Salmons, 2012). Therefore, a plan describing how data will be stored is necessary. As per the university's IRB requirements, electronic data files were

encrypted using available computer software. In addition, files are stored on an encrypted flash drive requiring a password to access enclosed files. Paper copies of research materials are stored in a locked filing cabinet to securely limit access and protect documents.

The inclusion of multiple data collection methods helped to strengthen the study. Combining the three methods, in-depth individual interviews, field notes, and journaling provided greater depth and breadth. Audio recording of individual interviews allowed for verbatim transcribing encounters and completing thorough qualitative analysis. A synopsis of the data collection guidelines from a CRT perspective is presented in Table 2.

**Table 2**

*Narrative Data Collection Guidelines Guided by Critical Race Theory*

Stages	Data Collection Guidelines	Data Collection Guided by Critical Race Theory
a	Select 1 or more individuals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identify a group of self-ascribed African Americans consisting of multi-perspectives</li> </ul>
b	Gain access and rapport	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Submit IRB request</li> <li>Identify local school research requirements and submit research proposal</li> <li>Once sample is selected:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Obtain informed consent and explain study purpose</li> <li>Review potential risks and benefits</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
c	Identify specific selection strategy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Initiate purposeful sampling via electronic communication (i.e., email) as a means to select participants</li> </ul>
d	Determine form of data to collect	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Include multiple forms of data collection: in-depth semi-structured synchronous interviews in a private online environment via Zoom, field notes, and researcher journal</li> </ul>
e	Specify how to record information	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Conduct semi-structured individual interviews via Zoom</li> <li>Audio record interviews and complete transcription</li> </ul>
f	Establish a plan for storing data	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Encrypt and store data files on an encrypted flash drive</li> </ul>

*Note.* Adapted from Creswell, J. W. (2013). *Qualitative inquiry and research design: Choosing among five approaches* (3rd Ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE.

## Data Analysis

Azungah (2018) describes that an inductive approach to data analysis involves “working exclusively from the participant experiences” (p. 391). Categories are generated and are not predetermined but emerge through gathering and reviewing data (Guest et al., 2013). In addition, Creswell (2013) describes that data collection, analysis, and writing of data are not disjointed processes but interrelated. Approaching data in this way allows data collection and analysis to co-occur (Harding & Whitehead, 2013). The qualitative analysis does not occur in a fixed linear process. Creswell (2013) describes the process as moving through interconnected analytical circles.

The data analysis was conducted via two analytical strategies: constant comparative method and narrative thematic analysis, and CRT tenets guided analytical procedures. The constant comparative method involves “taking information from data collection and comparing it to emerging categories” (Creswell, 2013, p. 86). It starts once data collection begins and continues until the completion of the study. Therefore, the constant comparative method was the ideal choice to engage participants in the analysis process and ensure that a truthful representation of participants' perspectives is present because the information gathered can be presented to participants following individual interviews.

Narrative thematic analysis is a common approach in narrative inquiry, and the content within the text is the primary focus (Butina, 2015). Themes were generated by critically analyzing content and listening for themes related to tenets specific to CRT. To structure data analysis, I used the five stages of analysis suggested by Creswell (2013): (a) data organization, (b) reading and memoing, (c) describing the data into codes and themes, (d) classifying the data

into codes and themes, (e) interpreting the data, and (f) representing, visualizing the data (p. 190). Each stage is explained in further detail below.

The data organization stage consisted of transcribing interviews immediately or shortly after the conclusion of interviews. Verbatim transcription was completed, notating pauses or non-verbal subtleties throughout the interview. Computer software is often used during this phase to expedite data organization. I utilized Atlasti software to assist in data organization and coding interviews.

The reading and memoing stage required reading through the transcripts, making notations, and formulating initial codes. Transcripts were read several times in entirety, and I documented any ideas and critical concepts that occurred. Engaging in this stage allowed me to immerse myself in the details of the data. I carefully scrutinized content to consider the explicit or implicit role of race, socioeconomic status, and other differences in youth participation.

The third stage, describing the data into codes and themes, included describing the story and placing events into a chronology. Here I began building a “detailed description, develop[ed] themes, and provide[d] an interpretation” separate from my perspectives (Creswell, 2013, p. 184). Descriptions consisted of what I saw situated within a larger sociohistorical context. Narratives were aggregated into more minor categories of information and specific labels were assigned to codes. A short list of codes was developed, and codes were expanded if new categories were developed when data was repetitively reviewed. As Creswell (2013) suggested, the evidence that does not fit within the ascribed codes and themes was reported (see Appendix F for unreported findings).

The stories and contextual materials were identified while classifying the data into codes and themes. The data was “taken apart” to identify categories or themes (Creswell, 2013, p.

186). Creswell (2013) describes themes as broad information units comprising multiple codes aggregated to form a common idea (p. 186). Thus, various codes were categorized into overarching themes. Codes and themes were generated from the stories told by participants and guided by CRT tenets.

Interpretation of the data consisted of understanding the larger meaning of the stories told. Participants' experiences were analyzed from a racial-centered lens considering how the sociohistorical context and the larger society impact individual experiences. Interpretations were guided by the context and linked to interpretations/findings from other CRT and OST literature related to the current study.

The final stage, representing and visualizing the data, concluded with presenting the narrative focused on processes, theories, and unique features of life. I created a tree diagram (see Appendix G) representing the stages of data abstraction. Creswell (2013) suggests that the boxes at the top of the tree represent the most abstract information, and the bottom layers consist of the least abstract themes. At this time, stories were presented to participants to ensure that narratives reflected participant experiences. Table 3 provides a concise depiction of the stages described above.

**Table 3***Data Analysis and Narrative Approach From a CRT Perspective*

Stages	Data Analysis and Representation	Narrative Thematic Analysis
a	Data organization	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Create and organize files for data analysis.</li> </ul>
b	Reading memoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Read through text, make margin notes, form initial codes keeping in mind CRT tenets.</li> </ul>
c	Describing the data into codes and themes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Describe the story or objective set of experiences and place it in a chronology guided by CRT tenets.</li> </ul>
d	Classifying the data into codes and themes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identify stories</li> <li>• Locate epiphanies</li> <li>• Identify contextual materials</li> <li>• Situate stories within a historical context and document experiences with oppressions.</li> </ul>
e	Interpreting the data	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Interpret the larger meaning of the story from a racially centered lens.</li> <li>• Consider the relevant impact of the larger sociohistorical context.</li> <li>• Link findings to relevant CRT and OST literature.</li> <li>• Consult with participants to receive feedback related to accuracy of research interpretations (i.e., memo checking).</li> </ul>
f	Representing, visualizing the data	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Present narration focusing on processes, theories, and unique and general features of life.</li> </ul>

*Note.* Adapted from Creswell, J. W. (2013). *Qualitative inquiry and research design: Choosing among five approaches* (3rd Ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE.

Including two data analysis strategies strengthened the study to provide a rigorous and critical analysis process with built-in checks and balances and participant verification. In addition, outlining a step-by-step process through analytical stages provided guidelines to thoroughly comb through texts, identify themes, interpret, and adequately represent participant counterstories. Lastly, CRT tenets and the larger body of OST research guided analysis. CRT guidance allowed for the final product of the study to be derived from a critical race-based perspective.

### **Assessing Data Quality**

The researcher is the primary instrument for data analysis (Mohajan, 2018). Therefore, certain precautions were taken. In addition, it is imperative to outline strategies to ensure the ethical treatment of participants and explicitly expound researcher subjectivity through identifying and monitoring researcher biases (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). Below I will provide details related to strategies that were used in the current study to 1) strengthen the trustworthiness of the study, 2) describe the biases that I am bringing into the study, and 3) elaborate on potential ethical dilemmas.

#### **Trustworthiness**

Building trust is essential for qualitative researchers because studies are conducted in the field and, often, in real-time (Creswell, 2013). Three aspects are significant to trustworthiness. These aspects include internal validity, external validity, and reliability. Trochim (2006) defines internal validity as related to the credibility or believability of the study results. External validity consists of the transferability or “generalizability” of other contexts or settings. Lastly, reliability is associated with the dependability of results based on the collected data. The goal of the current study is not to generalize results across groups; therefore, will not be discussed below. Creswell (2013) suggests eight validation strategies to strengthen a qualitative research study. Recommendations include using at least two of the eight strategies in any study. Below I highlight six of the suggested strategies that were integrated into the research study. The other two strategies consisted of persistent observation and external audits and were not included due to time and study limitations.

First, making research biases explicit is one method to increase the validity of the study findings. Clarifying and explicitly stating my biases provides readers with context of how my

experiences may influence findings. Second, triangulation was employed through multiple data sources (i.e., field notes, journals, and interviews). Third, participants were asked to review findings as they unfolded throughout the study. This process is called *memo checking* and includes participants' review of written analyses to verify the accuracy of interpretations. I emailed all participants ( $N=44$ ) included in the study with an attachment identifying the associated themes and a brief description. Participants were asked to provide feedback confirming themes with their interview responses. Of all of the included participants, 15 individuals responded, including OST employees ( $n=10$ ), parents ( $n=3$ ), and youth ( $n=2$ ) (see Appendix H). Fourth, I worked closely with my committee members to complete *peer debriefing* to hold me accountable and analyze my methods, meanings, and interpretations. Fifth, the evidence that did not fit into the pattern of codes and themes is reported. This process is called *negative case analysis*, which provides a realistic assessment of the phenomenon being studied. Lastly, providing detailed descriptions of participants' experiences and settings where the study was conducted increased the study's validity. Including detailed, thick descriptions allows the readers to "transfer information to other settings" (Creswell, 2013, p. 252). Additionally, Denzin (1989) underscored the importance of including thick descriptions and respecting the researcher's point of view. Descriptions should illuminate a phenomenon while considering historical and interactional features of the experience.

According to Creswell (2013), a "good" narrative study should include: a focus on one (or 2-3) individuals, collect stories about a significant issue related to this individual's life, develop a chronology, tell a story that reports what and how it was said, and the author reflexively brings himself or herself into the study (p. 259). As suggested, the use of audio recorders, transcription, and field notes was included in this study to increase the reliability of

results (Creswell, 2013). The following study was conducted incorporating the suggestions proposed above.

### **Researcher's Subjectivity Statement**

Using the researcher as a 'human instrument' result in biases that can impact the study. Instead of attempting to eliminate researcher subjectivities, it is imperative to identify and monitor them (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). To begin, I identify as African American and Puerto Rican and as a woman, a historically minoritized and marginalized group. Being visibly brown, in complexion, and 'female' are significant aspects of my identity and impact how I perceive my experiences. My perspective is inextricably connected to my experience of identifying with a minoritized racial and gender group. Therefore, my outlook on my research, career, and professional ambitions are closely tied to my identity. My views of the social problems in this world are inseparable from my experience as a minoritized individual. My approach to societal deficiencies and inequities is viewed from a racially and gender-biased lens.

As a child, I was raised by a single mother in a neighborhood rich in culture and potential but poor in resources and opportunity. It was not until my first year of undergraduate school that I became aware of the dearth of our household's financial circumstances. I grew up with four sisters in a low-income household. Finances were limited, and my sisters and me had limited opportunities. Growing up in such conditions has influenced my perspective and how I think about other children and families in similar circumstances. My upbringing gives me perspective on how socioeconomic status plays a vital role in access to opportunities and resources and its intersection with race.

Prior to and after graduating with a Master's in Social Work (MSW) degree, I worked and volunteered with various OST programs. I have worked closely with school administrators,

teachers, and university students and professors to facilitate groups, plan activities, and evaluate program outcomes. My participation in such programs has allowed me to witness the potential positive impact of programming on children. In addition, I have seen the variety of experiences children have participated in when offered an opportunity to enroll in free OST programming that they would not have access to otherwise.

My professional and personal experiences lead me to make certain assumptions before going into this research. I assumed that most, if not all, African American participants would have experienced some form of racism, especially those that do not practice accepted social norms. I believed that participants would verbalize a link between race and income and the participation of low-income, African American youth in OST programs. In addition, I assumed that participants would confirm that race and racism continue to play a significant role in the OST experiences of minoritized youth. I journaled throughout the data collection process. In journaling, I was mindful of my biases and careful not to skew what I saw to conform to my biases. Another suggested way of managing biases is to seek consultation throughout the research process (Rajendran, 2001). I sought consultation and worked closely with other researchers to verify that my predispositions were not clouding my analysis of the data collected.

### **Ethical Dilemmas**

Creswell (2013) suggests considering several ethical issues throughout the research process. Addressing potential ethical issues begins before conducting the study and is carried through to the final stage of publication. Careful consideration should be given to what safety measures are put in place to address ethical issues at every phase of research, which will be discussed or reiterated below.

I obtained approval from the IRB and local school district before conducting this study. In addition, negotiations with community providers were made in order to secure the distribution of fliers for participant recruitment and interviewing. I worked closely with providers with whom I have established relationships and collaborated to identify other potential supports.

Conducting research with marginalized participants necessitates the use of precaution throughout the entirety of the study. That is especially true when obtaining informed consent and the additional need for sensitivity to the participant's culture, race, and other differences (Creswell, 2013; Ekmekci & Arda, 2017). When I implemented this study, it was vital for me to be transparent with participants and collaborators about the purpose of the study. The informed consent was thoroughly explained to participants, including their ability not to sign, and they were made aware of their right to withdraw from the study at any time (Salmons, 2012). In the case of youth, the appropriate consent to interview them was obtained from their parents or guardian, and assent was gathered from youth participants. I worked closely with community providers to be aware of cultural, religious, or other nuisances that should be respected during the study process.

Minoritized groups often experience institutional mistrust due to prior deception related to study purposes (Smirnoff et al., 2018). Therefore, as data was collected, I worked diligently to avoid leading questions and removed my personal biases from the interviews. In addition, I worked to build trust with participants and was forthcoming about the use of data once the study concluded. I relied on my professional advisors to critique the process and to hold me accountable for demonstrating respect and dignity to all participants.

Participants were assigned pseudonyms and random IDs to respect individual confidentiality, and all participants' perspectives were valued through inclusion in the final

analysis. Results are reported honestly, and stories are presented as a composite to protect the identity of individuals. Lastly, participants will be informed of where results are published and offered a copy of the publication if desired (Creswell, 2013).

### **Methodological Limitations**

It is imperative to acknowledge and discuss the limitations of the methodology chosen for the current study. With any methodology, there will be limitations. However, methodology rationale is provided to demonstrate that, despite the limitations, the inclusion of qualitative methods is the best fit for the current study.

There are arguments that the use of a qualitative research methodology means that generalizability is a limitation because individual experiences may not represent the experiences of others and generalize across groups and because research is typically conducted with small sample sizes (Ercikan & Roth, 2014). However, this argument is limited because it restricts generalizability in research to a statistical probabilistic perspective (Smith, 2018). The purpose of the current study was not to generalize across all groups but to explore and understand the experiences of certain individuals/groups. This will allow for future opportunities to explore this area of research in greater depth and to further the understanding of factors at play that impact youth participation in summer programs. Therefore, generalizability is possible, just not in the same way understood when completing quantitative research.

One criticism of qualitative research is the reliance on self-reported data. Reliance on verbal communication and self-reported data is perceived as limited because the legitimacy of participant responses is questioned (Solorzano & Yosso, 2002). The purpose of the study was to capture the multi-perspectives of African American community members' experiences. In order to accomplish that task, members should be provided with the opportunity to share their

experiences with engaging in summer programs. This feat cannot be accomplished without using qualitative methods because an essential characteristic of qualitative research is its ability to amplify the voices of those that have been ‘silenced’ or marginalized populations (Creswell, 2013).

Even with the above limitations for the purposes outlined in this study, a narrative design, guided by CRT tenets, is the best approach. Employing individual in-depth interviews is a commonly used protocol for gathering data for narrative inquiries and counterstories (Creswell, 2013; Solorzano & Yosso, 2002). Qualitative research emphasizes the perspectives of marginalized populations, which is what I hope to accomplish with the present study.

### **Chapter Conclusion**

Implementing a qualitative design in the current study is appropriate due to the purpose of what is being studied. One of the tenets of CRT is counterstorytelling, a necessary form of narrative research (Delgado & Stefancic, 2017). African Americans have experienced historical marginalization. Therefore, critically examining the perceptions of minoritized, low-income youth summer program participation is essential. Procedures to recruit participants and collect data relied on collaborative partnerships with community providers (Clinical and Translational Science, 2011). In addition, the inclusion of both the constant comparative method and narrative thematic analysis to analyze data resulted in a more rigorous review process. Creswell (2013) suggested the included plan to assess data quality by explicitly outlining researcher biases, memo checking, and detailed descriptions helped strengthen the current study quality.

## **CHAPTER FOUR**

### **FINDINGS**

#### **Chapter Overview**

This chapter presents the findings from the current study. Four research questions led to the study findings:

1. What are African American youth (i.e., high school age), parents, and OST employees' perspectives of the role race plays on high school-aged low-income African American youth participation in summer programs?
2. What are African American youth, parents, and OST employees' perspectives on socioeconomic status's role in high school-aged low-income African American youth participation in summer programs?
3. What are African American youth, parents, and OST employees' perspectives of compatibility (i.e., program fit with youth interests) of summer programs with high school-aged low-income African American youth interests?
4. What are African American youth, parents, and OST employees' perspectives on the impact of current socioeconomic conditions since COVID-19 on high school-aged low-income African American youth participation in summer programs?

The research findings from this study came from the raw data obtained from the semi-structured, in-depth participant interviews and the personal memos collected from informal notetaking and journaling during the research process. Being cognizant of racial nuances, implications of historical impacts and youth development research, and analyzing data from a counterstory lens

helped to guide the completion of data analysis. This chapter will open with a presentation of the participant characteristics and responses to questions related to the quality of programs, participation in OST programs/observation of youth participation in OST programs, and experiences or observations of the impact of race and income on youth OST experiences. The findings for each subgroup are categorized under overarching themes: positive youth development perspective: existing assets, and system-level disproportionality: needed assets. Throughout, raw data findings are presented in quotations and blocks.

The guiding principles of CRT are evident in the way the findings unfolded. The accurate reporting of participant experiences highlighted the relevance of historical racism and the impact of this history on the current resources available and accessible to minoritized groups. Although interviews were completed separately, a collective experience of participants can be observed for each subgroup. The interviews were rich, and as much of the participants' words are presented to provide a fluid narrative about their experiences. In doing so, I am bringing as much of their experiences to the forefront to provide a space to emphasize participants' voices and perspectives in a way that gives honor and legitimacy to their experiences.

### **Participant Characteristics**

Multi-perspective interviews consisted of OST employees ( $N=20$ ), parents ( $N=13$ ), and youth ( $N=11$ ) interviews. A total of 44 interviews were completed. Interviews were collected between Fall 2020 to Fall 2021 and ranged in average length for each subgroup. On average, OST employees' interviews were greater in length (53 minutes, 20 seconds) in comparison to parents (35 minutes, 58 seconds) and youth (21 minutes, 17 seconds) (see Table 4 below):

**Table 4***Average Interview Length for Each Study Subgroup*

Subgroup	Average Length of Interview	Range of Interviews
OST employees	53 minutes, 20 seconds	22 minutes 10 seconds to 74 minutes, 26 seconds
Parents	35 minutes, 58 seconds	15 minutes, 30 seconds to 49 minutes, 17 seconds
Youth	21 minutes, 17 seconds	14 minutes, 4 seconds to 36 minutes, 50 seconds

**OST Employees**

OST employees reported an age range of 25 years or older. Most (60%) participants identified as female, were married, possessed a graduate degree, and worked full-time. See Table 5 for specific OST employee demographic characteristics.

**Table 5***OST Employee Demographic Characteristics*

Participant #	Name	Age	Sex	Marital Status	Employment Status	Education	Income
1	Brandon	35-39	Male	Never married	Full time	Bachelor's degree	\$30,000-\$39,999
2	Tracey	65 or older	Female	Widowed	Retired	Graduate degree	\$70,000-\$79,999
3	Leonard	40-44	Male	Married	Full time	Graduate degree	\$60,000-\$69,999
4	Terrence	40-44	Male	Married	Full time	Graduate degree	\$60,000-\$69,999
5	Ralph	65 or older	Male	Married	Retired	Graduate degree	\$70,000-\$79,999
6	Karen	65 or older	Female	Married	Retired	Graduate degree	\$90,000-\$99,999
7	LeAnn	50-54	Female	Separated	Full time	Graduate degree	\$80,000-\$89,999
8	Tiffany	40-44	Female	Married	Full time	Graduate degree	\$50,000-\$59,999

9	Joshua	40-44	Male	Divorced	Full time	Associates degree	\$30,000-\$39,999
10	Lilly	40-44	Female	Divorced	Full time	Associates degree	\$30,000-\$39,999
11	Jennifer	45-49	Female	Married	Full time	Graduate degree	\$50,000-\$59,999
12	Katie	45-49	Female	Married	Full time	Graduate degree	\$100,000 or more
13	Larry	30-34	Male	Never married	Full time	Graduate degree	\$100,000 or more
14	Frank	65 or older	Male	Married	Retired	Graduate degree	\$90,000-\$99,999
15	Ashley	50-54	Female	Never Married	Full time	Graduate degree	\$70,000-\$79,999
16	Paula	30-34	Female	Never married	Full time	Bachelor's degree	\$30,000-\$39,999
17	Miranda	30-34	Female	Never married	Full time	Some college	\$30,000-\$39,999
18	Leslie	25-29	Female	Never married	Full time	Graduate degree	\$10,000-\$19,999
19	Keon	30-34	Male	Married	Full time	Bachelor's degree	\$50,000-\$59,999
20	Teresa	50-54	Female	Divorced	Full time	Graduate degree	\$40,000-\$49,999

When asked about specific program features, the majority (82%) of OST employees indicated that they have worked in the OST field for eight or more years and are open during the summer for five or more days. In addition, most OST employees reported they served middle school-aged children (12-14 years).

For questions regarding youth experiences with race, most OST employees reported Moderately to Not at all. However, OST employees' responses were pretty split between their observations of incidents of unfair treatment of youth occurring in programs because of youths' perceived income level. OST employees' qualitative interview responses highlight a greater understanding of historical and contextual factors impacted by race and income. Interview responses are shared in greater detail during the presentation of themes.

## Parents

Age of participants ranged between 30 to 59 years old. Most (92%) participants identified as Black or African American (one person identified as mixed race), female, and reported full-time employment. Education level varied fairly evenly across having a school diploma, some college, and a bachelor's degree. Most (69%) participants reported an annual income of \$10,000-\$39,999 and living in their current homes for more than five years. The number of children ranged across participants, with most (92%) reporting having two or more children. See Table 6 for parent demographic characteristics.

**Table 6**

### *Parent Demographic Characteristics*

Participant #	Name	Age	Marital Status	Employment Status	Education	Income	Number of Children	Years in Home
1	Francine	45-49	Divorced	Full time	Bachelor's degree	\$30,000-\$39,999	3	10 or more
2	Queen	35-39	Married	Full time	High school degree or equivalent	\$20,000-\$29,999	2	10 or more
3	Phoebe	45-49	Divorced	Full time	Some college	\$20,000-\$29,999	5	1
4	Amanda	30-34	Married	Full time	Some college	\$20,000-\$29,999	2	10 or more
5	Leah	45-49	Divorced	Full time	High school degree or equivalent	\$30,000-\$39,999	4	10 or more
6	Abbie	55-59	Divorced	Unemployed	Some college	\$10,000-\$19,999	3	6
7	Monique	30-34	Never married	Unemployed	High school degree or equivalent	\$30,000-\$39,999	4	5
8	Sara	35-39	Divorced	Full time	Some college	\$30,000-\$39,999	2	2

9	Roger	35-39	Married	Full time	Graduate degree	\$50,000-\$59,999	5	1
10	Isis	35-39	Married	Full time	Graduate degree	\$60,000-\$69,999	4	1
11	Morgan	50-54	Married	Full time	High school degree or equivalent	\$20,000-\$29,999	1	10 or more
12	Danielle	45-49	Never married	Full time	Graduate degree	\$100,000 or more	4	10 or more
13	Leigh	35-39	Never married	Full time	Graduate degree	\$50,000-\$59,999	2	8

Parents provided details about summer program participation for all youth in their care.

Parents reported that of the programs youth participated in over the summer, most (80%) programs were located in local public schools or community settings, held between one to six weeks during the summer, and offered for an average of five hours or fewer at no cost to \$40 weekly. Most (77-92%) parents reported Not at all, or This has never happened to me for questions regarding race and income. However, during the individual interviews, parents provided information regarding their experiences that provide a more nuanced experience with race and income, which will be provided in more detail during the presentation of themes.

### ***Federal Poverty Line and Parent Outcomes***

There were four parents in the current study who met the criteria for the federal poverty line. Marital status was split, with two reporting being married and two divorced. Most (75%) reported being employed full-time and having some college education. Overall, all four parents included in this supplemental analysis reported less program involvement across all children under their care. Of the total parent participants, only three reported being unable to afford activities as a reason for non-participation. Two of the three parents that identified unaffordability as a reason for non-participation were included among those who reported an

income within the federal poverty line. In addition, two of the four parents included in this supplemental analysis were the only ones of the entire parent participants to report programs as poor. Moreover, two of the four parents in this group reported that they observed their child being mistreated due to their socioeconomic status compared to one reporting it in the higher income group. Also, half of the parents in this group reported that their child was excluded from activities due to being unable to afford activities in comparison to none in the higher income group. Lastly, three of the parents included in this supplemental analysis reported that their child was made fun of because of their socioeconomic status compared to none reporting it in the higher income group.

### **Youth**

Youth in the current study primarily identified as female, lived at their current address for more than five years, and lived with both biological parents. Regarding grade level, the participants were distributed across grades ninth through twelfth. See Table 7 for youth demographic characteristics.

**Table 7**

*Youth Demographic Characteristics*

Participant #	Name	Sex	Grade Level	Years in Home	Caregiver(s)
1	Deon	Male	11 <sup>th</sup>	1	Single biological mother
2	John	Male	12 <sup>th</sup>	10 or more	Both biological parents
3	Lauren	Female	9 <sup>th</sup>	10 or more	Single biological mother
4	Jackie	Female	11 <sup>th</sup>	1	Both biological parents
5	Isabela	Female	11 <sup>th</sup>	5	Biological mother and partner

6	Jocelyne	Female	10 <sup>th</sup>	1	Single biological mother
7	Ronald	Male	9 <sup>th</sup>	1	Both biological parents
8	Chante	Female	11 <sup>th</sup>	10 or more	Both biological parents
9	Ethan	Male	11 <sup>th</sup>	2	Guardian
10	Mary	Female	10 <sup>th</sup>	8	Both biological parents
11	Ebony	Female	10 <sup>th</sup>	9	Both biological parents

At the time of the study, a little less than half of the youth reported that they did not participate in summer activities during the most recent summer. Of those youth who participated in programs during the most recent summer reported that all programs were located in local public schools or community settings and offered between one to six weeks. The program number of hours was split equally from five or fewer to six or more hours. Youth identified weekly program costs varied evenly, with some programs offered at no cost and a similar amount of programs charging \$41 or more.

Interestingly, most youths reported high satisfaction with program offerings, including interest in programs (72%), that there are many activities to choose from (64%), the ability to engage in atypical activities (64%), and opportunities to do new things (82%). The above responses are in contrast to reports by youth during individual interviews. During interviews, most (64%) youths reported limited availability and accessibility to programs, which will be described in greater detail while presenting youth themes. Additionally, similar to interview findings, most (45-82%) youths agreed they were highly satisfied with staff quality. Finally, the majority (91-100%) of youth reported Not at all, or This has never happened to me for questions regarding race and income. However, youth provided greater depth of their experiences with

race and income during their individual interviews compared to responses given on questionnaires.

## **Cross Group Comparisons**

### ***Main reasons for Non-Participation***

Regarding non-participation, 10 or more OST employees reported that the main reasons for youth non-participation in summer activities were lack of awareness and transportation and home responsibilities (i.e., caring for younger siblings). Like OST employees, parents agreed that lack of awareness was a common reason for youth non-participation in OST programs and unaffordability. However, youth identified the main reasons for non-participation in summer activities as lack of interest and involvement in other activities. Table 8 includes responses from all subgroups detailing the main reasons for youth non-participation in summer programs.

**Table 8**

### ***Main Reasons for Youth Non-Participation***

Reasons for Youth Non-Participation	OST Employees	Parents	Youth
Unable to afford activities	9	3	1
Need to work	3	2	2
Feel out of place/unwelcomed	4	0	0
Lack of transportation	12	1	0
Involvement in other activities	9	2	3
Lack of peer involvement	7	2	2
Boredom/Lack of interest	2	3	4
Lack of awareness	14	3	2
Lack of caring adults	7	0	0
Home responsibilities (i.e., caring for younger siblings)	10	1	1
Other	1	3	2

Note. Under the other category for parents, one parent reported COVID-19, and another reported no programs available for teenagers as reasons for non-participation. Under the other category for youth, one youth reported aging out of programming.

### ***Overall Program Quality***

The rating of program quality for each subgroup varied. A majority (53%) of OST employees reported that overall program quality was excellent or good. Most parents reported that program quality was fair (38%) or excellent (31%). In addition, most (55%) youths reported that overall program quality was good (see Table 9 for summer program quality ratings).

**Table 9**

#### *Overall Summer Program Quality Rating*

	OST Employees	Parents	Youth
Poor	0	2	0
Fair	3	5	3
Good	6	2	6
Excellent	10	4	2

### **Presentation of Themes**

Stakeholders experience the OST environment and activities offered in varying ways. Identifying the impact of race and income on older low-income African American youth participation in summer programs necessitated a multi-perspective approach to provide a holistic depiction of youth summer program experiences. CRT was used to guide the investigation of OST employees, parents, and youth perspectives. First, the existence of racism and the link to the historical impact it continues to have on institutions, systems, and outcomes for African American individuals were recognized. Second, intersectionality is a crucial tenet of CRT, and the complication of examining multiple classifications of an individual (i.e., race and income) were centralized as a critical component of the current study. Lastly, bringing participants' perspectives to the forefront and emphasizing their voice provides a counternarrative to deficit-based perspectives of African American youth and insight into the complexity of how historical

oppression, self-help, advocacy, and investment in youth development play a role in participant perspectives.

