Enhancing Career Decision Self-Efficacy and Navigational Capital While Preparing for a High School Internship

by

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ABSTRACT

All high school students deserve access to experiences that will help shape their perspectives of post-secondary options. They also deserve adequate preparation for said experiences. Minimal consideration is given to how to prepare low-income Latinx high school students for success in internships. Thus, this mixed-methods action research study utilized a Youth Participatory Action Research (YPAR) framework to investigate a semester-long internship preparation course. It explored how students recognize and develop navigational capital from the Community Cultural Wealth (CCW) framework as well as Career Decision Self-Efficacy (CDSE) while preparing for a subsequent internship. Data analysis and its triangulation were derived from participants' interviews and a focus group, as well as surveys from the treatment group and control group. Results suggest that the intervention was successful in preparing participants for an internship and increasing their CDSE, but results were inconclusive on whether navigational capital was affected.

Keywords: High school internships, internship preparation, youth participatory action research, Career Decision Self-efficacy, navigational capital

DEDICATION

To my husband, the dedicated partner, father, and educator without whom none of this would have been possible. To Brady and Olivia, our beautiful children, both of whom were born after I began this doctoral journey. Anything is possible with a support system as strong as ours! To my mom, thank you for instilling that belief in me. I could never understand your selfless nature until I became a mom, and now to see that outpouring of love upon my babies is life's truest blessing. Finally, thank you to Brian Holman, the founder and principal of the high school where my research took place. Your vision of empowering students to change their world, and support of the internship program as a vital piece of that mission, has indeed changed my world and inspired me to complete this research.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION AND PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

This study is about an intervention to support low-income, Latinx students in a small, urban, public charter school in the acquisition of navigational capital, career decision self-efficacy, and internship preparedness. The intervention is a semester-long internship preparation course designed to bolster the aforementioned constructs and connect students to a subsequent internship experience.

Statement of the Problem

Global Context

In her 2018 memoir, Michelle Obama details her first experience with what she calls "the apparatus of privilege and connection" (p. 58) as a freshman at a selective magnet high school in Chicago. Much like many low-income youths of color, Mrs. Obama was unaware of the hidden networks of success prior to coming into contact with a more affluent peer group. "Conventional educational provisions for working-class minority students, while officially designed to educate, may have always played an inadvertent yet key role in reproducing social inequality" (Stanton-Salazar, 1997, p. 5).

The apparatus of privilege and connection alludes to the dark underbelly of the oft cited "achievement gap" between low-income, minoritized students and their more affluent, white peers. The phraseology of the achievement gap became widely accepted with the U.S. Department of Health, Education, and Welfare's 1966 publication of The Coleman Report. More recently, however, scholars denounced the use of the "achievement gap," as it focuses on students' outputs rather than the inputs afforded them by their context within the education system. Welner and Carter (2013) proposed the now

widely accepted “opportunity gap” to highlight the disparate inputs across schools in the United States

> Vast opportunity gaps limit children’s future prospects… particularly among those living in poverty and in disadvantaged communities of color… Students who excel [in school] have often been exposed to vastly different economic and social realities beyond the classroom than those who do not (pp. 3, 10)

It is well documented that Latinx students are negatively impacted by opportunity gaps (see Garcia et al., 2018) as they often lack access to the aforementioned apparatus of privilege and connection of more affluent, white high school students. Wise (2012) describes this apparatus of privilege and connection as an institutionalized white advantage that has led to “unequal opportunity and access” (p. 27) for minoritized students. Carbado (2011) describes these unequal opportunities as the inherited and accumulated social effects of race, which shape income, wealth, and social capital. To monetize the magnitude of inequity, Wise (2012) states that the median net worth of a typical white family is 18 times greater than the median net worth of a typical Latinx family. To extend the analogy, it follows that a white student may have access to 18 times the non-monetary benefits of social capital compared to a Latinx student.

Unequal opportunities are documented in who has access to high school internships. Griffith (2001) noted that Latinx students are excluded from internship opportunities at the highest rate, whereas white students complete internships at the highest rate. Internships offer an experience beyond the classroom that can expose broader economic and social realities for traditionally excluded students (Bennett et al., 2016; Kenny et al., 2015; Murillo et al., 2017; Neumark and Rothstein, 2006).

Local Context

I am currently the Internship Coordinator at Enrichment College Prep High School (ECPHS, pseudonym). ECPHS is located in the Alhambra village of Phoenix, Arizona. ECPHS serves the Alhambra neighborhood of Phoenix, Arizona. According to the Arizona Department of Education (ADE), ECPHS consists of 91% low-income students (2020). ADE (2020) also indicated that nearly all of the students (98%) enrolled at ECPHS belong to racially minoritized groups, with 89% identifying as Latinx. Latinx students disproportionately represent 93% of the low-income students while making up 89% of the student population at ECPHS (ADE, 2020).

During the 2017-2018 school year, ECPHS initiated an Internship Planning Committee. As the entrepreneurship teacher at the time, I worked with the executive director of the school to ensure fulfillment of the school's mission to empower students to change their world, starting with community-based internships while in high school. I recruited internal stakeholders to form the planning committee consisting of: the school board president, another school board member and business owner, the high school principal, the college and career counselor, as well as input from a few students. After a semester of planning, the committee hired me as the Internship Coordinator, and I recruited a group of 25 students for the inaugural internship preparation course during the spring 2018 semester.

ECPHS graduated their first class in May 2020, which consisted of the inaugural group of interns; 50% of these graduating seniors had successfully completed an internship. As stated on the website, ECPHS strives to prepare students for college and

career through real-world experiences, and to serve the community using their unique interests, talents, and goals. The internship program, consisting of the internship preparation course in the present study as well as a subsequent internship experience, has been an integral component of this preparation since 2018, but its effectiveness has not been explored.

Conceptual Framework

Youth participatory action research (YPAR) provides youth with opportunities to study issues of social justice affecting their lives and then determine actions to rectify these problems (Cammarota & Fine, 2008; Morrell, 2008; Schensul, 2014). Students typically engage in YPAR projects in tandem with adults, in an effort to actualize social justice by addressing oppressive practices within the educational context (Bertrand, 2016; Schensul, 2014). Research suggests that empowering students as transformative agents of change, through the lens of the YPAR conceptual framework, will create a greater likelihood of setting and achieving their goals (Akom et al., 2008; Morrell, 2008; Murillo et al., 2017; Stanton-Salazar, 2011). The current study seeks to foster collaboration between students and teachers in the hope to challenge structural inequities for youth in school as well as the community in which they live and work by way of creating meaningful internship experiences.

This collaboration occurs within the context of an elective internship preparation course and is made possible by the critical action research paradigm provided by YPAR as knowledge production for social justice. Though YPAR as knowledge production for social justice is the least well-known type of youth participatory action research, Schensul (2014) also describes it as the most comprehensive of the approaches. Different

approaches to YPAR balance the process of research/inquiry, reflection, and action differently. Sydlo-Ward et al. (2000) developed the methods for knowledge production for social justice as a curriculum for empowering youth. The intervention in the present study is a curriculum for empowering students to seek and obtain meaningful internships, as such, this is the most fitting YPAR approach. Schensul (2014) states these methods, in relation to YPAR, include: "Research methods that enable young people to test their own experiences and ideas with those of others, both adults and peers, while enhancing their logical thinking, social and communications skills" (p. 833). Interviews and observations are used in the present study for participants to learn more about themselves, their classmates, and various internship opportunities in their community. YPAR as knowledge production for social justice is a balance of these types of collective knowledge production and action outcomes, in this case, the goal of internship placements for all participants.

Schensul (2014) provides a powerful example of YPAR as knowledge production for social justice in which high school students studied the root cause of teenage "hustling", then they worked to discourage it. Over the period of a school year, they advocated for more teen employment programs within their school, community, city, and state government. Schensul (2014) sums up this approach to YPAR, "By building on youth experience, the approach is culturally, developmentally and contextually appropriate; supports civic attachment and community affiliation and offers opportunities for career exploration" (p. 834). The present study seeks to intentionally culminate cultural, developmental, and contextual support of the local community while explicitly offering opportunities for career exploration.

In a six-year study on YPAR, Morrell (2008) describes the work as, “Spaces where young people attending city schools can learn and utilize the tools of research as they design and carry out research projects of interest to them and their communities” (p.156). The same is true for the present study, however instead of research projects, the young people are designing internship experiences and projects of interest to them and their communities. For example, one student was heartbroken by the number of stray dogs around the school campus. She researched the issue and found that overpopulation is an issue in many low-income areas of Phoenix. She then found local organizations that work to alleviate this issue and found a no-kill shelter that also offers free spay and neuter services. By the end of the internship preparation course, she had started her online training to begin her internship at the shelter and designed a project to begin chronicling the adoption process from the time a dog arrives at the shelter to their departure with a forever home. This example follows the tenets of YPAR (Bertrand, 2016; Cammarota, 2014, Caraballo et al., 2017) as she worked closely with her teacher and peers to research and design the internship, which in turn affects her educational and local context (by playing a part in helping stray dogs and creating an internship for herself). The goal is that this student is empowered to complete the internship and project, as a result of playing a central role in designing it.

The internship preparation course taught the student in the previous example about the tools of research and the power of action. Akom et al. (2008) support this “theory of action” stating, “We believe that YPAR is more than a research methodology; rather it is simultaneously: a methodology, pedagogy, and a theory of action for creating social justice and social change” (p. 6). Similarly, various academics posit YPAR as a

pedagogy (Caraballo et al., 2017; Scorza et al., 2017). In the present study, YPAR is a fitting conceptual framework (M. Bertrand, personal communication, April 8, 2021) encompassing method, pedagogy, positionality, and theory. Dr. Bertrand has written extensively on YPAR, and on its ability to foster both critical consciousness and self-efficacy in students (see Bertrand, 2014).

Although YPAR as knowledge production for social justice is used as a framework rather than a method in the present study, YPAR principles, pedagogy, positionality, and transformative goals remain. Schensul (2014) outlines the importance of teacher/researcher positionality in YPAR, stating

> Facilitators must assess the skills and abilities of youth participants and integrate their lived experiences into their work. Young people in marginalized environments… [experience] lack of recognition of strengths, assets and accomplishments. Youth-PAR facilitators thus need pedagogical, theoretical and methodological training that highlights the importance of positionality (p. 834)

The teacher/researcher (i.e. facilitator) in the present study seeks to empower students through the skills of research and collective knowledge production to help students/subjects recognize their strengths, assets and accomplishments. From there, students are empowered to research opportunities in their community and design internships that combine their past experience with future goals. In a review of YPAR in US high schools, Anderson (2020) offers a suggestion that is pivotal to the success of the internship preparation course in the present study, "It is recommended that [teachers] reflect on ways to maximize the opportunities for student researchers to exercise agency within the classroom" (p. 249). The agency offered to students in the present study is centered around creating their own internships and thus central to the success of the intervention and congruent with the goals of YPAR.

Ginwright (2008) calls YPAR "both an art and a method to engage youth" with the aim to "provide a deeper intellectual curiosity about our capacity as researchers, youth advocates, and teachers" (p. 14). In the present study, this art of engagement and empowerment through YPAR is the framework guiding the study rather than a strict methodology to be followed. "As pedagogy, YPAR has helped place knowledge production at the center of engaged teaching" (Caraballo et al., p. 315, 2017). In the present study, YPAR is used as a pedagogy with additional focus on breaking down the power hierarchy between the teacher/researcher and students/subjects. The traditional pedagogical power hierarchy must be turned upside down in order to break down the dominance and privilege of teacher/researcher and foster critical agency in students (Caraballo et al., 2017; Davis, 2008).

Statement of Purpose

The purpose of this project is to foster students' career decision self-efficacy, navigational capital, and internship preparedness through participation in the elective internship preparation course at ECPHS. In addition to a mixed methods action research (MMAR) approach, the study delivers an intervention that requires the empowerment of participants as influenced by YPAR. The internship preparation course was designed to promote collective knowledge production to empower students to secure internship placements during the intervention, and as two of the YPAR principles, these aims of knowledge production and empowerment will be two lenses used to analyze the data in the present study. The primary action outcome desired is for participants to excel in their subsequent 120-hour internships, but as this is outside the scope of the present study, their preparedness to do so will be analyzed via the internship preparedness construct.

For the qualitative portion of this study, semi-structured interviews and a focus group will be used to gather data on the effectiveness of the internship preparation course at increasing skills related to career decision-making and internship preparation.

For the quantitative portion of this study, constructs of *Career Decision Self-Efficacy, navigational capital, and internship preparedness* will be explored. A pre-intervention and post-intervention survey will be used to quantify these constructs in the treatment group; a control group will also complete the survey post-intervention to compare the effects on the treatment group. The first portion of the survey is an oft cited measure called the Career Decision Self-Efficacy- Short Form (CDSE-SF) (Betz et al., 1996). The CDSE-SF is a 25-item short form of the original 50 question Career Decision Self-Efficacy scale (Hackett & Betz, 1981). To measure navigational capital, Sablan's (2019) validated measure of navigational capital will be used. I have created and validated one subscale of the survey instrument to measure internship preparedness for the purposes of this study. This survey has been validated in Cycles 2 and 2.5 of the present study and will be validated again in Cycle 3.

Research Questions

Given the purpose of the study, several research questions guide its conduct.

Research Question 1 (RQ 1): What is the difference in (a) career decision self-efficacy (CDSE) and (b) navigational capital for low-income, Latinx students who plan to complete an internship compared to those who do not plan to complete an internship?

Research Question 2 (RQ 2): How and to what extent does the internship preparation course affect low-income, Latinx students' perceived (a) navigational capital and (b) internship preparedness?

Research Question 3 (RQ 3): To what extent does the internship preparation course affect low-income, Latinx students' career decision self-efficacy (CDSE)?

Significance of the Study

The intervention in the present study goes beyond the typical internship model which begins with placing students into work-based learning and supporting them while they are there (Bennett, 2007; Bennett et al., 2016; Burgstahler & Bellman, 2009; Hsu & Espinoza, 2018; Murillo et al., 2017; Ryken, 2004; Tyson et al., 2016). The present study is about a semester-long course, called an internship preparation course, to prepare students to excel in their subsequent internship placements. This intervention, called an internship preparation course, has gone through many iterations, and as such is an action research study. As mentioned above in the conceptual framework, this study is significant due to the framework established specifically by YPAR. This intervention establishes the student both as researcher and the target population of their research (Cammarota, 2014). As such, the purpose of the study is to better prepare participants to successfully complete an internship, by embedding them in all aspects of the preparation to do so. This portion of the study is significant because the research is very limited on how to prepare youth for internships and other work-based learning experiences (Bennett et al., 2016; Kenny et al., 2015; Murillo et al., 2017; Neumark and Rothstein, 2006) as well as the use of YPAR as a framework rather than a methodology.

Furthermore, this intervention is significant, because it attempts to measure the value of internships in the development of low-income, Latinx students' career decision-making and navigational capital. In a study on high school internships, Murillo et al. (2017) claimed, "Internships, in the context of low-income urban communities, are much

more than an extracurricular activity. They act as purveyors of capital typically inaccessible to marginalized student populations" (p. 250). In an attempt to quantify Murillo et al.'s (2017) claim, navigational capital is being measured in the present study. Navigational capital, as defined by Yosso's (2005, 2006) Community Cultural Wealth framework, is a critical race theory approach to education. As such, navigational capital has primarily been studied using qualitative methods (Sablan, 2019; Murillo et al., 2017; Yosso, 2006). However, the present mixed methods action research study will measure navigational capital both qualitatively and quantitatively. This is significant, as it contributes to the limited body of research around critical quantitative study, hereinafter referred to as QuantCrit. A more traditional and widely used quantitative measure will also be used to assess the impact of the intervention, called the Career Decision Self-Efficacy scale (Betz et al., 1996; Hackett & Betz, 1981).

In their work on Social Cognitive Career Theory (SCCT), and specifically career barriers, Lent et al. (1994; 2000) point out a lack of theory-driven measures to assess the effects of race and socio-economic status on career development. This gap in the research is being addressed in the present study in several ways. Quantitative data provided by the Career Decision Self-Efficacy scale (Betz et al., 1996) as well as Nondominant Cultural Capital Scale (Sablan, 2019) will be used to measure career development and navigation of low-income, Latinx students throughout the intervention. Winkle-Wagner (2010) observed that quantitative measures of cultural capital are too often focused on affluent forms of cultural participation, which has led to the inclusion of Sablan's (2019) operationalization of navigational capital in the present study.

Taken together, this study is significant in its contribution to the field of high school internships for low-income, Latinx students as well as the critical quantitative methodology that will be employed.

Previous Cycles of Research

The beginning cycle of my action research focused on student and teacher perceptions of the internship preparation course. As the cycles progressed, the focus shifted from college-going capital to the constructs of the present study. The process is summarized in Table 1 below.

Table 1

Results from Cycles 0, 1, 2, & 2.5

Cycle	Purpose of this Cycle	Methods in this Cycle	Key Findings
Cycle 0	Conduct reconnaissance research on the background issues and existing data on student and staff view the internship program	Semi-structured interviews were conducted with two students and two staff members	Internships have the possibility to positively affect student perceptions of post-secondary education, which necessitates subsequent cycles of research.
Cycle 0 Research Questions	1. RQ 1: What are students' perceptions about their opportunities to participate in post-secondary preparation including (a) college education programs and (b) job training, career preparation programs? 2. RQ 2: How might participation in an internship change students' perceptions about their opportunities to participate in post-secondary preparation including (a) college education programs and (b) job training, career preparation programs?		
Cycle 1	Explore the relationship between the college-going self-efficacy of high schoolers before completing internships and after completing internships	Gibbons and Borders (2005) College-going Self-Efficacy Scale (CGSES) was introduced for quantitative data collection and one semi-structured interview with a student was conducted; COVID-19 interrupted plans for post-intervention data collection plans	Need a third research question and control group: *RQ3 Is there a difference in college-going self-efficacy for students who successfully complete an internship and those who do not successfully complete an internship?*
Cycle 1 Research Questions	1. RQ 1: What are students' perceptions about their opportunities to participate in post-secondary preparation including (a) college education programs and (b) job training, career preparation programs? 2. RQ 2: How and to what extent is implementation of the Internship Preparation Course affecting students' (a) skills related to and (b) self-efficacy for pursuing post-secondary education?		
Cycle 2	The CGSES was revised to also include Internship Value-Preparedness items, and is now called the College-going Self-Efficacy and Internship Value-Preparedness Survey (CGSEIVPS). This will be used for pre- and post- intervention data collection. A control group was added to compare the treatment group's scores on the CGSEIVPS post- intervention.	Pre- and post-intervention CGSEIVP Survey, control group CGSEIVP Survey, post-intervention semi-structured interviews and focus group conducted	College-going self-efficacy proved not to be the best construct for the study and will be exchanged for career decision self-efficacy. Internship Value construct is unnecessary.

