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Anti-Oppressive Pedagogy in Dance/Movement Therapy Education: Embodied Experiences of Black, Indigenous, and Students of Color

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ANTI-OPPRESSIVE PEDAGOGY IN DANCE/MOVEMENT THERAPY EDUCATION: EMBODIED EXPERIENCES OF BLACK, INDIGENOUS, AND STUDENTS OF COLOR

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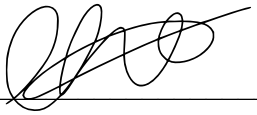
SIGNED: 

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ABSTRACT

This study explored the embodied graduate educational experiences of dance/movement therapy students who were Black, Indigenous, and people of color (BIPOC). Eight research participants who were between the ages of 22 to 45 years old were recruited from American Dance Therapy Association (ADTA) approved programs. Participants self-identified as Black/African American and Jamaican, Black/African American, Latinx/Brazilian, Asian/Chinese, Asian/Filipino, Asian/Chinese and Taiwanese American, and Asian/Chinese and White American. A qualitative research design based in phenomenology and arts-based methods grounded in anti-oppressive research were used. Two semistructured interviews and 1 week of embodied observation and journaling were part of data collection. Themes included four embodied states and eight embodied substates. The embodied state, wounded body, spoke to harm that occurred with peers, instructors, and course materials. The second embodied state, critical body, included ideas of contemplation or action about injustices or inequities for marginalized groups. The embodied substate, intersectional body, encompassed participants' awareness, understanding, and choices around conformity to social norms of their own intersectional identities. The final embodied state, flourishing body, were the conscious and unconscious efforts of resourcing through various interpersonal and intrapersonal supports. The findings, in combination with other research in the literature, were used to suggest seven recommendations for an embodied anti-oppressive pedagogy in dance/movement therapy.

CHAPTER 1

Introduction

Developed in the United States in the 1940s, the dominant paradigm of dance/movement therapy (DMT) is based in White, Eurocentric, middle-class, Western dance, and able-bodied cultures (Caldwell & Leighton, 2016; Multicultural Diversity Committee, 2009; Puloka, 2019). Similar to other mental health professionals in the United States, the early theoretical foundations of DMT were rooted in psychoanalytic and Jungian perspectives which were based on White middle-class men. Furthermore, DMT is a profession dominated by women who over the past 50 years had awareness of diversity issues but were not always taking active steps as a community toward social justice until recent years (Caldwell & Leighton, 2016).

For historical context, the initial training for dance/movement therapists in the United States used an apprenticeship model during the 1950s and 1960s. Prospective candidates sought out DMT theorists they wanted to train with and took workshop classes and assisted them at their place of work. The formation of graduate programs began in the 1970s after the formation of the American Dance Therapy Association (ADTA). Graduate programs in DMT consisted of programs which are designated as either approved programs or alternate route programs. Approved programs are housed under accredited academic institutions which meet the ADTA's educational standards (ADTA, 2020). Alternate route programs are designed for individuals who already hold a master's degree in a form of mental health which leads to state licensure (social work, counseling, psychology, etc.) and take a "self-directed" study in DMT coursework (ADTA, 2020).

Courses under both programs take anywhere from two to 10 years to complete depending on the program delivery model (*Standards for Education and Clinical Training*, 2021). Courses consist of four curriculum requirements. These are history, theory, practice, and professional development. Each core curriculum is informed by culture. These courses fall under the areas of dance, assessment, human development, relationships, and neuroscience (*Standards for Education and Clinical Training*, 2021). Traditionally theoretical perspectives discussed in these courses were from the dominant paradigm. Additionally, students are also required to complete fieldwork and internship hours with a Board Certified Dance/Movement Therapist. At these sites students are able to apply what they have learned in the classroom in the field with the support of clinical supervision. Once students have shown competency in coursework, fieldwork, and internship, they apply to receive the entry-level credential of registered dance/movement therapist.

The teaching of DMT courses has been primarily conducted by instructors who did not undergo training in education pedagogy but led through an apprenticeship model (Chace, 1964a; Levy, 2005; Sandel et al., 1993). DMT instructors have also traditionally been White middle-class women who are able bodied. However, despite this there has been a growing number of dance/movement therapists entering the field who are of diverse racial and ethnic backgrounds and who hold various intersectional differences in class, gender, and ability.