I engaged with African American OST employees, parents, and youth to investigate their individual and overlapping perspectives on how race and income impact the participation of high school-aged youth in summer programs. Following you will find themes presented from each subgroup's perspective and the varied level of experiences that provide a multilayered account of older youth participation in summer programs. The themes are separated into two overarching categories: positive youth development perspective: existing assets and system-level disproportionality: needed assets.

### **OST Employees**

When it comes to OST programs, OST employees are uniquely situated to engage on a higher level with other providers, stakeholders, and the community. For clarity, conceptual descriptions for each of the seven constructed themes from the interviews with OST employees are in Table 10. Thereafter, each theme will be explained, starting with those that fall under the PYD perspective, and OST employees' viewpoints will be prioritized by bringing their voices to the forefront.

**Table 10**

*OST Employees Conceptual Descriptions of Themes*

Positive Youth Development Perspective and Existing Assets		System Level Disproportionality and Needed Assets	
Theme	Description	Theme	Description
Program benefits	Availability of supervised and safe programs that reduce boredom and allow the opportunity for parents to work and results in youth social, emotional,	Intersectionality of race and income	The relationship between racial identification and income status and the impact on access to family, school, and community resources (e.g., OST programs) and exposure to

	academic/career, and cognitive development.		and receipt of information about opportunities.
Diverse program offerings	The development of available youth programs by enhancing program quality, resources, and structure (e.g., hours offered) that includes an emphasis on youth perspectives, focus on existing assets/asset development, and a holistic approach to youth development (e.g., postsecondary preparation, physical activity, etc.).	Resource disproportionality	Unequal program supports (e.g., limited funding) that exist due to environmental (e.g., limited financial resources) and historical factors (e.g., gentrification, racism) that have shifted community, family, and school assets and has resulted in historic disadvantage of marginalized groups.
Connection with youth	Intentional efforts of OST employees to engage youth impacted by historical oppressive practices through the development of trust, providing a supportive environment that is strongly linked to the community through collaboration, and inclusive of staff who have relatable experiences and are racially representative of youth.	Countering disproportionality	The development of youth program structure (e.g., staff and service quality) by increasing available family, school, and community resources (e.g., transportation, labor opportunities) to prioritize the interests and requests of youth.
		Effects of COVID-19 on programming	The impact of COVID-19 on program implementation (e.g., increased sanitation, virtual programming), program perseverance, and impact on caregivers and youth engagement in programs (e.g., Zoom fatigue, loss of wages/jobs).

***Positive Youth Development Perspective: Existing Assets***

**Program Benefits.** OST employees ( $n=19$ , 95%) affirmed that programs go beyond providing a space to occupy youth time to providing a positive outlet to help youth develop

cognitively, socially, emotionally, and professionally. For instance, Keon verbalized that summer programs are “giving [youth] the opportunity to be out of the house and do things that [they] wouldn’t be able to do at home.” In addition, Larry supported that programming “keeps [youth] engaged in something” but went beyond programs occupying youth time to also highlighting that programs provide avoidance of potential adverse outcomes and offer positive stimulation and outlets:

I mean I think rather than spending your summer, I mean, the many days kids I watch that don’t do any summer programming and they spend days trying to figure out what they’re going to do and literally ask the question, what am I gonna do today? I think it provides structured programming to allow their minds to get to be stimulated.

Leonard expanded upon the idea that programs provide an escape from negative influences:

Kids get a chance to be involved in something rather than just hang out. You look at the research, you know what I mean, this is where you in Athens see a lot of the shootings and a lot of the other activities are going down because of um there are not a lot of youth programs, summer programs. So, getting them involved in um summer programs, it helps to reduce, you know, that kind of engagement, that kind of interaction

The historical argument that OST programs occupy youth time and help them avoid negative outcomes has been a significant influence on the development of OST programs.

Beyond occupying youth’s time and avoiding negative influences, OST employees such as Brandon referenced that the positive opportunities youth are exposed to when engaging in summer programs are “many and varied.” Katie confirmed this point by stating that programs are “helping youth remaining active and giving them positive outlets in the summertime.” Even beyond that, Brandon reported a more holistic and circular perspective that he thinks

“participating in summer programs gives [youth] something to do that is constructive, that helps them build skills”, such as “social skills, that helps them stay out of trouble.” Tiffany reiterated the benefit of socialization and “find that there’re more people in the community like them” and “they’re tied into students at the, possibly at the same schools they never talked to.” In addition to socialization, cognitive or academic enrichment is a significant aspect of summer programs.

Leonard emphasized that summer programs address the following:

the summer slide, you know, giving [youth] a chance to read during the summer helps them stay educated, helps them stay on point with um, you know, picking up new vocabularies, keeping their minds active during the summer rather than just, you know, lay around and, you know, play video games all day or do nothing.

Other intangible features of OST programs were reported by employees such as Ashley: “the relationship[s] buil[t] with a lot of our campers and their parents” goes beyond the time spent in summer camps. Terrence underscored what could be longer-term benefits of programs when programs do a

good job and [youth] um can kind of get an idea or light switch or get a child to think a certain way to kinda value education or just value um different experiences um that tends to, I hope, and I know I believe that, it tends to help their decision process going forward.

All things considered, thinking about the avoidance of negative influences, positive impact on youth socialization, emphasis on academic enrichment opportunities, and well-rounded programming, Leslie verbalized that she thinks “summer programs, they kinda help stand in that gap” for youth who would otherwise not receive such opportunities.

**Diverse Program Offerings.** All OST employees (100%) emphasized expanding programs beyond singular approaches to include diverse program offerings that build on and

allow youth to explore their interests. For example, Keon reported that “the kids will kinda dictate” what type of activities programs offer. Similarly, Lilly stated that it is essential to “meet kids where they are. Like, have a conversation and see what they want. Don’t assume because you think it’s a great idea that the kids wanna do it because they may not wanna do it.” Frank reported that engaging in such an approach helps to develop programs that “attract that interest” of youth but that OST providers must “still make sure” that “there’s quality there and that you’re challenging” youth. OST employees reported that they use youth feedback to inform program offerings, and according to Katie, “sometimes youth want activities” that are “not necessary all academically” based (e.g., sports).

Many OST employees were adamant about including educational activities in their programs. Terrence reported that he is “big on education” because he feels “it being the great equalizer” to help individuals have access to greater opportunities. Ashley stated she would like to see more educational programming that offers “a little bit” of other aspects of learning, whether a youth is “musically inclined, artistically inclined” or interested more in “science or math.” Brandon advocated for the inclusion of education that takes a non-traditional approach:

A lot of black youth or... youth that I’ve experienced in the black community, they love to, you know, they learn by doing, you know. They are very like active learners and so um by having those tangible experiences I feel like you know, their um I mean, I don’t think it’s like just specific to black youth but, you know, that’s kinda what I’m most familiar with is working with black youth. And just seeing them engage in those ways um and you experiencing an activity or learning environments seems to be a better way to reach them and capture their attention.

Frank summarized why an emphasis on academic enrichment is critical for youth development: “the idea is to teach them something that’s gonna help them later on down the road” into adulthood.

OST employees such as Tracey emphasized that youth should be given “leadership opportunities to create [a] program, programmatic processes” with staff assistance. According to Leslie, programs help to provide skills because youth “parents are working”, and there may be “certain things that” they learn on their own, incorrectly, or still don’t know. However, OST employees perceive that there are certain youth groups being left out of current programming. For instance, Katie stated that “kids who have a juvenile” record who have been “expelled from school” also need “a space where they feel safe and comfortable” so that “they can thrive as a youth and not be treated like” they have “ended their life.” In addition, Ashley stated that

I think the population of children we are missing; we think when teenagers become of a certain age they don’t need programs such as that because when they’re 15 they’re trying to find some jobs and that, that is true, you know, most of us are eager to try to get our first job but also, I think we need to focus on if we do camp programs... encourage them to work and have some type of, build employability skills, tie that in.

Many OST employees advocated expanding and creating more inclusive programming for all youth groups.

Beyond looking at individual aspects of program offerings, OST employees provided suggestions to improve OST programs at the systems level. OST employees offered the need to look at current program structures, such as the hours offered. For example, Miranda reported that she would like to see programs “include the hours um that parents work particularly in warehouse settings” and that she would provide “twenty-four-hour care.” Paula took a different

perspective and emphasized the need for increased: “funding so kids can come and funding to do more things, to do more activities, and to spice it up a little bit. Like, give kids more activities, more fun activities to do here.” Terrence agreed that “more community partnerships” and “more public/private partnerships” with “whoever has funding” will help get “the right people in the right position.”

Community-based programming seemed to be an essential consideration for OST employees. Terrence proposed “taking [OST programs] to the students and taking it to the communities” to eliminate “the barrier of transportation.” LeAnn agreed that programs should be “apart [of], located within communities”, specifically, “located within communities that are considered” to be “lower-income communities.” She continued by stating she feels that “there’s something that happens [when] you, we tell kids that they have to be enriched outside of the environments that they, that are familiar to them.” Larry summarized the need for community-based programs by stating the following:

when we think access, we have to consider the many barriers that exist for kids from internet to transportation to food to health to um childcare. Um so, I think as many of our organizations that can think about, how can I bring our programs to centralized locations such as our community centers who is, I mean, to be honest if we talk to many of their coordinators will say they don’t have as many programs using their buildings as possible.

OST employees appear to support that building community-based programs that evaluate program structures and emphasize youth voice, include a variety of opportunities, and expand offerings to underserved youth will help to diversify and address current gaps in programming.

**Connection with Youth.** Of those OST employees interviewed, 18 (90%) reported positive perspectives of youth abilities and efforts to support their interests, various strategies to

engage youth, and how to create a space where youth feel accepted are efforts that influence their connection with youth. Many OST employees recognized the abilities of youth. For example, Miranda said she wants the youth she works with “to realize their potential, know what their purpose is.” Therefore, an essential aspect of her intake process is “learning who [the youth] are.” Ralph shared a similar positive perspective of youth but further expounded by highlighting how experiences over time may adversely impact youth:

I think they're, they got as much um they got as much potential, you know, as anybody else and probably the greater pain, for me, is to see when you see em, you know, the younger they are, you can see that spontaneity in them, you can see that brightness in their eyes, they're very quick and smart and all that kind of stuff. You also can see down the line because of a lot of stuff they may go through, you know, in their home situation or in the community, but you can see the little light goes out.

Kelly acknowledged that more prominent societal factors might be at play in affecting youth experiences:

It definitely seems like there is a bigger overall issue with education in general and... I think that's school and that's also what's being done at home. But just the kids are behind, and I don't know if they're ever really catching up and with what's going on they definitely aren't gonna be able to catch [up] because they're behind already and then may not necessarily have someone at home um that can help them stay on track.

OST employees appear to possess a heightened perspective of youth abilities but also underscored a realistic understanding of the impact of how experiences and environmental factors impact youth outcomes.

In addition to the perspective of youth abilities, OST employees shared various strategies to engage youth. Program location seems to be one aspect that helps to centralize a focus on recruiting underserved populations. Paula stated that “the majority of our participation comes from low-income African Americans... because of the location” and that the program she works for “is surrounded by many... projects, housing authorities.” LeAnn acknowledged that recruitment is a byproduct “if you’re there in the neighborhood long enough, you won’t have to recruit” due to recognition within the community. Beyond location, Tracey stated that they respond to “whatever the need is” in the community and that their program is “focused on community capacity building.” Ralph agreed that “community capacity building” occurs through

partnership [with] the churches, the leadership to understand what role everybody would play. It’s not just designed so that if I disappear or if the non-profit disappears, the whole idea is to build the capacity of all of the partner organizations.

OST employees support that the program location is essential to engage youth and that it is equally imperative to build the capacity of the community surrounding programs. According to OST employees, recruitment efforts occur naturally when OST providers intentionally build community trust.

Perhaps in part due to OST employees’ intentional recruitment efforts, OST employees expressed that they build programs where African American youth feel accepted. Terrence stated, “one thing that my staff is, if not naturally gifted at, we’ve learned how to do, is to relate to the kids. To um build relationships with the kids” and that through building relationships, “we create atmosphere for them to open up.” Larry stressed how relationships and racial

representation of youth impacts program participation. He stated that “we build our program off our relationships” and

most of our students actually are African American um but I think part of it is that...

we are so much more intentional with our recruiting African American, Hispanic coaches that helps when we go to the high schools, and we talk with students that they see someone who looks like them who’s actually in school or in a certain job.

Brandon agreed that creating spaces that are accepting of African American youth is the providers' responsibility to “co-create space” with youth. He further explained that his perception is based on what youth express while visiting his facility:

I hear them [youth] saying stuff like, ow that person looks like me in that painting or... being in aw... seeing some of the pictures and portraits that I... create... cause all... of my paintings have African American figures in them um especially the ones that are up on the walls in my studio.

He emphasized that “when you see yourself represented in a space... it makes you feel like you belong in that space.” According to OST employees, staff racial representation appears to positively impact youth acceptance, connection, and engagement in various OST spaces.

### ***System Level Disproportionality: Needed Assets***

**Intersectionality of Race and Income.** Of the OST employee interview participants, 18 (90%) OST employees reported observations of how income, race, and the intersectionality of each concept impact low-income African American youth experiences in summer programs.

When thinking about income, Tiffany underscored the link between income and access to information and resources:

feel[s] like... some of the information is not getting to [families] or the information is

getting to them but... too many other barriers that are preventing them from being able to take advantage of the resources and programs that we have over the summer.

LeAnn verbalized that participation in OST programs, or lack thereof, extends beyond program affordability:

time is money for families. Then that doesn't change with activities, and I think there are a lot of enrichment and other activities that kids are ruled out of because of income, with the actual cost but I think it goes far beyond that as well.

She said, "I think it [income] plays a significant role. Because it's not always the cost of the activity. It's the cost of gas, you know, it's the cost of a bus ticket um it's... lost wage[s] for families." Brandon emphasized that high-quality summer programs offered by organizations such as UGA are out of reach for a lot of low-income families: "[UGA programs] are out of the price point of a lot of the families that are serviced in public housing or other communities. Even with the subsidies that they offer to those communities, it's still \$60, \$70, \$80, \$100 a week." He provided that "those economic barriers... are really like limiting what those kids in public housing and some of the neighborhoods I serve can experience." To remedy the issue of cost, Larry expressed that he thinks that "scholarships vary so much" between programs that "there needs to be more [scholarships] for sure."

The role of race, specifically, was verbalized by many of the providers throughout the interviews. Brandon underscored that several African American youths are "pigeonholed" into certain activities. LeAnn confirmed that instead of appealing to youth varying interests, many opportunities are predetermined for youth:

in many areas... we decide what we're gonna expose children to and we make assumptions about what they like, what they won't like, what they will be able to do...

what they can't do... And so, I think as it relates to... African American identity I think there are some assumptions that come along with that... Especially as it relates to interests... like maybe this student will only want to play kickball so we just have to have a field here.

Therefore, including people with similar identities appears to be crucial in supporting African American youth development. For instance, Lilly expressed how her own identity impacts the youth she works with:

I think because I look like them they're more comfortable... being around me opposed to if it was someone of a different race or... they wouldn't [be] so comfortable. Parents wouldn't even be so comfortable, in a sense, especially with all the injustice and everything going on in our world today. People are a little more reluctant to allow their kids to go over or be with a program where it's, you know, outside of African Americans. So, they want somebody that look like them and wants somebody that walks around the Neighborhood... to meet them where they are.

The youth's identity appears to impact the availability of and exposure to OST program opportunities.

For many OST employees, separately race and income do not appear to be the main issue with low-income African American youth participation in summer programs. The bigger issue seems to be the combined effect of both concepts on youth experiences. Frank acknowledged that "I'm not shy about saying that racism is a problem... and it's real." However, that

it's possible... if you live... in [a] certain part of town... the people got resources... They got money, they got great jobs. And I'm talking about most of these White folks and so they can afford, and their kids get those exposures and some of them get... great

exposure beyond what we can think of... They kids get to travel. They get to go out to, out the country and some of these kids may not get out of Athens.

Terrence confirmed this reality by emphasizing the impact on how “[i]f you don’t have education, if you dropped out of high school or barely made it out and you have no college or no trade or no technical skill... that tends to leading to being here in public housing.” He further stated[t]here’s a lot of places and camps that they [African American youth] just can’t afford” and

being black and poor and your parents are poor, a lot of times they think going to Atlanta is going out of town. So, you, they don’t have a great... view of all or awareness of all the opportunities that... they may pursue. So, I think [that] has something to do with race but has large part more to do with the environment that you’re in and the culture that you’re in... if everybody around is kinda struggl[ing] through... life financially then you probably aren’t exposed to getting opportunities, you’re not aware of a lot of opportunities so they may not have a great outlook as to their own capabilities.

Ralph agreed that “[b]eing African American in and of itself is not the primary um challenge that they [youth] have to deal with, but it’s... when you don’t have the resources”, issues are compounded. He stated:

But on the flip side of it if you got so many deficits then you don’t have, you lack a lot of resources then you become self-aware simpl[y] because look like everybody that’s having a hard time they look like me... kids can’t help but... see that identity because they’re so safe... where they are, where they live, looks at every turn it’s affecting people who look like me. So, um that’s the role that I see to the extent that race plays... because it’s the

economic impact... on your situation... and the fact that there's such a high concentration of people that look like me have the same experience.

Tracy provided that the combined impact of race and income is likely due to

low-income neighborhoods are usually... filled by African Americans and... those neighborhoods are also a lot of times opportunity, information, resources, are not vetted back to... those neighborhoods. So, yes opportunities don't come their way because they just don't know. And it's simple because of the fact that they're low-income and they're in this neighborhood.

Leonard summarized the intersectional impact of race and income on participation in OST programs: "I think the role of African American kid is... there maybe opportunities, there may not be opportunities depending on... where the families at financially. Those who have access you can see a lot more summer camps open."

**Resource Disproportionality.** A total of 19 (95%) OST employees shared details of how multilayered factors have impacted the participation of youth in summer programs, including environmental changes over time, the impact of family factors on youth participation, and the disproportionality of community and program resources. Many providers stressed the impact of changes over time on communities and programs. Ralph enlightened that prior to racial integration,

we [Black families] had in tack neighborhoods... I'm a product of... segregation, it was just a black experience... we had our own black community, own black schools, and so the whole culture... none of the deficits were there... And then the other thing... is that a great deal of the families, they may have been small and kinda needing painting, but... a lot of people actually owned their own homes.... During that time you had a lot of um

things... built in where you could have a lot of support because everybody knew one another.

LeAnn shared her experience that confirmed Ralph's point by stating, "[t]here was a daycare" in the neighborhood she grew up in, and for her and others in similar circumstances,

things like that, they matter. Daycare, childcare is one aspect but, you know, it's to me, it's good for something to be in that neighborhood. Because you can build from there, you really can build from there if you have a daycare, if you have a camp, or Boys and Girls Club.

Community-based programs have encountered growing challenges with maintaining accessible program options for low-income, minoritized communities.

OST employees also communicated a link between transportation, family responsibilities, affordability, and awareness of low-income youth participation in summer programs. Lilly stated "funding" is essential "because we are so [im]poverished here food is a must. It's very rare that we can have any meeting, any event, or anything without food." Many providers, such as Tiffany, reported that "the challenges that I've seen... more represented than any others would be transportation." Karen highlighted the role of family responsibilities and the consequence on youth participation: "some of... those young women have to help with the family, and so sometimes they have to babysit younger siblings", because "[q]uite a few of our young ladies come from single-parent homes." LeAnn provided that the barriers described can be linked back to finances:

I think finances [are an issue] but I also think other barriers that like... sometimes people are like oh you can get a scholarship here and our county is really good about that... but their circumstances that are related to... a low SES family... And so, it could be related

to transportation. Transportation... could be related to work schedule... it could be related to other um sibling or family responsibilities.

Although OST employees recognize the barriers low-income African American youth experience, they also report how increased funding could help mitigate the challenges youth experience.

**Countering Disproportionality.** All OST employees ( $N=20$ , 100%) verbalized suggestions to counter the disproportionate resources that low-income African youths experience. Suggestions included identifying strategies to enhance program offerings, improve the quality of program structure, increase program awareness, and build community capacity. To enhance program offerings, Larry provided that it is important to

make [programs] attractive, make it engaging, find ways to incentivize kids to wanna be there. Maybe build kinda like a build a friend program where their friends can also actively participate. Find ways to recruit not just one kid but maybe their peer or friend group as well... I think... engage the families if there's a way you can get the families bought in

Ashley reported that there should be an “enrichment program that would tap into different interests that our students have like... employability” and to “incorporate tutoring, academic enrichment... as well as... field trips.” In sum, Teresa agreed that “these students are our future. So, we need to make sure that we continue to keep these students... stimulated academically so that they're ready” and that “[t]he money has to be invested in our... students.”

When considering how to improve the quality of the program structure, OST employees verbalized multiple suggestions. Teresa communicated that providers must “continue to look at the cost... make sure not just... lower-income or the ones who live in housing authority are in

programs but look at the rural areas cause the rural areas are poor.” Tracey agreed that the programs should “allow [staff] to come in who understand what it means to give back”, “partnering with those who have the experience and the expertise”, and that “having a heart of service” are fundamental aspects of the programming she offers. Keon verbalized the conflict that some families experience when half-day programs are offered to families and the impact on childcare:

if the need is really for you to have childcare you can’t really participate in a half day camp or... not just art, whatever our specialty camps are. I think it kinda hinders... if you need actually childcare care. You don’t really get the opportunity to spend time in such a focused camp like those are. Um even if there is a way to provide transportation to where they could go there and then finish the day at a regular camp, something like that.

Leonard also emphasized the programs have “to make sure that you providing some type of transportation” and should include “something that the kids can eat and you gotta have some kind of incentive” which includes “travel” and giving youth the opportunity to “make some money.”

As previously reported, many providers verbalized that program awareness is lacking. Therefore, to address this issue, Jennifer stated we have to focus on “getting the information out.” Lilly expounded by stating:

we need to make things more aware. We can’t just put it on social media, we can’t just send it out to the schools and let them send an email blast. We really have to go in the neighborhood and talk to people and build a rapport with people so that they trust you enough to say... maybe that may be a program for my child because her energy was pretty good.

Similarly, Tiffany also stated:

I think we need to meet the families where they are. Um I know me individually, that's what I try to do but I don't know if county wide if that's the approach that's being taken... if we know that we have parents that are working from 6:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m. every day, how do we provide information to those parents? How do we allow those parents to know... what resources we have available and that their kids don't necessarily have to be at home by themselves all summer?

OST employees seemed to agree that awareness is an important aspect of program participation and getting out in the communities to connect with families is essential.

Building community capacity through various means is vital to countering the disproportionality of low-income African American youth experience. Karen suggested building community capacity through centralizing youth voice:

I think the main thing about youth is getting youth voice. Understanding what African American [youth] are saying they need. I mean, um or what they want um would be significant. And then um backing um and supporting something financially as a community and putting resources exactly where they need to be.

LeAnn emphasized the significance of building trust in communities: "we have to build relationships within lower SES communities. I really don't think or it can happen without that but I think that's critical. I think we have to start by building programs within communities."

Brandon made suggestions that go beyond improving specific aspects of programs to focusing on broader issues related to equitable occupations and wages:

I think it really relates to labor and our labor politics and the wages people take home.

Like if we were to create a space where more people had the freedoms and economic, um

Stability... they would have disposable income to be able to put their kids in whatever program they so choose.

Therefore, to build community capacity, programs and providers must consider various factors such as creating more resources, building community trust, improving the environmental conditions of low-income families, and community programming to address the needs of families.

**Effects of COVID-19 on Programming.** The entire sample ( $N=20$ , 100%) of OST employees reported some form of impact of COVID-19 on their programs, families, and youth. OST employees verbalized various effects such as program perseverance, the impact on OST program operations, the challenge of adapting, and the adverse effect of changes/closures on youth and families.

About the perseverance of programs, Joshua expressed that “a grassroots organization that wants to make an impact, they gone find a way.” Frank reiterated this point by stating:

this summer we were planning to do a math academy and of course it was going to be an in-person activity but um then COVID-19 came along and so um I still said well...

we gone adjust... [we] worked closely [and] one-on-one with families and the idea was to do a couple of things one, to kinda of introduce them to that technology and um Google...

And the other thing was to connect them to Kahn Academy.

Additionally, Terrence stated:

[at] one point everything was virtually where we couldn't have people in the gym for two or three months. And then we modified the style of program as best we can to promote social distancing... we do require them to wear masks, we limit the number, we limit the type of things that we do, um as best we can.

Many OST employees were positioned to continue offering programming despite the unanticipated onset of COVID-19.

Not all programs could remain open, and if they were open, they had to make significant adaptations to the programming they offered. Brandon said, “I’ve seen programs kinda shut down... and slow their operation or even cut back on the hours they were offering services.” Lilly agreed that most programs had to be “restructured completely.” In addition, she observed that programs such as the “Boys and Girls Club, you can’t even go unless you are already a member there. They only taking up to 50 kids.” Many OST employees verbalized implementing general safety precautions in response to COVID-19. However, Ashley mentioned how adjustments have resulted in lower youth enrollment and participation:

[programs] just weren’t able to serve as many children so you know they had to do social distancing and spacing and safety and that meant they couldn’t accept as many children during the summer which meant many kids didn’t have a camp program to attend that normally do, that normally isn’t an issue.

The impact of adaptations on program capacity appeared to be significant for many OST employees.

Many OST employees experienced challenges with having to make adaptations. Providers such as Leonard stated, “I can say for certain like a lot of our afterschool programs that we was doing... we’re doing it online, and it’s difficult.” Not only is being virtual difficult for programs, but Teresa also verbalized the personal impact of virtual programming on her and other providers: “it seem like I’m doing double work with... being in Zoom with everything, it’s a meeting, after a meeting, after a meeting, and then I gotta do whatever it is that we talked about.” Leslie expressed concerns about whether programs have successfully adapted to changes

created by COVID-19: “I don’t think that we’ve done a, some of us have, but I don’t think as a collective we’ve done a good job with adapting because everything is so uncertain... Everything is Zoom and... if it’s not Zoom, it’s Zoom.”

Families and youth were impacted due to the numerous adaptations or closures necessary for programs. Paula was among the OST employees who had to close programs altogether:

due to the Coronavirus, a lot of things have been canceled, our summer day camp, our teen camp has been canceled. Teen camp is really being um it’s really affected um by the Coronavirus because even if we do decide to return, we’re thinking about returning but not offering those trips and to me that impacts teen camp altogether.

LeAnn agreed and expressed how OST program closures adversely impacted families:

I think that... some programs... at like Leisure Service... had to adjust... [however] you have families that still have to work. And so, at some point you have to decide will you... just stay home instead of going to... the Y or using the scholarship.

Larry echoed LeAnn’s point and emphasized how income impacts access to resources such as stable internet access and permanency of location when out-of-school:

I think income wise... we notice that a lot more of our low-income, students we serve from low-income households have less access... to stable internet.... They also tend to be in different places so some of them be at grandmas and aunts house and then at home. Um so, that does affect our ability to kinda serve students consistently.

OST employees verbalized several barriers that families have experienced that were created or exacerbated by COVID-19.

In response to the effects of COVID-19, many OST employees verbalized that they expanded or observed the expansion of programming to address community needs. Some

programs received additional funding to increase services. For example, Keon verbalized that “the mayor, commission voted to spend some of the money that they received for that COVID Relief um to pay for WIFI at, I think it’s like 18 facilities. Most of em are Leisure Services facilities.” In addition, community employees also provided additional supportive resources. Katie expressed that she has worked to link youth to necessary community resources:

hooked them [youth] up with food resources, we hooked them up with mental health specialist, we were, you know... we had um young adults that was displaced that was coming back home, well, coming back to Athens, say they were in Savannah in college but don’t really have a place to stay here.

The impact of COVID-19 has been widespread. OST programs are not immune to the larger society’s response to adapt or discontinue program offerings. Although many OST employees verbalized the significant harmful effects of such decisions on youth and families, many programs persevered and expanded despite the unpredictability of COVID-19.

### **Parents**

Parents uniquely encounter OST employees, programs, and youth. Their relationship with youth influences their experience with engaging youth. Therefore, parents’ perspectives add value to the research due to their unique positioning. Following, conceptual descriptions for each of the seven themes constructed from interviews completed with parents can be found in Table 11. Thereafter, each theme will be described starting with those that fall under PYD perspective, and parents’ voices will be prioritized by highlighting their perspectives.

**Table 11**

*Parents Conceptual Descriptions of Themes*

Positive Youth Development Perspective: Existing Assets	System Level Disproportionality: Needed Assets
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Theme	Description	Theme	Description
Program benefits	The current (e.g., occupies time) and future (e.g., possible scholarship opportunities) advantages that participation in supplemental programs has on youth.	Intersectionality of race and income	The combined impact of racial identification and socioeconomic status on access to resources (e.g., information about programs) and type of program participation (e.g., intentional efforts to seek programs with racial representation).
Diverse program offerings	The availability of a wide variety of activities and programs (e.g., cognitive, social, emotional, academic, etc.) that assist youth in the exploration of their interests and develop skills based on the varying interests and needs of youth.	Resource disproportionality	Unequal access to supports (e.g., transportation, availability of programs, information, financial resources) that would promote participation in OST programs.
Standard to high expectations of youth	The perspective that parents and OST employees have standard to high expectations of youth abilities is derived from an understanding of the barriers (e.g., being stereotyped) that youth of color often encounter.	Countering disproportionality	The expansion and increase of community resources (e.g., financial assistance, transportation) to improve OST programming that centers activities based on youth perspectives.
		Effects of COVID-19 on programming	The impact of COVID-19 on program implementation (e.g., increased sanitation, virtual programming) and adverse impact on caregivers and youth engagement in programs (e.g., Zoom fatigue, loss of wages/jobs).