Cycle 2 Research Questions	1. RQ 1: To what extent is implementation of the internship preparation course affecting low-income, Latinx students' (a) attitudes toward and (b) preparedness for completing an internship? 2. RQ 2: How and to what extent is implementation of the internship preparation course affecting low-income, Latinx students'(a) skills related to and (b) self-efficacy for career decision? 3. RQ 3: What is the difference in college-going self-efficacy for low-income, Latinx students who plan to complete an internship and those who do not plan to complete an internship?
Cycle 2.5 Research Questions (RQ remained for Cycle 3)	1. RQ 1: What is the difference in (a) career decision self-efficacy (CDSE) and (b) navigational capital for low-income, Latinx students who plan to complete an internship compared to those who do not plan to complete an internship? 2. RQ 2: How and to what extent does the internship preparation course affect low-income, Latinx students' perceived (a) navigational capital and (b) internship preparedness? 3. RQ 3: To what extent does the internship preparation course affect low-income, Latinx students' career decision self-efficacy (CDSE)?

The purpose of Cycle 0 was to conduct reconnaissance on the background issues and existing data for this problem of practice. Cycle 0 consisted of qualitative data collection in the form of interviews with 2 internship students and 2 staff members at ECPHS. The findings suggested that internships have the possibility to positively affect student perceptions and aspirations about post-secondary education.

The purpose of Cycle 1 was to explore the relationship between the college-going self-efficacy of high schoolers before completing internships and after completing internships, but it shifted to reflect a more equitable construct in career decision self-efficacy, which encompasses the possibility to enter college or career directly after high school. This study was conducted to answer the following research questions:

Research Question (RQ 1): What is the difference in (a) career decision self-efficacy (CDSE) and (b) navigational capital for low-income, Latinx students who plan to complete an internship compared to those who do not plan to complete an internship?

Research Question (RQ 2): How and to what extent does the internship preparation course affect low-income, Latinx students' perceived (a) navigational capital and (b) internship preparedness?

Research Question (RQ 3): To what extent does the internship preparation course affect low-income, Latinx students' career decision self-efficacy (CDSE)?

An important addition to Cycle 2 was the use of a control group to also take the Career Decision Self-Efficacy Subscale (CDSES) to compare to the treatment group's scores on the questionnaire both pre- and post- intervention. For Cycle 3, the treatment and control groups also took the Nondominant Cultural Capital Navigational Subscale (NCCNS) to compare to the treatment group's scores on the questionnaire both pre- and post- intervention with the control groups scores post-intervention.

Definition of Terms

In this chapter, the following terms have been used interchangeably: internship, apprenticeship, school-to-career (STC), school-to-work (STW), work-based learning (WBL), and community-based learning (CBL), as the research has shown various terms used to convey the same meaning as "internship" in the present study.

- **Career decision self-efficacy**: people's beliefs regarding their ability to successfully accomplish the tasks related to making career decisions (i.e., accurate self-appraisal, goal selections, developing plans for the future, gathering occupational information, and problem solving) (Betz & Hackett, 1983)
- **Internship**: 120-hour work-based learning experience, which is often secured during the internship preparation course then completed in a subsequent semester

- **Internship preparation course**: the semester-long course that serves as the intervention in this study
- **Internship program:** The pathway of study at ECPHS consisting of the internship preparation course and the 120-hour internship
- **Latinx**: "Women, men, transgender individuals, and communities that come from the Spanish-speaking Caribbean, Latin America, and/or the descendants of former Spanish colonies in the Western and Southwestern US" (Garcia, Lopez, & Velez, p. 155, 2018). "[Latinx] incorporates more of the equity dimensions that I adhere to in my research" (J. F. Carrillo, personal communication, September 8, 2020).
- **Low-income students**: Students that qualify for free or reduced school lunch meet the poverty criterion as identified by the federal government (Food and Nutrition Service, USDA, 2020).

Organization of the Study

In the remaining chapters, I will present the following. First, I will present a literature review (Chapter 2) which includes discussion of high school internship opportunities for low-income Latinx students, self-efficacy, critical race theory in education, the community cultural wealth (CCW) framework, youth participatory action research, and QuantCrit. In the methods (Chapter 3), I will present the research design, information about the participants, the setting of the study, role of the researcher, introduction of the intervention, data collection and analysis, and the quantitative and qualitative instruments used in the study. Then I will include the results (Chapter 4) of the study and findings of the data collection and analysis. Finally, I will close with the discussion of the findings (Chapter 5), conclusions, and implications of the study.

Throughout the remaining pages, I seek to elucidate, elaborate, and hopefully eliminate, "the apparatus of privilege and connection" (Obama, 2018, p. 58) as it relates to internship experiences for low-income Latinx high school students at a small public charter school.

CHAPTER 2

THEORETICAL PERSPECTIVES AND RESEARCH GUIDING THE STUDY

This study is about an intervention to support low-income, minoritized students from a small, urban, public charter school to develop career decision skills, navigational capital, and self-efficacy through their participation in an internship preparation course. The intervention is a semester-long internship preparation course designed to connect students to a subsequent internship experience. Chapter 2 begins with a review of significant literature on high school internships in the United States of America, including literature on work-based learning and other school-to-career programs. Second, self-efficacy for career decision-making is discussed. This section includes Social Cognitive Theory (SCT) and Social Cognitive Career Theory (SCCT), which explain self-efficacy in detail. Finally, critical race theory (CRT), the community cultural wealth framework (CCW), and QuantCrit, are discussed. In this section I focus on social and navigational capital from the CCW, as well as the merits of using a quantitative branch of CRT in education for part of the analysis in the present MMAR study.

Figure 1 shows the overarching, umbrella nature of Youth Participatory Action Research as the conceptual framework for the present study. Encompassed by this framework are the two theories guiding the research, namely Community Cultural Wealth and Self-efficacy. In the center of the Venn diagram, QuantCrit is the final theory that supports the convergence of CCW and Self-efficacy.

Figure 1

Conceptual Framework

Work-Based Learning and Internships: Opportunity Beyond the Classroom

In a comprehensive analysis of public high schools in the United States of America, Boyer (1983) observed that students were under prepared for the transition from high school to higher education or the workplace and was one of the first educational researchers to recommend that students participate in apprenticeship or work-based learning to help prepare them for that transition. Though internships have been around since the early 20th century (Sovilla, 1998), it wasn't until 1994 that work-based learning was introduced to the mainstream American public, when the United States Congress passed the federal School-to-Work Opportunities Act (STWOA), which provided more than $1.5 billion to support career preparation in public schools (*School-to-Work Opportunities Act of 1994*). One of the three main objectives of the STWOA was to increase work-based activities such as job shadowing, internships, and apprenticeships.

According to the Arizona Department of Education (ADE), work-based learning may be accomplished through apprenticeship, cooperative education, internship, job shadowing, school-based enterprise, service learning, as well as several other avenues which "connect classroom learning to work" (CTE Work-Based Learning, 2020).

Passage of the STWOA brought educators and policymakers together in support of internships as a means to support high school students, especially students in economically disadvantaged areas, on their paths to college and career success. These terms: school-to-work (STW), work-based learning (WBL), community-based learning (CBL), internship, apprenticeship, and school-to-career (STC) have been used interchangeably throughout the chapter, as consistent definitions do not exist in the literature (Bennett et al., 2016; Kenny et al., 2015; Neumark and Rothstein, 2006). The underlying notion for any of these aforementioned programs was to expose youth to professionals in the field, rather than strictly to the more usual means of learning typified by teachers, textbooks, and classrooms.

Research has shown that these types of STW programs promote success in academic coursework as well as post-secondary planning (i.e. college or career) for high school students, particularly low-income students of color (Bennett et al., 2016; Kenny et al., 2015; Murillo et al., 2017; Neumark and Rothstein, 2006; Scales et al., 2005). Harvard Graduate School of Education's Pathways to Prosperity report (2011), Symonds et al. stated, "Students should have plentiful opportunities to participate in work-linked learning—ranging from job shadowing to internships—in secondary school" (p. 24).

Neumark and Rothstein (2006) studied the effects of school-to-career internships on student achievement using quantitative data from the 1997 National Longitudinal

Survey of Youth (NLSY97). Several school-to-career programs were covered in the NLSY97, including: job shadowing, mentoring, cooperative education, work in a school-sponsored enterprise; Tech Prep, internships, and apprenticeships. They used this data to study the impact of school-to-career programs on the early school-to-work transition, as students leave high school and make decisions about employment and higher education. Based on the results of Neumark and Rothstein's (2006) analysis of the NLSY97, "findings' on which the STWOA is based refer specifically to the problems posed by disadvantaged and minority youths . . . there is some indication that internship/apprenticeship programs may be particularly advantageous for the less-advantaged" (p. 392). Likewise, Kenny et al. (2015) explored the benefits of internships in a low-income, ethnically and racially diverse, Catholic high school. In this study, Kenny et al. (2015) concluded, "work-based learning, including internships, apprenticeships, job shadowing, and vocational-specific curricula, is a promising model for offering beneficial work exposure, especially for those low-income youth who have limited access to a variety of career role models" (p. 118). Taken together, the literature shows that high school internships are important for high school students' career development pathways, particularly for students who may lack exposure to "career role models" (Kenny et al., 2015).

While research supported internships for low-income students of color to feel connected to school and work, it has also demonstrated that such students continue to be under-represented in internship opportunities. In a study on over 4000 high school students' internship experiences, Griffith (2001) found that the largest demographic predictor of internship *completion* (i.e. starting and finishing an internship) was

whiteness, and the indicators most strongly associated with *non-participation (*i.e. never beginning an internship) belonged to Latino males. Knouse et al. (1999) found that white college students participated in internships at a higher rate than African American college students. They offered the following as a possible cause of lower internship participation, “The problem may not have been a lower selection rate, but rather a reticence among African Americans to search for internships [or] a lack of encouragement about the internship process” (Knouse et al. 1999, p. 39).

Similarly, Symonds et al. (2011) criticized the American education system for not evolving to serve a rapidly changing world of work. While a traditional four-year postsecondary pathway works well for affluent students who can draw on familial and social "career role models", the system does not work for low-income students and young people of color as “Many of these students [low-income students and young people of color] are frustrated by an education they often find irrelevant and removed from the world of work” (Symonds et al., 2011, p. 13).

Murillo et al. (2017) conducted a four-year study related to the experiences of 229 low-income high school interns of color in Los Angeles, California. In the first year, the study began as an elective program with eight students. By the fourth year it had grown to become a graduation requirement for 70-80 on-track seniors. The population consisted of 81% Latinx students, and the school was located in a largely immigrant neighborhood. Murillo et al. (2017) found that, “work-based learning experiences may help improve traditional education outcomes (e.g., grades and college entrance)” (p. 250). Taken together research supports the intervention of an internship preparation course designed specifically for low-income, Latinx students to obtain and complete high school

internships in the present study (Kenny et al., 2015, Murillo et al., 2017, Neumark & Rothstein, 2006; Symonds et al., 2011).

Social Cognitive Theory: An Introduction to Self-Efficacy

Social Cognitive Theory (SCT) was developed by Albert Bandura as an extension of his social learning theory (Bandura, 1977; 1997). SCT explains human functioning in a three-pronged model of environmental, behavioral, and personal factors (Bandura, 1986). While each of these factors will be discussed, the personal factor of self-efficacy will be the main focus for this study. For the purpose of this study, self-efficacy will be further distilled as career decision self-efficacy (Hackett & Betz, 1981).

Environmental Factors

Environmental factors consist of social supports and barriers. Bandura (1997) distinguishes three types of environmental structures in which those supports and barriers may exist, that include 1) the imposed environment, 2) the selected environment, and 3) the constructed environment. This intervention addresses all three of these structures: 1) the imposed structure of compulsory K-12 schooling, 2) the selected structure of this chosen elective, the internship preparation course, and 3) the constructed environment of the student's choice of internship site. For the purposes of the present study, the selected environment of the elective internship preparation course will be the focus of research, as was introduced within the Community Cultural Wealth framework.

Behavioral Factors

Behavioral factors are related to outcome expectations. Outcome expectations refer to the belief that, given the performance of a particular behavior, the consequence of certain results will follow (Bandura, 1977). The outcome expectations in the present

study are varied based upon students' understanding of the internship preparation course description found in the course syllabus, which states:

> This course is designed to prepare students for college and career by exploring individual skills, determining career pathways, writing a resume, cover letter, practicing interview skills and ultimately applying for and securing internships. This is the prerequisite course for an internship, which will help expand opportunities and build career networks. An internship is defined as a 120 hour experience, on- or off-campus, in an area of interest over one semester in place of the Thursday advisory. (ECP, 2021)

Internships help motivate students to work toward and guide their goals (Bandura, 1997), but there is no research on behavioral factors that help motivate students to work toward completing internships.

Personal Factors

Personal factors, also referred to as cognitive factors, consist of knowledge, goal, and self-efficacy (Chin & Mansori, 2018). Self-efficacy is the primary construct of interest in the present study.

Self-efficacy: An Overview. Albert Bandura coined the term "self-efficacy" to encapsulate expectations of personal efficacy determined by three psychological procedures: 1) whether coping behavior will be initiated, 2) how much effort will be expended, and 3) how long the effort will be sustained in the face of obstacles and aversive experiences (1977). In short, self-efficacy is defined as a person's belief in his or her capabilities to perform and/or exercise influence over a particular task or event (Bandura, 1977; 1997). Conversely, low self-efficacy expectations may prevent a person from attempting to perform a task even if he or she is relatively certain that performance of that task would lead to a desired outcome.

According to SCT, efficacy beliefs regulate human functioning through cognitive processes, motivational processes, affective processes, and selection processes (Bandura, 1995). These processes typically combine to influence overall self-efficacy. Cognitive processes involve forethought and self-appraisal of capabilities in setting and attaining one's personal goals. Motivational processes involve forming beliefs about what one can do, anticipating likely outcomes of actions, and setting goals and planning courses of actions to fulfill pre-set goals. Affective processes involve one's ability to cope with anxiety, stress, or other emotions that may be present in challenging situations. Finally, selection processes involve one's ability to select environments that cultivate certain potentials and lifestyles, while avoiding activities and environments that one believes will exceed his or her coping strategies.

In a study on the career decision self-efficacy of urban high school students, Conkell Ziebell (2010) states, "In regard to inner-city adolescents' self-efficacy beliefs, selection processes could be defined as the ability to exercise some control over the barriers they encounter (such as the effects of poverty)" (p. 9). The current study will examine the effects of what happens when cognitive processes, motivational processes, affective processes, and selection processes are positive and directed towards the goal of improving career decision self-efficacy. As a result, the participants with stronger efficacy beliefs are more likely to persist in the face of perceived and actual barriers (i.e. poverty) than those with weaker efficacy beliefs (Bandura, 1995).

Bandura (1977) identifies four sources of information by which efficacy expectations are acquired and/or altered: performance accomplishments, vicarious experience, verbal persuasion, and emotional arousal. Each of these four sources of

information will be further defined and explored under the heading of career decision self-efficacy.

Bandura et al. (2001) conducted a longitudinal study on 272 6th and 7th graders to determine the effects of self-efficacy beliefs on their aspirations and career trajectories. Children's perceived self-efficacy and academic achievement had the largest effect on their career trajectories; their beliefs in their academic capabilities foster a sense of efficacy for higher level occupational pursuits through its impact on academic aspirations and level of academic achievement (Bandura et al., 2001). In a study with marginalized high school students, Conkel Ziebell (2010) found, "results suggest inner-city adolescents with greater perceived career decision-making self-efficacy … are more likely to persist [in career goal setting] in the face of perceived barriers, such as few working role models, high levels of poverty, and lack of access to the opportunity structure" (p. 84-85).

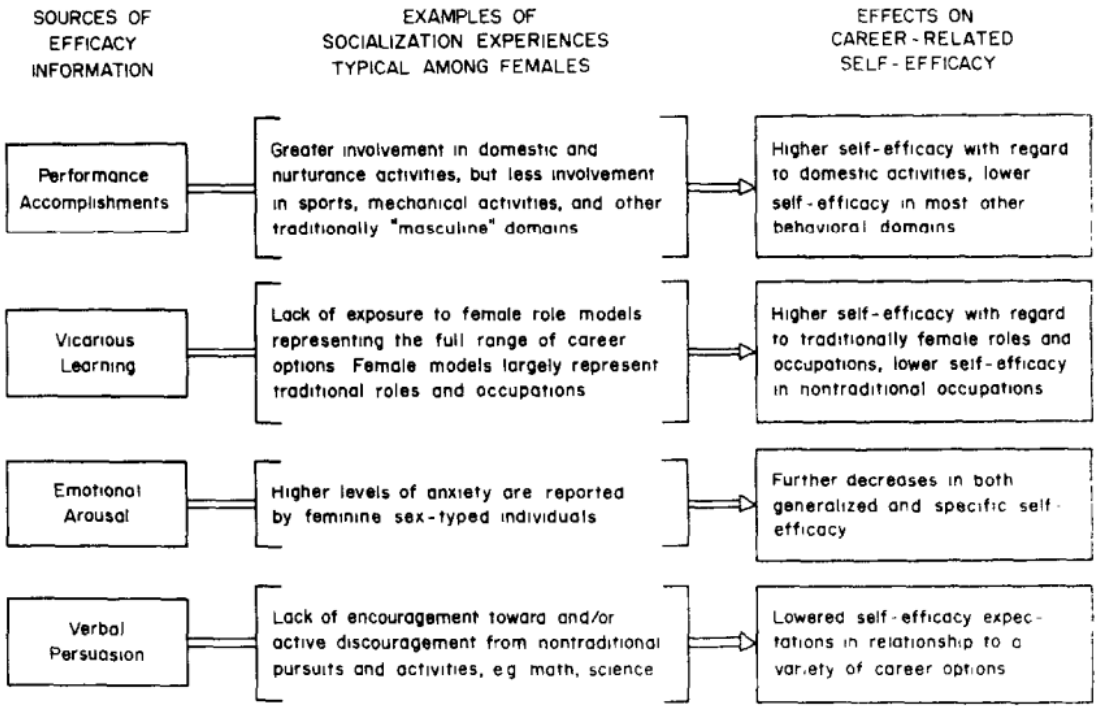
The literature supports the link between high school achievement, in terms of ability and aspirations, and career goals and trajectories. The internship preparation course is designed to be a bridge between in-school achievement and work-based achievement, which may impact their self-efficacy. This intervention is designed to help participants accomplish the tasks related to making career decisions (i.e., accurate self-appraisal, goal selections, developing plans for the future, gathering occupational information, and problem solving (Betz & Hackett, 1983) via all four manners of altering efficacy expectations: performance accomplishments, vicarious experience, verbal persuasion, and emotional arousal (Bandura, 1977).

Career decision self-efficacy. According to SCT, self-efficacy is achieved through motivation and beliefs regarding one's capability in performing domain-specific

tasks (Bandura, 1997; Betz & Hackett, 1983; Lent, Brown, & Hackett, 1994). Prior to Hackett and Betz' (1981) groundbreaking research on career-related self-efficacy, self-efficacy had only been applied to the understanding and treatment of clinical phobias (Bandura & Adams, 1977; Bandura et al., 1977). Hackett and Betz (1981) were the first to propose the concept of self-efficacy expectations in relation to career-related behaviors. Figure 2 shows Hackett and Betz' (1981) model depicting the utility of aligning the four sources of efficacy, traditional female socialization, and effects on career-related self-efficacy.

Figure 2

Model of Female Career-Related Self-Efficacy Effects



Note: Adapted from (Hackett & Betz, 1981, p. 333).

In the domain of career development, career decision self-efficacy refers specifically to people's beliefs regarding their ability to successfully accomplish behavior relevant to career options, career plans, and career-related decision-making processes (Hackett & Betz, 1981; Betz & Hackett, 1983). Career decision self-efficacy is defined as efficacy to accomplish the tasks related to making career decisions (i.e., accurate self-appraisal, goal selections, developing plans for the future, gathering occupational information, and problem solving) (Betz & Hackett, 1983). These four sources of efficacy: performance accomplishments, vicarious learning, emotional arousal, and verbal persuasion (Bandura, 1977) will be further explored as related to career decision self-efficacy and the internship preparation course in the present study.

Performance Accomplishments. Successful past performance accomplishments of a task or behavior tend to increase efficacy beliefs in relationship to that task or behavior. Performance accomplishments provide the most influential source of efficacy because they are based on personal mastery experiences (Bandura, 1982; 1986). It follows that successes increase perceived self-efficacy, whereas repeated failures lower perceived self-efficacy (Bandura, 1982; 1986).

In Figure 2, Hackett and Betz (1981) give examples of typical performance accomplishments of women. At that time, typical women were well experienced in domestic activities but had little experience in sports, mechanics, and other activities outside of the home. The expected effect on women's' career-related self-efficacy would be higher self-efficacy with regards to domestic activities and lower self-efficacy with regards to most other behavioral domains (Hackett & Betz, 1981). In the current study, performance accomplishments are discussed in the creation of resumes and the enactment of mock interviews. The expected effect on participants' career-related self-efficacy would be higher self-efficacy with regards to activities in which the students had shown prior mastery; the goal of the subsequent internships would be for students to translate their performance at the internship site into a mastery experience for heightened career decision self-efficacy in the future.

Vicarious Experience. Vicarious experience, also known as observational learning, is also a major source of information pertinent to increasing efficacy by way of observing other people succeed (Bandura, 1977). Bandura (1982) asserted that seeing peers perform a task or behavior successfully can raise efficacy expectations in the observer. This vicarious experience is particularly effective in increasing the observer's

self-efficacy belief when the observer has had little personal experience on which to base their evaluation of personal capability (Bandura, 1986). Conversely, observing peers fail despite high effort lowers the observers' judgements of their own efficacy (Brown & Inouye, 1978, as cited in Bandura, 1982).

In Figure 2, Hackett and Betz (1981) highlight the lack of exposure to women in diverse career fields. Female models typically represent traditional (i.e. domestic) roles. The expected effect on women's career-related self-efficacy would be higher self-efficacy with regards to traditional roles and lower self-efficacy with regards to non-traditional careers (Hackett & Betz, 1981). Much like the lack of exposure women had to diverse career fields, students often report minimal exposure to career trajectories at the start of the internship preparation course. Throughout the course, students participate in industry chats via Zoom calls with practitioners in an array of fields, as well as hear from internship mentors to learn more about possible placements for their 120-hour internships. The expected effect on students' career-related self-efficacy would be higher self-efficacy with regards to the roles in which they are exposed via the internship preparation course.

Verbal Persuasion. Verbal persuasion, also known as encouragement, is commonly used to get people to believe they possess the ability to achieve desired tasks or behaviors (Bandura, 1982). While it is possible to boost self-efficacy through verbal persuasion, it is actually more likely to undermine efficacy beliefs through negative persuasion (Bandura, 1986). In order to support the development of career-related self-efficacy as well as internship completion beliefs, verbal persuasion will be used throughout the internship preparation course to help participants believe they have the

ability to successfully obtain and complete an internship. “To the extent that persuasive boosts in self-efficacy lead them to try hard enough to succeed, such influences promote development of skills and a sense of personal efficacy” (Bandura, 1982, p. 127).

Hackett and Betz (1981) cite a lack of encouragement as well as active discouragement of women to enter nontraditional careers fields (i.e. math and science). This typifies a focus on the inefficacy that can be attributed to negative verbal persuasion. As a result, Hackett and Betz (1981) hypothesize that women will have lower career-related self-efficacy expectations in relation to various career options. Conversely, positive verbal persuasion occurs in the internship preparation course around strengths and interests assessments as well as practice developing and meeting SMART (specific, measurable, attainable, realistic, time-based) goals. For example, in the Clifton Strengths Finders © assessment, which is a required assignment for the internship preparation course, students are encouraged to focus on refining their strengths rather than dwell on fixing their weaknesses (Rath, 2007). With this continual improvement as the focus, students may be persuaded to try hard enough to succeed in their desired internship placements to ultimately boost their career decision self-efficacy.

Emotional Arousal. The final source of efficacy information is partly reliant on the individual's physiological state (Bandura, 1982). Namely, emotional arousal is the state from which people judge their level of anxiety and vulnerability to stress (Bandura, 1977). The emotional arousal of stress and anxiety is considered a co-effect of low self-efficacy and is not seen as a cause of low self-efficacy beliefs (Bandura, 1977).

Hackett and Betz (1981) report higher levels of anxiety in women. The expected result would be lower self-efficacy for women in all domains, including career-related as

well as general self-efficacy (Hackett & Betz, 1981). Some level of anxiety is common for adolescents when they are first introduced to adults outside their immediate spheres of influence (i.e. family, school, neighborhood). The internship preparation course is designed to create meaningful interaction between students and adults within the school environment as well as at local organizations to increase students' comfort in these situations, and hopefully lessen anxiety for future interactions. The desired effect would be higher general self-efficacy as a result of the lower levels of stress and anxiety (Bandura, 1977).

Social Cognitive Career Theory: Connecting Self-Efficacy to Career Tasks

Lent, Brown, and Hackett (1994) further conceptually linked self-efficacy beliefs for career tasks in Social Cognitive Career Theory (SCCT). This work extends Hackett and Betz' (1981) concept of career decision self-efficacy to include contextual variables that can affect the career development process. Two of the three primary paths of influence within the career development process are addressed in the present study. They are as follows: the first path occurs during the formative periods of educational and career development, when children's environments provide them with differential learning opportunities, resources, and rewards. In turn, these experiences contribute to children's beliefs about their personal capabilities at various career-related activities (Lent et al., 2001). According to Lent et al. (2001), the second path occurs:

> during periods of active educational or career choice making (e.g., selection of elective courses, apprenticeship programs, academic majors, or job training programs), certain contextual factors may directly influence people's choice options, in some cases overriding personal ambitions. For example, one's options may be restricted by economic conditions or, particularly in some cultural contexts, prescribed by influential others (p. 475)

The present study occurs in this period of active educational and career choice making, as exemplified in the example given in the quote above: the internship preparation course is both a selected elective course, and in some cases, leads to an apprenticeship program (Lent et al., 2001). As such, the course in the present study may have lasting effects on career choice making, and career decision self-efficacy is therefore a fitting construct.

Career Decision Self-Efficacy in Practice

Bandura (1997) explained the value of building career decision self-efficacy in a high school setting, saying, "An important initial goal in career development is to build students' efficacy to find an occupational calling for themselves that provides structure and meaning to their educational pursuits" (p. 428). As such, CDSE has been used in many studies with marginalized high school students (Flores et al., 2006; Gushue, 2006; Gushue & Whitson, 2006, McWhirter, Rasheed, and Crothers, 2000). McWhirter, Rasheed, and Crothers (2000) implemented a nine-week career education class with high school seniors and showed an increase in CDSE when compared to a control group. Wetzel (2017) used CDSE to explore the effects of internships on career decision making, in which there was no statistically significant difference on CDSE scores between those who participated in an internship and those who did not.

Social Cognitive Career Theory in Education

Education is described as pivotal in the first two paths of influence that contextual variables play in the career development process (Lent et al., 2001). Specific Learning Experiences are necessary in the development of self-efficacy (Lent, Brown, & Hackett, 1994) and outcome expectations, as detailed above in the section on SCT.

The extension of SCCT to the educational domain has been done by examining predictors of educational aspirations and expectations (Flores, Navaro, & DeWitz, 2008; Gainor & Lent, 1998; Lent et al., 2001, 2005). As suggested by Lent et al. (2000), contextual variables, such as race and socio-economic status, should be included in the model of educational aspirations and expectations to provide a deeper understanding of the contextual influences on the socio-cognitive processes (i.e. self-efficacy). Lent et al. (2000) also pointed out a lack of theory-driven measures for assessing contextual variables, which contributes to limited study of their effects.

In sum, a review of SCT (Bandura, 1977; 1997) and SCCT (Lent et al., 1994; 2000) has highlighted the role self-efficacy plays in people's beliefs, actions, and decision-making processes, specifically in regards to career decision self-efficacy. The intervention in the present study seeks to help students build self-efficacy towards their post-secondary trajectory, including college and career goals.

Critical Race Theory in Education: Why Race Matters

CRT was first introduced to education in 1995 by Ladson-Billings and Tate. Ladson-Billings and Tate (1995) begin their foray into educational inequality by situating their discussion of race to "move beyond the boundaries of the educational research literature to include arguments and new perspectives from law and the social sciences" (p. 47). Social activist and education critic Kozol (1991) delineated the inequities of school experience between low-income students of color and those of white middle-class students. Ladson-Billings and Tate (1995) brought CRT into the field of education to suggest that racism accounts for much of those educational iniquities Kozol cites, and several other education scholars have found the same (Delgado, 2011; Delgado Bernal,

2002; Liou et al., 2009; Ladson-Billings, 1998; Solorzano, 1998; Solorzano & Bernal, 2001; Yosso, 2006).

In their pioneering work on CRT in education, Ladson-Billings and Tate (1995) use Wellman's (1977) definition of racism, "culturally sanctioned beliefs which, regardless of the intentions involved, defend the advantages Whites have because of the subordinated positions of racial minorities" (Wellman,1977, as cited in Ladson-Billings & Tate, 1995, p. 54). In the present study, the researcher contends that low-income Latinx high school students are being subject to unintentional racism by the failure of the education system to expose them to meaningful internship experiences afforded to many middle-class white students. "A CRT approach in education has sought to understand and challenge ways changing structures of racism mutate to reproduce educational inequality both in and out of the classroom across time" (Garcia et al., 2018, p. 151). CRT in education seeks to understand these inequalities from a lens of the centrality of race, racism, and White supremacy in the educational structure (Ladson-Billings & Tate, 1995; Yosso, 2005).

In the introduction to their book on CRT in education, editors Dixson and Anderson (2017) question, "As a researcher, how do we understand and work within a context where people are both experiencing racialized inequity, but must also rely on the very [education] system in order to maintain their lives?" (p. 5). The present study endeavors to answer this question vis-a-vis an intervention called an internship preparation course in a setting where the vast majority of students are from low-income, Latinx backgrounds.

Community Cultural Wealth Framework: A Strengths Based Perspective

Yosso's (2005) community cultural wealth framework (CCW) has provided a CRT model to understand how students of color accessed college from a strengths-based perspective by explaining six types of nondominant capital these students already possessed: aspirational, resistance, linguistic, navigational, familial, and social capital. "By recognizing these as alternative forms of capital, students who come from racial minority and lower-class socioeconomic backgrounds can use these forms of capital to overcome the disadvantages they face when attempting to access higher education" (Yosso, 2006, p. 74). In the present study, low-income, Latinx students can also use these forms of capital to overcome the disadvantages they face when making post-secondary plans that may include higher education or other career pathways.

Yosso (2005) built off of the seminal research on funds of knowledge (FoK) (Moll et al., 1992; Vélez-Ibáñez & Greenberg, 1992) that students from nondominant classes bring to school. "The FoK theory is rooted in the concept of applying community knowledge to the school environment for improved student learning" (Basu & Calabrese Barton, 2007). The aforementioned application of community knowledge within the school experience is critical in the success of the school-based intervention in the present study. "The academic 'failure' of African Americans and Latinas/os often signals to mainstream observers their lack of effort, their cultural deficiency, or the non-existent assets of their community. Of course, this is a non-critical and non-intersectional analysis" (Covarrubias & Velez, 2013, p. 278). The present study seeks to harness students' community knowledge, skill sets, and interests to prepare them for internships

in the near future as well as career development pathways that extend into their lives after high school.

In a study on internships for low-income, minoritized high school students, Murillo et al. (2017) used the CCW as their theoretical framework, because their study was grounded in the belief that students come to school with experiences and knowledge that contribute to their perspectives about college and careers. Likewise, in the present study, the internship preparation course will focus on and build from existing social and navigational capital students bring to their schooling experience.

Social capital

Social capital has been defined as the opportunity to access resources through the participation in social networks (Bourdieu, 1986; Coleman, 1988; Jimenez, 2020; Lin, 2001; Perna & Titus, 2005; Yosso, 2005, 2006). According to Yosso (2006), "social capital can be understood as networks of people and community resources" (p. 45).

Wolfe and Haveman (2001) found strong correlations between neighborhood social capital and the level of schooling, income, and occupational status for the children of residents in that neighborhood. The idea that where a child grows up has an effect on his or her future goals and aspirations is not new. Since the Coleman report (Coleman et al., 1966), it has been widely cited that family background has a large effect on students' educational achievement (Becker, 1993; Gonzalez et al., 2013; Sander, 2006; Wolfe & Haveman, 2001). The need for ample social networks in low-income, minority dominant schools is imperative. To begin to address the "education debt" (Ladson-Billings, 2006) that has accumulated over time between minoritized and disadvantaged students and their white counterparts, schools need to reevaluate the forms of capital that students have

available in their existing networks. The role that education plays in reproducing social inequality has long been the subject of research and debate (Coleman et al., 1966; Kozol, 1991; Ladson-Billings, 2006; Stanton-Salazar, 1997).

In a study on 171 Latinx middle- and high-school students, Gonzalez et al. (2013) found a negative relationship between Latinx identity and educational aspirations. A possible explanation the researchers offered was, "there might be fewer examples of well-established Latino families who had completed formal education in the United States or stereotypes regarding manual labor as typical work for Latino adults" (p.114). This quote typifies the need for further cultivation of Yosso's (2005) definition of social and navigational capital within Latinx students' educational environments. As such, it is important to understand the origins of social and cultural capital.

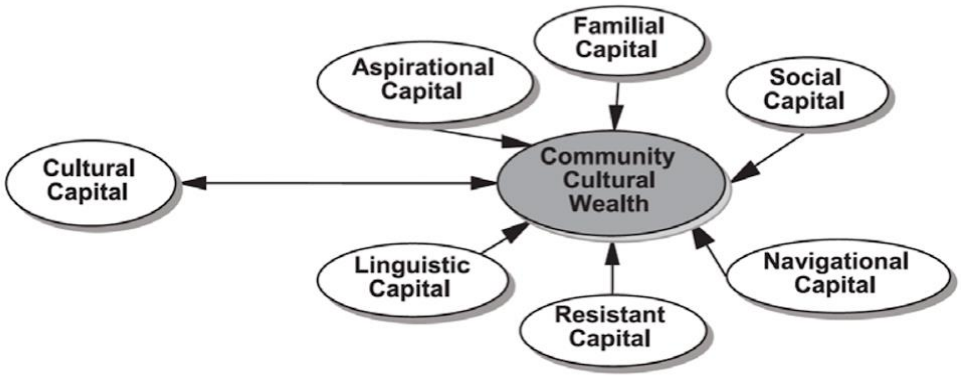
Bourdieu (1977) formulated the cultural capital hypothesis, which suggests that the effect of families' affluence on children's educational achievement is due to privileged cultural resources, such as linguistic styles or tastes in art and music. De Graaf et al. (2000) offer an explanation as to why affluence is linked to educational attainment in that, "well-to-do parents are able to offer their children access to more privileged, better schools, and extracurricular activities" (De Graaf et al., 2000, p. 93). As a society, we must counter hegemonic notions that social capital is only available to the elite, and that having "well-to-do parents" is a necessary precursor for a child's educational attainment.