***Positive Youth Development Perspective: Existing Assets***

**Program Benefits.** Many parents ( $n=12$ , 92%) reported various benefits that youth gain from participation in summer programs. Areas of social, life, and community skill development were emphasized. Parents such as Danielle stressed that the development of youth occurs through exposure:

we as people can be introduced to something don't mean we like it, but you can't say you didn't try it, or yea it's a good thing, but I don't wanna do that, but [if] you... never know about it, how can you say whether or not you wanna do it?

Leah also reported that youth benefited from meeting other kids and occupying their time:

I think it's great for them to meet other kids and just to get into the community and just... not to just be at home on the TV all the time. Learning and interacting with other people is very important.

Isis further expounded by stating participation “supports their [youth] social-emotional as well as their academic or athletic need... because it allows them to build relationships, build connections... and integrate content into their life and see how it... can be used to make them successful.”

Parents agreed that the benefits of summer programming expand beyond youth. Sara acknowledged that summer programs have also benefited parents:

helpful for the parents to know where their kids are in the summer, they have something for them to do. Number two... it keeps the kids active, of course, let's them spend time with their friends also it lets them meet other kids too because a lot of times with summer camps you're going to camp with kids that go to different schools.

Similarly, Morgan reported that summer program participation was initiated as a means to accommodate her work schedule at the time:

[summer program involvement] started out... because I'm working a lot of times and I didn't just wanna leave her at the home... by herself... and then she took a interest with basketball and... how I was looking at basketball if she ever got... pretty good perhaps it was a scholarship... [because] if I couldn't afford to send her to college... if that was an opportunity... for her to perhaps get a scholarship or... a scholarship academically.

Parents shared that summer programs help fill youth time with constructive outlets to engage their interests and could have benefits that expand into adulthood. The benefits of youth participation in summer programs include parents' desire to provide time for youth to engage in productive opportunities to develop social and life skills.

***Diverse Program Offerings.*** In order to address low-income African American youth participation in summer programs, all parent participants ( $N=13$ , 100%) agreed that programs should offer diverse programming and additional support resources. Parents suggested improvements in summer programs by centering youth voices and interests and enhancing program structures. In addition, they identified that providing skill development, academic support, and specialized programs is most important to them. Following examples of parents' interview responses will be provided.

Many parents felt that programs need to meet the varied interests of the youth. Although many parents expressed that program options are limited, Danielle declared that “we... just [have to] ask the youth, what is that you wanna do? What do you like to do outside? What would you like to do outside?” Phoebe stated that it is important that providers allow space for youth input to influence the creation of programming:

letting them [youth]... deciding what will be there. Whether it was a um place to learn your skills as far as athletes are concerned or whatever it is that child could do or wanna do. Even if that child is not physical but they have more of a brain working power, having some STEM type things, stuff for science and math that would kinda show them even though you don't want to run around and get hurt but you do have a brain that likes to run around do things here's somethings that you can do to make you a better you.

Considering youth voices, many parents advocated for the expansion of programming to include preteens and teens. Leah acknowledged that programming options were limited as her daughter entered adolescence:

[s]he um liked basketball and soccer, all those things when she was younger but when she got older, she was more into music and art. She's [an] amazing artist and amazing [at] writing.

So, I would like to see them have more programs... they had programs, art programs but they were expensive... and they were only like a week at a time... and I could see if it was for a month, I could see the fee but for a week... I couldn't do that with her so I couldn't get her into a lot of those programs because they were too expensive for me as a single parent.

All-in-all, parents agreed that youth interest should drive program creation.

Many parents acknowledged the barriers to program access. Isis verbalized limited access to viable transportation options:

allow there to be opportunities to transport them other than just to their house. So, if they are a baseball player or a football player for the high school but they're at the middle school there could be transportation to that location.

Regarding transportation, Sara agreed that "... I know some of the camps do provide like a bus to pick up the children um I don't know if all of em do that, but transportation is probably an issue for some... But, transportation [and] the timeframe of the camp" can be problematic. Many parents such as Phoebe emphasized the need to adjust program schedules to fit with parents' work schedules. She stated that she would not have a "particular sign in or sign out time. It would be kinda like a walk in, free for all type thing, at your convenience." Queen provided additional recommendations to improve program structure:

I guess it would be nice to have a program that actually wasn't so hard to kinda get in... I would say something about different trades or a career... I would do a program that would allow, I guess, more kids and not be so strict to allow different kids versus the same people.

Program accessibility seems to vary among parents. In addition, barriers to access appear to prohibit the ability of all youth to take advantage of available summer opportunities.

Parents also expressed that skill development for teens is essential. For instance, Isis focused on comprehensive academic programming by stating that youth should:

have lunch provided when they enter into the building and then you provide them with their core things that they need: their literacy, their language, and then some type of um math of course, and then some type of enrichment opportunity that is not [typical]... something that would challenge or engage their thinking.

Other aspects of programming that parents felt would be important included providing youth with specialized programming. Sara discussed the need for programs that focus on improving youth mental health outcomes:

I don't know if there's counselors there at the camps because a lot of kids are going through a lot and they may not be able to talk about what's going on at home and they're holding it in and you know a lot of times these children's we say have behaviors, there's something going on in their household and they have nobody to talk to and... some type of therapy programs or to at least let the child know it's okay to not be okay and you can ask for help.

Holistically, Francine stated programs that help children should "be more well-rounded" that include a variety of activities such as "investing or... how to balance a check book... how to balance life in general and I think a lot of people um that self-care part even personally should be a part of it." Skill development across a range of areas that provide youth with a well-rounded base of skills was emphasized by parents.

Parents identified that diverse programming should include a centralized focus on youth perspectives and interests. In addition, programs should work towards alleviating barriers that preclude youth involvement in summer activities. Summer activities focused on academics, skill development, and specialized programming, such as mental health, were shared as relevant areas of programming by parents.

**Standard to High Expectations.** Most parents ( $n=12$ , 92%) agreed that parents and program providers demonstrated standard to high expectations of youth abilities. Parents emphasized how their level of involvement contributed to the program providers' expectations of youth. In addition, parents expressed that they worked to push youth to explore opportunities that fit their interests and to consider additional activities to increase their exposure. How parents expressed their experiences will be further expounded below.

Many parents verbalized the necessity to be present during youth activities. Danielle shared one of the reasons she is heavily involved in the programs her children were involved in: if they don't see a parent of some sort engaging that child will be lumped with the other 15 over here as you know that's how I feel if you don't make your presence known that yea I know it's whole bunch of kids with a whole lot of different backgrounds in this typically program or space or whatever the situation may be but just know this one here is cut from a different type cloth that I don't want you to categorize her as cause it's not what I want her to know.

Because of her involvement with all her of her children, Leah expressed:

I just think that they looked at em... a different way because also I've worked in the community as far as like volunteering in different places, mainly at their schools and stuff um and working with the teachers and volunteering when they had things.

Parent involvement seems to be a beneficial and imperative aspect of youth program participation.

Many parents described that they and program providers push youth to fulfill their expectations of youth abilities. Related to program provider expectations, Monique shared that program providers have:

high expectations because they know what the kids are capable of. They know some kids are troubled, so they know how to deal with them, and they know some kids are just acting out. So, if my kids are having a bad day... they explain to me what's going on, they have them right there they explain what's going on, we all talk about it, and we all come up with a solution.

Leigh shared how her expectations may come in conflict with information her daughter receives from the broader society:

... I have high expectations... due to society I will say a lot of times does have an effect on our children in what they are exposed to on social media so... you try to um keep your children away from certain material because you feel like okay... this should not be heard, this should not be seen.

From the parents' perspective, similar expectations of youth seem to be shared by program providers and parents.

When African American youth engage in summer programs, parents share concerns about youth being lumped into categories. Therefore, parent involvement seems crucial in helping youth succeed in programs and influencing how program providers engage with youth. Parents consistently shared that they have similar expectations for their children as providers to help push youth beyond their perceived abilities.

***System Level Disproportionality: Needed Assets***

**Intersectionality of Race and Income.** All parent participants (N=13, 100%) reported some aspect of the impact of race, income, and the intersectionality of each factor on African American youth participation in summer programs. Parents verbalized direct and indirect links between scholarship and resource availability and accessibility of programming to youth racial and/or economic classification. The experiences of the parents included in the current study will be centralized and shared below.

Many parents verbalized the significance of their children participating in supplemental programming regardless of cost. For parents such as Danielle, she shared her observations of a

link between the role of race and income on African American youth participation in summer programs:

[r]ace plays a lot because you have to understand where the money that's where opportunities are that's just gonna be the bottom line. No money, no opportunities... money get opportunities, I mean that just goes all back to the school zones... some schools are better than others because of the area that it's in... unfortunately the areas for us [African Americans] is always gonna be... on the bottom because of the finances. That's just it... they're not gonna have these productive programs for African Americans because we don't: A. either demand it or we're not in the area that can afford to bring in the better programs. They get all this grant money... we're not in the area so either you're gonna go to other areas to where you can get the better programs, or you stay over here to the programs that you have.

Sara's perspective is that some camps would have been inaccessible for her daughter but that "... we've been eligible for scholarships each time but, I know if scholarships were not available it'd probably be hard for me to be able to afford taking them to summer camp." Due to the limited availability of scholarships, parents such as Amanda highlighted how limited resource availability impacts how youth occupy their time: "I just think that since there aren't any youth programs... it... causes um our kids to like get into more trouble... cause they don't have anything to occupy their time." She continued by providing that she perceives that "... being African American I just feel like we don't have a lot of resources."

In addition to the provision of scholarships to increase program accessibility, free or low-cost programming appears to have helped parents such as Abbie to access programming for her children:

there hasn't been any issue with the cost because the things that [my daughter is] involved in right now are free but then that would be a problem if somebody would do something like um music lessons or singing lessons or something like that then I would assume there would probably be a cost with that.

Conversely, Isis highlighted how summer program options are limiting for some when the cost is high and additional supports are not provided,

the best experiences and opportunities like UGA's reading program... they were asking for \$400... it was worth the price if I could find the money financially at that time but then they didn't give me available opportunities where I could actually enroll my daughter and she could go, they weren't as understanding to realize... I'm a working parent so that means in order for me to have this money for you I have to do these jobs... the better or the more opportunities for... my kids [to get their] academic needs met the higher the cost.

She expressed how the higher cost programs offered by entities such as UGA often experience issues with racial inclusion:

a lot of the opportunities like UGA is not racially biased... but they don't... provide resources to allow culturally struggling people to have what they need... they don't have a racial issue there I feel that it is a cultural um they have a blind eye to the culturally differences that are within the community which they want to serve without truly serving them um because the kids who they're serving are coming from out of the county and they're not doing anything to serve the struggling cultural people within their county.

Sara highlighted the importance of racial representation in the programs her daughter participates in:

I would want my children to participate in something where they see more people like them in it... my daughter she's very big on that just making sure that African American children are involved in activities especially that don't have a lot of our children in it.

Most parents recognize how the affordability of and representation within programs could impact youth experiences.

For low-income and working-class families, program quality seems to vary among the programs their children have access to and has an impact on youth program participation.

Parents such as Francine admitted that when having to decide between quality programming versus cost, she will often choose a program that costs less and sacrifice quality:

I think that's the biggest thing... instead of looking for quality and looking for the best experience... for our children, we're looking for... what's available and what we can afford which is not always the best... and it's not always giving our children what they need... for development.

She also reported that,

I do feel like... African American children, children of color... have less opportunities of like the ones that I speak of... unless... they know someone that knows someone... It's kinda like there's no opportunities for good camp that just come up because you're African American... It's kinda like... it limits our children...

Likewise, Phoebe agreed that accessibility of quality programming for low-income families is lower:

[cost] has a high impact because usually the thing that is free its more of a babysitting setting. And usually, the things that are gonna help them be smarter, stronger citizens

have a cost to it and you end up having to choose the roman noodle version versus... filet mignon.

According to the parents who participated in the current study, race, and income both seem to have an impact on the availability of support networks, resources, and access to summer programming. Many parents verbalized a link between resource access and their racial identification and income level.

**Resource Disproportionality.** Most parents ( $n=12$ , 92%) reported limited availability of community and family resources and youth interest as contributors to African American youth involvement in summer programs. Amanda stated that program access has been challenging because of “[t]he unavailability” of programming. Isis expressed the need to increase income by working additional jobs to support her children’s summer program interests:

now when it comes to summer enrichment activities that are not aligned to the school, all of them [children] jump for those opportunities and love those opportunities... they give me the list of... [activities] and their parents work, summer school programs or a second job or a third jobs to get the income to be able to send them to their other things.

Concerning the availability of summer programming, Queen acknowledged that awareness of programming is limited:

... I still feel like... it should be equal... all the way across. Because I don’t live in a neighborhood that would get more, who wanna make sure that [youth] know... that their loved and their cared [about]... and that they have the outlet but by you giving that to just that set of people, it has hurt a lot on the community. Cause a lot of the different kids have suffered because I may not have growed up in this area, but I lack... a lot just as much as... this child may have. So, I wish that across the board, it would really allow

more programs to allow all kids and not just one set or this set. Like, it would be nice to have a program out there for the youth that didn't cater so much of the finances or the um what you have versus what this person has. I feel like by doing that not only do it have adults divided it has kids divided.

The literal unavailability of programming has limited the accessibility for youth because parents perceive programs are unavailable or information about available programs is not widely shared.

Resources available in the community for families are essential to increase program access. When support is limited, program participation could be impacted as a byproduct. For instance, Morgan stated that because “[programs are] nowhere in my neighborhood”, transportation is a necessity. However, this creates an issue because in her situation

[t]he only inconsistency we have is... a car problem... [my daughter] don't mind going but um with her not having a car yet... certain things be limited cause um I got to try... find her a way to get to where she need to be.

Similarly, because transportation is limited, Phoebe verbalized concerns with her child using available public transportation:

So, do I really want my middle schooler or my high schooler on the bus coming back home late at night? No, that's not safe cause I wouldn't want them to have to walk from the bus stop and that's what helped out a lot with some of the things that my kids were involved in. There were sometimes I had to get either a parent that was um going in the same area to bring my child home or to take them or if it was something that my baby girl was involved with, she did more so um with the adult that was involved, a part of that, that adult was the one that was picking her up and bring her back

Parents agreed that limited family resources have a high impact on African American youth participation in summer programs.

Parents perceive that youth interest has an impact on participation. As youth transition from being a child to a teenager, it seems program options decrease. Danielle stated:

[teenage youth] have nothing for they age group... all of em [children] are over the age of 13, they all in high school so they just have to go to work for the summer... there are none I haven't even tried to look for any [programs].

Monique also recognized the issue of age restrictions on program participation:

[there are] just not enough stuff to capture the interests in the older kids. Cause you know they in high school they thinking about so much other stuff... I don't really see too many college [exposure programs]... to get them more educated on college and... if they don't decide to go to college, they should have an expo on how to get a training, how to get your own business license if you want to... I see they do a big um college expo in Atlanta, but I haven't seen them really have nothing around here because everybody's not gonna go to college but it's other ways you can be successful and make money as well and there's a lot of good successful business owners.

Parents verbalize the impact of limited availability of programs, limited community and family resources, program quality, and youth interest on African American youth participation in summer programs.

**Countering Disproportionality.** All parent participants (100%) shared responses related to countering the disproportionality in summer program access. The areas referenced most included addressing systemic program issues, improving dissemination of information, focusing on community and social factors, and developing programming geared towards youth interest.

Queen stated that program improvement could occur by increasing "... equal rights. Not really allowing to let no race or finance deter... a person [from] being able to be a part of a program." Sara provided suggestions that encompass a range of systemic improvements including "... [financial support] so the parents know that they'll be able to afford it. I think the timeframe of availability also to stress what the children will be learning while they're there." The provision of equal rights through program access could be enhanced by evaluating the distribution of resources and adapting the time programs are offered.

How information is shared and who has access to information impacts the level of engagement among groups in programs. Amanda emphasized this point by highlighting the need to increase information sharing by "put[ting] the information through schools... [and] through athletics... If the coaches require the kids to do a certain amount, you know, get involved. I feel like they [youth] would." Abbie recommended that OST providers distribute information about available programs directly in communities:

you really gotta put your... boots on the ground and actually get out and engage and... make people aware of what's available and... because if you don't know it's available then some people are not gonna seek it out... a lot of people just don't know.

Leigh concurred that information should be shared widely and in a format that is accessible to youth and parents:

to... make sure that you... getting the word out... people always say we don't know you all have these outreach programs because we don't know about them. Um I know a lot of the kids are tech savvy, but their parents are not, so you know we need to make sure that we... let the parents know as well as the children know what their options are and what programs are available.

Information access seems to be a challenge for low-income African American families.

Identifying solutions to address the issue of information sharing appears to be a relevant area for those families included in the current study.

Many parents provided suggestions to counteract community and social challenges disproportionately impacting low-income African American families. For example, Leah stressed the need to evaluate and provide solutions for transit issues:

I know that transit has this program for all students that they can ride for free.. but if they're younger they won't qualify for that... if you could get um a shuttle bus in some of those areas where you pick up, just like at the YMCA they pick up students, they have a bus to come and pick up the students, I think they would get a lot more kids into some of those programs. But also, do a survey, see what kids like... and then see if you can implement that into the program that you already have available.

Monique discussed the impact of limited program availability and spaces for youth which underscores the need for more program options:

as far as these summer programs around here they pretty much get full... the first day, we are signing up because even if you wait until the third or fourth day you could miss your spot, they fill up so fast and it's like that all around... even they have some of the camps at the churches and those get full too... once it's time you just better hurry up and jump on it because it's not hard to get a spot but you have to gone ahead and sign up because it's so many people with kids and that they work in the summer and that they need somewhere for they kids to go and they don't want them to sit at home and be bored even though we have older siblings.

Identifying solutions to community and social challenges that families experience could help to improve summer program participation.

Centralizing youth interests, abilities, and experiences was strongly encouraged by parents. Francine acknowledged that youth “always want to find something fun to do in the summer but find something that actually um nurtures them... that actually helps them develop... mentally.” Danielle affirmed that programs have to offer programs that “peak [youth] interest”:

I just feel like it gonna have to be something they want because I even ask what do you all want to do... and Athens is very boring understand that... There’s nothing for our teenagers to do here... I often time will wanna take them to do things in the community which is nothing so I find myself going to Atlanta so I can see why a lot of kids get into trouble because it’s nothing to do.

Parents advocate for the inclusion of additional resources to support youth summer program participation.

**Effects of COVID-19 on Programming.** Many parents ( $n=11$ , 85%) verbalized their experiences with COVID-19 and its impact on summer programs. Some consequences they reported included the indirect impact on families and the adaptation to program adjustments, closures, and virtual programming. Leah was among the parents who reported that COVID-19 had an impact on families:

there are parents who are out of work or... their work has been reduced and some... got to work to help make ends meets or some of these can’t be in these programs because they got to stay home and take care of they siblings or they may have a parent at home that’s sick cause they couldn’t afford daycare.

She additionally recognized that “kids can’t participate in things that they did have available for them because they need to take care of siblings, or they had to get a part-time job too.” Morgan was transparent about how transitioning to online platforms in response to COVID-19 does not result in the same level of engagement from youth:

[COVID-19] kept em out of school for a while even though they were doing online it still not like being there... getting the attention you need... not being able to get out and go to the school or go to someone else to try and get help... if you don’t understand it. That’s one of the things that affected em.

Understanding the initial and ongoing impact of COVID-19 on families is still growing. OST programs generally serve as an outlet for youth. However, parents emphasized how changes due to COVID-19 personally impacted their families.

In order to survive, many programs had to make significant adjustments to the modality of activities and services offered. Sara shared,

[in the past] ESP... they usually would do all their summer camp in they main building, but they have to social distance everyone especially with children with special needs because a lot of them have medical issues. So, fortunately a lot of local churches allowed ESP to use their church. So, they separated them um into smaller groups... [however] if somebody on the staff is diagnosed with COVID then the whole camp has to shut down, then the parents, okay what do we do with our child...? Especially when it’s the same day they find out they were diagnosed on Friday then on Monday we don’t know what to do with our kids.

Francine agreed that,

all programs were greatly impacted, actually... because of COVID you can't really group anymore um you gotta make sure you have the six feet, you gotta have you[r] mask, you can't be um touching, playing... that kind of thing. So, COVID kinda restricted all of that stuff.

Many parents verbalized that virtual programming was ubiquitous throughout the early stages of COVID-19. For example, Danielle verbalized that “there’s not any programs everything is virtual, on Zoom and most kids is not finna sit down on a Zoom camp.” However, she identified that “White camps was still going on. It was our [predominantly African American] camps was not going on. So, our camp was Zoom.” Many programs went to great lengths to ensure that modified activities continued to be offered in the absence of in-person interaction or with additional safety precautions. However, some parents verbalized that not all programs were as fortunate.

Families adjusted by increasing safety precautions, social distancing, and decreased enrollment in summer programs in response to COVID-19.

## **Youth**

Youths directly encounter OST programs and have a personal experience engaging in programming and with OST providers. The parents and OST employees often influence their experience. Therefore, youths’ perspectives add value to the research due to their unique positioning. Following, conceptual descriptions for each of the seven themes developed from the interviews completed with youth can be found in Table 12. Thereafter, each theme will be described starting with those that fall under PYD perspective, and youths’ voices will be prioritized by highlighting their perspectives.

**Table 12***Youth Conceptual Descriptions of Themes*

Positive Youth Development Perspective: Existing Assets		System Level Disproportionality: Needed Assets	
Theme	Description	Theme	Description
Program benefits	Positive developmental outcomes in areas such as social skills, academic support, and future career preparation for youth as a result of participating in OST programs.	Resource disproportionality	The lack of public or private spaces for youth (specifically teenagers) to engage in age-appropriate activities.
Diverse program offerings	The expansion of OST programs to include activities that derive from youth interests and help with the development of skills in diverse areas (e.g., social, cognitive, professional, physical, etc.).	Economic disproportionality	The issue of inconsistent financial resources (e.g., scholarships, flexible payment options, free programming) that can serve as barriers or supports to OST program access.
Standard to high expectations of youth	The perspective that OST employees and caregivers have standard to high expectations of youths' ability to succeed.	Effects of COVID-19 on programming	The impact of COVID-19 on program implementation (e.g., increased sanitation, virtual programming) and adverse impact on youth engagement in programs (e.g., limited outlets for teens, lack of awareness).
Connection to programs	The impact of racial representation, or lack thereof, among participants in programs and the impact on youth experiences in summer programs.		

### *Positive Youth Development Perspective: Existing Assets*

**Program Benefits.** Most youth ( $n=10$ , 91%) verbalized the personal and general benefits of participating in summer programs. Youth reported benefits included the fundamental component of occupying youth time to more complex outcomes such as increased socialization and exposure. Youth, including Deon, shared that “[summer programs] gives people something to do... you don’t wanna just waste your day sitting around the house not doing anything. It gives you something to look forward to do.” For youth such as Ebony, she felt that “a lot of people, I just think they just like to escape their household and stuff and do something they enjoy doing.” Lauren expanded on how the occupation of time impacts youth and parents: “you wouldn’t be home alone; you’ll be like somewhere, [parents] will know where you are.” Whether occupying time, escaping their household, or engaging in a safe environment, it seems that youth perceive their time as well spent in summer programming.

Through engagement in summer programs, youth frequently reported how they benefited from increased socialization with others their age. Ronald share his perspective about the impact on his relationships with his peers:

[summer programs] definitely brings you closer to kids who have the same interest...

also it helps you build... the things you like to do and build... well I always look at it as my portfolio what I’m gonna have in the future.

Jocelyn shared similar feelings:

I feel like it gives you a different perspective on other people, so you get to meet people that aren’t as likeminded or... come from the same place as you and... I got to meet girls that were from all the different schools in Clarke County, so they weren’t just people I went to school with.

John spoke from a general perspective to include more than just the development of friendships: “[youth] would probably gain a few friends. They would probably gain some knowledge, they gone learn something hopefully... Sometime out of the house, not being at home all the time... They get out, see things... learn their surroundings.” The feedback provided by youth is consistent with research documenting the importance of youth socialization, especially during adolescence.

Exposure to various activities and opportunities also seems to be relevant to the experiences youth have during engagement in summer programs. Youth such as Mary shared a multitude of experiences she had when participating in summer camps:

I’ve definitely learned a lot from being in summer camps... we did have like a few different learning opportunities, they had a lot of guest speakers come... they had a few people... tell us about their books and... a lot of people have come and sat with us and talked with us... I’ve learned a lot.

Jackie reported being exposed to activities that could help prepare her for future career opportunities,

you get to know what you’ll need for the future... they teach you the stuff that you need... [for the] [work]force you’ll already know what you need to do or what needs to be done or... already have like a head start.

Youth verbalized experiences that exposed them to a range of opportunities through participation in various summer programs. Youth confirmed they receive exposure to academic, career, and life skill development opportunities.

**Diverse Program Offerings.** All youth ( $N=11$ , 100%) included in the current study provided suggestions for the type of diverse programming they would like to engage in. The

youth responded with suggestions for general summer and academic programming and activities to increase life skill development. Following youth voices will be highlighted by including detailed descriptions of youth experiences.

For youth, suggestions for program improvements come in various forms. John provided suggestions to improve summer programming by envisioning the type of summer camp he would like to create:

my summer camp would probably be... something fun for like a decently sized group of kids or whatever really, any age. Like, high school or whatever... It could cycle out activities that they could do every day or have like a lunch time. It'd be school but instead of going to class and learning something you'd go do an activity... a fun activity of some sorts.

In addition, Jocelyne agreed that the provision of a variety of activities to keep youth interests would be a core component of the summer program she would develop:

I think I would want to do different types of classes like in the camps... we used to go from one activity to the other and some of the activities were kind of like geared towards the younger kids, but they still give it to the older kids. So, I would have different programs that I think would be geared towards kids my age like arts and crafts instead of doing a color page we would do something that was more, like you would have to put more effort into or trips we went on maybe change those to something that a kid my age would wanna go to like Funopolis... not make everything generalized for the entirety of the camp if there are multiple age groups.

Other youth, such as Chante, gave feedback about activities geared towards preparation for the future: “[I] wanna go to college for engineering” and that “... jobs that got something to do with

engineering” would be helpful to prepare her for future career opportunities. Ebony underscored that in comparison to programs that are currently available, she thinks that the programming she would like to see would include youth voice: “[have] kids and ask them what’s some stuff they probably like to do instead of just putting things together and saying the kids would probably like this but they probably won’t end up liking it.” Youth provided a variety of suggestions that would be helpful to engage youth in summer programming.

Many youths expressed interest in programs dealing with academic support. Lauren stated that “I would probably like... other people to like help with their homework... Because that was... one of the first things I used to do when I walked in... get people to help me with my homework.” Mary also shared her observation of youths’ current educational needs:

[programs] already offering like a lot of tutoring options and things like that now which I’ve definitely taken advantage of... the pandemic it has been a bit of a struggle to... keep yourself centered, keep your grades up and do I just feel like everybody is kind of going through a little slump, I’m kind of getting out of that now and... I’m glad that they... [started] doing like this tutoring after school and having like Saturday school really helps and... that’s mostly the out of school programs I see, is like afterschool tutoring and they do it for all subjects but um for summertime I don’t see much other than like probably PSAT prep.

Academic engagement outside of traditional educational contexts appears to be significant to youth.

Life skill development was emphasized as an essential aspect of older youth development. For example, Ethan verbalized that he would be interested in “activities where it helps you work on your financials, like your financial needs... How to control your money...

Stuff that you would probably need later on in life as an adult.” Isabela agreed that “[t]hings involving money” or “[m]aking money” would be of interest to her. She expressed that many youths' future career interests include areas such as making music, but that exploration of interests may be limited due to lack of resources and programming:

I know people that wanna do music but know that rapping isn't for them so they wanna produce or make stuff but they don't have the resources so maybe something like that like to get people more interested.

Deon agreed that helpful programs would include a focus on a range of skills and future planning to assist youth to be successful as adults:

career planning... skill building,... and just public speech... I struggle with eye contact and um getting my words out when I'm talking, right. So, um public speech is a huge thing because you gotta be able to talk to... people... no matter whatever you do, you gonna have to um communicate... [Also,] [c]ollege isn't for everyone. I feel that you don't have to go to college to be necessarily successful cause there are so many... different um definitions on what successful is, success is, it varies from person to person. So, I feel that um people that are leaning towards going to a trade or something, they need to start building those skills in that industry, whatever gonna make them stand out in that industry so that they can be successful one day... and just more like some academic support. Cause, I mean, in school, in Clarke County I feel like if you show up, you will pass.

Life skill development in career, financial, and academic programs that contribute to preparation for adulthood appear to be essential for youth.