After his seminal work on cultural capital, Bourdieu (1984) defined social capital as, "social connections, honorability and respectability" (p. 122) that work as a form of cultural capital in social settings, such as the school setting. Attempting to apply this form

of social capital to marginalized students is typically regarded as deficit thinking (Carter, 2005; Ladson-Billings, 1998; Stanton-Salazar, 2001; Winkle-Wagner, 2010; Yosso, 2006). By acknowledging and celebrating the assets found in marginalized communities, we approach a more critical stance on social capital. By doing so, we can begin to acknowledge the aforementioned achievement gap and education debt between low-income, minority students and their white counterparts.

Figure 3

Community Cultural Wealth Model



Note. Adapted from (Yosso, 2005, p. 78).

Figure 3 shows the reciprocal effects of Yosso's (2005) community cultural wealth on cultural capital. Research has shown that this acknowledgement of nondominant cultural capital alone may contribute to higher academic achievement of marginalized students (Carter, 2005). Ladson-Billings and Tate (1995) argue that the cause of poverty for minorities is inextricably linked to the dismal conditions of their schools and schooling opportunities, which is linked to institutional and structural racism. This argument further delineates the need for an expanded perception of social capital to honor where students come from while supporting their future aspirations. Research has

shown that students from low-income, minority neighborhoods rely more heavily on social capital they gain from their schools to assist them in post-secondary planning than they do from their personal and community networks (Choy et al., 2000, González, et al., 2013; Noeth & Wimberly, 2002; O'Connor, 2000). In order to break the cycle of elitist definitions of social capital, achievement gaps, and opportunity gaps, schools need to build pathways joining students' existing community cultural wealth with their post-secondary college and career planning. The following definition of navigational capital serves as starting points in the present study to inform this work from a strengths-based perspective.

Navigational capital

Yosso (2006) defines navigational capital as the, "skills of maneuvering through social institutions" (p. 44). Navigational capital, by definition, incurs some aspects of social capital, due to its place in social institutions. Murillo et al. (2017) posited that navigational capital can be improved through high school internship experiences, stating, ". . . participating in the internship program helped students develop their navigational capital by learning what to consider in future job prospects and how to ensure that they meet their needs" (p. 245). Navigational capital can also be bolstered in the present intervention as participants create resumes, prepare for interviews, and complete application processes for various internship placements.

According to Lapan's (2004) Integrative Contextual Model (ICM) of Career Development, for adolescents to set and reach viable career goals, they must develop social and work readiness skills as well as the utilization of social support. In the present study, navigational capital is viewed as the utilization of social support in a culturally

responsive way. The skills of maneuvering through social institutions are pivotal for career development within the internship preparation course.

In a quantitative case study of the CCW, Sablan (2019) developed a survey to measure navigational capital that was not only aligned with CRT but also statistically reliable and valid. Latinx community leaders also reviewed and approved the survey of navigational capital for the present study, in alignment with standards set forth for culturally responsive quantitative research on multicultural populations (Padilla, 2004).

Youth Participatory Action Research: Methodology, Pedagogy, & Framework

YPAR was explained in detail as the conceptual framework in Chapter 1. The intervention in the present study, an internship preparation course, will consider four important YPAR principles: (1) commitment to addressing issues affecting youth's educational context; (2) collaborative knowledge construction (3) transformative research that can improve the lives of the youth by initiating change within their context; and (4) students are empowered, as a result of playing a central role in shaping how schools meet their educational needs (Bertrand, 2016; Cammarota, 2014, Caraballo et al., 2017).

In the first principle, youth (i.e. participants/students in the internship preparation course) address the need for more work-based learning opportunities for low-income, Latinx high school students (Bennett et al., 2016; Kenny et al., 2015; Murillo et al., 2017; Neumark and Rothstein, 2006). In the second principle, youth work through knowledge construction with their peers and their teacher around personal skills and interests, needs in their community, internship opportunities and application processes, and this

culminates in a final project they design to represent their 120-hour internship experience. Davis (2008) connects knowledge construction to the power of positionality of the teacher/researcher, stating, “Critical action research takes the concept of knowledge-as-power, and equalizes the generation of, access to, and use of that knowledge. Critical action research is an ethical choice that gives voice to, and shares power with, previously marginalized and muted people” (p. 141). Because YPAR is a form of critical action research, it is important to consider the full extent of the students/subjects’ muted voices. In a study on participatory action research with Latinx youth, Bautista et al. (2013) speak to the value of teacher/researcher positionality when working with this population: “Our study points to alternatives to traditional research that take advantage of urban students' positionality and insights. We argue that the perspective of youth of color, especially in working-class, urban areas, is integral to our understanding of problems in urban schools as well as approaches to transforming inequitable learning conditions and structures” (p. 2). Allowing the students/subjects to co-create knowledge with one another is of the utmost importance in the present study.

The third principle holds that experiences must be transformative for youth, and for this Yosso’s (2005) Community Cultural Wealth framework (CCW) is utilized to gather quantitative and qualitative data on students' navigational capital before and after the intervention. Yosso’s (2005) CCW is aligned with YPAR with an emphasis on knowledge production for social justice. Critical theories, such as the CCW framework, focus analysis on the structural barriers to achieving greater equity (Budd, 2008; Davis, 2008). Yosso built off the seminal research on Funds of Knowledge (Moll et al., 1992;

Vélez-Ibáñez & Greenberg, 1992) that students from nondominant classes bring to school, so this is a fitting measure of transformation.

Finally, Cammarota (2014) believes the fourth principle, empowerment, is the most important part of the YPAR framework when it comes to education-based research. "Being able to recognize the pitfalls of educational institutions means that young people reach a higher level of empowerment, which enables them to bring changes to the institutions that have the most impact on their lives. They can comprehend the difference between a good and bad education" (Cammarota, 2014, p. 110). In this study, youth empowerment extends to Bandura's (1977) self-efficacy construct that will be used to measure youths' beliefs about their agency to change their educational context. Stanton-Salazar (2011) elucidates the need for low-income, minoritized students to experience empowerment, such as that at the heart of this final principle of YPAR, stating, "Empowerment goes far beyond the provision of institutional support ... a series of empowerment experiences that lead to … a critical awareness about those societal structures, institutional policies and practices, and environmental conditions that hinder their efforts to achieve their goals" (p. 1091).

QuantCrit: Closing the Gap Between Critical Theory & Quantitative Methods

In the last decade or so, researchers have begun to explore quantitative methods from a critical race perspective (Covarrubias, 2011; Covarrubias & Velez, 2013; Garcia et al., 2018; Gillborn et al., 2018; Jang, 2020; Sablan, 2019; Teranishi, 2007). This critical quantitative work has been done under various titles, such as Critical Race Quantitative Intersectionality (CRQI) and Critical Race Transformative Convergent

Mixed Methods (CRTCMM). CRQI is inspired by the guiding tenets of CRT in education (Covarrubias, 2011) and insists that numbers must be contextualized and do not ‘‘speak for themselves’’ (Covarrubias & Velez, 2013, p. 278). Furthermore, CRQI suggests that quantitative research is also designed to advance social justice and that transdisciplinary approaches are necessary to address injustice (Covarrubias & Velez, 2013). In their 2013 work which created CRQI, Covarrubias and Velez assert that, “It is time for CRT to develop a framework to guide quantitative research that, we argue, adds value to the overall impact CRT has in the field of education” (p. 272). QuantCrit is built upon similar tenets as CRQI.

CRTCMM confronts the idea that racism permeates educational institutions and must be dealt with by the researchers within mixed methods research in order not to further marginalize people of color through the analysis of quantitative data (Garcia & Mayorga, 2017). This mixed methods approach advocates for the same disaggregation of quantitative racial data that is necessitated by both CRQI and QuantCrit.

QuantCrit is a methodological sub-field of critical race studies in education which gained traction during a panel at the 2015 Critical Race Studies in Education Association Conference (Garcia et al., 2018). Gillborn et al. (2018) are credited with coining the name QuantCrit. In their work on framing QuantCrit as a viable critical research methodology, Gillborn et al. (2018) frame the following five principles to guide this field of critical quantitative work: a) racism permeates our society and is not “readily amenable to quantification” (p. 158), b) numbers are not neutral and should be analyzed to understand their role in serving White interests, c) categories are not natural and thus must be critically examined, d) data cannot speak for itself and should be analyzed with insight

from historically marginalized groups, e) quantitative analysis has no inherent value but can play a role in advancing social justice aims. These pillars have framed the present study from the inception of the research questions through the cycles of data collection and are inherent in the youth participatory action research framework that has been employed. "Quantitative approaches cannot be adopted for racial justice aims without an ontological reckoning that considers historical, social, political, and economic power relations" (Garcia et al., 2018, p. 149).

In a groundbreaking article on the methodological development of a QuantCrit measure, Sablan (2019) defines QuantCrit as a theory "that emphasizes the assets of students of color rather than deficits and/or speaks to the overarching structure of racism and racial inequity (vs. individualistic determination) in framing, interpretation, and approach" (p. 184). In order to complete these aims of QuantCrit, Sablan (2019) recommended integrating quantitative methods into CRT frameworks (i.e. the CCW framework, within a YPAR research design). As mentioned above in the section on navigational capital, Sablan (2019) operationalized Yosso's (2005) CCW framework using the QuantCrit framework; Sablan (2019) then proved reliability and validity for navigational and familial capital. This is to say that the survey instrument was critically constructed, analyzed, and validated using tenets of both CRT and quantitative theory.

Implications for the Study Based on Literature

In a study on two large, urban, high schools with mandatory internship programs, Bennett (2016) found that increasing capacity for "fair equality of opportunity" (p. 578) and reducing potential for reproducing structural inequities requires critical agency (i.e. understanding of local context) on the part of the school implementing the programs. As

such, the utilization of CRT and the CCW framework to understand the community wealth students bring with them to the present intervention is crucial to foreground this research on low-income, Latinx high school students. Research on internships in a low-income, urban, high school setting is limited (Murillo et al., 2017), so this study builds upon that limited body of research. The intervention in the present study focuses on resolving the problem of practice that low-income, Latinx students have limited opportunities to participate in internships and other forms of navigational capital, thus precluding them from building their career decision self-efficacy. Efforts to expand internship preparation for low-income, Latinx high school students offer the promise to support their post-secondary pathways by enhancing their navigational capital as well as improving their career decision self-efficacy. Taken together, these measures may help students to better understand, plan, and realize their career goals after high school.

CHAPTER 3

METHOD

This study was conducted to examine the effects of an internship preparation course on college and career perceptions and aspirations for low-income, Latinx high school students. In this chapter, I provide information about the methods to be used in Cycle 3 of this action research study. Specifically, I present material about the research design, setting for the work, participants, role of the researcher, intervention, instruments, and timeline/procedures.

Action Research

Action research consists of a continuous process of implementation, reflection, and reiteration (Creswell & Guetterman, 2019). This process of "cycling back" is demonstrated in the reciprocal nature of Cycle 0, Cycle 1, Cycle 2, Cycle 2.5, and Cycle 3 of the present study. In Cycle 0, qualitative interview questions were asked of students and staff, and similar, yet slightly tweaked questions were asked of students again at the end of Cycle 1, Cycle 2, Cycle 2.5, and Cycle 3.

As mentioned in the introduction and conceptual framework, this will be an Action Research study influenced by YPAR due to the centrality of high school students' involvement as both researchers and target population (Bertrand, 2016; Cammarota and Fine, 2008; Schensul, 2014). Action research was chosen to reflect the constant improvement process inherent in teaching and learning, and YPAR was specifically chosen for its liberatory roots in critical theory (Budd, 2008; Davis, 2008; Schensul, 2014) and focus on social justice outcomes.

Research Design

This AR study will employ an exploratory, concurrent mixed-methods approach, which involves the analysis of qualitative and quantitative data at the same time (Ivankova, 2015; Mertler, 2017). Through the combined data collected from surveys, interviews, and a focus group, I will be able to triangulate the data across participants and data types and thus corroborate findings and enhance credibility of the study's conclusions (Creswell & Guetterman, 2019; Ivankova, 2015; Mertler, 2017). This is an explanatory mixed methods study, in which the quantitative data will be the main focus of the analysis and the qualitative data will be used to support, explain, and elaborate the findings of the surveys (Ivankova, 2015). Complementarity between quantitative and qualitative data is found by elaborating, enhancing, or illustrating the findings of one method with those from the other method (Greene, 2007; Greene, Caracelli, & Graham, 1989). Results from this study reveal complementarity in the development of internship preparedness and career decision self-efficacy, though navigational capital was only illustrated in the qualitative data.

Pioneers in the field of Critical Race Quantitative Intersectionality (CRQI), Covarrubias and Velez (2013) describe the power and necessity of mixed methods study, "CRQI extends our critical race research toolbox and helps us develop the necessary skills that satisfy the tenets of critical race scholarship, both quantitatively and qualitatively, and supports our efforts to transform the lives of the communities we serve" (p. 282). CRQI is a precursor to the QuantCrit theory used in the present study, and as such, supports the efforts and importance of this approach.

Setting

This study took place during the fall 2021 semester at Enrichment College Prep High School (ECPHS) in Phoenix, Arizona. ECPHS is a free public charter high school with 305 students. ECPHS serves the Alhambra neighborhood of Phoenix, Arizona. According to the Arizona Department of Education, ECPHS consists of 91% low-income students (2020). ADE (2020) also indicated that nearly all the students (98%) enrolled at ECPHS belong to racially minoritized groups, with 89% identifying as Latinx.

Recall from chapter 1 that ECPHS instituted the innovation, an internship program consisting of the internship prep course and a subsequent internship, for the spring 2018 semester. I helped develop the internship program by creating and teaching the curriculum for the internship preparation course as well as serving as the internship coordinator starting in the fall 2018 semester. 50% of the 2020 graduating class successfully completed an internship, whereas only 32% of the 2021 graduating class successfully completed an internship (largely due to Covid complications), and 80% of the 2022 graduating class successfully completed an internship.

Population, Participants, and Sampling

Population

Cycle 3 of this study focused on the experiences of current sophomores, juniors, and seniors at ECPHS enrolled in the internship preparation course. The students in this study selected the internship preparation course as their elective, and the only prerequisites are that the student is a) on track for graduation and b) a sophomore, junior, or senior (freshmen are excluded from this population).

Participants

During the semester in which this study took place, eleven teenagers, ages fifteen to seventeen, who are enrolled in an elective internship preparation course at ECPHS participated in the study. The gender, age, race/ethnicity and income status of these students is shown in Table 2.

Table 2

Table of Participants

Participants	Gender	Age	Race/Ethnicity	Income Status
Alice	Female	16	Hispanic/Latinx	Free Lunch
Andrea	Female	16	Hispanic/Latinx	Free Lunch
Tyler	Female	16	Hispanic/Latinx	Free Lunch
Nohemi	Female	16	African American	Free Lunch
Ader	Male	16	Hispanic/Latinx	Free Lunch
Cairo	Male	16	Hispanic/Latinx	Free Lunch
Danny	Male	16	Hispanic/Latinx	Free Lunch
David	Male	17	Hispanic/Latinx	Free Lunch
Jose	Male	16	Hispanic/Latinx	Free Lunch
Manuel	Male	15	Hispanic/Latinx	Free Lunch
Donny	Male	16	White	Reduced Lunch

As shown above, 100% of these identified students qualify for free or reduced lunch. According to the Food and Nutrition Service (2020) of the United States Department of Agriculture, students are eligible for free lunch if their family makes up to 1.3 times the Federal income poverty guidelines or reduced lunch price if their family makes up to 1.85 times the Federal income poverty guidelines. In this study, students who qualify for free or reduced lunch prices will be classified as low-income going forward.

I received approval from the Office of Research Integrity and Assurance's Institutional Review Board (IRB) to conduct this cycle. Because all of these students are

under 18-years-old, their parents have also consented to their students' participation in the study.

Sampling

This study conducted a purposeful sample of participants in the internship preparation course. Because the sample size of his study was small, all students within the sample frame were purposively selected to participate in the study. “Purposive sampling allows researchers to strategically select participants for the study in order to best obtain insights into a phenomenon, individuals, or events” (Onwuegbuzie & Leech, 2007, p. 242). While participants cannot be forced to join the study and therefore are not guaranteed, historically, all students enrolled in the internship preparation course agreed to participate in the study during previous cycles. Regardless of the study’s findings, this sampling method provided the entire population of the internship preparation course the opportunity to engage in the study. Creswell and Guetterman (2019) asserted that this sampling method can help to minimize any potential bias in the process by inviting the entire population. To lessen the risk of coercion in this sampling method, a colleague of the researcher distributed the consent forms and explained the procedure when the researcher is not in the classroom. In that way, students will not know who is the one who will conduct the study and will not feel coerced into participating.

This sample size was not large enough to use inferential statistics. A control group was also recruited (n=11) from the population to gather more data on students who are not exposed to the intervention of the internship preparation course. This group was selected using stratified sampling. I collected more responses than needed in order to pick from that group in order to mirror the demographic of my population (i.e. 4 Latina

females, 5 Latino males, and 1 African American female, and 1 white male) of ECPHS sophomores, juniors, and seniors who have not previously taken the internship preparation course. The selection was done on a first-come, first-used basis, so that there was no bias in selecting the control group (i. e. the data from the first African American female and first white male to fill out the survey were used, and subsequent data from African American and white students was discarded to mirror the treatment demographics).

Role of the Researcher

Recall, I have been employed as the Internship Coordinator at ECPHS for four years. In this action research study, I served as the Internship Coordinator as well as the internship preparation course instructor. I worked to develop the coursework for the internship preparation course and recruit internal/external partners for internship placements. As such, I was a participant/observer in the study (Herr & Anderson, 2015). Within this positionality, the research will take place in the scope of my role as the internship coordinator and teacher of the internship preparation course. “A major issue that many … doctoral students face is that their research is usually done in their ‘backyard.’ While there is nothing inherently wrong with such research, it raises a host of potentially thorny issues revolving around relationships with participants, insider bias, and impact from negative findings” (Butin, 2010, p. 103). Because I was embedded in the intervention and not just a neutral observer, I took heed not to allow my involvement with participants to alter the outcomes of the AR (Greenwood & Levin, 2007; Herr & Anderson, 2005). One way I took precautions to guard against possible coercion of participants is by using an external study team member (a fellow teacher at ECPHS) to

disseminate the research information and consent forms to the treatment group. I was not present when the research study was explained to the students in my class.