**Standard to High Expectations of Youth.** All youth participants ( $N=11$ , 100%) agreed that most OST employees had standard expectations, and parents set high expectations for them. Some youth verbalized that their parents' or caregivers' expectations exceeded standard requirements of being on time, respectful, etc. Multiple youths verbalized a difference in perception of the standard expectations set by OST employees compared to the high expectations set by parents. For example, Danielle felt that OST employees "was good people. They all wanted to see us do well... They made sure we got along. They too made sure we did activities... they was really good they pushed you to do better and good things." Isabela also felt that OST employees' expectations are "not unreasonable..." and that expectations included "being on time." However, her mother's expectations of her "are very, very high" because "I'm the baby of the family so me being the last one left I have to have it together since she's almost done cause I'm like the youngest, youngest." Mary also stated that OST employees she engaged with set standard expectations and wanted her "to behave... be respectful... they didn't really have any super high standards for us they just wanted us to... be nice to others, clean after ourselves." Conversely, she verbalized the high standards her mother set for her:

She definitely has high standards for me, which is good I appreciate that she does... cause if she didn't... I'd be a little disappointed myself honestly. I'd be like man... you don't want me to succeed. She definitely has high standards for me, she wants me to succeed, I love that she is so... passionate about the things that I wanna do and like where I wanna go... she never forced me, she's like if you don't wanna go to summer camp you don't have to anymore, it's fine, we can find other things for you to do... [to] be more productive during the summer time which I appreciate a lot.

Youth verbalized similar experiences with the expectations set by OST employees and, in most cases, parents.

The expectations set for youth by OST employees and their parents or caregivers seemed to range from standard to high. Many youth experiences were somewhat dissimilar across home and OST settings. Regardless, the youth did not verbalize lower expectations set by OST employees and their parents that helped shape their summer program experiences.

**Connection to Programs.** Most youth ( $n=10$ , 91%) verbalized having experiences where they felt connected to the other participants and settings where other youths were of a similar race. Youth reported racial discrimination was limited. However, youths communicated that they participated in programs that included mixed or primarily African American races. Contrarily, youth expressed how involvement in programs with predominantly White participants and limited racial representation impacted their experiences in summer programs.

Most youths verbalized their experiences with how race impacted their experiences in summer programs. Lauren shared her lack of experience with discrimination: “I’ve never been like racially discriminated against or anything like that. I’ve been good.” However, many youths expressed that they engaged in programs with a majority of mixed races or African American participants and providers. Ronald said “all the programs that I participate... is biracial and all that, and... I really honestly I never really run into... altercations” related to race. Isabela agreed that her experiences with summer programs have been engaging with primarily African American participants:

I haven’t really had a problem because majority of the things that I do are based around like African American... like a good 90, 95% of all... members are African American youth and with volleyball majority of the team is black.

Mary confirmed that she also did not experience challenges while participating in summer programs that mainly included African American participants:

within the girls camp it was mostly African American girls there so I didn't see much of... a difference... I went to one other camp but I was like way smaller so I mostly stayed at that one camp for most of my life... I didn't see much of a... challenge within there um because I was surrounded with people who looked like me so there was no... challenge or difference but yea, there was mostly people that looked like me and we got along pretty fairly.

Youth seem to verbalize very few adverse experiences, especially when engaging in settings where the representation of their race is more prominent compared to spaces where it is not.

Some youth underscored how perceptions of them and engaging in predominantly White spaces may impact others and their experiences. John shared that race has an impact, especially when considering feelings of belonging in a given space:

Because [if]... most programs would probably have more light-colored people, I don't wanna sound racist or anything, light colored people. And the African Americans might not feel welcomed or not wanting to go because it's like too many, they would feel like there's too many of them people and there's one me or something like that. Or like the money situation... Like they would want to go and they wouldn't care about race but they wouldn't have enough money.

Jocelyne affirmed her perspective by sharing her experience in a predominantly White program:

sometimes during the summer I would do [program]... stuff... you don't really see a lot of African American people in those types of settings. Like, I went to a competition earlier like right before the pandemic hit and my group for the competition were the only

people of color and there are multiple competitions going on and we were still the only people of color out of the entire arena place we were at... I saw no other Hispanic or black people we were literally the only people of color. It's kind of a sense of, you're in a space you typically wouldn't be in but you're here and you show out because you're the only ones there.

Deon shared how the perception of African American youth may initially play a role in how youth are perceived but counteracting perceptions can occur after engaging with youth:

being African American, I feel like... you do have some disadvantages in just life in general... sometimes how I'm looked [at]... if I decide to wear a durag today or one of those type of things. But I'll say... opportunities are given to... the best of us, everyone. It's... the impression that you make on people... I think that they could care less how you dress or was it presentable or not. I think it's more of how you carried yourself when you were dressed that way... if you look like you were happy to be there or... just took pride in when you walked in the door or wherever you work, when you talking to someone, how you address them. I think that plays a lot and um just youth today, people my age and younger, also like older people too.

Although youth verbalized challenges with participating in predominantly White spaces, they also expressed a sense of pride and responsibility to be present.

***System Level Disproportionality: Needed Assets***

**Resource Disproportionality.** All youth ( $N=11$ , 100%) verbalized few opportunities to participate in OST activities and programs. For example, Mary verbalized, "I don't think I have any [spaces to go]. Don't think I have any other then you know right here in my room." Also, Isabela shared that "I just stay in the house it's nowhere really over here for me to really do

anything.” Jocelyne expressed how residential location impacts access to activities offered outside of school,

over on the Eastside there’s not really a lot of stuff. I noticed all the places I’ve gone for camp, and everything always ended up being on the Westside on the Eastside there’s not a lot over here. Even though we have a couple schools and stuff there’s not a lot of stuff on the Eastside for kids. There’s not a lot of stuff for teenagers to go either like places there aren’t anything.

John also confirmed her point by admitting that:

back then [at a younger age]... I think there were some programs that I seen, but like you’ll have to get to them pretty quickly... before they like, fill up or whatever... I remember one time I went on the UGA website to look for somethings too and I saw basketball, I saw some robotics, dance, art... all those things. But most of the stuff that I was interested like basketball, or something would be full... I couldn’t do it because of an age limit.

According to youth, participation in programming is limited, especially at their current age, because of the limited availability. Program availability appears to be more accessible for younger children but is limited as children age out of programming and enter adolescence and teenage years.

**Economic Disproportionality.** Fewer youths ( $n=8$ , 73%) verbalized knowledge of how income impacted their participation in summer programs. Some youth acknowledged that the programs available to them and their participation in programs relied on program cost and the availability of scholarships or financial resources. Deon shared the difficulty for many families when offered paid versus free programming:

when they're [programs] coming from the schools... you don't have to pay for it, food would usually be provided. But outside sources um sometimes they may charge a fee or something, or require some kind of fee or payment... which may be downfall in that program to a lot of people that may want to contribute or be in it because they just don't have it financially to be able to do that.

Jocelyne communicated that the availability of scholarships assisted with her attendance at camps:

if I've gone to camp, [it was] on like scholarships before, I would say that and I feel like I went to there was no different in how they treated scholarships kids, with kids who paid full [price] but my brother he went to camp on scholarship. He was still with all the same kids like he was fine. They never did anything like different, they never treated us different.

Ebony expressed that OST employees "always made it affordable for where any kid could come." She stated that providers would work with families to make payments:

if you don't have enough money for it [activities/programs] they let you pay for it throughout the summer or they give you like a certain amount um that you can pay. They really just um talk to you about the amount cause they really want any kid to come to they camp.

Some youth verbalized how economic disproportionality impacted their experiences. From availability of programs that align with their interests to the cost and availability of financial resources such as scholarships. Youth acknowledged how their experience with economic disproportionality influences access to resources, including programmatic and financial supports.

**Effects of COVID-19 on Programming.** All youth ( $N=11$ , 100%) disclosed some impact that COVID-19 had on their summer program experience. Typical safety accommodations, including social distancing, virtual programming, mask-wearing, and limited capacity. In addition, youth discussed the challenges with how precautions and cancelation of programs impacted their engagement and limited potential spaces for youth to escape from their home environments.

Youth verbalized that they experienced program closures and significant adjustments to improve safety precautions in response to COVID-19. Chante observed that programs “had to be canceled because of COVID so kids had to stay home” and that she “couldn’t go places a lot cause of COVID.” Ebony agreed that “I’ve noticed a lot of camps haven’t been open cause they want to be very cautious of everybody’s safety.” Isabela stated that “[w]e have Zoom meetings for stuff and try to have meet ups once a month since we can’t do them all the time like we use to.” Youth reported a range of safety precautions that summer programs began to initiate in response to COVID-19.

For some youth, the inability to continue participation in programs disrupted their normal routine. Jocelyne verbalized that “some of my clubs haven’t picked up because school is just now going back in-person for Clarke County full-time.” Because of the changes, she agreed that “it’s impacted the way we actually do the club and how many people can be in it and how many people can go to these certain things.” Ronald verbalized the limitation of the hours offered for programming: “it’s being limited to um participation and those different types of things but... I just know... not being able to participate as much or having less hours to do things.” Deon expressed how changes in school programs have impacted many students:

with social distancing you can't really be around um too many people, they don't want you to form too big of groups.... School was an outlet for a lot of people to like get away from their real life problems... and it [school] isn't as effective with distance learning but when you're in person I feel that you learn more, it's more effective, because at the end of the day they're gonna push the content out to you and if you actually take the time to go over it and study it that's 100% on you.

Limited program offerings seemed to impact those youth who depended on programs as outlets.

Youth verbalized that many programs took standard safety precautions, including increased cleaning, mask-wearing, and social distancing. The youth verbalized that some programs were canceled or not open due to COVID-19. Youth also shared how program changes impacted their personal experiences with programs and observed how limited program access impacted others' inability to engage in positive outlets.

### **Instrument Reflections**

When completing qualitative research, the researcher is seen as the primary 'human instrument' and invested in data collection and analysis (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016; Mohajan, 2018). This responsibility makes tracking and monitoring the researcher's experience throughout the data collection and analysis process imperative. Therefore, during the research process, I kept a journal to document my own experiences/interpretations as data unfolded and was analyzed. Below are two entries that were transcribed during data collection/analysis.

Friday, April 1, 2022 (verbatim):

It's so impressive and interesting how much the providers invest themselves and their personal resources into the programs they administer. There is a lot to consider such as the impact/necessity of collaboration, the role of parent involvement, the influence of

COVID on resources, cost of programs, type of program offerings, how person experience impact professional endeavors, building and maintain[ing] community trust, youth exposure to culturally significant and diversifying experiences, youth voice, compassion/love/caring, income, awareness/relationship building to learn about opportunities, burnout, multiple demands, and inclusivity. I wonder how to best represent the perspectives, the collective perspectives of my participants. I am circling around all of the broad content areas that are coming out of the data. I am curious to learn how similarities or differences [between groups] are made clear throughout.

Monday, May 9, 2022 (verbatim):

I am entering the final stages of my dissertation analysis and there is a lot of data to work through. I find it interesting how much similarity there are in reference to responses between groups but also the subtle differences that are also present. If youth rely on programming as an outlet, how have the issues of COVID compounded or exacerbated adverse experiences? It seems to be consistent, especially for teens, that teen programming is limited to non-existent. Even if there is not formal programming, opportunities for youth to engage in activities are limited. Would it make a difference if activities that are or would be available would be offered for free? I say that because it seems like free programming was/is a saving grace for a lot of youth.

I do not possess the foresight to identify the impact that my study findings will have.

However, listening to the interview recordings and repeatedly reading the transcripts helped clarify a collective narrative within each participant group. I take my position as the researcher for this study and the responsibility that comes with that very seriously. I hope the voices of the individuals who participated in my study are represented with dignity and sincerity.

## Chapter Conclusion

The above chapter consists of my interpretation of the 44 individual interviews completed with OST employees ( $N=20$ ), parents ( $N=13$ ), and youth ( $N=11$ ). CRT and relevant youth development research guided data analysis. Findings for each subgroup were categorized using two overarching themes of positive youth development perspective: existing assets and system level disproportionality: needed assets. Although there is some similarity in themes between groups, how each subgroup expressed their experiences were shared from varying perspectives and with subtle distinctions based on their positionality. Chapter 5 will expand upon study findings and elaborate on study implications.

## **CHAPTER FIVE**

### **CONCLUSIONS**

#### **Chapter Overview**

The current study explored the influence of race and income on high school-aged low-income African American youth participation in summer programs. The following questions guided the study:

1. What are African American youth (i.e., high school age), parents, and OST employees' perspectives of the role race plays on high school-aged low-income African American youth participation in summer programs?
2. What are African American youth, parents, and OST employees' perspectives on socioeconomic status's role in high school-aged low-income African American youth participation in summer programs?
3. What are African American youth, parents, and OST employees' perspectives of compatibility (i.e., program fit with youth interests) of summer programs with high school-aged low-income African American youth interests?
4. What are African American youth, parents, and OST employees' perspectives of the impact of current socioeconomic conditions since COVID-19 on high school-aged low-income African American youth participation in summer programs?

This study sought a deeper understanding of how race and income impact African American youth participation in summer programs. Therefore, it included the use of a qualitative design. Critical Race Theory (CRT) was the guiding theory that informed all aspects of the study,

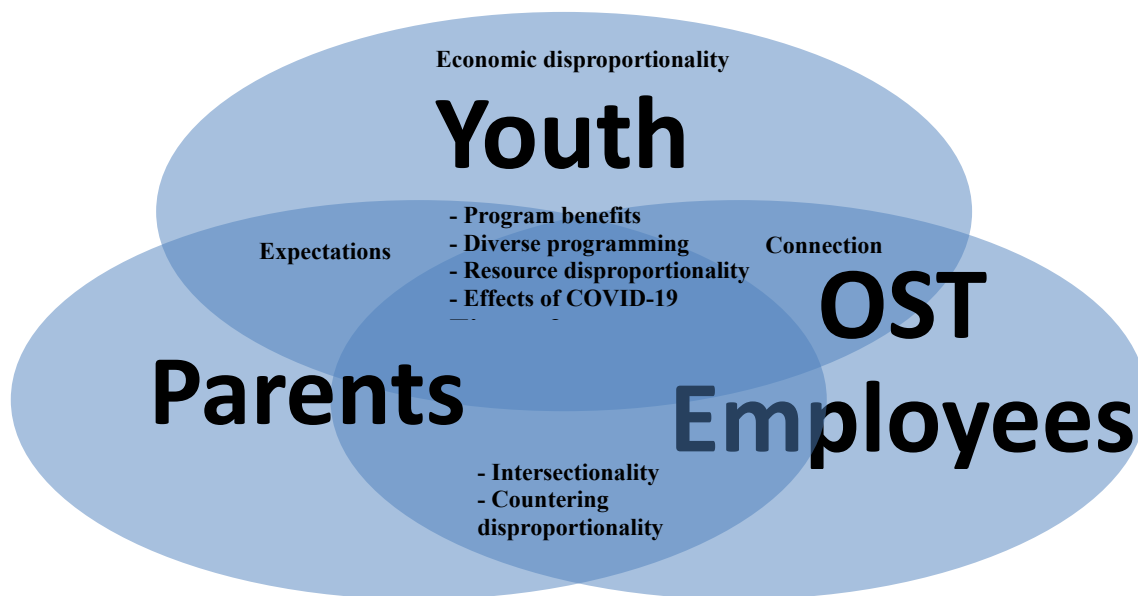
including the development of the research questions, methodology, data collection and analysis, and overall lens of the study. The inclusion of CRT was imperative to centralize the intersectionality of race and income and to provide a critical lens to investigate the issue of summer program participation.

A total of 44 individuals participated in interviews, inclusive of African American OST employees ( $N=20$ ), parents ( $N=13$ ), and youth ( $N=11$ ), using a semi-structured interview protocol via Zoom. All interviews were analyzed using counterstorytelling as a lens to investigate findings and qualitative thematic analysis. Critical race tenets and youth development research guided analysis and presentation of findings.

The following section will present a summary and discussion of the findings. In addition, this chapter will include study limitations, recommendations for further research, and implications for social work. This chapter will conclude with a summary of the final conclusions.

### **Summary of findings**

A total of seven overlapping and individual themes emerged for each subgroup from the data analysis addressing the four research questions about how race and income impact high school-aged African American low-income youth participation in summer programs. Some themes between groups are similar. However, factors informing the coding of themes and perspectives informing theme descriptions differ. Figure 2 displays the overlapping and individual themes across each subgroup.



**Figure 2**

*OST Employees, Parents, and Youths Individual and Overlapping Themes*

There were some similarities and differences in findings. The theme of the intersectionality of race and income included the experiences verbalized by parents and OST employees. Many described how both identities collectively and individually impact youth experiences in summer programs. Comparatively, the theme of economic disproportionality demonstrated how youth perceive and experience the impact of income on their experiences with summer programs. The youth did not explicitly verbalize that race significantly impacted their summer program participation. However, most (91%) youths admitted to participating in programs primarily run and attended by mixed or African American employees and youth. Instead, youth acknowledged a connection to programs that could be linked to the racial makeup of program participants and staff. Related to issues experienced due to racial and economic classification, all three subgroups verbalized experiences that resulted in resource

disproportionality. In addition, parents and OST employees reported the theme of countering disproportionality in response to issues of resource accessibility and availability.

Although the current study did not include PYD theory as a guiding theory, several themes fit within perspectives shared by PYD research. For instance, exploration of how African American youth, parents, and OST employees perceive compatibility (i.e., program fit with youth interests) of summer programs with low-income African American youth interests was captured by all subgroups within themes of program benefits and diverse program offerings. Both themes demonstrated how participants verbalized their own experiences and observations of youth experiences with summer programs and the benefits of participation which is compatible with PYD perspectives. In addition, all participants communicated exposure to and desire for more diverse programming to fit with the varied interests of youth. Parents and youth reported they perceived that parents and OST employees had standard to high expectations of youth, and connection with programs or youth was expressed by youth and OST employees, respectively.

Conducting the study occurred during the onset of the novel coronavirus (i.e., COVID-19). Therefore, it was imperative to examine how African American youth, parents, and OST employees perceive the impact of current socioeconomic conditions since COVID-19 on youth participation in summer programs. The theme, effects of COVID-19 on programming, was expressed by all subgroups as everyone adjusted to and implemented program adaptations, including closures and increased safety precautions.

Based on the study's findings presented in Chapter 4, conclusions are drawn that African American OST employees, parents, and youth acknowledge the impact of racial and economic classification on youth summer program experiences. Participants' perception of the impact of

race and income on their experiences also seemed to play a role in their perception of resource access and availability. Contrastingly, each subgroup supported the claims of PYD perspectives of diverse youth development and the benefits of program participation. Parents' and OST employees' expectations of youth influenced youths' experiences with summer programs. Additionally, providers and youth verbalized how connections between OST providers and youth and youth connections to programs positively impacted their experiences in summer programs. Interestingly, each subgroup verbalized more similarities than differences derived from their positionality and experiences.

## **Discussion**

### **Critical Race Theory: System Level Disproportionality: Needed Assets**

Study findings were consistent with relevant tenets from Critical Race Theory (CRT) and developmental assets literature (Search Institute, 2011). Delgado & Stefancic (2012) emphasize the impact of historic oppression and racism on the experiences of minoritized populations. The historical disadvantages of People of Color are still observable today by the disproportionate outcomes, access to resources, and neighborhoods concentrated with low-income, minoritized communities (Roithmayr, 2014). In addition, centralization of race, intersectionality, and counterstorytelling are fundamental features of CRT. Below, the current study discusses findings concerning CRT tenets.

#### ***Historical Oppressions and Racism***

The impact of historic oppression and racism were expressed as overt and covert features identified by research participants (Delgado & Stefancic, 2012). Some participants' experiences with historic oppression were evident by their expression of changes they observed over time within their community. For example, OST employees who have lived in Athens long enough to

see significant environmental and social changes verbalized their impact on African American individuals and families. Ralph provided a context for which he has observed that adaptations have transpired, disenfranchising previously well-established African American communities and families. He referenced the adverse consequences to African American Athenians related to the development and persistence of gentrification over the past 25 years. He encapsulated the direct impact on multiple families:

So, you had a 99% historically residential community [but] they changed the zoning, the public had no understanding of this... it allowed investors to come in to start sending letters out to [Black] folks and to these grandchildren... parents who granddaddy had the property 50 years, they give em \$30,000 and they buy they little house but what they did was knock the whole house down or remodel and make three or four apartments out of it. The university student, they paying twelve to fifteen hundred dollars a month each person... what that did was displace all of us... So, now what you don't have um the kids now have been displaced to multi-family housing. So, [they] really don't have neighborhoods... you don't have that anymore and it creates all kinds of problems. They don't have big mama living in the house with them that could oversee them. You got single parents who got two or three children in this complex and it's a hundred more people that got the same situation. So... the families have just gotten disintegrated. So, now the need for summer youth programming is even greater but... the question is, is the readiness of the community to respond to it.

Ralph's observations demonstrate gentrification's pervasiveness and its perpetual impact on residents and minoritized individuals (Garcia & Weiss, 2014). From his perspective, gentrification has occurred over the last 25 years. Today, African American families are dealing

with the consequences of being displaced, multi-family housing, and its impact on the availability and accessibility of resources. Many parents did not draw a direct link to historical influences on youth experience; however, it is well known that gentrification has resulted in minoritized communities being pushed out to create opportunities for others (Reardon & Bischoff, 2011). Therefore, when parents such as Danielle explain how residential location impacts the ability of families to access resources, a connection can be drawn back to gentrification:

Race plays a lot because you have to understand where the money is, that's where opportunities are, that's just gonna be the bottom line. No money, no opportunities. Um money get opportunities, I mean that just goes all back to the school zones, you know some schools are better than others because of the area that it's in um unfortunately the areas for us [African American individuals] is always gonna be on the bottom of the pedal, totem pole, on the bottom because of the finances. That's just it, you know, they're not gonna have these productive programs for African Americans because we don't: A. either demand it or we're not in the area that can afford to bring in the better programs. Historical oppression and racism continue to influence the experiences of African Americans. Although individuals may not draw direct connections, the effects of racism throughout history continue to leave many families living and engaging in inequitable conditions.

Youth also did not make apparent claims of historical influences on current OST programmatic circumstances. However, they did verbalize observance of the limited programming availability, particularly in their neighborhoods, and access to age-appropriate activities. Again, John shared his perspective on limited program access, particularly for his age group:

back then [at a younger age]... I think there were some programs that I seen, but like you'll have to get to them pretty quickly... before they like, fill up or whatever... I remember one time I went on the UGA website to look for somethings too and I saw basketball, I saw some robotics, dance, art... all those things. But most of the stuff that I was interested like basketball, or something would be full... I couldn't do it because of an age limit.

Consistent with CRT research, the impact of oppression and racism is not always obvious (Delgado & Stefancic, 2017). Racism within our society is so heavily embedded that it has become a normalized experience for marginalized groups (Roithmayr, 2014). Racism is apparent in how subgroup participants verbalize their experience with different summer programs, the accessibility of programs, and the impact of broader societal shifts and political changes on community resources.

### ***Race and Income***

The influence of characteristics such as race and income on the experiences of youth is a significant aspect of Critical Race Theory (Delgado & Stefancic, 2012). Aligned with tenets of CRT, study findings reveal that race and income collectively and individually impacted the experiences of youth in summer programs. The centralization of race and the intersectionality of oppressive socially constructed identifying categories (e.g., race, class, national origin, etc.) are tenets of CRT (Degaldo & Stefancic, 2012; Solorazano & Yosso, 2002). Specifically, study participants communicated a relationship between race and income independently and intersectionally and the impact on low-income, African American youth participation in summer programs. OST employees and parents shared comparable insights related to their experiences of how race and income impacted youth experiences. Their perspectives included a more

nuanced and interconnected observation of how identifying as African American and socioeconomic status impacted youth experiences. OST employees such as Tracey summarized her observation as race not being the central issue. However, lack of access to resources results from African American families being historically siloed in low-resource communities:

low-income neighborhoods are usually... filled by African Americans and those... neighborhoods are also a lot of times opportunity, information, resources, are not vetted back to... those neighborhoods. So, yes opportunities don't come their way because they just don't know. And it's simple because of the fact that they're low-income and they're in this neighborhood.

Parents, like Francine, verbalized having experiences with resource access and availability and the link to race and income. She underscored how race and income impact access to quality resources for a lot of African American families:

I think that's the biggest thing... instead of looking for quality and looking for the best experience... for our children, we're looking for... what's available and what we can afford which is not always the best... and it's not always giving our children what they need... for development.

For OST employees and parents, multiple identities appear to impact the experiences that low-income African American youth have during the summer. It seems that there is a dual and interrelated role that each identity plays as it relates to youths' experiences in accessing and engaging in summer programs. Contrarily, the youth did not express a link between their summer program experiences and their racial identity. Instead, youths shared feelings of being connected to OST program providers. I observed that most (91%) youth participants verbalized involvement in programs with mixed to predominantly African American participants, which

could impact their overall experience. For example, Ronald shared that “all the programs that I participate... is biracial.” Similarly, multiple youths, such as Isabela, did not verbalize issues with racialized experiences. Her program participation included engaging with same-race youth:

I haven't really had a problem because majority of the things that I do are based around like African American... like a good 90, 95% of all... members are African American youth and with volleyball majority of the team is black.

However, the youth acknowledged income as a separate issue impacting their summer program experiences. Isabela shared how most programs “I'm in are free.” Many of the youth shared how access to scholarships and other financial resources assisted with their ability to participate in programs. For instance, Jocelyne shared that “if I've gone to camp, [it was] on like scholarships.”

Race and income, whether viewed as separate or collective, impacts low-income African American youth summer program experiences. African American families are historically more likely to be economically disadvantaged than other racial groups (Reber, 2010). Due to this incessant connection between race and income, it becomes difficult to examine these identities separately (Garcia & Weiss, 2014). OST employees, parents, and youth all shared responses that support this linkage and its adverse impact on the accessibility to programming and the experiences of low-income African American youth.

### ***Resource Disproportionality***

Garcia and Weiss (2017) support that factors such as racial segregation and socioeconomic group concentration impact the availability of resources within communities. OST programs and schools are situated in environments and consequently either benefit or not from the circumstances in the surrounding environment. All subgroups communicated some

experience with how contextual factors outside of programs contributed to African American youths' experiences within programs. For example, LeAnn (OST employee) communicated that factors linked to socioeconomic status impact youth summer program involvement:

I think finances [are an issue] but I also think other barriers that... because sometimes people are like oh you can get a scholarship here and our county is really good about that... but their circumstances that are related to... a low SES family... And so, it could be related to transportation. Transportation... could be related to work schedule... it could be related to other um sibling or family responsibilities.

Parents such as Queen agreed with LeAnn's point of barriers linked to socioeconomic status and communities where people live. She expressed how access to programming is disproportionate and unequal because of the neighborhoods children grow up in:

it should be equal... all the way across. Because I don't live in a neighborhood that would get more... you giving that to just that set of people, it has hurt a lot on the community. Cause a lot of the different kids have suffered because I may not have grew up in this area, but I lack... a lot just as much as... this child may have. So, I wish that across the board, it would really allow more programs to allow all kids and not just one set or this set. Like, it would be nice to have a program out there for the youth that didn't cater so much of the finances or the um what you have versus what this person has. I feel like by doing that not only do it have adults divided it has kids divided.

Youth also highlighted how neighborhood assets, or lack thereof, impact the availability of OST programming. Jocelyn shared how living in specific neighborhoods in Athens impacts the availability and accessibility of resources:

over on the Eastside there's not really a lot of stuff. I noticed all the places I've gone for camp, and everything always ended up being on the Westside on the Eastside there's not a lot over here. Even though we have a couple schools and stuff there's not a lot of stuff on the Eastside for kids. There's not a lot of stuff for teenagers to go either like places there aren't anything.

A connection between economic and racial identification and neighborhood capacity is clear. Policy shifts over time and neighborhood economic and racial concentration have influenced the community assets within families' neighborhoods (Bifulco et al., 2009; Reardon & Bischoff, 2011). Leaving some families to have more or less access depending on their zip code and school zone. Participants in the current study underscore how their experiences with summer program access in their neighborhoods demonstrate the accuracy of the above claims.

### ***Countering Disproportionality***

Counterstorytelling is a recommended method of CRT to emphasize and highlight the perspectives of marginalized groups (Horsford, 2010). In the current study, including only African American participants provided space for centralizing their perspectives. More specifically, many participants from the current study shared insights regarding OST options to counter the disproportionality of limited program access, availability, and resources within communities. OST employees and parents shared suggestions for improving youth participation in summer programs. OST providers such as Tiffany focused on meeting the needs of parents and youth by identifying what families lack and meeting them where they are:

I think we need to meet the families where they are. Um I know me individually, that's what I try to do but I don't know if county wide if that's the approach that's being taken... if we know that we have parents that are working from 6:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m.

every day, how do we provide information to those parents? How do we allow those parents to know... what resources we have available and that their kids don't necessarily have to be at home by themselves all summer?

Parents such as Abbie agreed that OST employees should make a personal connection with parents to get the information into the hands of parents:

you really gotta put your... boots on the ground and actually get out and engage and... make people aware of what's available and... because if you don't know it's available then some people are not gonna seek it out... a lot of people just don't know.

Neighborhood disproportionality results in the availability of economic, programmatic, and educational resources within communities (Garcia & Weiss, 2017; Ladd, 2012). OST employees and parents have provided recommendations to address the existing disproportionality that has continued to exacerbate.

### **Positive Youth Development Perspective: Existing Assets**

Shifts in youth development research has resulted in viewing youth from a deficit perspective to one of empowerment, strength-based, and from the perspective of the need for and existence of internal and external assets (Search Institute, 2011; Shek et al., 2019). The current study excluded PYD as a theoretical framework; however, the significance of this perspective on current youth programming is apparent. OST employees, parents, and youth verbalized numerous themes that align with PYD: Overall program experiences, program benefits, desire for diverse program offerings to support youth development, perceptions of youth, and connections between OST providers and youth.

### ***Program Benefits***

Research on youth participation in OST programs and the benefits gained is mixed. Some reported benefits include independence, perseverance, willingness to try new things, self-identity, and appreciation for differences (Warner et al., 2021). Similar to research, participants reported various benefits from participation in summer programs. PYD research provides a perspective of extending OST program offerings beyond play to include more enrichment and developmental opportunities for youth (Shek et al., 2019). Results from the current study provide additional support to the reported program benefits that youth receive. All subgroups provided details about the benefits of summer programs for youth. Although reported benefits include factors such as “it gives people something to do” as Deon (youth participant) stated, benefits appear to extend beyond occupying youth’s time. According to Brandon (OST employee), programs are holistically beneficial: “participating in summer programs gives them [youth] something to do that is constructive, that helps them build skills” such as “social skills, that helps them stay out of trouble.”

Parents provided similar feedback by highlighting their experiences with their children participating in summer programs. Most parents ( $n=12$ , 92%) agreed that their child(ren) benefited from summer program participation. For example, Isis recognizes the range of program benefits and underscores related outcomes:

[participation in programs] supports their [youth] social-emotional as well as their academic or athletic need... because it allows them to build relationships, build connections... and integrate content into their life and see how it... can be used to make them successful.

Although parents described a range of program benefits, they emphasized the benefit of socialization and the development of social skills. Monique summarized her experience as one that emphasizes the wealth of activities youth experience and the skills learned through participation:

[youth benefit by receiving] good social skills and just awareness like when they go on field trips sometimes... they're mostly fun but sometimes they learning as well. They go to the Aquarium, they went to the Coca Cola factory and then they do different activities um they do plays and little stuff like that so um as far as it being a good benefit with them socialably, yes, and good learning stuff, good learning skills.

Parents and OST employees recognize the overall outcomes youth gain from participating in programs.

The youth also verbalized receipt of multiple benefits from participation in summer programs. From occupying their time to increased socialization and skill development, youth report that their experience engaging in programs has been positive. For example, Mary shared the abundance of benefits she received from participation in programs when she was younger:

I've definitely learned a lot from being in summer camps... we did have like a few different learning opportunities, they had a lot of guest speakers come... they had a few people... tell us about their books and... a lot of people have come and sat with us and talked with us.

I've learned that OST employees, parents, and youth acknowledge the benefits of summer programs. However, all groups agree that summer program availability is limited for teenagers. The next section will include participant recommendations for the type of diverse programming to offer to increase youth participation in summer programs.

### *Diverse Program Offerings*

Research reveals that the program desires of older youth differ from younger youth (Lewalter et al., 2021). Greene et al. (2013) emphasized that adolescent participation rates increased when programs provided adolescents with activities focused on learning new skills, college, and jobs. Older youth also show a greater propensity for programs that include leadership opportunities and are community-based (Deschenes et al., 2010). Similarly, programs that provide work experience or compensation may be more apt to attract low-income youth (Lauver et al., 2004). All subgroups offered some insight and agreement with the above research by suggesting diverse program offerings. All OST employees ( $N=20$ , 100%) reported that youth could benefit from a range of activities, especially in areas of skill development. According to Ashley, many adults overlook teenage programming because there is a perception that teens do not need programming; instead, they desire to work. Her suggestion is to build employability skill development and job opportunities into available programming:

I think the population of children we are missing; we think when teenagers become of a certain age they don't need programs such as that because when they're 15 they're trying to find some jobs and that, that is true, you know, most of us are eager to try to get our first job but also, I think we need to focus on if we do camp programs because this summer camps offer... encourage them to work and have some type of, build employability skills, tie that in.

Several providers shared similar perspectives suggesting that skill development is essential to programming that youth desire and as a component of existing programming.

Parents shared a similar perspective about the diversity of opportunities that could benefit youth. All parents ( $N=13$ ) agreed that the programming offered for youth should fit the desires

and needs of the youth. Phoebe emphasized this point by suggesting that whether youth desire activities that focus on STEM or athletics, programs should engage youth to develop opportunities that fit their interests:

letting them [youth]... deciding what will be there. Whether it was a um place to learn your skills as far as athletes are concerned or whatever it is that child could do or wanna do. Even if that child is not physical but they have more of a brain working power, having some STEM type things.

Francine agreed that programs should focus on providing developmental opportunities to help youth hone their interest for future success:

I would like them [children] to be in a program... to where it would help them find out what their nitch is. Like, what desires do they have far as... what their careers gonna be... I think a lot of times children miss out on that if parents aren't giving it to them.

It is important to parents that real-life opportunities are offered for youth to explore their interests and identify future career opportunities.

All youth participants ( $N=11$ ) also expressed a desire for diverse programming, including skill development, career exploration, and leadership. Deon summarized the perspective shared by youth by advocating for career planning, skill building, and developmental opportunities, especially considering that not everyone will attend college:

career planning... skill building,... and just public speech... I struggle with eye contact and um getting my words out when I'm talking, right. So, um public speech is a huge thing because you gotta be able to talk to... people... no matter whatever you do, you gonna have to um communicate... [Also,] [c]ollege isn't for everyone. I feel that you don't have to go to college to be necessarily successful cause there are so many...

different um definitions on what successful is, success is, it varies from person to person. So, I feel that um people that are leaning towards going to a trade or something, they need to start building those skills in that industry, whatever gonna make them stand out in that industry so that they can be successful one day... and just more like some academic support. Cause, I mean, in school, in Clarke County I feel like if you show up, you will pass.

Findings received from all subgroups coincide with available research on the type of OST programming that would benefit older youth.

### ***Standard to High Expectations***

An optimistic strength-based perspective derived from PYD research and current perspectives on youth development (Shek et al., 2019) was apparent from the expectations that parents and youth reported that parents and OST employees have of youth. Most parents ( $n=12$ , 92%) verbalized understanding the importance of being present and involved in their children's programs, especially to avoid having their children stereotyped. Danielle (parent participant) emphasized this point by sharing that her presence in programs resulted in her kids not being adversely categorized:

if they don't see a parent of some sort engaging that child will be lumped with the other 15 over here as you know that's how I feel if you don't make your presence known that yea I know it's whole bunch of kids with a whole lot of different backgrounds in this typically program or space or whatever the situation may be but just know this one here is cut from a different type cloth that I don't want you to categorize her as cause it's not what I want her to know.

All youth participants ( $N=11$ ) stated that OST employees and parents expected them to do well. Jackie shared how OST providers wanted her and others to do well, get along with one another, and participate in programming: “[OST employees] was good people. They all wanted to see us do well... They made sure we got along. They made sure we did activities... they was really good they pushed you to do better and good things.” She also stated that her mother “pushed me to do better.” The expectations communicated by parents and youth are aligned with the current perspectives of youth development, viewing youth from a positive perspective, and seeing their current age as an opportunity for positive development.

### ***Connections Between OST Providers and Youth***

One component of PYD is a connection that consists of a bidirectional relationship and a positive mutual bond with people and institutions (Lerner, Lerner, et al., 2005). Findings from the current study reported by OST employees and youth support the significance of connection in developmental programs. Most of the OST employees ( $n=18$ , 90%) interviewed emphasized the development of connection through their view of youth abilities and the efforts to support their interests, strategies to engage youth, and the creating space where youth feel accepted. OST employees such as Larry stressed that “we build our program off our relationships,” and he discussed how the representation of employees and youth are compatible:

most of our students actually are African American um but I think part of it is that [is]... we are so much more intentional with our recruiting African American, Hispanic coaches that helps when we go to the high schools, and we talk with students that they see someone who looks like them who’s actually in school or in a certain job.

Most youth ( $n=10$ , 91%) also reported a connection with programs through a level of racial representation that seems both subconsciously and consciously significant for various youths.

John shared how African American youth may feel unwelcome in settings that have little to no African American racial representation:

[if] most programs would probably have more light-colored people... the African Americans might not feel welcomed or not wanting to go because it's like too many, they would feel like there's too many of them people and there's one me or something like that.

Youth such as Lauren verbalized, "I've never been like racially discriminated against or anything like that. I've been good." Her limited encounters with racial discrimination could be partly due to most youth, including Mary, reporting that the programs they attended included "mostly African American" participants. OST employees verbalized intentional effort to engage employees and youth of similar racial backgrounds. Their efforts helped to shelter youth from adverse racial experiences and create opportunities for youth to engage in welcoming settings.

### **Effects of COVID-19 on Summer Programming: Needed Assets**

The impact of COVID-19 on youth development is still unfolding. Mandated and recommended safety precautions by the local, state, and federal governments have continuously evolved and fluctuated. In turn, decisions have resulted in OST programs responding by adapting and adjusting programming as the circumstances of COVID-19 continue to change. In addition, funding has varied with legislation such as the American Rescue Plan allocating funds to support summer enrichment, learning recovery, and childcare (Afterschool Alliance, n.d.). However, although additional funding was available during this study, the effects of COVID-19 on grassroots and established programming were significant.

Participants from all subgroups in the current study reported that they experienced program closures, adaptations to program modality, or increased safety precautions within

programming. More specifically, all OST employee participants ( $N=20$ , 100%) verbalized adjusting to programming in response to COVID-19. OST employees such as Joshua admitted, “a grassroots organization that wants to make an impact, they gone find a way.” Other providers shared his sentiments. However, not all programs could commit to remaining open or had to implement strategies to decrease enrollment and increase social distancing. Ashley shared her experience with COVID-19 and the provision of programs during a more restrictive time:

[we] just weren't able to serve as many children so you know they had to do social distancing and spacing and safety and that meant they couldn't accept as many children during the summer which meant many kids didn't have a camp program to attend that normally do, that normally isn't an issue.

Many OST providers recognized the difficulty of program closures and adaptations on families. LeAnn summarized this point by sharing the challenge of parental responsibility to continue to work without having the support of programs to provide positive outlets for their children:

I think that... some programs... at like Leisure Service... had to adjust... [however] you have families that still have to work. And so, at some point you have to decide will you... just stay home instead of going to... the Y or using the scholarship, we don't know exactly when things are gonna be happening or if in fact if there's only a certain amount of people that can come, you will stay home with cousin so and so.

No aspect of our society has been unaffected by COVID-19. OST programs and families adjusting to changing societal circumstances is just one aspect of the wide range of consequences.

Parents also shared experiences relating to the impact of COVID-19 on families. Most parent participants ( $n=11$ , 85%) agreed that COVID-19 significantly impacted them and their

children's program participation. Francine agreed that COVID-19 had a great impact on the availability of summer programs:

all programs were greatly impacted, actually... because of COVID you can't really group anymore um you gotta make sure you have the six feet, you gotta have you mask, you can't be um touching, playing... that kind of thing. So, COVID kinda restricted all of that stuff.

Leah also shared how COVID-19 and parents being out of work impacted program involvement and increased responsibility of youth:

there are parents who are out of work or... their work has been reduced and some... got to work to help make ends meets or some of these can't be in these programs because they got to stay home and take care of they siblings or they may have a parent at home that's sick cause they couldn't afford daycare.

Parents also felt the impact of program closures but additionally the effects of COVID-19 on larger aspects of their everyday life.

All youth ( $N=11$ ) shared some insight into their experience with how COVID-19 impacted their summer program experiences. Chante confirmed that the programs "had to be canceled because of COVID, so kids had to stay home." Deon acknowledged the adverse effect of program cancelations on youth. He stressed the benefits of program participation by agreeing that some youth who engage in OST programming use the positive settings as an escape from their home situations:

with social distancing you can't really be around um too many people, they don't want you to form too big of groups.... School was an outlet for a lot of people to like get away from their real life problems... and it [school] isn't as effective with distance learning but

when you're in person I feel that you learn more, it's more effective, because at the end of the day they're gonna push the content out to you and if you actually take the time to go over it and study it that's 100% on you.

From Jocelyne's perspective, which other OST employees share, is that OST programs could have done a better job of adjusting:

I feel like places could have done a little bit better like some of my favorite clubs which I kind of miss cause I missed having Bee Club meetings and for a while we really did not go in-person at all and then we just started doing a slight in-person thing cause I think when school goes back we might start doing a in-person meeting once a month in the library but I think that's it.

The unexpected onset and impact of COVID-19 and the immediate need to adjust have resulted in complexity for many youth, families, and OST employees. As the safety requirements in response to COVID-19 continue to change, providers and families must make similar adjustments. The effects of the current circumstances on youth development are largely still unknown. The findings from this study provide some initial insight into the circumstances and experiences of the study participants included in the current study.

OST employees, parents, and youth participants reported similar themes predicated upon their perspectives and experiences. Approximately half of the themes reported by the study participants related to tenets of CRT, including historic oppression and racism and the impacts on current communities and resources, the centrality of race and the intersection of income, and the necessity of counterstorytelling to highlight the perspectives of marginalized groups. In addition, various subgroups shared a PYD perspective on program benefits, connections between youth and providers, and the perspective of youth abilities through the expectations communicated by

parents and OST employees. Lastly, the novel coronavirus (COVID-19) and its impact on OST programs continue to unfold. All subgroups reported experiencing program closures and adaptations in response to COVID-19. Programs that generally serve as an outlet for youth underwent significant adjustments, and the impacts of those changes on youth development are still unknown.

### **Conclusions**

From the study themes and above discussion, four primary conclusions highlighting the existing and needed assets to support youth development were drawn: (1) The perceived role race plays on the experiences of African American youth varies by subgroup, (2) Income plays a significant role in the experiences of African American youth, (3) Teenage programming is limited, and Resources for African American youth are sparse, and (4) Positive Youth Development (PYD) is a significant aspect of OST programming today. A discussion of the conclusions, suggestions for further research, and implications for social work practitioners will follow.

#### **Perceived Role of Race on African American Youth Experiences**

CRT scholarship emphasizes the significance of race on the experiences of racially marginalized groups (Delgado & Stefancic, 2012). Every day and normalized experience of racism that People of Color endure emphasizes the significance of race (Roithmayr, 2014). For the current study, how OST employees, parents, and youth communicated the experience or observation of African American youth's experiences with race in summer programs varied. OST employees and parent participants shared similar expressions of race as a significant influence on African American youth's experiences, especially regarding accessibility and programming availability.

Dissimilar to OST employees and parents, the youth did not outright verbalize their race adversely impacted their experiences. However, from the expressions of OST employees and parents, they intentionally sought to include racial representation among staff and, for parents, to involve youth in racially representative programs. A link between the intentionality of recruitment and involvement by OST employees and parents and youth participation in programs that mainly included mixed or African American participants is clear. Findings allude to the need to examine how youth conceptualize race and perceive their experiences therein. Perhaps this youth group's perspective was influenced by the high concentration of African American youth involved in their programs. Therefore, it would be interesting to explore how engaging in predominantly African American settings contributes to the potential of counteracting racist experiences.

### **The Role of Income on African American Youth Experiences**

OST employees and parents verbalized a more holistic observation of the role of race and income on African American youths' experiences. Similar to CRT research, they often observed how the intersectionality of both categories impacted youths' experiences. CRT scholars stress how the combination of oppressive categories plays out in various settings, and singular identities (i.e., race, income, gender, etc.) alone do not define the experiences of People of Color (Stefancic & Delgado, 2012). Parents and OST employees shared that the combination of different forms of oppression played a significant role in youth experiences. Particularly, they identified how People of Color being siloed in different parts of the community contributes to resource accessibility and availability. They acknowledged a shift in community resources, and programs identified factors such as gentrification and the impact on families of color. The historical racism and how it has disenfranchised African Americans and their communities is

apparent (Roithmayr, 2014). Parents and OST employees explicitly communicate how their experiences demonstrate this point.

Youth also agreed that income significantly influences their experiences engaging in summer programs. They frequently referenced receiving scholarships, enrollment in free programming, or how limited financial resources contributed to their inability to participate in programs. Youth consistently affirmed that they received a range of benefits from program participation. However, the inability to afford programming or financial support may adversely contribute to youth participation. Therefore, knowing that program affordability contributes to program participation, identifying strategies to increase collaboration and make programs more financially accessible is imperative.

### **Limited Teenage Programming and Resources**

Research demonstrates that adolescents have interests in programs that differ from younger youth. In addition, programs that involve skill development and learning about college and jobs reportedly appeal to older youth (Greene et al., 2013). The outcomes from the multi-perspective interviews completed in the current study support these findings. Many OST employees, parents, and youth reported the desire for programs to focus on life skill development, future planning, and exploration of options following high school, such as four-year and technical college and career opportunities. In addition, centralizing youth perspectives to identify what programs appeal to their interests was a consistent comment across groups. Engaging youth by involving them in developing and implementing programming could influence outcomes related to youth participation.

Although participants verbalized that youth programs and participation were greater during younger years, they acknowledged that youth age out of programming when they become

teenagers. Participants confirmed that program options for youth (i.e., teenagers) were limited to non-existent. Many youth participants verbalized they last participated in a formalized summer program before adolescence. Youth expressed that they were currently working or interested in career or developmental opportunities that would help them prepare for life after high school. Programs would benefit from including activities that help support the continued development of youth and incorporate their current interests into programming.

### **Positive Youth Development and OST Programming**

The positive view of youth and the view of them from a strength-based perspective has been a shift in youth research over the past several decades (Shek et al., 2019). Youth are considered resources for development, and their well-being and ability to thrive are significant to their development (Lerner et al., 2005). A PYD perspective was present throughout the findings in the current study. All subgroups verbalized the view of youth and their abilities from a positive perspective while recognizing the potential barriers that could interfere with their ability to thrive and recognize their full potential.

All participant subgroups verbalized the need for diverse programming to appeal to the varied interests of youth to aid in youth development. Participants did not suggest that programs should offer one type of programming. Suggestions ranged from academic, sports, and vocational programming to arts, music, and life skill development. One crucial aspect of the suggestions included emphasizing the centralization of youth voice to inform and develop programming. Therefore, moving towards more youth inclusivity in the development and administration of programming could assist in the innovation of programming, youth involvement, and fit of programming with youth interests.

### Study Limitations

It is essential to acknowledge the limitations of the current study. Every study has limitations and being transparent about study limitations is crucial. Lower-income groups' experiences were inconclusive because parent and youth data from the current study could not be linked. It would benefit the research community if future studies focused on linking outcomes between groups to connect conclusions drawn. Additionally, overall, the sample consisted of 44 interview participants. However, of the participants, the parent ( $N=13$ ) and youth ( $N=11$ ) groups were smaller compared to the OST employee ( $N=20$ ) group. Generally, sample size varies for qualitative research that has included counterstorytelling as a method to conduct education research (Horsford, 2010; Solorzano, 1998). However, the sample in the current study falls on the higher end of the range. It also includes a comprehensive perspective by focusing on multi-perspective interviews among African American OST employees, parents, and youth.

The sample in the current study consisted of individuals from one of the public high schools in Athens. Including participants from other high schools to confirm the experiences of youth across school settings is warranted. Furthermore, conducting online interviews limited my ability to engage with participants in-person. Therefore, collaborating with community partners was essential to help virtually gain access to the local community (Salmons, 2012). Working closely with my community advisory committee provided immense support to connect with additional OST employees, parents, and youth in the current study.

Three of the seven individuals on my community advisory committee also participated in the study as participants. According to Halladay et al. (2017) and Strauss et al. (2001), the role of the community advisor and the participant should be separate to avoid potential skewing of the data. Mugenyi et al. (2021) completed a study that included all community advisory board

members as participants and did not reference biasing or skewing of data. Similarly, the perspectives of the committee members included in the current study resembled those of the 17 other OST employees interviewed, and responses were indistinguishable. Therefore, concerns related to data skewing were unfounded in the current study.

The number of females compared to male participants is significantly higher. Every effort was made to collaborate with local sports teams, predominantly male-serving organizations, requesting spouses or male significant others to participate, specifically requesting male participant referrals. However, my efforts did not result in additional male recruitment. Identifying additional recruitment and sampling techniques that could increase the inclusion of males would enhance future studies. Even with the limitations mentioned above, the results of the current study add value to the research and general community by providing a multi-perspective account of low-income African American youths' participation in summer programs.

### **Recommendations for Further Research**

The current study findings give further insight into how a diverse group of African American participants views the role of race and income on the experiences of high school-aged low-income African Americans in summer programs. Study findings expand OST research by examining high school-age youth experiences specifically with summer programs from a multi-participant perspective. In addition, the inclusion of CRT to examine summer programs further expands the use of theoretical frameworks in OST settings. Lastly, the current study contributes to the literature by including the use of counterstorytelling as a data collection method and provides an example of the use of CRT as a methodology.

The themes that surfaced between groups in the current study were similar but varied by the perspective and positionality of the specific subgroup. However, my reach was limited by

the relationships, amount of time, and resources I possessed to conduct the current study. Therefore, I suggest that future researchers consider the development of a research team. Also, it would be beneficial to expand financial resources to increase the sample size and inclusion of participants from other public schools in future studies.

Critical race theory emphasizes that people with multiple oppressive identities can work together or separately to disadvantage individuals (Stefancic & Delgado, 2017). Racial identity and connections with others who identify similarly was a linked experience among the participants in the current study. Additionally, socioeconomic status and the availability and accessibility of resources influenced the experiences of low-income African American youth. Since the concept of identity is much more expansive and inclusive of other characteristics such as gender, sex, and national origin, among others, future research would benefit from exploring different aspects of identity (i.e., gender identity, etc.) and the potential influence on summer program participation.

When conducting research, it is critical to consider the best strategies and methods to strengthen the study. One feature specific to qualitative research is the necessity to add depth to the study methodology by including multiple forms of data collection (Acocella, 2012). The current study included collecting field notes, journaling, and in-depth individual interviews. Another feature that could help strengthen future studies would include focus group interviews. One benefit of focus groups is the ability to observe a large amount of interaction in a limited time and to directly observe similarities and differences in participants' experiences and opinions (Acocella, 2012).

Positive Youth Development was not a guiding theoretical framework in the current study. However, participant perspectives closely align with the shift in research that views

adolescence as an opportunity for increased development of youths' internal and external assets (Search Institute, 2011; Shek et al., 2019). To further investigate the impact and permeation of such perspectives, one suggestion is to increase the inclusion of multiple theories to examine youth developmental opportunities (i.e., OST programs). Including perspectives such as the 5 C's of PYD could help to add insight into factors impacting youth participation. Connection was a significant outcome in the current study and it would be worthwhile to explore how other features of PYD influence youth participation and experiences in summer programs. Such practices could add depth and strength to further studies by expanding upon critical research guided by multiple theories to understand better the complexity of engaging youth in supplemental opportunities.

Participants frequently reported experiencing limited access to information about summer programs throughout the individual interviews. Therefore, I propose that future studies exploring information communication and the impact on participation in summer programs could be valuable, particularly for low-income minoritized communities. As a suggestion, Diffusion of Innovations may be a relevant theory when examining the communication of information about OST programs/activities. Diffusion of Innovations can be used when exploring a specific innovation (i.e., activity, technology, program, etc.) introduced in OST settings. Diffusion of Innovations provides a comprehensive framework for understanding change and adopting new ideas (Schleien & Miller, 2010). Diffusion of Innovations is one approach that evaluates the process as innovative programs, policies, products, or methods are introduced and adopted by consumers (e.g., the introduction of the internet; Rogers, 2003). However, adopting innovations is not isolated from the social, societal, or systemic influences where innovations operate. Therefore, future studies would benefit from including a comprehensive theoretical approach to

examine how communication of information about summer programs impacts adoption or rejection.

### **Implications for Social Work**

#### **Anticipated and Desired Change**

The positive effects of OST programs are well-documented (Durlak, Weissberg, & Pachan, 2010; Fredricks & Eccles, 2008; Lauer et al., 2006). However, the participation rates across all groups of adolescents are low (Gardner et al., 2009). Therefore, identifying reasons for non-participation and strategies to increase youth retention is paramount. Below, the anticipated and desired changes from the completion of the current study are outlined.

Results from the current study can be used to further advocate for inclusive practices among OST programs (Gardner et al., 2009). In addition, results can assist in developing strategies to improve youth retention and recruitment. Programs must consider the perspectives of multiple stakeholders who engage with OST programs at various levels (Mahoney et al., 2009). Therefore, obtaining multi-perspectives of African Americans provides a more holistic account of factors impacting youth participation. Furthermore, community member participation creates opportunities for collaborative relationships and the possibility of collective action to alleviate barriers to participation (Bandy & Moore, 2009).

Implications for the present study extend beyond the impact on the individual. Findings could assist students and their families by identifying reasons interfering with access and participation in OST programs (Gillard & Witt, 2008). In addition, schools can benefit by using results to inform practitioners of strategies to encourage student engagement in OST settings (Lauer et al., 2004). Moreover, a collaborative approach to support student participation is

encouraged. Anticipated changes will occur over time, and the current study will catalyze identifying underrepresented factors impacting non-participation in OST programs.

### **Possibilities for Social Work Practitioners**

Social work practitioners have a significant role in minoritized communities. Their role is tied to their relationship with minoritized youth, their families, and local communities (Lauver et al., 2004). They must be prepared to support all stakeholders and challenge others when met with resistance throughout the change process (Solorzano & Yosso, 2002). Practitioners should actively participate in the change process and act as a resource for those in the community by consistently engaging with families and community members (Gillard & Witt, 2008; Lauver et al., 2004).

Practitioners are essential to change and collaborative relationships between communities and programs. They often serve as a crucial link between the student, their families, and potential collaborators (Farrell et al., 2019). In addition, they support minoritized youth and their families through provision, linkage, and education about available resources (Lauver et al., 2004). It will be necessary for practitioners to assume an active role in educating youth and their families about summer program opportunities and to be active listeners to their needs and desired programming.

Collective advocacy with the community at the center will be necessary. Practitioners are tasked with educating constituents and developing advocacy strategies to push legislators to understand the significance of OST Programs and the need for additional policies and funding (Lauver et al., 2004; Sawhill & McLanahan, 2006). Furthermore, education systems have historically operated in ways that have perpetuated and seemingly accepted the perception that minoritized students are educationally inept (Howard, 2010). Practitioners must be prepared to

support OST staff as new insights on the role of racism develop and to stand firm in advocacy when met with resistance (Solorzano & Yosso, 2002).

The role of practitioners stretches across multiple systems. Since practitioners are on the front lines, they are directly connected to and are responsible for actively engaging community participants (Lauver et al., 2004). Practitioners should be active in the change process and prepared for opposition (Lauver et al., 2004; Solorzano & Yosso, 2002). Practitioners must be prepared to provide multilayered support when necessary.

### **Final Conclusions**

The availability of OST programs to supplement formal education has undergone significant shifts regarding the underlying view of and reasons programs engage youth (Howard, 2010; Shek et al., 2019). Programs were created in the 19<sup>th</sup> century and purposely blocked African American youth from inclusion and participation (Halpern, 2002). The remnants of this exclusionary practice and those in the larger society continue to impact the availability and accessibility of programming to low-income African American youth today. African American OST employees, parents, and youth expressed concerns about how their race and income impact their summer program experiences. In addition, the intersectionality of race and income has siloed low-income African American youth into low-resource communities and created a separation of families by race and income. Youth should have equitable and equal access to programs to take advantage of the various content areas provided. Youth should not be excluded from program participation due to limited accessibility and resource availability because of the circumstances they are born into, their racial identification, or their economic status.

African American OST employees, parents, and youth participants in the current study acknowledge the impact of race and income on youth experiences in summer programs, the

limited availability and accessibility of youth programming, and that Positive Youth Development (PYD) is a common perspective that youth experience in programming. Although participants verbalized several positive experiences and benefits, most of the programs discussed included mostly mixed and African American participants and providers. Intentionality to recruit employees and youth that share similar racial identities has a positive impact on the experiences of youth. As such, race is a significant factor impacting the experiences of African American youth. Therefore, consistent with CRT research, examining race remains a significant and necessary aspect of conducting research, especially for minoritized groups.

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## Appendix A

### Recruitment Materials

IRB: PROJECT00002475 | Date approved: 9/9/2020 |  
Expiration date: 9/9/2025

**If you identify as African American and are in high school or have at least one child you are raising in high school, this study may be for you.**

#### **Study for African American high school students or adults with a student in high school**

We're looking for individuals in high school or parents/guardians/primary caregivers of youth who have an opinion about summer programs.

Participants must have access to a smart phone, computer, or tablet with a camera, microphone, and internet.

Summer programs have a positive impact on youth in various areas but participation is low. This research seeks to discover how race and income may impact youth participation in programs.

Participants will be asked to participate in:

- Complete a 10-15 minute demographic questionnaire
- One 60-90 minute individual interview
- Provide additional feedback related to outcomes



**All interviews will be held via Zoom in Athens, Georgia**

- **Enrolled in High School**
- **18 years or older with a student in high school**
- **Identify as African American**

**If you're unsure if you meet the requirements, call or email a member of the study team:**



**Megan Lee**  
**Mw19394@uga.edu**  
**567-868-4083**

## Appendix B

### Interview Protocols

#### Questions for OST employees

1. In general, tell me what your experience has been like with low-income, African American youth participating in summer programs.
2. If you could create a summer program for low-income African American kids, what would it include?
  - How would you say the organization you work for compares to the above program?
3. What is your perception about your organizations provision of activities geared toward youth interests?
4. What efforts, if any, has your organization taken to recruit and retain low-income, African American youth?
5. What is your perception of the benefits, if any, generated from youth participating in summer programs?
6. What have you observed are some of the challenges, if any, with low-income, African American youth attending OST programs?
7. What changes, if any, have you observed about summer programs in the neighborhoods you serve?
8. What is your perception about whether your organization provides a space where low-income, African American youth may feel accepted?
9. What is your perception about the abilities of the children you serve?
10. What is your perspective about what role income plays in the opportunities youth experience during the summer?
11. What is your perspective about what role identifying as an African American plays in the opportunities youth experience during the summer?
12. What suggestions, if any, do you have to increase youth participation in summer programs?
13. In what ways have OST programs offered in your community been impacted by the current socio-economic conditions?
14. What efforts, if any, has your organization taken to provide alternative program options for youth?
15. What supports, if any, has your program provided to assist with the educational needs of youth at home?
16. What suggestions do you have for alternative OST program options that might be helpful to meet the needs of youth?