In taking this precaution, I demonstrated awareness of what Smith and Glass (1987) call the experimenter effect. The experimenter effect reflects the potential influence of a researcher involved in a study (Smith & Glass, 1987), particularly an action researcher embedded in her own local context. While threats to validity cannot be eliminated entirely, they can and should be acknowledged and minimized where possible. Butin (2010) reminds that many such concerns are mitigated within the IRB process. In addition to the IRB requirements, I worked to not alter the results of the study by involving the participants in the creation of knowledge as much as possible, per YPAR principles (Bertrand, 2016; Cammarota, 2014, Caraballo et al., 2017; Davis, 2008).

As the researcher, I collected pre-intervention survey data from the internship preparation course participants at the beginning of the semester. I then participated in the creation and dissemination of knowledge throughout the semester-long course. At the end of the semester, I conducted individual interviews, a whole-class focus group, and I collected the post-intervention survey data. In accordance with the four tenets of YPAR (Bertrand, 2016; Cammarota, 2014), students will be instrumental in their development throughout the intervention by utilizing collaborative knowledge creation around topics related to career development and internship preparation.

Intervention

As stated on the website, one of the pillars of ECPHS has been to prepare students for college and career through real-world experiences, and to serve the community using their unique interests, talents, and goals. The internship preparation course is the first step

towards unifying the school-experience with community-based service and experience. This intervention seeks to implement, improve, and evaluate the internship preparation course as a purveyor of navigational capital, internship preparedness, and career decision self-efficacy.

The end goals of the semester-long internship preparation course are twofold: a) each student will secure an internship for the subsequent semester b) students will learn the skills and habits necessary to complete the subsequent 120-hour internship. Knowledge construction to aid students in the journey to secure an internship will include: a) strengths and interests assessments b) resume writing, c) interview preparation, c) cover letter writing, d) internship application process. This knowledge construction is accomplished in 80-minute class periods, four times per week. The intervention, which took place during the fall 2021 semester, is summarized in Table 3.

Table 3

Summary of the Internship Preparation Course Intervention

Timeline	Activity	Learning Task	Theory to Support the Activity	Citations
Weekly	Setting and evaluating goals	Participants complete weekly goals tracker on Google Sheets to set and evaluate goals	Career Decision Self-Efficacy (CDSE): Goal selection	(Betz & Hackett, 1983)
August	Pre-intervention surveys (treatment group only)	Post Google Form to Internship Preparation Course Google Classroom	CDSE, Community Cultural Wealth (CCW)	(Betz et al., 1996; Burgstahler & Bellman, 2009; Sablan, 2019; Yosso, 2005)
August	Strengths Finder assessment & Junior Achievement Career Inventory	Complete Clifton Strengths Finders © strengths inventory and Junior Achievement Career Profile online	CCW: Honoring existing capital	(Junior Achievement Arizona; Rath, 2007; Yosso 2005)
	Presentations on how strengths are related to career goals	Students share with peers and are required to ask each other questions	YPAR Collective Knowledge Production	(Caraballo et al., 2017; Schensul, 2014)
September	Resume creation and peer editing	Students are given a resume template and example then create their own and edit together	CDSE: vicarious experience and verbal persuasion; YPAR Collective Knowledge Production	(Bandura, 1977, 1982; Schensul, 2014)
September	Interview preparation and practice with teacher, peers, and community members	Students are given several common interview questions and taught how to structure their responses, then given ample opportunity to practice the responses	CDSE: vicarious experience and verbal persuasion; YPAR Collective Knowledge Production	(Bandura, 1977, 1982; Schensul, 2014)
October	Cover letter writing	Students are given a cover letter template and example then write a cover letter to apply for a specific internship	CDSE, YPAR, CCW	(Bandura, 1977, 1982; Schensul, 2014; Yosso, 2005, 2006)
November	Post-intervention survey	Same as August	Same as August	Same as August
November	Post-intervention interviews and focus group	Individual interviews then a focus group with the treatment group	Qualitative data collection	
December	Prepare internship logistics and develop final research projects	Participants finalize their internships and brainstorm research ideas	YPAR Transformative Research	(Schensul, 2014)

Clifton Strengths Finders © will be used to help students hone and explore their strengths. Students will be provided a school-provided copy of Clifton Strengths Finders © and instructed to complete the strengths assessment. At the end of the assessment, they will be told their top five strengths and asked to choose three to share with the class in a presentation. The presentation will include the definition of the strength, why it resonated with them, and an example of when or how the student has demonstrated that strength in his or her life. Students will also complete a career profile from Junior Achievement Arizona to begin to identify applications of their strengths in various career fields.

The resume writing component will be with the student's existing resume or a standard template I created for someone with little work experience. The teacher will provide an exemplary resume from a past student as well as a list of high frequency resume verbs, then assign students with the task of drafting or improving their resume. From there, the teacher will provide feedback on proposed edits. This resume will serve as the basis for interview preparation. Students will begin by talking through every item on their resume with a partner to ensure conversational fluency and comfortability with their most salient experiences.

After completion of their resumes, students will be introduced to various behavioral interview questions. They will then be coached to respond to each question with a specific situation, task, action, and result. With this, the students will participate in a fishbowl discussion where the instructor models how to progress through a situational interview question, then they practice, one at a time, answering similar questions themselves. Cover letter writing will begin with a template and an example cover letter, then students will write a cover letter to apply for an internship at the Arizona State Fair.

Most students are familiar with this State Fair, which allows for more connection to the assignment, then later the students will write cover letters to their desired internship sites. Several internship sites will be given as options to choose from, but students will also be given the option to research their own local internship site. The teacher will edit both rounds of cover letters and give them back for revisions. With their resumes and cover letters as resources, the students will then be encouraged to apply for their desired internships.

Direct instruction to reinforce skills and habits necessary to successfully complete the 120-hour internship will include: a) goal setting and tracking, b) industry chats, and c) mentor connections, and d) internship logistics, and e) final presentation development. Specific, measurable, attainable, realistic, time-based (also known by the acronym SMART) goal will be set weekly in a personal spreadsheet created by the instructor. These SMART goal trackers are digitally shared with students at the start of the internship preparation course. Students then fill these out weekly throughout the semester to practice goal setting skills and hone the time management skills necessary to navigate the freedom of a day away from school during their internship semester. The teacher will comment on these goal trackers weekly to provide support, encouragement, and consistency as the students develop this imperative habit. Industry chats are sponsored by the ECPHS Career Trip Committee and include field trips or Zoom calls with practitioners in an array of fields from entrepreneurs to physicians to contractors to authors. These chats are promoted to broaden students' perceptions of career paths and reinforce the value of learning about the various paths people have taken to their current careers. Similarly, internship mentors are invited to speak directly to the internship

preparation course participants in-person or digitally to provide information and encourage dialogue around various internship options. Students will learn about the 120-hour internship requirement, which is the standard set forth in the AZ College and Career Readiness Standards (Standards: College and Career Readiness, n.d.), as well as the expectation of a final project to receive an elective credit for their subsequent internship. To internalize the demands of the subsequent internship experience, students will develop a final presentation in the internship preparation course about their desired internship site, why they hope to intern there and propose a project they could complete at the end of their internship. The project could be anything from a website, art project, poster, or essay; details of this project serve as the culmination of the internship preparation course.

Informing Theories and Studies

The theories, studies, and gaps in the research presented in Chapter 2 demonstrate the imminent need for this type of educational intervention. Research has shown that high school internships provide resources for post-secondary planning for high school students, particularly low-income, students of color (Bennett et al., 2016; Kenny et al., 2015; Murillo et al., 2017; Neumark and Rothstein, 2006; Scales et al., 2005). Researchers also agree that internships and other forms of WBL should be widely available and equitably distributed to high school students, but they are not (Bennett et al., 2015; Griffith, 2001; Murillo et al., 2017; Neumark & Rothstein, 2006; Symonds et al., 2011). QuantCrit Theory (Garcia et al., 2018; Gillborn et al., 2018; Sablan, 2019) is utilized to combine traditional quantitative methods with Critical Race Theory, namely Yosso's (2005) Community Cultural Wealth framework. This study fills a gap in needed critical action research on preparation for community-based, culturally-sensitive

internships (Bennett et al., 2016; Murillo et al., 2017) as well as how to integrate a critical race framework (i.e. the Community Cultural Wealth framework) with quantitative measurement (Sablan, 2019). Self-efficacy (Bandura, 1977) will be the primary quantitative measure in the present study. More specifically, career decision self-efficacy (Hackett & Betz, 1981; Betz & Hackett, 1983) will be used to assess participants' efficacy beliefs around the tasks related to making career decisions.

Data Collection

As noted in Chapter 1, the purposes of this concurrent mixed-methods study are to foster students' career decision self-efficacy, increase student preparedness to complete an internship, and increase navigational capital through participation in the internship preparation course at ECPHS. The following research questions guide this YPAR study.

Research Questions

Research Question 1 (RQ 1): What is the difference in (a) career decision self-efficacy (CDSE) and (b) navigational capital for low-income, Latinx students who plan to complete an internship compared to those who do not plan to complete an internship?

Research Question 2 (RQ 2): How and to what extent does the internship preparation course affect low-income, Latinx students' perceived (a) navigational capital and (b) internship preparedness?

Research Question 3 (RQ 3): To what extent does the internship preparation course affect low-income, Latinx students' career decision self-efficacy (CDSE)?

Table 4 illustrates the concurrent mixed-methods approach for this YPAR study. Additionally, the table highlights the explicit purposes, sources of data, and methods aligned with each research question.

Table 4

Research Questions, Methodology, Method, and Sources of Data

RQ#	Purpose	Sources of data	Method
RQ1: What is the difference in (a) career decision self-efficacy (CDSE) and (b) navigational capital for low-income, Latinx students who plan to complete an internship compared to those who do not plan to complete an internship?	The purpose of this two part question is to assess if participation in the internship preparation course increases CDSE and/or navigational capital when compared to a control group not exposed to the intervention	Post-intervention CDSE-SF and navigational capital subscales for treatment group and CDSE-SF and navigational capital subscales for control group	Quantitative analysis: Two separate T-tests for Independent Samples
RQ 2: How and to what extent does the internship preparation course affect low-income, Latinx students' perceived (a) navigational capital and (b) internship preparedness?	The purpose of this two part question is to assess if participation in the internship preparation course increases participants' perceived skills related to navigating the institutions required to obtain and complete an internship (qualitative) and/or participants perceptions of their navigational capital and/or perceptions of their preparedness to complete an internship (quantitative)	Post-intervention semi-structured interviews and subsequent focus group Pre- and post-intervention NCCNS and IPS subscales on survey of treatment group	Qualitative analysis: constant comparative method Quantitative analysis: T-test for Dependent Samples
RQ 3: To what extent does the internship preparation course affect low-income, Latinx students' career decision self-efficacy (CDSE)?	The purpose of this question is to assess if participation in the internship preparation course increases perceptions of their CDSE	Pre- and post-intervention survey of treatment group	Quantitative analysis: T-test for Dependent Samples

Sources of Data

As shown in Table 4, there were multiple sources of data used in this mixed-methods action research study. They were: a pre- and post- intervention survey for the treatment group, that same survey post-intervention for the control group, and post-intervention interviews and a focus group for the treatment group. Each of these will be examined in detail in the following sections.

Examined Constructs

As illustrated in Table 4, to answer these research questions, several different data sources are needed to better understand the influence of participation in the internship preparation course. The constructs in the present study are *career decision self-efficacy (CDSE)*, *navigational capital*, and *internship preparedness. CDSE* is the primary construct of this study, whereas *navigational capital* and *internship preparedness* are sub-components. RQ 1 and RQ 3 are quantitative in nature, whereas RQ 2 reflects the mixed-methods (both quantitative and qualitative inquiry) components of this study. More specifically, RQ 1 and RQ 3 look at the construct of *CDSE*. RQ 1 compares participants' *CDSE* and *navigational capital* beliefs pre- and post-intervention to a control group's *CDSE* and *navigational capital* beliefs post-intervention, whereas RQ 3 compares participants' *CDSE* beliefs pre- and post-intervention. RQ 2 explores the lived experience of students in the internship preparation course as related to the sub-components of *navigational capital* and *internship preparedness* as influenced by the intervention. In order to better understand their experiences, qualitative methods will be used in addition to the quantitative methods of RQ 1 and RQ 3. Even though the primary

construct and sub-components were introduced in Chapter 2, this section further elucidates how the different methods of data collection informed the study.

Career Decision Self-Efficacy (CDSE). The perceived self-efficacy of participants' career decision will be measured by the pre- and post-intervention survey called the Career Decision Self-Efficacy-Short Form (CDSE-SF) (Betz et al., 1996). As the primary construct in this study, CDSE will focus on the study participants' beliefs in their ability to make well-informed decisions about their future careers. CDSE will be measured on one of the subscales of the pre- and post-intervention survey, called the Career Decision Self-Efficacy Subscale (CDSES).

Navigational Capital. Participants' perceived navigational capital will be measured by the pre- and post-intervention survey called the Nondominant Cultural Capital Scale, which was created by Sablan in 2019. Sablan (2019) operationalized Yosso's (2005) CCW framework using QuantCrit Theory, and this will be used to focus on participants' beliefs in their navigational capital. Participants' perceptions of their ability to maneuver through social institutions, namely their navigational capital, will be assessed qualitatively as well.

Internship Preparedness. The perceived preparedness for successfully completing a 120-hour internship, is a new construct I created for this study called *internship preparedness*. Internship preparedness will be measured by a subscale on the pre- and post-intervention survey. As the only newly developed sub-components in this study, internship preparedness is necessary to gauge the overall effectiveness of the preparation portion of the internship preparation course at ECPHS. An existing measure does not exist, but assessing this preparation is necessary in the present study.

Participants' perceptions of their readiness to complete an internship, namely their internship preparedness, will be assessed qualitatively as well.

Quantitative Data

Pre- and post-intervention survey

To address the quantitative elements of this YPAR study, a pre- and post-intervention survey will be used to assess the effectiveness of the internship preparation course. The survey instrument will have multiple subscales to measure constructs of *CDSE, internship preparedness, and navigational capital.* The instrument will consist of 35 total items, all measured on five-point Likert scales. Table 5 represents the three constructs, subscales, and items included in each.

Table 5

Quantitative Data Collection Subscales

Construct	Subscale	Within Construct Items	Number of Items
Career Decision Self-Efficacy (CDSE)	Career Decision Self-Efficacy Subscale (CDSES)	1-25	25
Internship Preparedness	Internship Preparedness Subscale (IPS)	26-30	5
Navigational Capital	Nondominant Cultural Capital Navigational Subscale (NCCNS)	31-35	5

Self-Efficacy. The first subscale is the Career Decision Self-Efficacy Short Form (CDSE-SF) (Betz et al., 1996). The CDSE-SF (Betz et al., 1996) is a 25-item short form of the original 50 question Career Decision Self-Efficacy scale (Hackett & Betz, 1981). The CDSE-SF assesses five behavioral domains, based on Crites' (1971) model of career maturity, including: self-efficacy to accomplish accurate self-appraisals, self-efficacy to

select specific goals, self-efficacy to formulate plans for the future, self-efficacy to gather occupational information, and self-efficacy to engage in effective problem-solving. The scale measures respondents' confidence in their capability to perform career-decision related tasks on a five-point Likert scale ranging from *no confidence at all to complete confidence*. Higher scores indicate greater career decision self-efficacy. Sample items from the CDSE-SF are: "How much confidence do you have that you could select one occupation from a list of potential occupations?, and How much confidence do you have that you could persistently work at your major or career goal even when you get frustrated?" See Appendix B for more information on the CDSE-SF. For the purposes of the present study, the CDSE-SF will be referenced as the Career Decision Self-Efficacy Subscale (CDSES).

Internship Preparedness. Quantitative instruments to evaluate internship effectiveness for high school students are very limited. As such, the sub-component of internship preparedness required the researcher to create a new survey for the second subscales of the survey instrument utilized in this study. This subscale is referenced as the Internship Preparedness Subscale (IPS), which was developed by the researcher with guidance from Burgstahler and Bellman's (2009) work-based learning survey for high school students with disabilities. The initial iteration of the IPS was validated in Cycle 2 of this study and indicated acceptable reliability for the internship preparedness construct (alpha = .718, n = 4). For Cycle 2.5, the Likert scale measure was changed from a four-point scale to match the five-point scale used in the CDSE-SF (Betz et al., 1996).

The internship preparedness subscale measures respondents' beliefs on their perceived preparedness to complete an internship while in high school. There are five

questions related to *internship preparedness*, with a possible range of scores from 5-25. Responses to the *internship preparedness* subscale are scored on a five-point Likert scale ranging from *not sure at all to completely sure*. Higher scores on each construct indicate higher perceptions of preparedness to complete an internship. Questions from the internship preparedness construct include: "I plan to complete an internship before I graduate from high school" and "I feel well prepared to successfully complete a 120-hour internship." The complete set of survey questions for IPS has been provided in Appendix C.

Navigational Capital. The final subscale is called the Nondominant Cultural Capital Navigational Subscale (NCCNS). Sablan (2019) developed and validated a survey to measure navigational capital, which she called the Nondominant Cultural Capital Scale. Reliability for Sablan's (2019) construct of *navigational capital* was strong (alpha = .83), and thus has been used for the present study. Minor changes have been made to Sablan's (2019) Nondominant Cultural Capital Scale to address a high school audience (i.e. the verbiage of the items was changed from "college" to "school") and the Likert scale measure was changed from a six-point scale to match the five-point scale used in the CDSE-SF (Betz et al., 1996). Responses to the *navigational capital* subscale are scored on a five-point Likert scale ranging from *not at all like me to exactly like me*. Higher scores on each construct indicate higher perceptions of *navigational capital*. Questions from the *navigational capital* construct include: "I am confident in my ability to network at my school" and "I have sought out mentors in school who share my interests." The complete set of survey questions for NCCNS has been provided in Appendix D.