### Questions for parents

1. In general, tell me what your experience has been like with summer programs.
2. If you could create a summer program for kids like yours, what would it include?
  - How would you say programs your child has attended compares to the above program?
3. What type of OST activities would you like your child to participate in?
  - If the mentioned activities were available, would your child be able to participate?
4. What is your perception of the benefits, if any, of your child participating in summer programs?
5. What are some challenges, if any, you have experienced with your child consistently attending summer programs?
6. What 'spaces' in your neighborhood are available during the summer for your child to go where they may feel accepted?
7. What is your perspective about expectations that summer program staff have of your child?
8. What is your perception about your child's abilities?
9. What impact, if any, does cost have on your child's ability to participate in summer programs?
10. What is your perspective about what role identifying as African American play in the opportunities your child experiences during the summer?
11. What suggestions, if any, do you have to increase youth participation in summer programs?
12. In what ways have OST programs offered in your community been impacted by the current socio-economic conditions?
13. What efforts, if any, have OST programs taken to provide alternative program options?
14. What alternative OST program options might be helpful to meet your child's current needs?

### **Questions for Youth**

1. In general, tell me what your experience has been like with summer programs.
2. If you could create a summer program for kids like you, what would it include?
  - How would you say programs you've attended compare to the above program?
3. What type of OST activities interest or would interest you?
  - If the mentioned activities were available in your community, would you participate?
4. What is your perception of the benefits, if any, of participating in summer programs?
5. What are some challenges, if any, you have experienced with consistently attending summer programs?
6. What changes, if any, have you observed about summer programs in your neighborhood?
7. What 'spaces' in your neighborhood are available during summer for you to go where you feel accepted?
8. What is your perspective about expectations that summer program staff have of you?
9. What is your perspective about expectations that your parent/guardian have of you?
10. What impact, if any, does cost have on your ability to participate in summer programs?
11. What is your perspective about what role identifying as an African American play in the opportunities you experience during the summer?
12. What suggestions, if any, do you have to increase African American youth participation in summer programs?
13. In what ways have OST programs offered in your community been impacted by the current socio-economic conditions?
14. What efforts, if any, have OST programs taken to provide alternative program options?
15. When school is out, what alternative OST program options might be helpful to meet your needs?

## Appendix C

### Consent Forms

# OST Employee Demographic Questionnaire Consent

My name is Megan Lee and I am a graduate student in the School of Social Work at the University of Georgia under the supervision of Dr. June Hopps. I am asking you to take part in a research study. Before you decide to participate in this study, it is important that you understand why the research is being done and what it will involve. This form is designed to give you the information about the study so you can decide whether to be in the study or not. Please take the time to read the following information carefully and ask me if there is anything that is unclear or if you need more information.

This study aims to explore the role of race and income on African American youth participation in summer programs. In order to participate in the study individuals must identify as African American and manage or work at an OST program that provides services before or after school or during the summer.

If you agree to participate, you will be asked to:

- Participate in a 15-20 minute demographic questionnaire.
- Participate in an individual interview which is expected to last 90 to 120 minutes.
- Participate for the length of the study, which will be approximately 6 months.
- Participate in *memo checking* where you will reflect on findings and provide feedback.
- Interviews will be audio recorded for later transcription and review.
- You will be asked to answer a series of questions related to African American youth participation in summer programs. Questions will relate to your experiences and perceptions of various aspects of summer programs. An example of the most personal questions you will be asked is: What is your perspective about what role identifying as an African American plays in the opportunities youth experience during the summer?

I do not anticipate any risks from participating in this research. In addition, there are no direct benefits to you however; participation in this study will benefit society and the scientific community by providing insight into factors impacting African American youth participation in summer programs. Interviews will be audio recorded in order to be later transcribed verbatim to accurately represent conversations during interviews. Once interviews are transcribed audio recordings will be deleted. Please select below if you agree to have this interview audio

recorded or not. You may still participate in this study even if you are not willing to have the interview recorded.

- I do not want to have this interview recorded.
  
- I am willing to have this interview recorded.

Data collected will be used for future studies without additional consent. In addition, this research involves the transmission of data over the Internet. Every reasonable effort has been taken to ensure the effective use of available technology; however, confidentiality during online communication cannot be guaranteed.

Pseudonyms and random ID numbers will be assigned in order to protect your confidentiality and privacy as a participant in the study. No identifiable information, like your name, will be linked with the data provided. I will be the only person who will have access to the data collected and all information will be kept strictly confidential. Researchers will not release identifiable results of the study to anyone other than individuals working on the project without your written consent or unless required by law.

Your involvement in the study is voluntary, and you may choose not to participate or to stop at any time without penalty or loss of benefits to which you are otherwise entitled. If you decide to withdraw from the study, the information that can be identified as yours will be kept as part of the study and may continue to be analyzed, unless you make a written request to remove, return, or destroy the information.

Please ask any questions you have now. If you have questions later, you may contact Dr. Hopps (hoppsbjg@aol.com, 706-542-7002) or myself (mw19394@uga.edu, 567-868-4083). If you have any questions or concerns regarding your rights as a research participant in this study, you may contact the Institutional Review Board (IRB) Chairperson at 706-542-3199 or irb@uga.edu.

To voluntarily agree to take part in this study, you must select the appropriate option below. Your selection below indicates that you have read or had read to you this entire consent form, and have had all of your questions answered.

- I consent, begin the study.
  
- I do not consent. I do not wish to participate.

# Parent Demographic Questionnaire Consent

My name is Megan Lee and I am a graduate student in the School of Social Work at the University of Georgia under the supervision of Dr. June Hopps. I am asking you to take part in a research study. Before you decide to participate in this study, it is important that you understand why the research is being done and what it will involve. This form is designed to give you the information about the study so you can decide whether to be in the study or not. Please take the time to read the following information carefully and ask me if there is anything that is unclear or if you need more information.

This study aims to explore the role of race and income on African American youth participation in summer programs. In order to participate in the study individuals must identify as African American and low-income and have at least one African American youth (preferably in the 9<sup>th</sup> or 10<sup>th</sup> grade) currently enrolled at Cedar Shoals High School.

If you agree to participate, you will be asked to:

- Participate in a 15-20 minute demographic questionnaire.
- Participate in an individual interview which is expected to last 90 to 120 minutes.
- Participate for the length of the study, which will be approximately 6 months.
- Participate in *memo checking* where you will reflect on findings and provide feedback.
- Interviews will be audio recorded for later transcription and review.
- You will be asked to answer a series of questions related to African American youth participation in summer programs. Questions will relate to your experiences and perceptions of various aspects of summer programs. An example of the most personal questions you will be asked is: What is your perspective about what role identifying as an African American plays in the opportunities your child experiences during the summer?

I do not anticipate any risks from participating in this research. In addition, there are no direct benefits to you however; participation in this study will benefit society and the scientific community by providing insight into factors impacting African American youth participation in summer programs. Interviews will be audio recorded in order to be later transcribed verbatim to accurately represent conversations during interviews. Once interviews are transcribed audio recordings will be deleted. Please select below if you agree to have this interview audio recorded or not. You may still participate in this study even if you are not willing to have the interview recorded.

- I do not want to have this interview recorded.
- I am willing to have this interview recorded.

Data collected will be used for future studies without additional consent. In addition, this research involves the transmission of data over the Internet. Every reasonable effort has been taken to ensure the effective use of available technology; however, confidentiality during online communication cannot be guaranteed.

Pseudonyms and random ID numbers will be assigned in order to protect your confidentiality and privacy as a participant in the study. No identifiable information, like your name, will be linked with the data provided. I will be the only person who will have access to the data collected and all information will be kept strictly confidential. Researchers will not release identifiable results of the study to anyone other than individuals working on the project without your written consent or unless required by law.

Your involvement in the study is voluntary, and you may choose not to participate or to stop at any time without penalty or loss of benefits to which you are otherwise entitled. If you decide to withdraw from the study, the information that can be identified as yours will be kept as part of the study and may continue to be analyzed, unless you make a written request to remove, return, or destroy the information.

Please ask any questions you have now. If you have questions later, you may contact Dr. Hopps (hoppsbjg@aol.com, 706-542-7002) or myself (mw19394@uga.edu, 567-868-4083). If you have any questions or concerns regarding your rights as a research participant in this study, you may contact the Institutional Review Board (IRB) Chairperson at 706-542-3199 or irb@uga.edu.

To voluntarily agree to take part in this study, you must select the appropriate option below. Your selection below indicates that you have read or had read to you this entire consent form, and have had all of your questions answered.

- I consent, begin the study.
  
- I do not consent. I do not wish to participate.

## Parent Consent for Youth

My name is Megan Lee and I am a graduate student in the School of Social Work at the University of Georgia under the supervision of Dr. June Hopps. I am asking you to allow your child to take part in a research study. Before you decide to allow your child to participate in this study, it is important that you understand why the research is being done and what it will involve. This form is designed to give you the information about the study so you can decide whether to allow your child be in the study or not. Please take the time to read the following information carefully and ask me if there is anything that is unclear or if you need more information.

This study aims to explore the role of race and income on African American youth participation in summer programs. In order to participate in the study individuals must identify as African American and low-income and should be enrolled as a student at Cedar Shoals High School.

If you agree to allow your child to participate, they will be asked to:

- Participate in a 15-20 minute demographic questionnaire.
- Participate in an individual interview which is expected to last 90 to 120 minutes.
- Participate for the length of the study, which will be approximately 6 months.
- Participate in *memo checking* where your child will reflect on findings and provide feedback.
- Interviews will be audio recorded for later transcription and review.
- Your child will be asked to answer a series of questions related to African American youth participation in summer programs.
- Questions will relate to your child's experiences and perceptions of various aspects of summer programs. An example of the most personal questions your child will be asked is: What is your perspective about what role identifying as an African American plays in the opportunities you experience during the summer?

I do not anticipate any risks from participating in this research. In addition, there are no direct benefits to you or your child however; participation in this study will benefit society and the scientific community by providing insight into factors impacting African American youth participation in summer programs. Interviews will be audio recorded in order to be later transcribed verbatim to accurately represent conversations during interviews. Once interviews are transcribed audio recordings will be deleted. Please select below if you agree to have your

child's interview audio recorded or not. Your child may still participate in this study even if you are not willing to have the interview recorded.

- I do not want to have my child's interview recorded.
  
- I am willing to have my child's interview recorded.

Data collected will be used for future studies without additional consent. In addition, this research involves the transmission of data over the Internet. Every reasonable effort has been taken to ensure the effective use of available technology; however, confidentiality during online communication cannot be guaranteed.

Pseudonyms and random ID numbers will be assigned in order to protect your child's confidentiality and privacy as a participant in the study. In addition, a random ID number will also be provided to you to protect your confidentiality. No identifiable information, like your or your child's name, will be linked with the data provided. I will be the only person who will have access to the data collected and all information will be kept strictly confidential. Researchers will not release identifiable results of the study to anyone other than individuals working on the project without your written consent or unless required by law.

Your child's involvement in the study is voluntary, and you or your child may choose not to participate or to stop at any time without penalty or loss of benefits to which you are otherwise entitled. If you or your child decide to withdraw from the study, the information that can be identified as your child's will be kept as part of the study and may continue to be analyzed, unless you or your child make a written request to remove, return, or destroy the information.

Please ask any questions you have now. If you have questions later, you may contact Dr. Hopps (hoppsbjg@aol.com, 706-542-7002) or myself (mw19394@uga.edu, 567-868-4083). If you have any questions or concerns regarding your child's rights as a research participant in this study,

you may contact the Institutional Review Board (IRB) Chairperson at 706-542-3199 or irb@uga.edu.

To voluntarily agree to allow your child to take part in this study, you must select the appropriate option below. Your selection below indicates that you have read or had read to you this entire consent form, and have had all of your questions answered.

- I consent.
- I do not consent. I do not wish to allow my child to participate.

What is your name?

- Last, First \_\_\_\_\_

What is your child's name?

- Last, First \_\_\_\_\_

Your random ID code is: \_\_\_\_\_

# Youth Demographic Questionnaire Consent

My name is Megan Lee and I am a graduate student in the School of Social Work at the University of Georgia under the supervision of Dr. June Hopps. I am asking you to take part in a research study. Before you decide to participate in this study, it is important that you understand why the research is being done and what it will involve. This form is designed to give you the information about the study so you can decide whether to be in the study or not. Please take the time to read the following information carefully and ask me if there is anything that is unclear or if you need more information.

This study aims to explore the role of race and income on African American youth participation in summer programs. In order to participate in the study individuals must identify as African American and low-income and should be enrolled as a student at Cedar Shoals High School.

If you agree to participate, you will be asked to:

- Participate in a 15-20 minute demographic questionnaire.
- Participate in an individual interview which is expected to last 90 to 120 minutes.
- Participate for the length of the study, which will be approximately 6 months.
- Participate in *memo checking* where you will reflect on findings and provide feedback.
- Interviews will be audio recorded for later transcription and review.
- You will be asked to answer a series of questions related to African American youth participation in summer programs.
- Questions will relate to your experiences and perceptions of various aspects of summer programs. An example of the most personal questions you will be asked is: What is your perspective about what role identifying as an African American plays in the opportunities you experience during the summer?

I do not anticipate any risks from participating in this research. In addition, there are no direct benefits to you however; participation in this study will benefit society and the scientific community by providing insight into factors impacting African American youth participation in summer programs. Interviews will be audio recorded in order to be later transcribed verbatim to accurately represent conversations during interviews. Once interviews are transcribed audio recordings will be deleted. Please select below if you agree to have this interview audio recorded or not. You may still participate in this study even if you are not willing to have the interview recorded.

I do not want to have this interview recorded.

I am willing to have this interview recorded.

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Data collected will be used for future studies without additional consent. In addition, this research involves the transmission of data over the Internet. Every reasonable effort has been

taken to ensure the effective use of available technology; however, confidentiality during online communication cannot be guaranteed.

Pseudonyms and random ID numbers will be assigned in order to protect your confidentiality and privacy as a participant in the study. No identifiable information, like your name, will be linked with the data provided. I will be the only person who will have access to the data collected and all information will be kept strictly confidential. Researchers will not release identifiable results of the study to anyone other than individuals working on the project without your written consent or unless required by law.

Your involvement in the study is voluntary, and you may choose not to participate or to stop at any time without penalty or loss of benefits to which you are otherwise entitled. If you decide to withdraw from the study, the information that can be identified as yours will be kept as part of the study and may continue to be analyzed, unless you make a written request to remove, return, or destroy the information.

Please ask any questions you have now. If you have questions later, you may contact Dr. Hopps (hoppsbjg@aol.com, 706-542-7002) or myself (mw19394@uga.edu, 567-868-4083). If you have any questions or concerns regarding your rights as a research participant in this study, you may contact the Institutional Review Board (IRB) Chairperson at 706-542-3199 or irb@uga.edu.

To voluntarily agree to take part in this study, you must select the appropriate option below. Your selection below indicates that you have read or had read to you this entire consent form, and have had all of your questions answered.

- I consent, begin the study.
- I do not consent. I do not wish to participate.

## **Appendix D**

### Interview Questions/Content Guide

#### **Questions for Youth**

1. In general, tell me what your experience has been like with summer programs.
2. If you could create a summer program for kids like you, what would it include?
  - How would you say programs you've attended compare to the above program?
3. What type of OST activities interest or would interest you?
  - If the mentioned activities were available in your community, would you participate?
4. What is your perception of the benefits, if any, of participating in summer programs?
5. What are some challenges, if any, you have experienced with consistently attending summer programs?
6. What changes, if any, have you observed about summer programs in your neighborhood?
7. What 'spaces' in your neighborhood are available during summer for you to go where you feel accepted?
8. What is your perspective about expectations that summer program staff have of you?
9. What is your perspective about expectations that your parent/guardian have of you?
10. What impact, if any, does cost have on your ability to participate in summer programs?
11. What is your perspective about what role identifying as an African American play in the opportunities you experience during the summer?
12. What suggestions, if any, do you have to increase African American youth participation in summer programs?
13. In what ways have OST programs offered in your community been impacted by the current socio-economic conditions?
14. What efforts, if any, have OST programs taken to provide alternative program options?
15. When school is out, what alternative OST program options might be helpful to meet your needs?

#### **Notes**

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Date/Start time: \_\_\_\_\_

## Notes

Location: \_\_\_\_\_

Setting: \_\_\_\_\_

Participant demeanor/appearance: \_\_\_\_\_

Non-verbal responses: \_\_\_\_\_

Interview question changes: \_\_\_\_\_

Critical reflection/performance as an interviewer: \_\_\_\_\_

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Date/End time: \_\_\_\_\_

**Questions for parents**

1. In general, tell me what your experience has been like with summer programs.
2. If you could create a summer program for kids like yours, what would it include?
  - How would you say programs your child has attended compares to the above program?
3. What type of OST activities would you like your child to participate in?
  - If the mentioned activities were available, would your child be able to participate?
4. What is your perception of the benefits, if any, of your child participating in summer programs?
5. What are some challenges, if any, you have experienced with your child consistently attending summer programs?
6. What 'spaces' in your neighborhood are available during the summer for your child to go where they may feel accepted?
7. What is your perspective about expectations that summer program staff have of your child?
8. What is your perception about your child's abilities?
9. What impact, if any, does cost have on your child's ability to participate in summer programs?
10. What is your perspective about what role identifying as African American play in the opportunities your child experiences during the summer?
11. What suggestions, if any, do you have to increase youth participation in summer programs?
12. In what ways have OST programs offered in your community been impacted by the current socio-economic conditions?
13. What efforts, if any, have OST programs taken to provide alternative program options?
14. What alternative OST program options might be helpful to meet your child's current needs?

**Notes**

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## Notes

Location: \_\_\_\_\_

Setting: \_\_\_\_\_

Participant demeanor/appearance: \_\_\_\_\_

Non-verbal responses: \_\_\_\_\_

Interview question changes: \_\_\_\_\_

Critical reflection/performance as an interviewer: \_\_\_\_\_

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Date/End time: \_\_\_\_\_

**Questions for OST employees**

1. In general, tell me what your experience has been like with low-income, African American youth participating in summer programs.
2. If you could create a summer program for low-income African American kids, what would it include?
  - How would you say the organization you work for compares to the above program?
3. What is your perception about your organizations provision of activities geared toward youth interests?
4. What efforts, if any, has your organization taken to recruit and retain low-income, African American youth?
5. What is your perception of the benefits, if any, generated from youth participating in summer programs?
6. What have you observed are some of the challenges, if any, with low-income, African American youth attending OST programs?
7. What changes, if any, have you observed about summer programs in the neighborhoods you serve?
8. What is your perception about whether your organization provides a space where low-income, African American youth may feel accepted?
9. What is your perception about the abilities of the children you serve?
10. What is your perspective about what role income plays in the opportunities youth experience during the summer?
11. What is your perspective about what role identifying as an African American plays in the opportunities youth experience during the summer?
12. What suggestions, if any, do you have to increase youth participation in summer programs?
13. In what ways have OST programs offered in your community been impacted by the current socio-economic conditions?
14. What efforts, if any, has your organization taken to provide alternative program options for youth?
15. What supports, if any, has your program provided to assist with the educational needs of youth at home?
16. What suggestions do you have for alternative OST program options that might be helpful to meet the needs of youth?

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**Notes**

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**Notes**

Location: \_\_\_\_\_

Setting: \_\_\_\_\_

Participant demeanor/appearance: \_\_\_\_\_

Non-verbal responses: \_\_\_\_\_

Interview question changes: \_\_\_\_\_

Critical reflection/performance as an interviewer: \_\_\_\_\_

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Date/End time: \_\_\_\_\_

## Appendix E

### Demographic Questionnaires

#### OST Provider Demographic Questionnaire

1. What is your age?
  - 1) 18-24
  - 2) 25-29
  - 3) 30-34
  - 4) 35-39
  - 5) 40-44
  - 6) 45-49
  - 7) 50-54
  - 8) 55-59
  - 9) 60-64
  - 10) 65 or older
  
2. What is your race?
  - 1) Black or African American
  - 2) White, non-Hispanic
  - 3) Asian
  - 4) American Indian or Alaska Native
  - 5) Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
  - 6) Hispanic or Latino
  - 7) Multiracial
  - 8) Other
  
3. What is your sex?
  - 1) Male
  - 2) Female
  - 3) Other \_\_\_\_\_
  
4. Marital status:
  - 1) Married
  - 2) Widowed
  - 3) Divorced/separated
  - 4) Single
  - 5) Never married
  
5. Employment status:
  - 1) Full time
  - 2) Part time/PRN
  - 3) Unemployed
  - 4) Retired

## 6. Highest level of education

- 1) Less than high school degree
- 2) High school degree or equivalent
- 3) Some college
- 4) Associates degree
- 5) Bachelor's degree
- 6) Graduate degree

## 7. Income:

- 1) \$0-\$9,999
- 2) \$10,000-\$19,999
- 3) \$20,000-\$29,999
- 4) \$30,000-\$39,999
- 5) \$40,000-\$49,999
- 6) \$50,000-\$59,999
  
- 7) \$60,000-\$69,999
- 8) \$70,000-\$79,999
- 9) \$80,000-\$89,999
- 10) \$90,000-\$99,999
- 11) \$100,000 or more

8. What type of activities does your organization provide during the summer? (select all that apply)
- 1) Sports
  - 2) Academic support
  - 3) Art education/lessons
  - 4) Music education/lessons
  - 5) Mentorship
  - 6) Recreation activities
  - 7) Technical skill development
  - 8) Leadership development
  - 9) College preparation
  - 10) Employment development/opportunities
  - 11) Other: \_\_\_\_\_
9. When does your program operate? (select all that apply)
- 1) Afterschool
  - 2) Before school
  - 3) Weekends
  - 4) Summer
  - 5) How many days per week is your organization usually open to youth during the summer?<sup>1</sup>
  - 6) 2
  - 7) 3
  - 8) 4
  - 9) 5
  - 10) 6
  - 11) 7
  - 12) None
10. How many youth, on average, has your organization served during the summer?
- 1) 0-9
  - 2) 10-19
  - 3) 20-29
  - 4) 30-39
  - 5) 40-49
  - 6) 50-59
  - 7) 60-69
  - 8) 70-79
  - 9) 80-89
  - 10) 90-99
  - 11) 100 or more

11. What age groups does your organization serve during the summer? (select all that apply)

- 1) Early childhood (0-4 years old)
- 2) School-aged (5-11 years old)
- 3) Middle school (12-14)
- 4) Adolescents (15-21)

12. What sources of funding does your program receive? (select all that apply)

- 1) Private donations
- 2) Grant funding
- 3) Public (i.e., government) funding
- 4) User fees
- 5) Other: \_\_\_\_\_
- 6) Unknown

13. What is the average cost of activities provided per week during the summer?

- 1) \$1-\$20
- 2) \$21-\$40
- 3) \$41-\$60
- 4) \$61-\$80
- 5) \$81-\$100
- 6) \$101 or more
- 7) No cost
- 8) Unknown

14. How many years has the organization you currently work for been operating?

- 1) 0-1
- 2) 2-3
- 3) 4-5
- 4) 6-7
- 5) 8-9
- 6) More than 10
- 7) Unknown

15. How many years have you worked in the OST field?

- 1) 0-1
- 2) 2-3
- 3) 4-5
- 4) 6-7
- 5) 8-9
- 6) More than 10

16. What do you think are the main reasons youth do NOT participate in activities offered by your organization? (select all that apply) Unable to afford activities

- 1) Need to work
- 2) Feel out of place/unwelcomed
- 3) Lack of transportation
- 4) Involvement in other activities
- 5) Lack of peer involvement
- 6) Boredom
- 7) Lack of awareness
- 8) Neighborhood safety
- 9) Lack of caring adults
- 10) Home responsibilities (i.e., caring for younger siblings)
- 11) Other: \_\_\_\_\_

17. Overall, how would you rate the quality of the summer activities offered by your organization?

<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>Very Poor</b>	<b>Poor</b>	<b>Fair</b>	<b>Good</b>	<b>Excellent</b>

18. In your role as an OST provider, how often do you receive coaching/mentoring opportunities?

<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>Never</b>	<b>2 times a year</b>	<b>1 to 2 times a semester</b>	<b>Once a month</b>	<b>At least 2 to 3 times a month</b>

19. In your role as an OST provider, how often do you participate in conferences?

<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>Never</b>	<b>2 times a year</b>	<b>1 to 2 times a semester</b>	<b>Once a month</b>	<b>At least 2 to 3 times a month</b>

20. In your role as an OST provider, how often do you attend staff meetings at the program?

<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>Never</b>	<b>2 times a year</b>	<b>1 to 2 times a semester</b>	<b>Once a month</b>	<b>At least 2 to 3 times a month</b>

21. In your role as an OST provider, how often do you participate in additional trainings directly related to OST?

<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>Never</b>	<b>2 times a year</b>	<b>1 to 2 times a semester</b>	<b>Once a month</b>	<b>At least 2 to 3 times a month</b>

22. In your role as an OST provider, how often do you communicate with parents?
- | <b>1</b>     | <b>2</b>              | <b>3</b>                       | <b>4</b>            | <b>5</b>                             |
|--------------|-----------------------|--------------------------------|---------------------|--------------------------------------|
| <b>Never</b> | <b>2 times a year</b> | <b>1 to 2 times a semester</b> | <b>Once a month</b> | <b>At least 2 to 3 times a month</b> |
23. In your role as an OST provider, how often do you talk to youth about things that are bothering them?
- | <b>1</b>     | <b>2</b>              | <b>3</b>                       | <b>4</b>            | <b>5</b>                             |
|--------------|-----------------------|--------------------------------|---------------------|--------------------------------------|
| <b>Never</b> | <b>2 times a year</b> | <b>1 to 2 times a semester</b> | <b>Once a month</b> | <b>At least 2 to 3 times a month</b> |
24. In your role as an OST provider, how often do you help youth try new things?
- | <b>1</b>     | <b>2</b>              | <b>3</b>                       | <b>4</b>            | <b>5</b>                             |
|--------------|-----------------------|--------------------------------|---------------------|--------------------------------------|
| <b>Never</b> | <b>2 times a year</b> | <b>1 to 2 times a semester</b> | <b>Once a month</b> | <b>At least 2 to 3 times a month</b> |
25. In your role as an OST provider, how often do you discuss programs with other staff members?
- | <b>1</b>     | <b>2</b>              | <b>3</b>                       | <b>4</b>            | <b>5</b>                             |
|--------------|-----------------------|--------------------------------|---------------------|--------------------------------------|
| <b>Never</b> | <b>2 times a year</b> | <b>1 to 2 times a semester</b> | <b>Once a month</b> | <b>At least 2 to 3 times a month</b> |
26. When working with youth participating in summer activities, have you observed that African American children were wrongly disciplined
- | <b>1</b>          | <b>2</b>        | <b>3</b>          | <b>4</b>            | <b>5</b>         |
|-------------------|-----------------|-------------------|---------------------|------------------|
| <b>Not at all</b> | <b>Slightly</b> | <b>Moderately</b> | <b>Considerably</b> | <b>Extremely</b> |
27. When working with youth participating in summer activities, have you observed that African American children were discouraged from joining a program/club?
- | <b>1</b>          | <b>2</b>        | <b>3</b>          | <b>4</b>            | <b>5</b>         |
|-------------------|-----------------|-------------------|---------------------|------------------|
| <b>Not at all</b> | <b>Slightly</b> | <b>Moderately</b> | <b>Considerably</b> | <b>Extremely</b> |
28. When working with youth participating in summer activities, have you observed that other children did not include African American children in activities?
- | <b>1</b>          | <b>2</b>        | <b>3</b>          | <b>4</b>            | <b>5</b>         |
|-------------------|-----------------|-------------------|---------------------|------------------|
| <b>Not at all</b> | <b>Slightly</b> | <b>Moderately</b> | <b>Considerably</b> | <b>Extremely</b> |

29. When working with youth participating in summer activities, have you observed that people expected less of African American children than they expected of other children their age?

<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>Not at all</b>	<b>Slightly</b>	<b>Moderately</b>	<b>Considerably</b>	<b>Extremely</b>

30. When working with youth participating in summer activities, have you observed that African American children were called racially insulting names?

<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>Not at all</b>	<b>Slightly</b>	<b>Moderately</b>	<b>Considerably</b>	<b>Extremely</b>

31. When working with youth participating in summer activities, have you observed that people acted as if they thought African American children were not smart?

<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>Not at all</b>	<b>Slightly</b>	<b>Moderately</b>	<b>Considerably</b>	<b>Extremely</b>

32. When working with youth participating in summer activities, have you observed that people acted as if they were afraid of African American children?

<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>Not at all</b>	<b>Slightly</b>	<b>Moderately</b>	<b>Considerably</b>	<b>Extremely</b>

33. When working with youth participating in summer activities, have you observed that African American children were treated unfairly because someone perceived them to be from a lower social class?

<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>This has never happened to me</b>	<b>This event happened, but did not bother me</b>	<b>This event happened and I was slightly upset</b>	<b>This event happened and I was upset</b>	<b>This event happened and I was extremely upset</b>

34. When working with youth participating in summer activities, have you observed that African American children were made fun of because they were perceived to be from a lower social class?

<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>This has never happened to me</b>	<b>This event happened, but did not bother me</b>	<b>This event happened and I was slightly upset</b>	<b>This event happened and I was upset</b>	<b>This event happened and I was extremely upset</b>

35. When working with youth participating in summer activities, have you observed that African American children were excluded from an activity because they could not afford it?

<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>
----------	----------	----------	----------	----------

<b>This has never happened to me</b>	<b>This event happened, but did not bother me</b>	<b>This event happened and I was slightly upset</b>	<b>This event happened and I was upset</b>	<b>This event happened and I was extremely upset</b>
--	---	---	--	--

36. When working with youth participating in summer activities, have you observed that someone misunderstood African American children intentions or motives because they thought he/she was from a lower social class?