Quantitative data procedures

The CDSES, IPS, and NCCNS will be placed onto the same Google Form to streamline the data collection process. In terms of timing, the pre-intervention survey was administered in the first week of the internship preparation course, at the start of the fall 2021 semester. Likewise, the post-intervention survey was administered in the last two weeks of the internship preparation course, at the end of the fall 2021 semester. A link to the survey was placed on the internship preparation course Google Classroom space during these respective times. Participants were instructed to access the survey during the internship preparation course from any electronic device with access to the internet. The link remained active until all confirmed participants had completed the survey. The survey should have taken no longer than 20 minutes to complete.

Similarly, the same link was dispersed to a control group during the last two weeks of the semester. Dissemination of this link was done using snowball and stratified sampling of any sophomores, juniors, or seniors who had not taken the internship preparation course. According to Creswell and Guetterman (2019) snowball sampling is used when research participants recruit other participants. Study participants were asked to share a shortened url (i.e. tinyurl.com/nointernshipsurvey) with their peers via text or email. Once the data was all collected, it was stratified to mirror the population data, as detailed in the sampling section above.

In theory, the control group should have the same pre-intervention and post-intervention data, due to the fact that they had no exposure to the treatment at either time. As such, the control group was only given the post-intervention measure, and only the post-intervention data was compared from the control to the treatment group data.

Qualitative Data

Semi-structured interviews

Qualitative data was collected through semi-structured interviews with all participants upon completion of the internship preparation course at the end of the spring 2021 semester. I asked seven questions to elicit narrative responses regarding perceived skills related to career decision-making and internship preparation. The interviews lased approximately 15-20 minutes; they were recorded using audio and video on Zoom and were transcribed later using transcription software, Otter.ai. Examples of questions from the interviews are, “How well prepared are you to complete a 120-hour internship;” “How does your internship placement relate to your current college or career goals after high school?” and “What aspect of the pre-internship course is the most beneficial to your future?” The semi-structured protocol allowed me to ask flexible follow-up questions based on the responses to these interview questions. The full list of interview questions has been provided in Appendix E.

Focus group

The same seven questions provided in Appendix E for the semi-structured interviews were asked in a focus group for all participants following the completion of individual interviews. According to Creswell & Guetterman (2019), a focus group is an interview conducted with multiple participants. The objective for the focus group was to gather all eleven participants’ experiences in the internship preparation course. According to Jayanthi and Nelson (2002), a focus group is appropriate for a group of six to ten people, and can help to create a sense of security and anonymity for the participants that may help to facilitate a higher level of candor than the individual

interviews. As such, it was my hope that students would feel confident in their responses having already answered the same questions in the interviews and able to elaborate upon their peers' responses in the focus group setting.

Qualitative data procedures

The semi-structured interviews and focus group were conducted during the final week of the internship preparation course. The interviews took place in a private classroom setting at ECPHS. Interviews will take no longer than 20 minutes and will be scheduled during the regularly scheduled internship preparation course. Prior to the start of the interviews, study participants were asked for their verbal consent to participate and record the interview, in addition to the original consent given from them and their parents for the study. Study participants were then reminded that they did not have to answer any question they did not wish to answer and could stop the interview at any time. Finally, I reminded the participants that there were no right or wrong answers, and their grades nor standing in the internship preparation course would not be affected in any way as a result of the interview.

Data Analysis

This section begins by recalling the purposes of this YPAR study. What follows describes how the quantitative and qualitative data collected from the different sources of data will be analyzed. The purposes of this concurrent mixed-methods study were to foster students' career decision self-efficacy, navigational capital, and increase student preparedness to complete an internship through participation in the elective internship preparation course at ECPHS.

Procedures

Prior to the implementation of this study, the action researcher received approval from the IRB (Appendix A). A written consent form was signed by the parent or guardian of every participant under the age of eighteen, as well as a written assent form signed by those same participants. If any participants are 18 years or older, they would have signed a written consent form, but all participants were under 18 years of age. The following sections describe the procedures that were used for the collection as well as the analysis of each data source. This section is followed by further limitations of this study.

Quantitative Analysis

The following analyses will be used to address all research questions. The independent variable of this analysis will be the introduction of the internship preparation course. The dependent variables of this analysis will be the career decision self-efficacy, perception of navigational capital, and perception of internship preparedness. The independent variables of this analysis will be the internship preparation course (categorical- students took the internship preparation course or did not take the course), socio-economic status (categorical- qualifies for free or reduced lunch or does not qualify for neither free nor reduced lunch), and race (categorical- identifies as Latinx or does not identify as Latinx).

Independent and dependent samples t-tests will be used to compare the results of three surveys: the pre-intervention survey for the treatment group of internship preparation course participants, the post-intervention survey for the treatment group, and the post-intervention survey for the control group who has not taken the internship

preparation course but mirrors the population of the treatment group. See Table 2 for the demographics of participants in the treatment group.

Independent samples t-tests are appropriate for comparing the post-intervention survey results of the treatment group and the post-intervention survey results for the control group, because these groups are independent of one another (Salkind & Frey, 2019). Conversely, dependent samples t-tests are appropriate for comparing the pre- and post-intervention survey results of the treatment group, because these groups are not independent of one another (Salkind & Frey, 2019). Additionally, I will conduct non-parametric tests to compare results as an extra measure of reliability due to the small sample size (L. Ross, personal communication, Dec. 31, 2020). Non-parametric tests will be conducted to analyze if there were differences in each of the three constructs to identify any areas of significance (Salkind & Frey, 2019).

To analyze the survey data, it will be downloaded from Google Forms and saved in an Excel file format. Next, the data will be imported into the Statistical Package of Social Science (SPSS) software program, Version 27 (IBM Corp., 2021). From there, the data will be cleaned to ensure accuracy and consistency among the surveys and the groups. First, the reliability of each scale will be tested using the reliability analysis in SPSS. Cronbach's Alpha scores higher than $\alpha = .70$ meets acceptable ranges of internal reliability and will therefore be the minimum accepted in this analysis (George & Mallery, 2003; Gliem & Gliem, 2003).

Once the reliability analysis is complete, construct scores will be created by summing the individual items for each participant, on each of the three constructs: *CDSE*, *navigational capital,* and *internship preparedness.* As a result, the variables will be

transformed so that each construct is analyzed as a whole rather than individual items being analyzed separately. Once the constructs of *CDSE, navigational capital,* and *internship preparedness* are transformed, they are ready for analysis.

Qualitative Analysis

For the qualitative component of this YPAR study, I seek to understand the real-life experiences of the participants in the internship preparation course (Brinkmann & Kvale, 2015). Constant comparative data analysis (Strauss & Corbin, 1998), which is described in Table 6 below, will be utilized to address RQ 3. Creswell and Guetterman (2019) assert that the overall intent of constant comparison is to "ground" the categories in the data using the process of forming raw data into indicators, indicators into codes, and codes into categories. While grounded theory will provide the basis for my qualitative analysis, Budd (2008) cautions, "critical theory involves a substantive difference from grounded theory, which is inductive. There is a perspective that informs critical theory . . . that instrumental reason can subvert practical reason" (p. 178). As such, practical reason will be sought throughout the process of "grounding" categories.

Each interview will be recorded and transcribed, thus forming the raw data. Once all interviews are complete, the transcriptions will then be read over three times and formed into indicators (i.e. references to helping the community or building a resume). The indicators will then be grouped with other similar indicators into codes, and the codes will then be formed into categories. Finally, these categories will be transformed into overarching themes to address RQ 2. Throughout the constant comparative method, Mertler (2017) suggests that researchers continually return to how the information will help answer the research question(s).

Table 6

Qualitative Constant Comparative Data Analysis Process

Steps	Description
Step 1	Interview and focus group recordings were transcribed
Step 2	Transcriptions were reviewed
Step 3	The raw data from the interviews were read three times each and formed into indicators
Step 4	Indicators were then compared and codes emerged. A total of 21 codes emerged from the indicators
Step 5	Through an iterative review process, the codes were clustered into 11 categories of codes
Step 6	Once more, categories were clustered and 5 themes emerged from the 11 categories of codes
Step 7	The 5 themes will be utilized to answer RQ 2

Trustworthiness of Study

The purpose of an AR study is to understand and respond to a specific problem of practice within one's local context. As such, the study is inherently localized in its scope. The small sample size (n=11) of the study will not allow for the findings to be generalized to the larger population of students at ECPHS (n=305) or schools outside of this context. One of the constructs in the present study, *internship preparedness,* was created for the present study and should be validated to establish trustworthiness in the results.

External consumers of this AR study should compare the setting of this study to their unique context to draw their own conclusions on the generalizability and applicability of the findings for their individual use. As noted in the research design, triangulation of the data collected in participant surveys, interviews, and the focus group, was essential to more fully understand the outcomes of the study and enhance the credibility of the analysis procedures (Creswell & Guetterman, 2019). The data from the

pre- and post-intervention survey instrument, post-intervention interviews, and post-focus group were triangulated to gain full understanding of the outcomes. In an effort to strengthen the trustworthiness of this AR study, several additional threats to validity are discussed in the following section to establish further transparency.

Limitations of the Study

As with any study, there are factors that may have influenced outcomes in the present study which are not directly related to the intervention. As such, consumers of this AR study should be aware of the following potential threats to validity. In an effort to minimize these potential threats, I utilized components of Smith and Glass' (1987) threats to validity, which will be described in the following section.

History

Smith and Glass (1987) suggested that one potential threat to validity is history and its potential influence on the dependent variables, which in this case are career decision self-efficacy, perception of internship value, and perception of internship preparedness. Experiences or events that occur within the duration of this study but not directly related to the intervention may influence the dependent variable (Smith & Glass, 1987). History, in this sense, is a potential threat to this AR study's validity, and may have come in the form of participants' interactions with peers, family, counselors, etc. In an effort to control for the threat to validity that such interactions pose, the interview and focus group questions will be focused specifically on the internship preparation course.

Maturation

Like history, maturation is a potential threat of validity as a possible influence on the dependent variables of career decision self-efficacy, perception of navigational

capital, and perception of internship preparedness. Smith and Glass (1987) define maturation as the internal growth and development of participants that may account for some variation in the dependent variables. Namely, as students age, it is natural for their concerns about future career decisions to become more salient.

Mortality

Mortality in a study is another possible threat of internal validity. This threat describes the possible influence of any study participants departing the study over the course of the investigation (Smith & Glass, 1987). Mortality is a concern due to the transient nature of some students who attend ECPHS, that they may join the class late in the semester or transfer out before the end of the semester-long course. In an effort to control for this, students who join the course beyond the first month of the semester will be excluded, and students who give prior notice of departing the study within the last month will be included in the post-survey and interviews as time permits.

The Hawthorne Effect

Another limitation to consider is the Hawthorne Effect, which states that individuals modify their behavior in response to being observed (Smith & Glass, 1987). The Hawthorne Effect may have come into play during the interviews and focus group in this study. For this reason, triangulation will be used to compare participants' responses from the interview and focus group to their post-intervention survey responses.

Researcher

Consistent with the typical action research process, I was both the teacher and the researcher, and as such, I was in regular communication with the participants throughout the semester. As a result, I could not detach myself and participants' perceptions of me as

their teacher when I facilitated the interviews and the focus group. In response to this concern, as well as The Hawthorne Effect, triangulation will be used to corroborate different types of data and strengthen the findings of the study. Though my role as the action researcher may pose a threat to the validity of this study, it is an inherent strength as well. As a teacher at ECPHS before the start of this intervention, I knew the context and the culture of the participants and setting before creating the internship preparation course intervention, and this has aided in the development and facilitation of said intervention. Additionally, due to the theoretical framework inherent in YPAR and this study, the traditional power hierarchy between the teacher/researcher and student/subjects is challenged in order to produce relevant research and seek social justice-oriented outcomes (Davis, 2008).

Size and scope

The size (n=11) of this AR study is small, and this may be seen as a limitation due to the lack of generalizability of the findings. However, the scope of the study is consistent with other AR studies. Also, due to the cyclical nature of AR, the size and scope of this study could be n=37 to accurately reflect the total number of distinct participants in cycles 0 -3.

Selection bias

A final limitation that should be noted is selection bias of student participants (Creswell & Guetterman, 2019). During the semester the study took place, students had the choice of 10 different elective classes, the intervention, an internship preparation course, being one of them. While the researcher had no control over this selection, students with higher aspirations (in high school and beyond) may have been drawn to

take this more rigorous course. As a result, it is possible that selection bias occurred and the sample of participants is not truly representative of the ECPHS population.

In summary, Chapter 3 focused on the actual methodology of Cycle 3 of this study: rationales for research design, study protocols, data collection tools, steps for data analysis, as well as an overview of the internship preparation course. Finally, Chapter 3 concluded with a discussion on limitations and potential threats to validity of this AR study. Chapter 4 will present the findings of this study.

CHAPTER 4

DATA ANALYSIS AND RESULTS

Results from the study are presented in the following two sections. The first section includes results from the quantitative data. In the second section, results for qualitative data are presented. For the qualitative data, assertions are presented and reinforced with themes, categories that emerged from the themes, and quotes from participants. In addition to the presentation of results, the initial portion of this chapter includes a section that outlines data collection processes and analyses procedures.

Quantitative data included a set of pre-intervention and post-intervention scores for 11 students who received the semester-long treatment as well as post-intervention scores for the control group of 11 students who did not receive the semester-long treatment. Demographics (i.e. race, gender, and socio-economic status) were held constant between the treatment and control groups. Both the treatment and control groups took the Career Decision Self-Efficacy Subscale (CDSES) to assess their self-efficacy beliefs as related to career decision making, the Internship Preparedness Subscale (IPS) to assess their readiness to complete an internship, and the Nondominant Cultural Capital Navigational Subscale (NCCNS) to assess their navigational capital. The constructs present in these three subscales were: career decision self-efficacy, internship preparedness, and navigational capital.

The quantitative data were analyzed in several ways. First, reliability of the constructs was examined. Following the reliability analysis, construct scores were created for each participant on each of the three constructs. Finally, independent and dependent samples t-tests were used to compare the results.

Qualitative data included individual interviews with the participants in the intervention as well as a collective focus group interview with all participants in the treatment group. These qualitative data were entered into HyperRESEARCH (HyperRESEARCH 4.5.2, 2021) and analyzed using the constant comparative method (Strauss & Corbin, 1998). In this procedure, qualitative data were coded using initial indicators, which include key words or short phrases, which were formed into codes. Subsequently, these initial codes were grouped into larger categories. The categories were then collected and then brought together into themes. The themes led to the development of assertions, which were supported with quotes from the original data.

Again, the study was guided by the following research questions:

- Research Question 1 (RQ 1): What is the difference in (a) career decision self-efficacy (CDSE) and (b) navigational capital for low-income, Latinx students who plan to complete an internship compared to those who do not plan to complete an internship?
- Research Question 2 (RQ 2): How and to what extent does the internship preparation course affect low-income, Latinx students' perceived (a) navigational capital and (b) internship preparedness?
- Research Question 3 (RQ 3): To what extent does the internship preparation course affect low-income, Latinx students' career decision self-efficacy (CDSE)?

Quantitative Data Analysis

Results from the quantitative data are presented in three sections and analyzed according to the research questions that guided this study. First, the reliability is examined. The survey used to examine students' beliefs about themselves, and

perceptions of the internship preparation class included three constructs*: career decision self-efficacy, internship preparedness, and navigational capital*. Items for each of these constructs are presented in Appendix B, C, and D for the pre- and post-intervention survey scores. For each construct pre- and post-intervention, Cronbach's alpha, α, was computed using SPSS to determine the reliability of the constructs. Table 7 below shows the number of items and reliability coefficients for all six constructs. The reliability coefficients were all above .70, which is a minimally acceptable level of reliability, and confirm the reliability of the subsets of items for each of the constructs assessed by the survey (George & Mallery, 2003; Gliem & Gliem, 2003).

Table 7

Cronbach's Alpha, α

Construct	Number of Items	Cronbach's Alpha
Career Decision Self-Efficacy (CDSE) Pre-test	25	.76
Career Decision Self-Efficacy (CDSE) Post-test	25	.87
Internship Preparedness (IPS) Pre-test	5	.87
Internship Preparedness (IPS) Post-test	5	.82
Navigational Capital (NCCNS) Pre-test	5	.72
Navigational Capital (NCCNS) Post-test	5	.75

Once reliability was established for all three constructs, the quantitative data was ready for parametric tests. Results of the independent samples t-test pertaining to the control and treatment groups scores on *career decision self-efficacy* and *navigational capital* will be presented in detail for RQ 1. Third and finally, results of the dependent samples t-test pertaining to the treatment group's pre- and post-intervention scores on *career decision self-efficacy, internship preparedness,* and *navigational capital* are presented in detail for RQ 2 and RQ 3.

Research Question 1

In this question, "students who plan to complete an internship" are the participants in the treatment group, because their enrollment in the internship preparation course suggests the intention to complete an internship. Conversely, "those who do not plan to complete an internship" are the students in the control group who are not presently nor have never been enrolled in the internship preparation course. Independent samples t-tests were conducted to compare the scores of the control group, 11 students who did not take the internship preparation course, to the treatment group, 11 students who did take the internship preparation course. The survey questions were detailed in chapter 3 and are also provided for review in Appendices B, C, and D. There was no difference found for *the career decision self-efficacy* nor *navigational capital constructs* from treatment to control group. This may be due to the small sample size of the study. The null hypothesis for *navigational capital* is retained, and this may partially be explained by the novelty of the construct, which was first operationalized by Sablan in 2019.