<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>This has never happened to me</b>	<b>This event happened, but did not bother me</b>	<b>This event happened and I was slightly upset</b>	<b>This event happened and I was upset</b>	<b>This event happened and I was extremely upset</b>

**Parent Demographic Questionnaire**

1. What is your age?
  - 18-24
  - 25-29
  - 30-34
  - 35-39
  - 40-44
  - 45-49
  - 50-54
  - 55-59
  - 60-64
  - 65 or older
  
2. What is your race?
  - Black or African American
  - White, non-Hispanic
  - Asian
  - American Indian or Alaska Native
  - Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
  - Hispanic or Latino
  - Multiracial
  - Other \_\_\_\_\_
  
3. What is your sex?
  - Male
  - Female
  - Other \_\_\_\_\_
  
4. Marital status:
  - 6) Married
  - 7) Widowed
  - 8) Divorced
  - 9) Separated
  - 10) Never married
  
5. Employment status:
  - 11) Full time
  - 12) Part time/PRN
  - 13) Unemployed
  - 14) Retired
  
6. Highest level of education
  - 7) Less than high school degree
  - 8) High school degree or equivalent

- 9) Some college
- 10) Associates degree
- 11) Bachelor's degree
- 12) Graduate degree

## 7. Income:

- |                       |                       |
|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| 15) \$0-\$9,999       | 21) \$60,000-\$69,999 |
| 16) \$10,000-\$19,999 | 22) \$70,000-\$79,999 |
| 17) \$20,000-\$29,999 | 23) \$80,000-\$89,999 |
| 18) \$30,000-\$39,999 | 24) \$90,000-\$99,999 |
| 19) \$40,000-\$49,999 | 25) \$100,000 or more |
| 20) \$50,000-\$59,999 |                       |

## 8. How many years have you lived at your current address?

- |                         |                                  |
|-------------------------|----------------------------------|
| <input type="radio"/> 1 | <input type="radio"/> 6          |
| <input type="radio"/> 2 | <input type="radio"/> 7          |
| <input type="radio"/> 3 | <input type="radio"/> 8          |
| <input type="radio"/> 4 | <input type="radio"/> 9          |
| <input type="radio"/> 5 | <input type="radio"/> 10 or more |

## 9. How many children do you have?

- |                         |                                  |
|-------------------------|----------------------------------|
| <input type="radio"/> 0 | <input type="radio"/> 5          |
| <input type="radio"/> 1 | <input type="radio"/> 6          |
| <input type="radio"/> 2 | <input type="radio"/> 7          |
| <input type="radio"/> 3 | <input type="radio"/> 8          |
| <input type="radio"/> 4 | <input type="radio"/> 9          |
|                         | <input type="radio"/> 10 or more |

For child 1-10: *(parents will answer the next set of questions for each child)*

## 10. What is your child's sex?

- Male
- Female
- Other \_\_\_\_\_

## 11. What grade is your child in?

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| <input type="radio"/> Pre-kindergarten | <input type="radio"/> 6 <sup>th</sup>  |
| <input type="radio"/> Kindergarten     | <input type="radio"/> 7 <sup>th</sup>  |
| <input type="radio"/> 1 <sup>st</sup>  | <input type="radio"/> 8 <sup>th</sup>  |
| <input type="radio"/> 2 <sup>nd</sup>  | <input type="radio"/> 9 <sup>th</sup>  |
| <input type="radio"/> 3 <sup>rd</sup>  | <input type="radio"/> 10 <sup>th</sup> |
| <input type="radio"/> 4 <sup>th</sup>  | <input type="radio"/> 11 <sup>th</sup> |
| <input type="radio"/> 5 <sup>th</sup>  | <input type="radio"/> 12 <sup>th</sup> |

- Not in primary or secondary school

12. Relationship to child:

- Biological parent
- Parent's partner
- Foster parent
- Step-parent
- Adoptive parent
- Guardian
- Other adult relative

13. Has your child participated in summer OST programs?

- Yes
- No

14. What type of activities does your child typically participate in during the summer? (select all that apply)

- |   |                          |
|---|--------------------------|
| ○ Sports                                      | ○ Leadership development |
| ○ Arts  | ○ College preparation    |
| ○ Music                                       | ○ Employment preparation |
| ○ Clubs                                       | ○ Other                  |
| ○ Academic enrichment                         | _____                    |
| ○ Self-care (i.e., without adult supervision) | _____                    |

15. How old was your child when they first participated in a summer program?

- |                      |      |
|----------------------|------|
| ○ Before 5 years old | ○ 12 |
| ○ 5                  | ○ 13 |
| ○ 6                  | ○ 14 |
| ○ 7                  | ○ 15 |
| ○ 8                  | ○ 16 |
| ○ 9                  | ○ 17 |
| ○ 10                 | ○ 18 |
| ○ 11                 |      |

16. How many different summer programs has your child participated in this past summer?

- 1
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5
- 6 or more
- None

Type of activity	Did your child participate this past summer?	Where was the program held?	On average, how many weeks was the program offered?	On average, how many hours per week did your child spend in this activity?	How many summers has your child participated in this activity?	What was the average weekly cost?	Does your child plan to participate next summer?
Summer sports	<input type="radio"/> Yes <input type="radio"/> No	<input type="radio"/> Local public school <input type="radio"/> University <input type="radio"/> Community setting <input type="radio"/> Other: _____ _____	<input type="radio"/> 1-2 weeks <input type="radio"/> 3-4 weeks <input type="radio"/> 5-6 weeks <input type="radio"/> 7-8 weeks <input type="radio"/> 9 or more weeks	<input type="radio"/> 0-1 <input type="radio"/> 2-3 <input type="radio"/> 4-5 <input type="radio"/> 6 or more	<input type="radio"/> 0-1 <input type="radio"/> 2-3 <input type="radio"/> 4-5 <input type="radio"/> 6-7 <input type="radio"/> 8-9 <input type="radio"/> 10 or more	<input type="radio"/> \$0-\$20 <input type="radio"/> \$21-\$40 <input type="radio"/> \$41-\$60 <input type="radio"/> \$61-\$80 <input type="radio"/> \$81-\$100 <input type="radio"/> \$101 or more <input type="radio"/> No cost	<input type="radio"/> Definitely yes <input type="radio"/> Probably yes <input type="radio"/> Might or might not <input type="radio"/> Probably not <input type="radio"/> Definitely not
Summer arts	<input type="radio"/> Yes <input type="radio"/> No	<input type="radio"/> Local public school <input type="radio"/> University <input type="radio"/> Community setting <input type="radio"/> Other: _____ _____	<input type="radio"/> 1-2 weeks <input type="radio"/> 3-4 weeks <input type="radio"/> 5-6 weeks <input type="radio"/> 7-8 weeks <input type="radio"/> 9 or more weeks	<input type="radio"/> 0-1 <input type="radio"/> 2-3 <input type="radio"/> 4-5 <input type="radio"/> 6 or more	<input type="radio"/> 0-1 <input type="radio"/> 2-3 <input type="radio"/> 4-5 <input type="radio"/> 6-7 <input type="radio"/> 8-9 <input type="radio"/> 10 or more	<input type="radio"/> \$0-\$20 <input type="radio"/> \$21-\$40 <input type="radio"/> \$41-\$60 <input type="radio"/> \$61-\$80 <input type="radio"/> \$81-\$100 <input type="radio"/> \$101 or more <input type="radio"/> No cost	<input type="radio"/> Definitely yes <input type="radio"/> Probably yes <input type="radio"/> Might or might not <input type="radio"/> Probably not <input type="radio"/> Definitely not

Summer music lessons	<input type="radio"/> Yes <input type="radio"/> No	<input type="radio"/> Local public school <input type="radio"/> University <input type="radio"/> Community setting <input type="radio"/> Other: <hr/>	<input type="radio"/> 1-2 weeks <input type="radio"/> 3-4 weeks <input type="radio"/> 5-6 weeks <input type="radio"/> 7-8 weeks <input type="radio"/> 9 or more weeks	<input type="radio"/> 0-1 <input type="radio"/> 2-3 <input type="radio"/> 4-5 <input type="radio"/> 6 or more	<input type="radio"/> 0-1 <input type="radio"/> 2-3 <input type="radio"/> 4-5 <input type="radio"/> 6-7 <input type="radio"/> 8-9 <input type="radio"/> 10 or more	<input type="radio"/> \$0-\$20 <input type="radio"/> \$21-\$40 <input type="radio"/> \$41-\$60 <input type="radio"/> \$61-\$80 <input type="radio"/> \$81-\$100 <input type="radio"/> \$101 or more <input type="radio"/> No cost	<input type="radio"/> Definitely yes <input type="radio"/> Probably yes <input type="radio"/> Might or might not <input type="radio"/> Probably not <input type="radio"/> Definitely not
Summer clubs	<input type="radio"/> Yes <input type="radio"/> No	<input type="radio"/> Local public school <input type="radio"/> University <input type="radio"/> Community setting <input type="radio"/> Other: <hr/>	<input type="radio"/> 1-2 weeks <input type="radio"/> 3-4 weeks <input type="radio"/> 5-6 weeks <input type="radio"/> 7-8 weeks <input type="radio"/> 9 or more weeks	<input type="radio"/> 0-1 <input type="radio"/> 2-3 <input type="radio"/> 4-5 <input type="radio"/> 6 or more	<input type="radio"/> 0-1 <input type="radio"/> 2-3 <input type="radio"/> 4-5 <input type="radio"/> 6-7 <input type="radio"/> 8-9 <input type="radio"/> 10 or more	<input type="radio"/> \$0-\$20 <input type="radio"/> \$21-\$40 <input type="radio"/> \$41-\$60 <input type="radio"/> \$61-\$80 <input type="radio"/> \$81-\$100 <input type="radio"/> \$101 or more <input type="radio"/> No cost	<input type="radio"/> Definitely yes <input type="radio"/> Probably yes <input type="radio"/> Might or might not <input type="radio"/> Probably not <input type="radio"/> Definitely not
Summer academic enrichment	<input type="radio"/> Yes <input type="radio"/> No	<input type="radio"/> Local public school <input type="radio"/> University <input type="radio"/> Community setting <input type="radio"/> Other: <hr/>	<input type="radio"/> 1-2 weeks <input type="radio"/> 3-4 weeks <input type="radio"/> 5-6 weeks <input type="radio"/> 7-8 weeks <input type="radio"/> 9 or more weeks	<input type="radio"/> 0-1 <input type="radio"/> 2-3 <input type="radio"/> 4-5 <input type="radio"/> 6 or more	<input type="radio"/> 0-1 <input type="radio"/> 2-3 <input type="radio"/> 4-5 <input type="radio"/> 6-7 <input type="radio"/> 8-9 <input type="radio"/> 10 or more	<input type="radio"/> \$0-\$20 <input type="radio"/> \$21-\$40 <input type="radio"/> \$41-\$60 <input type="radio"/> \$61-\$80 <input type="radio"/> \$81-\$100 <input type="radio"/> \$101 or more <input type="radio"/> No cost	<input type="radio"/> Definitely yes <input type="radio"/> Probably yes <input type="radio"/> Might or might not <input type="radio"/> Probably not <input type="radio"/> Definitely not
Summer school	<input type="radio"/> Yes <input type="radio"/> No	<input type="radio"/> Local public school	<input type="radio"/> 1-2 weeks <input type="radio"/> 3-4 weeks <input type="radio"/> 5-6 weeks	<input type="radio"/> 0-1 <input type="radio"/> 2-3 <input type="radio"/> 4-5	<input type="radio"/> 0-1 <input type="radio"/> 2-3 <input type="radio"/> 4-5	<input type="radio"/> \$0-\$20 <input type="radio"/> \$21-\$40 <input type="radio"/> \$41-\$60	<input type="radio"/> Definitely yes <input type="radio"/> Probably yes <input type="radio"/> Might or might not

		<input type="radio"/> University <input type="radio"/> Community setting <input type="radio"/> Other: _____ _____	<input type="radio"/> 7-8 weeks <input type="radio"/> 9 or more weeks	<input type="radio"/> 6 or more	<input type="radio"/> 6-7 <input type="radio"/> 8-9 <input type="radio"/> 10 or more	<input type="radio"/> \$61-\$80 <input type="radio"/> \$81-\$100 <input type="radio"/> \$101 or more <input type="radio"/> No cost	<input type="radio"/> Probably not <input type="radio"/> Definitely not
Other	<input type="radio"/> Yes <input type="radio"/> No	<input type="radio"/> Local public school <input type="radio"/> University <input type="radio"/> Community setting <input type="radio"/> Other: _____ _____	<input type="radio"/> 1-2 weeks <input type="radio"/> 3-4 weeks <input type="radio"/> 5-6 weeks <input type="radio"/> 7-8 weeks <input type="radio"/> 9 or more weeks	<input type="radio"/> 0-1 <input type="radio"/> 2-3 <input type="radio"/> 4-5 <input type="radio"/> 6 or more	<input type="radio"/> 0-1 <input type="radio"/> 2-3 <input type="radio"/> 4-5 <input type="radio"/> 6-7 <input type="radio"/> 8-9 <input type="radio"/> 10 or more	<input type="radio"/> \$0-\$20 <input type="radio"/> \$21-\$40 <input type="radio"/> \$41-\$60 <input type="radio"/> \$61-\$80 <input type="radio"/> \$81-\$100 <input type="radio"/> \$101 or more <input type="radio"/> No cost	<input type="radio"/> Definitely yes <input type="radio"/> Probably yes <input type="radio"/> Might or might not <input type="radio"/> Probably not <input type="radio"/> Definitely not
<b>Type of activity</b>	<b>Did your child engage in self-care?</b>	<b>Where did your child stay?</b>	<b>On average, how many weeks was your child involved in self-care?</b>	<b>On average, how many hours per week did your child spend in self-care?</b>	<b>How many summers has your child spent in self-care?</b>	<b>What is the main reason your child spent time in self-care this past summer?</b>	<b>Will your child spend time in self-care next summer?</b>
Self-care	<input type="radio"/> Yes <input type="radio"/> No	Home At a friends Other _____	<input type="radio"/> 1-2 weeks <input type="radio"/> 3-4 weeks <input type="radio"/> 5-6 weeks <input type="radio"/> 7-8 weeks <input type="radio"/> 9 or more weeks	<input type="radio"/> 0-1 <input type="radio"/> 2-3 <input type="radio"/> 4-5 <input type="radio"/> 6 or more	<input type="radio"/> 0-1 <input type="radio"/> 2-3 <input type="radio"/> 4-5 <input type="radio"/> 6-7 <input type="radio"/> 8-9 <input type="radio"/> 10 or more	<input type="radio"/> Work schedule <input type="radio"/> No alternative care was available	<input type="radio"/> Definitely yes <input type="radio"/> Probably yes <input type="radio"/> Might or might not <input type="radio"/> Probably not <input type="radio"/> Definitely not

						<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ Alternative care was not affordable</li><li>○ Disinterest in available activities</li><li>○ Other</li></ul> <hr/>	
--	--	--	--	--	--	---	--

17. What are the main reasons your child does NOT participate in summer activities? (select all that apply)

- Unable to afford activities
- Need to work
- Feel out of place/unwelcomed
- Lack of transportation
- Involvement in other activities
- Lack of peer involvement
- Lack of interest
  
- Boredom
- Lack of awareness
- Neighborhood safety
- Lack of caring adults
- Home responsibilities (i.e., caring for younger siblings)
- Other: \_\_\_\_\_

18. What summer activities would you be most interested in enrolling your child? (select all that apply)

- Leadership opportunities
- Academic assistance
- Sports programs
- Music programs
- Art based programs
- College preparation programs
- Employment preparation programs
- Other: \_\_\_\_\_

19. Overall, how would you rate the quality of the summer activities your child has participated in?

<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>Very poor</b>	<b>Poor</b>	<b>Fair</b>	<b>Good</b>	<b>Excellent</b>

20. During summer activities, I am satisfied with staff members' communication with me about my child's daily activities.

<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>Strongly Disagree</b>	<b>Somewhat Disagree</b>	<b>Somewhat Agree</b>	<b>Strongly Agree</b>

21. During summer activities, I am satisfied with the opportunities available to me to communicate any concerns or questions related to my child's or my experience with the program.

<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>
----------	----------	----------	----------

- |  |                          |                          |                       |                       |
|--|--------------------------|--------------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|
|  | <b>Strongly Disagree</b> | <b>Somewhat Disagree</b> | <b>Somewhat Agree</b> | <b>Strongly Agree</b> |
|--|--------------------------|--------------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|
22. During summer activities, I'm satisfied with the information shared with me about how to support my child's development and learning.
- |                          |                          |                       |                       |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| <b>1</b>                 | <b>2</b>                 | <b>3</b>              | <b>4</b>              |
| <b>Strongly Disagree</b> | <b>Somewhat Disagree</b> | <b>Somewhat Agree</b> | <b>Strongly Agree</b> |
23. During summer activities, program staff and administrators are generally professional in their attitudes, actions, communication, and appearance.
- |                          |                          |                       |                       |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| <b>1</b>                 | <b>2</b>                 | <b>3</b>              | <b>4</b>              |
| <b>Strongly Disagree</b> | <b>Somewhat Disagree</b> | <b>Somewhat Agree</b> | <b>Strongly Agree</b> |
24. During summer activities, I am confident that the staff and administrators have the professional knowledge and skills to meet the challenges of the job.
- |                          |                          |                       |                       |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| <b>1</b>                 | <b>2</b>                 | <b>3</b>              | <b>4</b>              |
| <b>Strongly Disagree</b> | <b>Somewhat Disagree</b> | <b>Somewhat Agree</b> | <b>Strongly Agree</b> |
25. During summer activities, I am satisfied with staff's efforts to continue learning new knowledge and skills.
- |                          |                          |                       |                       |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| <b>1</b>                 | <b>2</b>                 | <b>3</b>              | <b>4</b>              |
| <b>Strongly Disagree</b> | <b>Somewhat Disagree</b> | <b>Somewhat Agree</b> | <b>Strongly Agree</b> |
26. During summer activities, I'm satisfied with the effort that program staff and administrators make to build a positive working relationship with me.
- |                          |                          |                       |                       |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| <b>1</b>                 | <b>2</b>                 | <b>3</b>              | <b>4</b>              |
| <b>Strongly Disagree</b> | <b>Somewhat Disagree</b> | <b>Somewhat Agree</b> | <b>Strongly Agree</b> |
27. When your child participated in summer activities, have you observed that your child was wrongly disciplined?
- |                   |                 |                   |                     |                  |
|-------------------|-----------------|-------------------|---------------------|------------------|
| <b>1</b>          | <b>2</b>        | <b>3</b>          | <b>4</b>            | <b>5</b>         |
| <b>Not at all</b> | <b>Slightly</b> | <b>Moderately</b> | <b>Considerably</b> | <b>Extremely</b> |
28. When your child participated in summer activities, have you observed that your child was discouraged from joining a program/club?
- |                   |                 |                   |                     |                  |
|-------------------|-----------------|-------------------|---------------------|------------------|
| <b>1</b>          | <b>2</b>        | <b>3</b>          | <b>4</b>            | <b>5</b>         |
| <b>Not at all</b> | <b>Slightly</b> | <b>Moderately</b> | <b>Considerably</b> | <b>Extremely</b> |
29. When your child participated in summer activities, have you observed that other children your child's age did not include them in their activities?
- |                   |                 |                   |                     |                  |
|-------------------|-----------------|-------------------|---------------------|------------------|
| <b>1</b>          | <b>2</b>        | <b>3</b>          | <b>4</b>            | <b>5</b>         |
| <b>Not at all</b> | <b>Slightly</b> | <b>Moderately</b> | <b>Considerably</b> | <b>Extremely</b> |
30. When your child participated in summer activities, have you observed that your child was called racially insulting names?
- |          |          |          |          |          |
|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|
| <b>1</b> | <b>2</b> | <b>3</b> | <b>4</b> | <b>5</b> |
|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|

- |   | <b>Not at all</b>                    | <b>Slightly</b>                                   | <b>Moderately</b>                                   | <b>Considerably</b>                        | <b>Extremely</b>                                     |
|---|--------------------------------------|---|---|--|--|
| 31. When your child participated in summer activities, have you observed that people acted as if they thought your child was not smart?   | <b>1</b>                             | <b>2</b>  | <b>3</b>  | <b>4</b>                                   | <b>5</b>   |
|   | <b>Not at all</b>                    | <b>Slightly</b>                                   | <b>Moderately</b>                                   | <b>Considerably</b>                        | <b>Extremely</b>                                     |
| 32. When your child participated in summer activities, have you observed that people acted as if they were afraid of your child?  | <b>1</b>                             | <b>2</b>  | <b>3</b>  | <b>4</b>                                   | <b>5</b>   |
|   | <b>Not at all</b>                    | <b>Slightly</b>                                   | <b>Moderately</b>                                   | <b>Considerably</b>                        | <b>Extremely</b>                                     |
| 33. When your child participated in summer activities, have you observed that you child was treated unfairly because someone perceived them to be from a lower social class?                      | <b>1</b>                             | <b>2</b>  | <b>3</b>  | <b>4</b>                                   | <b>5</b>   |
|   | <b>This has never happened to me</b> | <b>This event happened, but did not bother me</b> | <b>This event happened and I was slightly upset</b> | <b>This event happened and I was upset</b> | <b>This event happened and I was extremely upset</b> |
| 34. When your children participated in summer activities, have you observed that your child was made fun of because they were perceived to be from a lower social class?                          | <b>1</b>                             | <b>2</b>  | <b>3</b>  | <b>4</b>                                   | <b>5</b>   |
|   | <b>This has never happened to me</b> | <b>This event happened, but did not bother me</b> | <b>This event happened and I was slightly upset</b> | <b>This event happened and I was upset</b> | <b>This event happened and I was extremely upset</b> |
| 35. When your child participated in summer activities, have you observed that your child was excluded from an activity because they could not afford it?  | <b>1</b>                             | <b>2</b>  | <b>3</b>  | <b>4</b>                                   | <b>5</b>   |
|   | <b>This has never happened to me</b> | <b>This event happened, but did not bother me</b> | <b>This event happened and I was slightly upset</b> | <b>This event happened and I was upset</b> | <b>This event happened and I was extremely upset</b> |
| 36. When your child participated in summer activities, have you observed that someone misunderstood your child's intentions or motives because they thought he/she was from a lower social class? | <b>1</b>                             | <b>2</b>  | <b>3</b>  | <b>4</b>                                   | <b>5</b>   |
|   | <b>This has never happened to me</b> | <b>This event happened, but did not bother me</b> | <b>This event happened and I was slightly upset</b> | <b>This event happened and I was upset</b> | <b>This event happened and I was extremely upset</b> |

**Youth Demographic Questionnaire**

1. What is your age?
  - 1) 12
  - 2) 13
  - 3) 14
  - 4) 15
  - 5) 16
  - 6) 17
  - 7) 18
  
2. What is your race?
  - 1) Black or African American
  - 2) White, non-Hispanic
  - 3) Asian
  - 4) American Indian or Alaska Native
  - 5) Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
  - 6) Hispanic or Latino
  - 7) Multiracial
  - 8) Other \_\_\_\_\_
  
3. What is your sex?
  - 1) Male
  - 2) Female
  - 3) Other \_\_\_\_\_
  
4. What grade are you in?
  - 1) 9<sup>th</sup>
  - 2) 10<sup>th</sup>
  - 3) 11<sup>th</sup>
  - 4) 12<sup>th</sup>
  
5. How many years have you lived at your current address?
  - 1) 1
  - 2) 2
  - 3) 3
  - 4) 4
  - 5) 5
  - 6) 6
  - 7) 7
  - 8) 8
  - 9) 9
  - 10) 10 or more

6. Who is your primary caregiver?
- Both biological parents
  - Biological mother and partner
  - Biological father and partner
  - Single biological father
  - Single biological mother
  - Two foster parents
  - Two adoptive parents
  - Single foster parent
  - Single adoptive parent
  - Step-parent
  - Guardian
  - Other adult relative: \_\_\_\_\_
7. Do you receive free or reduced lunch at school?
- Yes
  - No
8. Have you participated in summer programs in the past?
- Yes
  - No
9. What type of activities do you typically participate in during the summer? (select all that apply)
- Sports
  - Arts
  - Music
  - Clubs
  - Academic enrichment
  - Self-care (i.e., without adult supervision)
  - Leadership development
  - College preparation
  - Employment preparation
  - Other \_\_\_\_\_
10. How old were you when you first participated in a summer program?
- Before 5 years old
  - 5
  - 6
  - 7
  - 8

- 9
- 10
- 11
- 12
- 13
- 14
- 15
- 16
- 17
- 18

11. How many different summer programs did you participate in this past summer?

- 1
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5
- 6 or more
- None

Type of activity	Did you participate last summer?	Where was the program held?	On average, how many weeks was the program offered?	On average, how many hours per week did you spend in this activity?	How many summers have you participated in this activity?	What was the average weekly cost?	Do you plan to participate next summer?
Summer sports	<input type="radio"/> Yes <input type="radio"/> No	<input type="radio"/> Local public school <input type="radio"/> University <input type="radio"/> Community setting <input type="radio"/> Other: _____ _____	<input type="radio"/> 1-2 weeks <input type="radio"/> 3-4 weeks <input type="radio"/> 5-6 weeks <input type="radio"/> 7-8 weeks <input type="radio"/> 9 or more weeks	<input type="radio"/> 0-1 <input type="radio"/> 2-3 <input type="radio"/> 4-5 <input type="radio"/> 6 or more	<input type="radio"/> 0-1 <input type="radio"/> 2-3 <input type="radio"/> 4-5 <input type="radio"/> 6-7 <input type="radio"/> 8-9 <input type="radio"/> 10 or more	<input type="radio"/> \$0-\$20 <input type="radio"/> \$21-\$40 <input type="radio"/> \$41-\$60 <input type="radio"/> \$61-\$80 <input type="radio"/> \$81-\$100 <input type="radio"/> \$101 or more <input type="radio"/> No cost	<input type="radio"/> Definitely yes <input type="radio"/> Probably yes <input type="radio"/> Might or might not <input type="radio"/> Probably not <input type="radio"/> Definitely not
Summer arts	<input type="radio"/> Yes <input type="radio"/> No	<input type="radio"/> Local public school <input type="radio"/> University <input type="radio"/> Community setting <input type="radio"/> Other: _____ _____	<input type="radio"/> 1-2 weeks <input type="radio"/> 3-4 weeks <input type="radio"/> 5-6 weeks <input type="radio"/> 7-8 weeks <input type="radio"/> 9 or more weeks	<input type="radio"/> 0-1 <input type="radio"/> 2-3 <input type="radio"/> 4-5 <input type="radio"/> 6 or more	<input type="radio"/> 0-1 <input type="radio"/> 2-3 <input type="radio"/> 4-5 <input type="radio"/> 6-7 <input type="radio"/> 8-9 <input type="radio"/> 10 or more	<input type="radio"/> \$0-\$20 <input type="radio"/> \$21-\$40 <input type="radio"/> \$41-\$60 <input type="radio"/> \$61-\$80 <input type="radio"/> \$81-\$100 <input type="radio"/> \$101 or more <input type="radio"/> No cost	<input type="radio"/> Definitely yes <input type="radio"/> Probably yes <input type="radio"/> Might or might not <input type="radio"/> Probably not <input type="radio"/> Definitely not

<p>Summer music lessons</p>	<p><input type="radio"/> Yes <input type="radio"/> No</p>	<p><input type="radio"/> Local public school <input type="radio"/> University <input type="radio"/> Community setting <input type="radio"/> Other: _____ _____</p>	<p><input type="radio"/> 1-2 weeks <input type="radio"/> 3-4 weeks <input type="radio"/> 5-6 weeks <input type="radio"/> 7-8 weeks <input type="radio"/> 9 or more weeks</p>	<p><input type="radio"/> 0-1 <input type="radio"/> 2-3 <input type="radio"/> 4-5 <input type="radio"/> 6 or more</p>	<p><input type="radio"/> 0-1 <input type="radio"/> 2-3 <input type="radio"/> 4-5 <input type="radio"/> 6-7 <input type="radio"/> 8-9 <input type="radio"/> 10 or more</p>	<p><input type="radio"/> \$0-\$20 <input type="radio"/> \$21-\$40 <input type="radio"/> \$41-\$60 <input type="radio"/> \$61-\$80 <input type="radio"/> \$81-\$100 <input type="radio"/> \$101 or more <input type="radio"/> No cost</p>	<p><input type="radio"/> Definitely yes <input type="radio"/> Probably yes <input type="radio"/> Might or might not <input type="radio"/> Probably not <input type="radio"/> Definitely not</p>
<p>Summer clubs</p>	<p><input type="radio"/> Yes <input type="radio"/> No</p>	<p><input type="radio"/> Local public school <input type="radio"/> University <input type="radio"/> Community setting <input type="radio"/> Other: _____ _____</p>	<p><input type="radio"/> 1-2 weeks <input type="radio"/> 3-4 weeks <input type="radio"/> 5-6 weeks <input type="radio"/> 7-8 weeks <input type="radio"/> 9 or more weeks</p>	<p><input type="radio"/> 0-1 <input type="radio"/> 2-3 <input type="radio"/> 4-5 <input type="radio"/> 6 or more</p>	<p><input type="radio"/> 0-1 <input type="radio"/> 2-3 <input type="radio"/> 4-5 <input type="radio"/> 6-7 <input type="radio"/> 8-9 <input type="radio"/> 10 or more</p>	<p><input type="radio"/> \$0-\$20 <input type="radio"/> \$21-\$40 <input type="radio"/> \$41-\$60 <input type="radio"/> \$61-\$80 <input type="radio"/> \$81-\$100 <input type="radio"/> \$101 or more <input type="radio"/> No cost</p>	<p><input type="radio"/> Definitely yes <input type="radio"/> Probably yes <input type="radio"/> Might or might not <input type="radio"/> Probably not <input type="radio"/> Definitely not</p>
<p>Summer academic enrichment</p>	<p><input type="radio"/> Yes <input type="radio"/> No</p>	<p><input type="radio"/> Local public school <input type="radio"/> University <input type="radio"/> Community setting</p>	<p><input type="radio"/> 1-2 weeks <input type="radio"/> 3-4 weeks <input type="radio"/> 5-6 weeks</p>	<p><input type="radio"/> 0-1 <input type="radio"/> 2-3 <input type="radio"/> 4-5 <input type="radio"/> 6 or more</p>	<p><input type="radio"/> 0-1 <input type="radio"/> 2-3 <input type="radio"/> 4-5 <input type="radio"/> 6-7 <input type="radio"/> 8-9</p>	<p><input type="radio"/> \$0-\$20 <input type="radio"/> \$21-\$40 <input type="radio"/> \$41-\$60</p>	<p><input type="radio"/> Definitely yes <input type="radio"/> Probably yes <input type="radio"/> Might or might not <input type="radio"/> Probably not <input type="radio"/> Definitely not</p>