Research Question 2

Dependent samples t-tests were conducted to compare the pre-intervention survey scores of the 11 students who took the internship preparation course to those same 11 students' post-intervention survey scores. Again, the survey questions were detailed in Chapter 3 and are also provided for review in Appendices B, C, and D. There was a significant difference found in *internship preparedness* for students in the treatment group before completing the internship preparation course and after (t_{10}=3.04, $p < .05$). Students scored .93 points higher (on a 5-point Likert scale) on the posttest than the

pretest, which is a significant difference. This indicates that participants were significantly better prepared to complete an internship after completing the internship preparation course. The effect size is .92, which is a large effect size based on Cohen's criteria (Olejnik & Algina, 2000; Salkind & Frey, 2019). Conversely, there was no difference found for *navigational capital* from pre-intervention to post-intervention. The null hypothesis is again retained for *navigational capital* and may be due to the small sample size of the present study, or as with RQ 1, it may partially be explained by the novelty of the construct, which was first operationalized by Sablan in 2019.

Research Question 3

Lastly, there was a significant difference found in *career decision self-efficacy*, the primary construct in the study, for students in the treatment group before completing the internship preparation course and after (t_{10}= 3.05, $p < .05$). Students scored .39 points higher (on a 5-point Likert scale) on the posttest than the pretest, which is a significant difference. The effect size is .92, which is a large effect size based on Cohen's criteria (Olejnik & Algina, 2000; Salkind & Frey, 2019). This indicates that participants beliefs regarding their ability to successfully accomplish the tasks related to making career decisions were improved because of the internship preparation course. This finding is triangulated in the data from the interviews and focus group in the following qualitative analysis.

Qualitative Data Analysis

In this section, results from qualitative data are presented to explore the lived experiences of the participants in relation to RQ 2. First, Table 8 displays the themes and

their associated theme-related components and assertions. Then, each of the themes is discussed, including quotes from the data to support the assertions and distill the findings.

Table 8

Themes, Categories, Assertions, Sources*

RQ 2: How and to what extent does the internship preparation course affect low-income, Latinx students' perceived (a) navigational capital and (b) internship preparedness?		
Themes and categories	Assertions	Sources
1. Internship preparation provides experience for various future obligations 1.1. Time management skills 1.2. Improved communication skills	1a. Participants believe the internship preparation course has prepared them to manage their time around school and work 1b. Participants agree that the course has forced them to improve their ability to communicate effectively, particularly with new people	Individual interviews, focus group interview
2. In-class experiences enrich my perceptions of myself 2.1. Exposure to career paths 2.2. Resume and interview practice	2. Resume creation and interview practice increase self-esteem and confidence in future job/internship applications	Individual interviews, focus group interview
3. Emotional journey during internship preparation 3.1. Fun and exciting internship options increase motivation 3.2. Nerves regarding ability to fulfill internship requirements	3. While excitement around internships is pervasive, participants consistently express nerves around the commitment to show up to an unknown environment and complete 120 hours there	Individual interviews
4. Present reality contrasts future dreams 4.1. Financial and familial barriers to future plans 4.2. Uncertainty in future plans 4.3. Change of perspective on opportunities available to me	4a. Literal expenses coupled with opportunity costs of continued schooling beyond high school inhibit perceptions of post-secondary options 4b. Participants express increased options in post-secondary plans despite uncertainty around their	Individual interviews, focus group interview

		preparedness to pursue said opportunities	
5.	*Job vs. career*	5a. Participants discuss current roles and some internship placements as jobs but anything that requires post-secondary training and/or education are called careers	Individual interviews, focus group interview
	5.1. Roles that require minimal education/training are called jobs whereas future dreams are called careers		
	5.2. Preparation for career-specific skills	5b. Participants who know their future plans discuss their internships as training for career-specific skills (such as construction or cosmetology)	

*--*Note*: Themes are in italic font.

Internship preparation provides experience for various future obligations

Two assertions support this theme that emerged from the focus group and interview data.

Assertion 1a– Participants believe the internship preparation course has prepared them to manage their time around school and work. Nohemi articulated a mixture of excitement and apprehension around starting her internship, "it's a lot to handle, especially when I was working and going to school, it's going to be like the same thing." Nohemi's struggles to manage work and school are consistent with the barriers to career decision self-efficacy Conkell Ziebell (2010) found as a direct effect of poverty. More affluent students would not have this additional burden of work weighing on them as they prepare to take on an internship, which is measured by the *internship preparedness* construct in the present study. Nohemi references an external barrier (i.e. a job) that the intervention is unable to address. Conversely, Cairo was confident in his ability to manage his time, "I already have the whole schedule [for my internship] so I

can complete the whole 120 hours." Cairo's confidence may be as a result of heightened navigational capital to take on the additional workload of a 120-hour internship, or he may not face the same external barrier to career decision self-efficacy and internship preparedness as Nohemi.

Assertion 1b– Participants agree that the course has forced them to improve their ability to communicate effectively, particularly with new people. Four of the participants interviewed spoke directly about the positive effects the internship preparation course had on their confidence and ability to speak with others. Donny affirmed his improved communication skills when he said, "I've learned how to be more knowledgeable about society and how to talk to anyone." When asked about how being "knowledgeable about society" helped him, he explained that he is now confident about his ability to say what he needs to in order to get a job. Similarly, Danny noted a rise in his "social skills," which he defined as the ability to, "know how to address the people and what words to choose." These student responses align to Yosso's (2006) definition of navigational capital as "the skills of maneuvering through social institutions" (p. 44). Being knowledgeable about society and having increased social skills are examples of increased navigational capital as well as a demonstration of collective knowledge as the participants evaluate their own experiences and ideas with those of others (Schensul, 2014; Sydlo-Ward et al., 2000). According to Schensul (2014) two of the primary goals of YPAR are to enhance participants' social and communications skills. Ader echoes these findings in his interview when he states, "For me this class it will help me get better at talking and communication with other people." Since social and communication skills are vital for

both *navigational capital* and *internship preparedness*, this assertion supports both of these sub-components in the present study.

In-class experiences enrich my perceptions of myself

One assertion supports this theme that emerged from the interview data.

Assertion 2– Resume creation and interview practice increase self-esteem and confidence in future job/internship applications. All eleven participants felt well prepared to submit a resume for a job or internship. Performance accomplishments, in this case having successfully written resumes and mock interviews in class, provide the most influential source of self-efficacy (Bandura, 1982; 1986). Likewise, defined as the skill of maneuvering through social institutions, navigational capital is pivotal for career development within the internship preparation course. Jorge summarized both *navigational capital* and *internship preparedness*, stating, "Your class has really truly prepared me to go out into the real world and apply for a job and understand what's happening and what's going on." Similarly, Andrea explained, "because I have everything I need already done, and if I had to do it over again I would know how to do it." Because the participants accomplished success within the internship preparation course, they express confidence to succeed in future career endeavors.

As for confidence in interviewing, nine of eleven participants felt well prepared. Danny exhorted the amount of practice with interview skills, stating, "I already did with you in the beginning, I already did with my job, and [I'm doing it] right now. I would not have been prepared a year ago." This assertion supports an increase in *navigational capital* from pre-intervention to post-intervention, as Danny states he would not have been prepared to complete an interview a year ago. These participants' personal

capabilities were affirmed at various career-related activities such as writing resumes, applying, and interviewing for internships (Lent et al., 2001), which may contribute to heightened career decision self-efficacy beliefs.

However, two participants only felt somewhat prepared due to their own unpredictable emotions. Alice explained her fear of interviews, stating, "I would just have to calm my nerves down, but I know everything I need to say." Navigational capital is present even in Alice's response, as she states she would know what to say in (i.e. how to navigate) an interview. Bandura (1977) states that self-efficacy has an inverse relationship with stress and anxiety, so it is possible that Alice's career decision self-efficacy beliefs were improved with the knowledge of what to say during an interview despite her existing nervousness.

Emotional journey during internship preparation

One assertion supports this theme that emerged from the focus group and interview data.

Assertion 3– While excitement around internships is pervasive, participants consistently express nerves around the commitment to show up to an unknown environment and complete 120 hours there. While most participants reported being well prepared to complete a 120-hour internship, three of the eleven were somewhat apprehensive. "I'm excited and nervous," said Nohemi. As discussed in assertion 1a, Nohemi has an external barrier to her internship preparedness, which is a job. Nohemi explains, "I don't really feel prepared to [spend 120 hours at the internship], because like it's a lot to handle, especially when I was working and going to school, it's going to be like the same thing and I'm going to have to get another job." Alice provided a pragmatic

viewpoint, stating, “I feel like 120 hours sounds like a lot, but being something I want to do I know it will go by fast.” These participants’ self-efficacy, as defined by Bandura (1977), regarding how much effort will be expended and for how long in the face of obstacles, will be tested as they attempt to complete their internships. As Alice alludes to, the 120-hour requirement to earn an internship credit is a lot of time, but believing it’s “something I want to do” shows empowerment as a result of the YPAR principle of shaping how schools meet their educational needs (Bertrand, 2016; Cammarota, 2014, Caraballo et al., 2017). Jorge also expresses excitement about his internship placement, “I feel good because I’m learning new things and it’s something I would like to do” – which indicates a level of preparation for completing the internship. Whether these participants will persist in the face of obstacles to completing their internships is not clear, but these lived experiences show a level of awareness to the demands of commitment and showing up to an internship for an extended period of time.

Present reality contrasts future dreams

Assertion 4a– Literal expenses coupled with opportunity costs of continued schooling beyond high school inhibit perceptions of post-secondary options. During his interview, Ader expressed apprehension towards the thought of going to college, “I think about going to it [college] but at the same time there’s still things like I feel like if I were to go, I would never get to see my family because I barely see them now but personally, I do want to go.” Ader expresses doubt about attending college and cites time away from his family as the reason for likely not attending. It seems as if his family is not supportive of him going to college, as he states “personally, I do want to go.” In this hesitation, Ader alludes to the restriction of his career options due to contextual variables that Lent et al.

(2001) discuss as cultural predispositions against leaving home. Ader's career decision self-efficacy may be negatively affected by the contextual variable he provides in this example about not wanting to be away from his family.

Donny explicitly stated his apprehension about paying for college when he said, "I still have some suspicions about college." When asked to elaborate on these suspicions, he said, "moneywise and where I will go [to college]." Developing plans for the future is one aspect of career decision self-efficacy (Betz & Hackett, 1983), and economic insecurity undoubtedly inhibits these participants' abilities to plan for the future. As such, their career decision self-efficacy likely reflects the insecurity they express here regarding paying for college. During the focus group, Donny openly admitted, "I'm not sure if I am passionate about what I want to do, or how I'm going to live, or the finances and how I'm going to pay for it," and several other participants nodded along in agreement. Collective knowledge production is occurring in the present example, as money presents itself a large barrier to many participants' plans for the future. In questioning his passion about what he wants to do after high school, Donny vocalizes two additional aspects of career decision self-efficacy, accurate self-appraisal and goal selections. While he doubts his ability to make these career decisions, he is at least considering them which shows some navigational capital in regards to navigating these barriers the attending college.

Assertion 4b– Participants express increased options in post-secondary plans despite uncertainty around their preparedness to pursue said opportunities. In her interview, Alice shared, "now that I actually took [the internship prep course] it's given me more information about if I wanted to do college- I never knew I had options." In

another interview, Jorge shares that the internship preparation course helped him “To get more options to make a good decision about what you want to be.” These participants are reflecting upon an increase in their navigational capital that she would not have received without the internship prep course. Similarly, Cairo shared, “the internship prep class basically helped open my eyes that there are other kinds of career options than the basic lawyers, doctors, any kind of engineer that there’s other options for careers.” Another aspect of career decision self-efficacy is gathering occupational information, which is espoused in Cairo’s response. In 2015, Kenny et al. found internships to be a promising way to expose low-income youth to a variety of career role models that they may not otherwise have had access to; the present assertion affirms this exposure through the internship preparation course. Tyler reflected on the equity of internship access, stating, "Since this class isn’t offered in other schools, I feel like once I get into college, a lot of people won’t have the experience that I got, so I will have more of a step [up]." This statement shows the agency to reach her goals that is instilled in this participant as a result of the intervention. YPAR scholars posit that agency is a critical tool of empowerment to propel her towards her goal of becoming a kindergarten teacher (Akom et al., 2008; Ginwright, 2008; Morrell, 2008; Stanton-Salazar, 2011). The “experience that I got” and the “step” that Tyler references may also be interpreted as *navigational capital* as to how to navigate the college experience which is required to meet her goal of becoming a kindergarten teacher.

Job vs. career

Assertion 5a– Participants discuss current roles and some internship placements as jobs but anything that requires post-secondary training and/or education are called

careers. Tyler provided a great example of contrasting logic behind a job and a career, stating, "My internship placement relates to a career, because it's going to be in a kindergarten classroom, and that's what I want to do as I get older . . . I plan on going to college and maybe get a job during." Tyler views her career as what she aspires to, whereas a job is what will sustain her through college as she chases that dream. This is a great example of navigational capital, as Tyler considers maneuvering through college to get to her goal of becoming a kindergarten teacher. David spoke solely of his desire for a career as a civil engineer, whereas Alice conversely recounted, "I've always remembered I said I've wanted to work at PetSmart for my first job." These assertions provide valuable insight into the participants' views on jobs (a means to earn money) and careers (an end in itself), which relate to the skills required to attain these positions. *Navigational capital,* namely the skill of maneuvering different levels of social institutions, is required to get an internship, a job, or a career. See *Assertion 4b* for more on how *navigational capital* was demonstrably increased in the present study.

Assertion 5b– Participants who know their future plans discuss their internships as training for career-specific skills (such as construction or cosmetology). Though navigational capital was not quantitatively proven in research question 1 nor research question 2, it was demonstrated in participant responses in the qualitative portions of the study. All eleven participants gave accounts of their internship placements during the individual interviews, which indicates an ability to maneuver through school and community based social institutions (i.e. navigational capital). Finding and landing their own internship is empowering and may also have the possibility of being transformative for the participants, which are two of the core principles of YPAR. In the focus group,

Jose shared, “I plan to get a contractor license and work with my uncle, so my internship with Revive Construction will help with that.” Schensul (2014) espouses the importance of teacher/researcher positionality and ability to integrate students' lived experiences into their YPAR work, and supporting Jose in his path to becoming a contractor is an example of empowering students to ensure school meets their needs. Jose stated, “My internship it relates to my future after high school, with Revive Construction, is going to prepare me for working outside and then after high school I’m planning on joining a trade school,” and added later, “[the internship] can help me getting adjusted to working outside, working with others, and listening to a boss.”

Similarly, Nohemi shared that the internship placement at a salon will be one of the most beneficial things she’s done in high school, adding, “[the internship] will help me because there are things I haven’t done ... this internship will help me learn how to do those styles and those things to get to my dream goal”. Jose and Nohemi demonstrate empowerment in their educational context by shaping how their internships further their goals for the future (Bertrand, 2016; Cammarota, 2014, Caraballo et al., 2017). During the focus group, Donny noted a third area of discernment in relation to his internship and navigational capital, **“**I want to see if I want to continue pursuing music as a career or keep it as a hobby.” The experience provided by the internship preparation course and his subsequent internship will allow him to further distill his future career plans and goals for the future.

CHAPTER 5

DISCUSSION

The problem of practice driving this mixed methods action research was that low-income, Latinx students have limited opportunities to participate in internships and other forms of navigational capital, thus precluding them from building their career decision self-efficacy. An intervention called the internship preparation course was developed to prepare students at a low-income, predominantly Hispanic charter school to complete internships and improve their navigational capital and their career decision self-efficacy. This study was designed to examine the use of the internship preparation course to determine its influence on internship preparedness, navigational capital, and career decision self-efficacy.

I will start with a summary of the findings of Cycle 3. Then I will compare the findings of Cycle 3 to the theoretical perspectives and literature presented in Chapter 2. Next, I will provide implications for practice as well as for future research based on this study. Finally, I will conclude with the limitations of this study. Again, the study was guided by the following research questions:

Research Question 1 (RQ 1): What is the difference in (a) career decision self-efficacy (CDSE) and (b) navigational capital for low-income, Latinx students who plan to complete an internship compared to those who do not plan to complete an internship?

Research Question 2 (RQ 2): How and to what extent does the internship preparation course affect low-income, Latinx students' perceived (a) navigational capital and (b) internship preparedness?

Research Question 3 (RQ 3): To what extent does the internship preparation course affect low-income, Latinx students' career decision self-efficacy (CDSE)?

Summary of the Findings

Results from this study reveal complementarity of quantitative and qualitative data in the development of internship preparedness and career decision self-efficacy, though the development of navigational capital was only illustrated in the qualitative data.

Research Question 1

What is the difference in (a) career decision self-efficacy and (b) navigational capital for low-income, Latinx students who plan to complete an internship compared to those who do not plan to complete an internship? Chapter 4 provided a complete picture of the findings of the present study, but to summarize, there was no significant difference found for career decision self-efficacy nor navigational capital when the treatment group was compared to the control group. Qualitative findings suggest that both navigational capital and career decision self-efficacy were bolstered by the intervention, and that will be further discussed in research questions 2 and 3.

Research Question 2

How and to what extent does the internship preparation course affect low-income, Latinx students perceived (a) navigational capital and (b) internship preparedness? Chapter 4 provided a complete picture of the finding of the present study, but the following is a summary of the mixed-methods findings of RQ 2.

This question focuses on the treatment group and includes quantitative data collected pre-intervention as well as both quantitative and qualitative data collected post-

intervention. There was not a significant difference found in participants' navigational capital before and after the internship preparation course. There was, however, a significant difference found in internship preparedness for students who completed the internship preparation course when compared to their pre-intervention internship preparedness. Participants scored nearly a full point higher (on a 5-point Likert scale) on internship preparedness after completing the intervention. Cohen's d was .92 for participants' internship preparedness pre- and post-intervention, which indicates a large effect size, for the two groups (Olejnik & Algina, 2000; Salkind & Frey, 2019). This large effect size indicates a strong relationship between these two variables.

These findings are enhanced by qualitative data from participant interviews. The interviews suggested that students were confident and well prepared to submit a resume and interview for a job or internship, thus indicating some level of preparation for said internship. Participants also expressed excitement to begin the internships they arranged for themselves during the internship preparation course, showing both preparedness and navigational capital, as obtaining internships was the action outcome desired in this YPAR as knowledge production for social justice framework. These ideas are reflected in the themes *In-class experiences enrich my perceptions of myself* and *Emotional journey during internship preparation.*

Research Question 3

To what extent does the internship preparation course affect low-income, Latinx students career decision self-efficacy? Chapter 4 provided a complete picture of the finding of the present study, but the following is a summary of the quantitative findings of RQ 3.

In the present study, there was a significant difference found in career decision self-efficacy for students in the treatment group before completing the internship preparation course and after completing the internship preparation course. Participants scored .39 points higher on a 5-point Likert scale on the CDSE posttest than the pretest. Cohen's d was .92 for participants' internship preparedness pre- and post-intervention, which indicates a large effect size, for the two groups (Olejnik & Algina, 2000; Salkind & Frey, 2019). This large effect size indicates a strong relationship between these two variables. This finding is enhanced by qualitative data from participant interviews, which suggested all four sources of self-efficacy: performance accomplishments, vicarious learning, emotional arousal, and verbal persuasion (Bandura et al., 1977; Hackett & Betz, 1981) were demonstrated in relation to career decision self-efficacy in the interviews.

Performance accomplishments provide the most influential source of self-efficacy (Bandura, 1982, 1986). In the present study, the most salient performance accomplishments related to career decisions took the form of resume creation and interview practice. Navigational capital, as detailed in RQ2, is also supported in the development of resume and interview skills, as students learn how their skills and past experiences relate to future job prospects (Murillo et al., 2017). For example, Ader confidently explained his performance accomplishments in relation to his resume, "I feel like I have a pretty good resume … because I have experience working at a fast food restaurant, that's a good thing because they know I have experience working and I'm able to adapt to new things." Likewise, Jorge clearly recognized his accomplishment of breaking down barriers to career decisions, stating, "It's allowed me to understand why interviews are really important and allowed me to get rid of that roadblock - growing up

thinking interviews were a big challenge in some sort of way, but now I don't see them as a big block." Finally, David sums up the value of acknowledging accomplishments to increase self-efficacy, saying, "I feel like I'm somewhat better [prepared for college or career] because I'm doing better now than I was before- all A's in my classes and I've been putting more effort into my work and school."

Vicarious learning, also known as observational learning, helps to raise self-efficacy (Bandura, 1977; 1982). In an interview, Tyler spoke about the opportunity to learn vicariously at her internship in a kindergarten classroom, stating, "I feel like it will help me a lot more to be put in that kind of environment and understand more of what I want to do."

Conversely, the emotional arousal of stress and anxiety is considered a co-effect of low self-efficacy (Bandura, 1977) and may decrease career decision self-efficacy (Hackett & Betz, 1981). The co-effect of emotional arousal was particularly present when participants spoke of interviews, but participants also shared confidence amid their nervousness. Alice shared, "I would just have to calm my nerves down, but I know everything I need to say," and Ader explained, "I'd be prepared knowing what my strengths and weaknesses are … I feel like I wouldn't do a good job at it at the same time because sometimes I mumble and just get nervous." While emotional arousal still presents itself as an issue for some participants, it is clear that participants learned techniques for managing these negative emotions in the intervention.

Verbal persuasion occurs throughout whole-group discussions in the intervention, but one example is when participants take a test to identify their strengths then share examples of those strengths in their lives. Participants are then encouraged by the teacher

and other participants to focus on their strengths in order to maximize their potential (Rath, 2007) and use these to identify meaningful internship placements. In a discussion on YPAR, Schensul (2014) implores researchers to assess the skills of young people in marginalized environments, as they have often experienced lack of recognition of strengths and accomplishments. Tyler recounts the experience of having her strengths recognized, "I feel like the most beneficial one has been when we did the little test where we had to answer questions about ourselves … it helped me figure out what I wanted to do." In summary, the test helped increase Tyler's beliefs about her ability to make accurate self-appraisal, which is one facet of career decision self-efficacy (Betz & Hackett, 1983).

Relationship to Literature and Existing Research

The current study's findings are mostly consistent with the research that has been done on the primary construct, career decision self-efficacy. One of the sub-components in the present study, internship preparedness, was created for this study because no measures previously existed to gauge how to best prepare students for an internship (Bennett et al., 2016; Kenny et al., 2015; Knouse et al. ,1999; Murillo et al., 2017; Neumark and Rothstein, 2006). The other sub-component in the present study, navigational capital, has been studied extensively by qualitative researchers, and the findings in the present study are consistent with that research. However, in the emerging field of QuantCrit Theory, the use of navigational capital as a quantitative construct is "preliminary and exploratory" (Sablan, 2019, p. 192). As such, the findings in this study are also exploratory.

In a survey of 176 college undergraduate students, Wetzel (2017) found that 24% of them had participated in an internship while in college. Similar to the results when the treatment group was compared to a control group in the present study, Wetzel (2017) found that participation in an internship did not affect students' career decision-making self-efficacy when compared to the students who did not complete an internship (N= 1,073).

DeLorenzo (2000) surveyed 225 undergraduate students that had taken part in two types of internship experiences: for credit and not-for credit (N=225). It was concluded that work experience for credit may yield higher career decision self-efficacy scores than offerings with no academic credit (DeLorenzo, 2000). This finding is consistent with the results in the present study that students in the for-credit intervention showed increased career decision making self-efficacy following the internship preparation course.

In a study of 166 high school sophomores enrolled in a 9-week career education class, McWhirter et al. (2000) found increased career decision-making self-efficacy as a result of the course (N = 1,139). The McWhirter et al. (2000) study is notably similar to the present study, as it met daily for 50-minute class periods, required active participation by the students, and covered topics such as interest inventories, resume creation, and job interviews.

Murillo et al. (2017) conducted a qualitative study on 35 students in an elective internship program (n=229). Through interviews with the participants, the researchers found that, "Many participants had utilized their navigational capital to maneuver through educational terrains that discouraged postsecondary education and presented limited career options" (Murillo et al., 2017, p. 244). Murillo et al. (2017) found that students

developed their navigational capital as they reflected upon the way their internship experiences taught them what to consider in future job prospects and to ensure that those jobs meet their needs. Similarly, in the present study, students showed evidence of developing their navigational capital as they discussed their prospective internship sites and how to ensure that those experiences meet their needs.

In a quantitative case study of Yosso's (2006) Community Cultural Wealth, Sablan (2019) operationalized navigational capital. In this study, data was collected from 772 undergraduate students and refined using expert reviews from cultural experts, a pilot survey, and cognitive interviews with some of the respondents to help determine the final sets of items for the quantitative construct of navigational capital. As such, Sablan's (2019) research shows "empirical support for a theoretically driven measure of CCW that could be used in further empirical study" (p. 194). Despite the utility of Sablan's operationalization and its use in the present study, validating a scale for use across samples rarely occurs with one study (Allen & Yen, 2002; DeVellis, 2012). Although the results in the present study that did not show a significant effect on participants' navigational capital, the use of Sablan's Nondominant Cultural Capital Navigational Subscale (Appendix D) contributes to the validation of the newly developed scale.

In a six-year study on youth participatory action research (YPAR), the conceptual framework used for the present study, Morrell (2008) studied the work of approximately 30 low-income, minoritized high school sophomores who were involved in five-week seminars at the University of California Los Angeles each summer. Morrell (2008) concludes at the end of this research that, "I focus on the significance of apprenticing young people as action researchers on the development of our future leaders… We

desperately require [young peoples'] passion, their purpose, and their unique positioning" (p. 183). This positionality was pivotal to the results of the present study, as the internship preparation course was designed to empower students to research their own community contexts to establish internship opportunities that matter to them.

Implications for Practice

The value of providing access to internships for marginalized student populations has been proven (Kenny et al., 2015; Knouse et al., 1999; Murillo et al., 2017; Neumark & Rothstein, 2006; Symonds et al., 2011). However, research on internships in a low-income, urban, high school setting is limited (Murillo et al., 2017) and how to support marginalized students in preparing for and obtaining internships is non-existent (Griffith, 2001; Knouse et al., 1999; Wetzel, 2017).

The present study provides a viable model to prepare marginalized high school students for a relevant internship experience. I created internship preparedness as a construct to be examined, and it was proven both quantitatively (when compared pre- and post- intervention) as well as qualitatively in individual student interviews and a focus group. I believe the intervention proved successful in providing adequate preparation for low-income, Latinx high school students to be successful in a subsequent internship.

As such, I believe other high schools serving marginalized student populations should consider a similar preparation course to help ensure student buy-in and success at their internship placements. Career decision self-efficacy was also improved in the present intervention, so schools with a career and technical education focus could also benefit from implementation of the internship preparation course as well.

Implications for Future Research

Results from this study suggest two main areas of future research. The first would require a longitudinal study to assess whether the construct of internship preparedness translated into success within the context of an internship. This would require longer than the one-semester research cycle allowed but would show whether the intervention, an internship preparation course, truly prepared students to complete 120 hours in their desired internship as well as the project they designed, thus earning the .5 elective credits.

A second implication for future research would require the collection of slightly altered quantitative data around community cultural wealth (Yosso, 2005). The construct of navigational capital was successfully operationalized (Sablan, 2019) and validated in the present study, but there was no statistically significant difference found when compared to a control group nor when pre- and post- intervention data was compared for participants. However, navigational capital was clearly demonstrated by the participants in post-intervention interviews and a focus group. This leads me to believe the intervention did bolster navigational capital, but perhaps it was not operationalized as well as it could have been. Further research on this implication would see ripple effects in furthering QuantCrit Theory (Garcia et al., 2018; Gillborn et al., 2018; Sablan, 2019) and could also be extended to other areas of Yosso's (2005) CCW framework, such as aspirational or social capital. If these forms of CCW were included in the quantitative portion of a study, I would suggest equal focus on how to address these forms of capital in the interview and focus group questions as well.

Limitations

On reflection of my AR study, there are limitations that are worth mentioning. COVID-19 impacted the research and influenced the design and utility of Cycles 1.5, 2, and 2.5 of research. The health crisis presented limitations due safety procedures leading to Zoom meetings in lieu of face-to-face course meetings with the participants. These meetings allowed for data collection in the form of surveys and interviews, but the focus group was not implemented until the final cycle of research where participants were back in the same room. It was a challenge in serving as a facilitator/teacher/researcher simultaneously during this YPAR study. While one of the aims of YPAR is the co-creation of knowledge with the participants/students/subjects, this is a learned method that challenges the traditional power hierarchy that typically exists within the high school classroom. As the facilitator I presented ideas for discussion, whereas the teacher I had to input grades for participation in said discussions, while simultaneously collecting data as the researcher. The whole group discussions improved immensely once we all resumed in-person classes at the start of Cycle 3, and they continued to be more participant driven as the intervention went on. Overall, the limitations did provide some challenges, but I was able to implement the intervention and collect the data according to the research plan.

Conclusion

High school students should have access to meaningful educational opportunities regardless of their background or their parents' income. The purpose of this study was to foster low-income, Latinx students' career decision self-efficacy and navigational capital while also finding and preparing for subsequent internship experiences. Through

participation in the elective internship preparation course at ECPHS, they were able to do all of this while co-creating meaning with their peers and the instructor of the course.

This co-creation of knowledge was pivotal in the youth participatory action research framework that challenges the traditional power hierarchy between the teacher/researcher and student/subjects (Davis, 2008). In this study, much like the work of Morrell (2008), YPAR served as the framework to empower students to utilize tools presented in the course to research and design internships of interest to them that would benefit their communities. This empowerment was done in a myriad of ways and its effects were affirmed through rigorous mixed methods inquiry.

The name of the intervention, an internship preparation course, insinuates the importance of the construct *internship preparedness.* Participants in the intervention not only learned about the unequal access to internships but then worked through various self-evaluations and a community needs assessment, before working to find (and obtain) an internship to start after the completion of the semester-long intervention. With such diversity of aims within one intervention, it quickly became clear that a unique approach to the research design would be necessary. As such, *internship preparedness* was evaluated both qualitatively and quantitatively, as was the construct of *navigational capital.*

Within the conceptual framework provided by YPAR as knowledge production for social justice, *navigational capital*, as a subset of Yosso's (2005) CCW is an example of CRT in education. CCW is important to the present study because research has shown that the application of community knowledge to the school environment improves student learning, particularly for marginalized students (Basu & Calabrese Barton, 2007;

Covarrubias & Velez, 2013). This community knowledge blends with the aims of *internship preparedness,* as the ideal outcome of the course is to find an internship within the community.

As with most critical research, *navigational capital* has traditionally been studied using qualitative methods. However, QuantCrit is a methodological sub-field of critical race studies in education (Garcia et al., 2018; Gillborn et al., 2018) which promotes integrating quantitative methods into CRT frameworks (Sablan, 2019). The present study pushed traditional boundaries and studied *navigational capital* both qualitatively and quantitatively. Though the quantitative results were not significant, qualitative findings replicated Murillo et al.'s (2017) findings that an internship program helped students develop low-income, Latinx students' navigational capital.

Finally, a strictly quantitative measure, career decision self-efficacy (Hackett & Betz, 1981) was used to assess participants' beliefs regarding their ability to successfully accomplish tasks related to making career decisions. The tenets of *career decision self-efficacy*: self-appraisal, goal selections, developing plans for the future, gathering occupational information, and problem solving (Betz & Hackett, 1983) align with the aims of the internship preparation course, which had been in place since 2018 (before Cycle 0 of the present study) at ECPHS.

As the creator of the internship preparation course, I felt it prudent to begin the present study with what was already in place at my school. Over the course of three school years and five cycles of research, through much reflection and reiteration, the course became what it is today: a place for students to learn about themselves, the needs of their communities, career trajectories, and internships that can serve all of those

interests at once. During that same time frame, the successful completion of internships grew from 50% of the class of 2020 to 80% of the class of 2022. While this measure was outside of the scope of this study (and thus recommended for future research!), such growth is inextricably linked to this exercise in action research.

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APPENDIX A

IRB APPROVAL

APPROVAL: EXPEDITED REVIEW

Ying-Chih Chen
Division of Teacher Preparation - Tempe
Ying-Chih.Chen@asu.edu

Dear Ying-Chih Chen:

On 5/14/2021 the ASU IRB reviewed the following protocol:

Type of Review:	Initial Study
Title:	Internship Prep: A Purveyor of Capital For Low Income Latinx High School Students
Investigator:	Ying-Chih Chen
IRB ID:	STUDY00013916
Category of review:	
Funding:	NONE
Grant Title:	NONE
Grant ID:	NONE

Documents Reviewed:	• Adult Consent CONTROL Cycle 3.pdf, Category: Consent Form; • Adult Consent Form Cycle 3.pdf, Category: Consent Form; • Interview_Focus Group Questions Cycle 3.pdf, Category: Measures (Survey questions/Interview questions /interview guides/focus group questions); • IRB Protocol Cycle 3.docx, Category: IRB Protocol; • Mason Empower Approval.pdf, Category: Off-site authorizations (school permission, other IRB approvals, Tribal permission etc); • Recruitment Consent Form Cycle 3.pdf, Category: Consent Form; • Student Assent CONTROL Cycle 3.pdf, Category: Consent Form; • Student Assent Form Cycle 3.pdf, Category: Consent Form; • Survey Questions Cycle 3.pdf, Category: Measures (Survey questions/Interview questions /interview guides/focus group questions)

The IRB approved the protocol from 5/14/2021 to 5/13/2022 inclusive. Three weeks before 5/13/2022 you are to submit a completed Continuing Review application and required attachments to request continuing approval or closure.

If continuing review approval is not granted before the expiration date of 5/13/2022 approval of this protocol expires on that date. When consent is appropriate, you must use final, watermarked versions available under the "Documents" tab in ERA-IRB.

In conducting this protocol you are required to follow the requirements listed in the INVESTIGATOR MANUAL (HRP-103).

Sincerely,

IRB Administrator

cc: Nicole Mason
Nicole Mason

APPENDIX B

CAREER DECISION SELF-EFFICACY SHORT-FORM PRE/POST SURVEY

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Career Decision Self-Efficacy-Short Form (CDSE-SF)

For more information, contact the copyright holder:

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Reference:

Betz, N. E., & Taylor, K. M. (2012). Career Decision Self-Efficacy Scale manual. Mind Garden.

Betz, N.E., Klein, K.L., & Taylor, K.M. (1996). Evaluation of a short form of the Career Decision Self-Efficacy Scale. Journal of Career Assessment, 4, 47-57.

APPENDIX C

INTERNSHIP PREPAREDNESS SUBSCALE PRE/POST SURVEY

How sure are you about the following: Not sure at all (1), A little sure (2), Moderately sure (3), Very sure (4), Completely sure (5)

26. I plan to complete an internship before I graduate from high school.
27. I know what kind of an internship I would like to complete while in high school.
28. I know where I would like to intern while in high school.
29. I feel prepared to start an internship.
30. I feel prepared to successfully complete a 120-hour internship.

APPENDIX D

NONDOMINANT CULTURAL CAPITAL NAVIGATIONAL SUBSCALE

How sure are you about the following: Not sure at all (1), A little sure (2), Moderately sure (3), Very sure (4), Completely sure (5)

31. I have sought out mentors in school who share my interests.
32. I have succeeded despite barriers to my success.
33. I know how to find resources at my school.
34. Even when presented with obstacles, I am able to access resources at my school
35. I am confident in my ability to network at my school.

APPENDIX E

INTERVIEW/FOCUS GROUP QUESTIONS

1. How has the pre-internship class affected your perceptions of college or career after high school graduation?
2. How well prepared are you to enter college or career after high school graduation?
3. How well prepared do you feel to complete a 120 hour internship?
4. How well prepared do you feel to a) submit a resume and application for and b) interview for and c) write a cover letter for a desired internship, scholarship, or job?
5. How does your internship placement relate to your current college or career goals after high school?
6. How do you think your internship could help further your current college or career goals after high school?
7. What aspect of the pre-internship course is the most beneficial to your future?