		<input type="radio"/> Other: _____ _____	<input type="radio"/> 7-8 weeks <input type="radio"/> 9 or more weeks		<input type="radio"/> 10 or more	<input type="radio"/> \$61-\$80 <input type="radio"/> \$81-\$100 <input type="radio"/> \$101 or more <input type="radio"/> No cost	
Summer school	<input type="radio"/> Yes <input type="radio"/> No	<input type="radio"/> Local public school <input type="radio"/> University <input type="radio"/> Community setting <input type="radio"/> Other: _____ _____	<input type="radio"/> 1-2 weeks <input type="radio"/> 3-4 weeks <input type="radio"/> 5-6 weeks <input type="radio"/> 7-8 weeks <input type="radio"/> 9 or more weeks	<input type="radio"/> 0-1 <input type="radio"/> 2-3 <input type="radio"/> 4-5 <input type="radio"/> 6 or more	<input type="radio"/> 0-1 <input type="radio"/> 2-3 <input type="radio"/> 4-5 <input type="radio"/> 6-7 <input type="radio"/> 8-9 <input type="radio"/> 10 or more	<input type="radio"/> \$0-\$20 <input type="radio"/> \$21-\$40 <input type="radio"/> \$41-\$60 <input type="radio"/> \$61-\$80 <input type="radio"/> \$81-\$100 <input type="radio"/> \$101 or more <input type="radio"/> No cost	<input type="radio"/> Definitely yes <input type="radio"/> Probably yes <input type="radio"/> Might or might not <input type="radio"/> Probably not <input type="radio"/> Definitely not
Other	<input type="radio"/> Yes <input type="radio"/> No	<input type="radio"/> Local public school <input type="radio"/> University <input type="radio"/> Community setting <input type="radio"/> Other: _____ _____	<input type="radio"/> 1-2 weeks <input type="radio"/> 3-4 weeks <input type="radio"/> 5-6 weeks <input type="radio"/> 7-8 weeks <input type="radio"/> 9 or more weeks	<input type="radio"/> 0-1 <input type="radio"/> 2-3 <input type="radio"/> 4-5 <input type="radio"/> 6 or more	<input type="radio"/> 0-1 <input type="radio"/> 2-3 <input type="radio"/> 4-5 <input type="radio"/> 6-7 <input type="radio"/> 8-9 <input type="radio"/> 10 or more	<input type="radio"/> \$0-\$20 <input type="radio"/> \$21-\$40 <input type="radio"/> \$41-\$60 <input type="radio"/> \$61-\$80 <input type="radio"/> \$81-\$100 <input type="radio"/> \$101 or more <input type="radio"/> No cost	<input type="radio"/> Definitely yes <input type="radio"/> Probably yes <input type="radio"/> Might or might not <input type="radio"/> Probably not <input type="radio"/> Definitely not

Type of activity	Did you engage in self-care?	Where did you stay?	On average, how many weeks were you involved in self-care?	On average, how many hours per week did you spend in self-care?	How many summers have you spent in self-care?	What is the main reason you spent time in self-care this past summer?	Will your child spend time in self-care next summer?
Self-care	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="radio"/> Yes</li> <li><input type="radio"/> No</li> </ul>	Home At a friends Other _____	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="radio"/> 1-2 weeks</li> <li><input type="radio"/> 3-4 weeks</li> <li><input type="radio"/> 5-6 weeks</li> <li><input type="radio"/> 7-8 weeks</li> <li><input type="radio"/> 9 or more weeks</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="radio"/> 0-1</li> <li><input type="radio"/> 2-3</li> <li><input type="radio"/> 4-5</li> <li><input type="radio"/> 6 or more</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="radio"/> 0-1</li> <li><input type="radio"/> 2-3</li> <li><input type="radio"/> 4-5</li> <li><input type="radio"/> 6-7</li> <li><input type="radio"/> 8-9</li> <li><input type="radio"/> 10 or more</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="radio"/> Parent(s)/guardian(s) work schedule</li> <li><input type="radio"/> No alternative care was available</li> <li><input type="radio"/> Alternative care was not affordable</li> <li><input type="radio"/> Disinterest in available activities</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="radio"/> Definitely yes</li> <li><input type="radio"/> Probably yes</li> <li><input type="radio"/> Might or might not</li> <li><input type="radio"/> Probably not</li> <li><input type="radio"/> Definitely not</li> </ul>



12. What are the main reasons you do NOT participate in summer activities offered by OST programs? (select all that apply)

- 1) Unable to afford activities
- 2) Need to work
- 3) Feel out of place/unwelcomed
- 4) Lack of transportation
- 5) Involvement in other activities
- 6) Lack of peer involvement
- 7) Lack of interest

- 8) Boredom
- 9) Lack of awareness
- 10) Neighborhood safety
- 11) Lack of caring adults
- 12) Home responsibilities (i.e., caring for younger siblings)

13. Other: \_\_\_\_\_ What summer activities would most interest you?

(select all that apply)

- 1) Leadership opportunities
- 2) Academic assistance
- 3) Sports programs
- 4) Music programs
- 5) Art based programs
- 6) College preparation programs
- 7) Employment preparation programs
- 8) Other: \_\_\_\_\_

14. Overall, how would you rate the quality of the summer activities you have participated in?

<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>Very Poor</b>	<b>Poor</b>	<b>Fair</b>	<b>Good</b>	<b>Excellent</b>

15. Overall, the activities really get me interested.

<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>Disagree a lot</b>	<b>Disagree a little</b>	<b>Agree a little</b>	<b>Agree a lot</b>

16. During the summer, there is a lot for me to choose to do.

<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>Disagree a lot</b>	<b>Disagree a little</b>	<b>Agree a little</b>	<b>Agree a lot</b>

17. During summer activities, I get to do things that I don't usually get to do anywhere else.

<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>
----------	----------	----------	----------

<b>Disagree a lot</b>	<b>Disagree a little</b>	<b>Agree a little</b>	<b>Agree a lot</b>
-----------------------	--------------------------	-----------------------	--------------------

18. During summer activities, I get a chance to do a lot of new things.

<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>Disagree a lot</b>	<b>Disagree a little</b>	<b>Agree a little</b>	<b>Agree a lot</b>

19. During summer activities, staff treat me with respect.

<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>Disagree a lot</b>	<b>Disagree a little</b>	<b>Agree a little</b>	<b>Agree a lot</b>

20. During summer activities, I feel that I can talk to staff about things that are bothering me.

<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>Disagree a lot</b>	<b>Disagree a little</b>	<b>Agree a little</b>	<b>Agree a lot</b>

21. During summer activities, staff really care about me.

<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>Disagree a lot</b>	<b>Disagree a little</b>	<b>Agree a little</b>	<b>Agree a lot</b>

22. During summer activities, staff always keep their promises.

<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>Disagree a lot</b>	<b>Disagree a little</b>	<b>Agree a little</b>	<b>Agree a lot</b>

23. During summer activities, staff care what I think.

<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>Disagree a lot</b>	<b>Disagree a little</b>	<b>Agree a little</b>	<b>Agree a lot</b>

24. During summer activities, staff always try to be fair.

<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>Disagree a lot</b>	<b>Disagree a little</b>	<b>Agree a little</b>	<b>Agree a lot</b>

25. During summer activities, staff think I can do things well.

<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>
----------	----------	----------	----------

- |                       |                          |                       |                    |
|-----------------------|--------------------------|-----------------------|--------------------|
| <b>Disagree a lot</b> | <b>Disagree a little</b> | <b>Agree a little</b> | <b>Agree a lot</b> |
|-----------------------|--------------------------|-----------------------|--------------------|
26. During summer activities, staff help me to try new things.
- |                       |                          |                       |                    |
|-----------------------|--------------------------|-----------------------|--------------------|
| <b>1</b>              | <b>2</b>                 | <b>3</b>              | <b>4</b>           |
| <b>Disagree a lot</b> | <b>Disagree a little</b> | <b>Agree a little</b> | <b>Agree a lot</b> |
27. During summer activities, staff think I can learn new things.
- |                       |                          |                       |                    |
|-----------------------|--------------------------|-----------------------|--------------------|
| <b>1</b>              | <b>2</b>                 | <b>3</b>              | <b>4</b>           |
| <b>Disagree a lot</b> | <b>Disagree a little</b> | <b>Agree a little</b> | <b>Agree a lot</b> |
28. When participating in summer activities, have you observed that you were wrongly disciplined?
- |                   |                 |                   |                     |                  |
|-------------------|-----------------|-------------------|---------------------|------------------|
| <b>1</b>          | <b>2</b>        | <b>3</b>          | <b>4</b>            | <b>5</b>         |
| <b>Not at all</b> | <b>Slightly</b> | <b>Moderately</b> | <b>Considerably</b> | <b>Extremely</b> |
29. When you participated in summer activities, have you observed that you were discouraged from joining a program/club?
- |                   |                 |                   |                     |                  |
|-------------------|-----------------|-------------------|---------------------|------------------|
| <b>1</b>          | <b>2</b>        | <b>3</b>          | <b>4</b>            | <b>5</b>         |
| <b>Not at all</b> | <b>Slightly</b> | <b>Moderately</b> | <b>Considerably</b> | <b>Extremely</b> |
30. When you participated in summer activities, have you observed that other children did not include you in activities?
- |                   |                 |                   |                     |                  |
|-------------------|-----------------|-------------------|---------------------|------------------|
| <b>1</b>          | <b>2</b>        | <b>3</b>          | <b>4</b>            | <b>5</b>         |
| <b>Not at all</b> | <b>Slightly</b> | <b>Moderately</b> | <b>Considerably</b> | <b>Extremely</b> |
31. When you participated in summer activities, have you observed that people expected less of you than they expected of other children your age?
- |                   |                 |                   |                     |                  |
|-------------------|-----------------|-------------------|---------------------|------------------|
| <b>1</b>          | <b>2</b>        | <b>3</b>          | <b>4</b>            | <b>5</b>         |
| <b>Not at all</b> | <b>Slightly</b> | <b>Moderately</b> | <b>Considerably</b> | <b>Extremely</b> |
32. When you participated in summer activities, have you observed that you were called racially insulting names?
- |                   |                 |                   |                     |                  |
|-------------------|-----------------|-------------------|---------------------|------------------|
| <b>1</b>          | <b>2</b>        | <b>3</b>          | <b>4</b>            | <b>5</b>         |
| <b>Not at all</b> | <b>Slightly</b> | <b>Moderately</b> | <b>Considerably</b> | <b>Extremely</b> |
33. When you participated in summer activities, have you observed that people acted as if they thought you were not smart?
- |                   |                 |                   |                     |                  |
|-------------------|-----------------|-------------------|---------------------|------------------|
| <b>1</b>          | <b>2</b>        | <b>3</b>          | <b>4</b>            | <b>5</b>         |
| <b>Not at all</b> | <b>Slightly</b> | <b>Moderately</b> | <b>Considerably</b> | <b>Extremely</b> |
34. When you participated in summer activities, have you observed that people acted as if they were afraid of you?
- |                   |                 |                   |                     |                  |
|-------------------|-----------------|-------------------|---------------------|------------------|
| <b>1</b>          | <b>2</b>        | <b>3</b>          | <b>4</b>            | <b>5</b>         |
| <b>Not at all</b> | <b>Slightly</b> | <b>Moderately</b> | <b>Considerably</b> | <b>Extremely</b> |
35. When you participated in summer activities, have you observed that you were treated unfairly because someone perceived you to be from a lower social class (i.e., low-income)?
- |          |          |          |          |          |
|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|
| <b>1</b> | <b>2</b> | <b>3</b> | <b>4</b> | <b>5</b> |
|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|

<b>This has never happened to me</b>	<b>This event happened, but did not bother me</b>	<b>This event happened and I was slightly upset</b>	<b>This event happened and I was upset</b>	<b>This event happened and I was extremely upset</b>
--	---	---	--	--

36. When you participated in summer activities, have you observed that you were made fun of because you were perceived to be from a lower social class?

<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>This has never happened to me</b>	<b>This event happened, but did not bother me</b>	<b>This event happened and I was slightly upset</b>	<b>This event happened and I was upset</b>	<b>This event happened and I was extremely upset</b>

37. When you participated in summer activities, have you observed that you were excluded from an activity because you could not afford it?

<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>This has never happened to me</b>	<b>This event happened, but did not bother me</b>	<b>This event happened and I was slightly upset</b>	<b>This event happened and I was upset</b>	<b>This event happened and I was extremely upset</b>

38. When you participated in summer activities, have you observed that someone misunderstood your intentions or motives because they thought you were from a lower social class?

<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>This has never happened to me</b>	<b>This event happened, but did not bother me</b>	<b>This event happened and I was slightly upset</b>	<b>This event happened and I was upset</b>	<b>This event happened and I was extremely upset</b>

## **Appendix F**

### **Unreported Study Findings**

During the individual interviews there were some interesting findings that were reported within the various subgroups. Findings were not reported due to a minority of participants reporting the same outcome. However, the information provided could be benefit from further investigation with a larger sample of participants. Following, findings that were not reported in the current study will be provided.

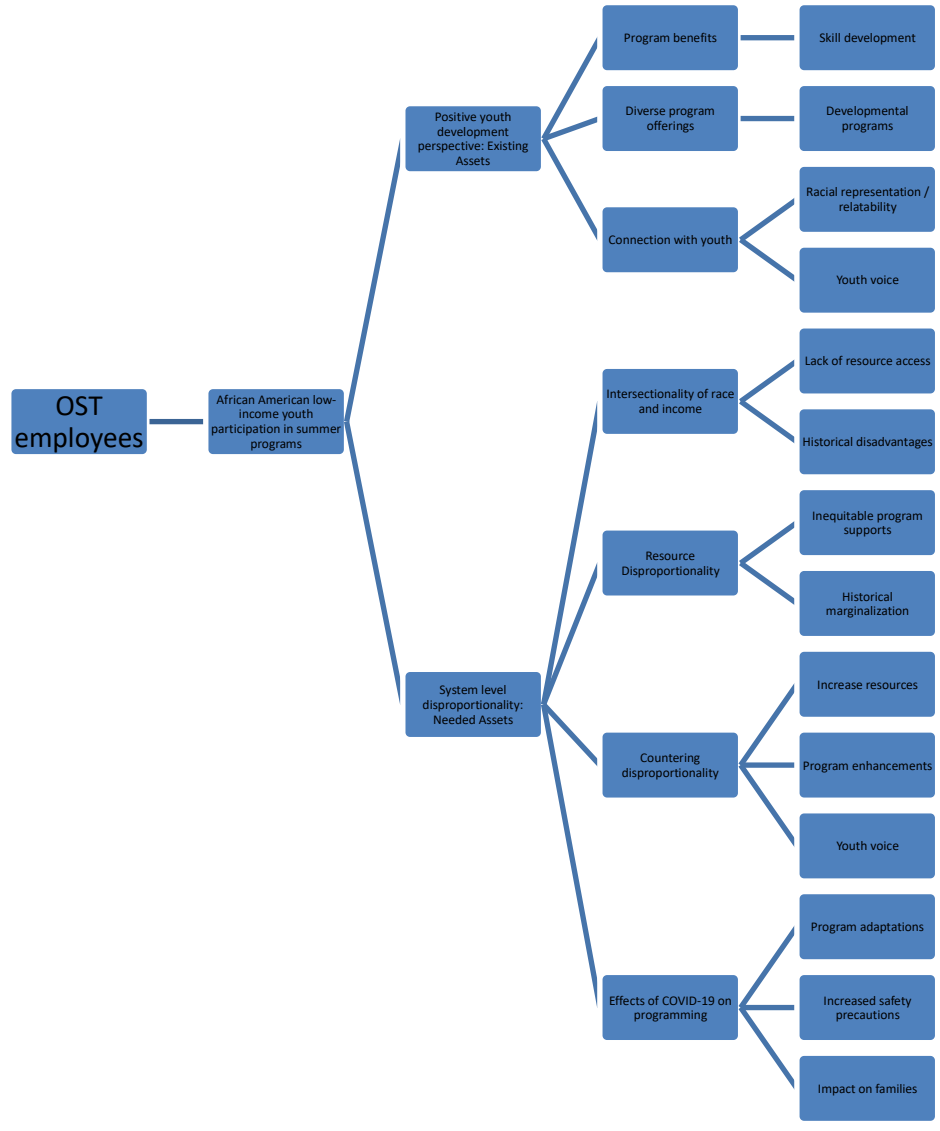
Youth and parents reported that youth had diverse experiences with respect to participation in summer programs. Because of the level of diversity of the experiences reported, summer program experiences could not be coded into one cohesive theme. However, the level of diversity that youth experience during the summer could be telling of why all subgroups verbalized the need for diverse program offerings. Also, there was some discrepancy with whether youth experienced challenges with participation in summer programs. Some youth reported experiencing no challenges while other verbalized personal conflicts with attendance such as feeling tired and lack of interest. Again, the lack of consistency between responses resulted in an inability to properly code findings.

There was a subset of OST employees that verbalized a dialogue between other community providers whether requiring parents to pay for programming would result in a higher level of commitment. It would be interesting to further investigate this particular finding with a larger group of OST employees. In addition, some OST employees emphasized the importance of having adults in OST settings that ‘care’ for children. The concept of caring was something

that came up for a few of the providers. Examining how this concept of caring is understood and exemplified by providers and received by youth and parents would be of interest. OST employees also verbalized the challenge of financial access to programs for lower middle class or working-class families. Some deliberated about how to make programs more accessible for those families that do not qualify for assistance but also cannot afford or experience challenges with paying for programming on their own. Finally, a small group of OST employees expressed a challenge with retaining youth in their programs due to competing with other interests that youth may have. Further investigation into the specific factors impacting OST employees perspectives and whether it is true for other providers would be beneficial to know.

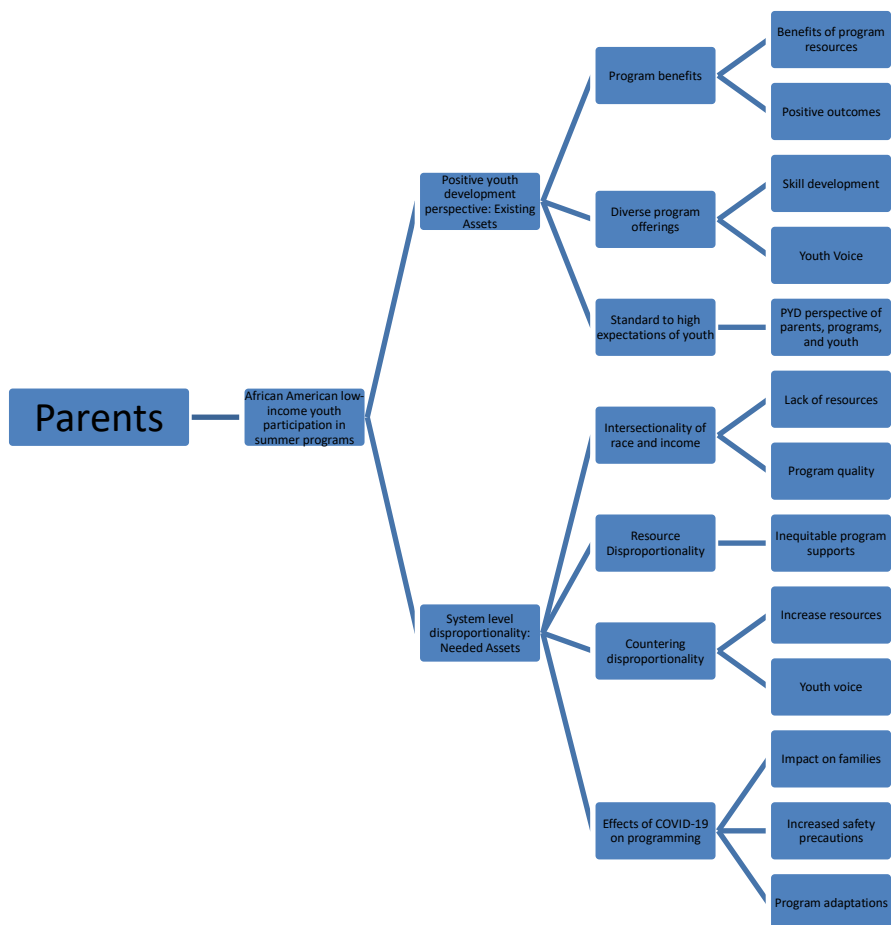
### Appendix G

#### Results Tree Diagrams – OST Employees, Parents, and Youth



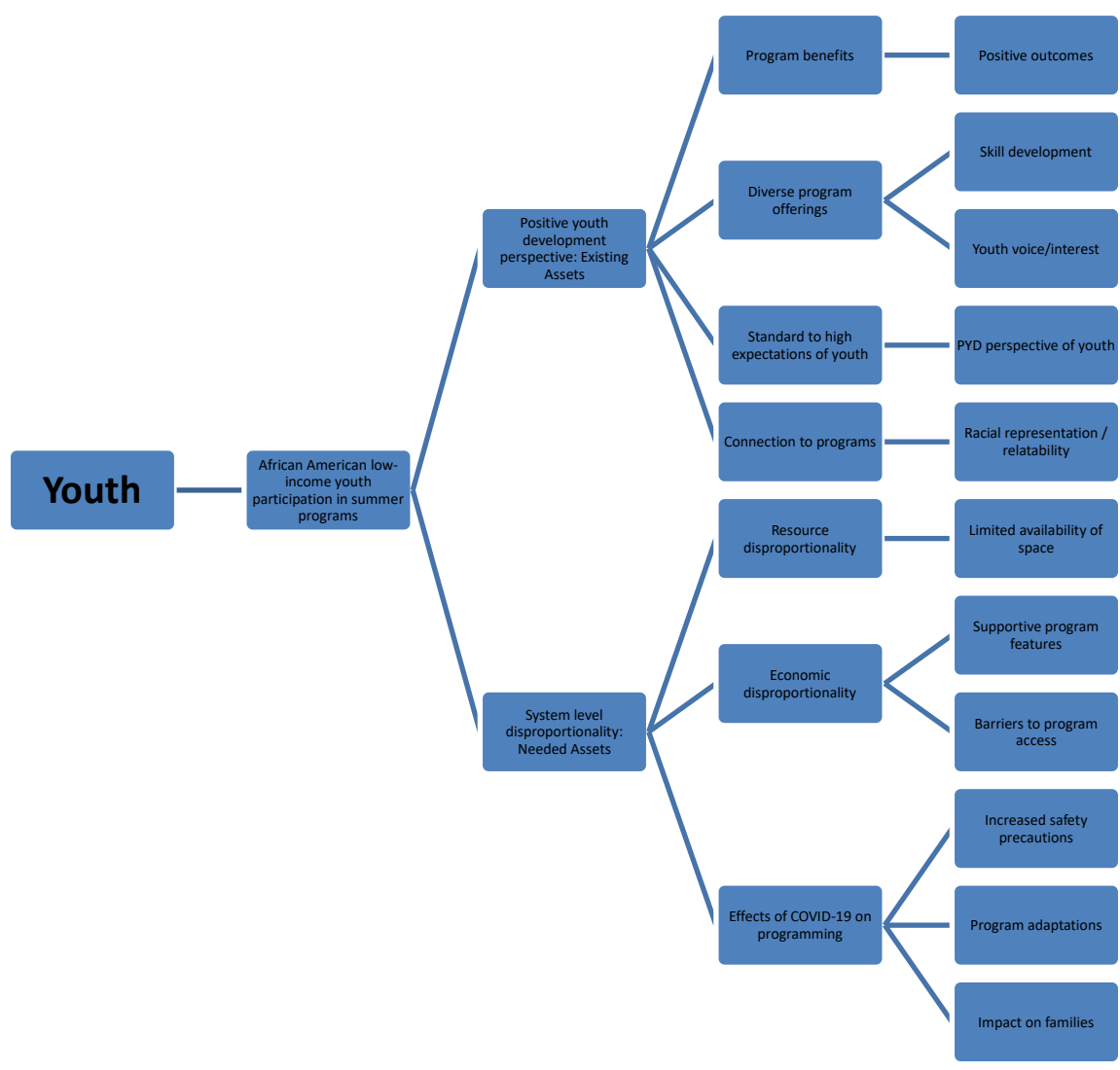
**Figure 3**

*OST Employees Study Themes – Tree Diagram*



**Figure 4**

*Parents Study Themes – Tree Diagram*



**Figure 5**  
*Youths Study Themes – Tree Diagram*

## Appendix H

### Memo Check Feedback

<b>OST Employees</b>		
<b>Name</b>	<b>Verbatim Comments</b>	<b>Action Taken</b>
Leslie	I read over the themes and have no feedback. This is spot on. Praying for you as you complete your research! Thank you for dedicating your studies to our youth; the future of our world.	No action required
Katie	Thank you Megan. I really think topics and explanations really sum up the issues In our community. Let me know if I can be of assistance in the future.	No action required
Keon	Yes I read it last week. Everything looks good to me. Good luck on your doctoral process!	No action required
Jennifer	Good morning, Everything looks good! The conceptual definitions capture the truth. Good job, thank you.	No action required
Ashley	Good morning, I would also add another program benefit: Parent and Family Engagement. Parents are able to work and maintain employment when they have somewhere for their children to attend during the summer. Another program benefit is that children are properly supervised when they are in a safe summer program. Everything else is covered very well. Thank you and best wishes to you as you defend your work!	Updated “program benefits” to include applicable aspects of recommendations
Karen	Megan, It was my pleasure to be a participant in your dissertation study. The themes generated are excellent, on target and expresses a well thought out process. I wish you the very best as you complete your dissertation.	No action required
Ralph	Omissions: The existence of Family, School and Community assets. <u>Recommendations: visit <a href="http://www.search-institute.org">www.search-institute.org</a></u> Consider incorporating Asset Approach terminology to help frame the themes presented. Consider incorporating Asset Approach terminology to design staff training and development. Consider and present other means and methods for decreasing “system level disproportionality” (sustainability).	Reviewed asset approach research for appropriateness of inclusion. Updated themes to reflect aspects of family, school, and community assets/needs.

Teresa	Hello, great job. I can't think of other themes to add at this time.	No action required
Lilly	<p>I read over it. It looks good for a professional in this field of work. I feel like its a challenging read for those who may not be in this field. I would avoid using words like "interplay" and "perpetually:.</p> <p>The definition for "program benefits" could read a "the exchange of racial identification, income status and the impact of access to resources and exposure to and receipt of information about opportunities"</p> <p>I hope this helps</p>	Reviewed suggestions to identify appropriateness for revision.
Brandon	<p>Hey there, my apologies for taking so long to get back to you. I hope that my feedback is still warranted and helpful.</p> <p>Also, I hope my critiques are not taken to heart and that they land in a way that provides understanding and proper context as I am not a scholar in the academic sense lol</p> <p>I do think the themes you have identified accurately reflect what I mentioned in my interview and is in alignment with what I hear and see in the community. I think you are spot on in capturing that.</p> <p>1) I think some of the definitions read as more descriptive than defining. Many seem to describe what the research is about and is designed for. Some of them do seem to define a set of parameters or themes as stated in the title, yet some read as more descriptive than definitions. I hope this makes sense.</p> <p>2) I would suggest putting what the acronym OST is somewhere on the document. I know you probably define it in the beginning sections of the paper/research. As far as this document standing alone and being read by a person outside of the field, I think that would be helpful.</p> <p>3) In some of the definitions of the themes there's a bit of redundancy in some of the language used. For example, in one of the definitions you mention improving in the first sentence then again in the next sentence or the one after that. I would suggest rewording or a little wordsmithing there. And check other definitions in each column to adjust for redundant statements.</p>	Reviewed suggestions and made appropriate changes to provide clarity, reduce redundancy, and accurately represent categorized themes.

	Thanks for all you're doing with this work and will do in the future with this work. Very important stuff.	
<b>Parents</b>		
<b>Name</b>	<b>Verbatim Comments</b>	<b>Action Taken</b>
Leah	Hi, I think these themes are great and I hope real change happens soon. God Bless and thank you for allowing me to voice my opinion.	No action required
Leigh	Hi Megan! We scanned the documents provided, and all looks great... you have done a wonderful job with your research!	No action required
Monique	I like program benefits the more kids get involved and the more activities and things of that nature is definitely a plus these are some good ideas here...	No action required
<b>Youth</b>		
<b>Name</b>	<b>Verbatim Comment</b>	<b>Action Taken</b>
Mary	...you have done a wonderful job with your research!	No action required
Lauren	... thank you for the opportunity to participate in your survey.	No action required