Second-generation African American dance/movement therapist Glorianne Jackson, in an interview with Garcia (2022) was quoted as recognizing the importance of having people of color in DMT as follows.

> We need more dance therapists from diverse backgrounds because when we go to diverse communities there should be representation of people that look like members of that community. We must be intentional about the invitation to more minorities and people of color, to come into the programs, graduate the programs, and do the work in various communities. We will all do better as we grow beyond our individual biases and blind spots with the sincere help, understanding and commitment of others. (para. 2)

Dance movement therapists such as Glorianne Jackson and Dr. Theresa Howard were not known to the current generation of dance movement therapists until efforts made by the independent historical archive project, "People Not in the Books: The Voices of Multiplicity in Dance Therapies" (García et al., 2020). These efforts came under the leadership of the Multicultural and Diversity Committee of the ADTA.

Statement of the Problem

While Black, Indigenous, and people of color (BIPOC) dance/movement therapists have been a part of this profession since the inception of graduate programs in the 1970s, their voices and contributions to the field until most recent times have not been reflected back in the literature. (The use of the term BIPOC for the purpose of this paper refers to any non-White identifying student. This identifier includes Latino/a/x, Black or African American, Native American, Asian or Asian American, Desi, Pacific Islander, and mixed-race or multicultural students). More specifically, when looking at the experiences of BIPOC students within their DMT education, there is limited research or archived accounts of their experiences. One of the earliest accounts was written by Gorman (1994) in her theses titled *Race, Culture, and Ethnicity as It Relates to Dance*

Therapy From an African American Perspective. Recently members of Multicultural Diversity Committee (MDC) have made conference presentations (Chang, 2016; Grayson, 2015; Howard, 2019) and research from BIPOC clinicians has spoken to BIPOC clinical experience (Campbell, 2019; De Valenzuela, 2014; Jenkins-Hayden, 2011; Jenkins-Hayden, 2015; Nichols, 2019; Nishida, 2008). Despite this there is still limited research on the BIPOC experience in DMT education. Due to the need for BIPOC dance/movement therapists in the field, it is imperative to have a robust understanding of how they are experiencing their education in the classroom and at internships.

Secondary to this initial issue is the limited research on pedagogy within the field of DMT. Dance/movement therapists who have discussed DMT pedagogy are Blanc (2019), Bunney (2013), Kawano and Chang (2019), Leventhal (2016), Sandel et al. (1993), and Stark (1980). Based on Chang's (2016) own lived experiences as a BIPOC student, researcher, and educator she provided recommendations for the DMT profession at education, personal, clinical, and institutional levels to continue critical reflection on how to be inclusive of people who are not of the dominant culture. Additionally, when speaking about DMT, Kawano and Chang (2019) posited "the lack of social critique of the inherent 'Whiteness' of its epistemology can be overlooked in the process of education and training of DMT professionals" (p. 234). A brief overview of a pilot study I conducted is provided to demonstrate initial findings of this research and provide the rationale for continued research on BIPOC student experiences in DMT education.

Pilot Study

The pilot study, *The Lived Experiences of People of Color in Dance/Movement Therapy Graduate Programs: A Pilot Study* (Stewart, 2020) explored experiences of four

BIPOC students and recent graduates (less than 3 years) in DMT graduate programs framed in racial, ethnic, and professional identity development. Three out of the seven thematic findings highlighted how the experience of oppression can affect BIPOC students in their educational environment. These findings were *anger/disappointment/sadness*, *caretaking and advocacy*, and *waver and exhaustion*. Three additional findings illustrated the cultural resiliency of students in an oppressive educational environment. This was expressed through themes of *acceptance and support*, *purpose*, and *privilege* (Stewart, 2020).

For these BIPOC students the experiences of oppression in DMT education manifested in the classroom, with instructors, peers, and at field and internship sites with supervisors (Stewart, 2020). In looking at the themes, participants who expressed anger/disappointment/sadness discussed racism, microaggressions, tokenism, and cultural insensitivity. These experiences led students to feel unaccepted, not good enough, and unsupported. The second theme, caretaking and advocacy, was defined as participants providing education to peers, instructors, and supervisors on multicultural issues as they appeared in the educational experience. The last theme, waver and exhaustion, described participants' confusion around certain parts of their DMT identity, as well as fatigue with sharing parts of their identity and advocacy. Participants described being ambivalent about continuing a career in DMT and felt fatigue with having to speak about various intersections in their identity (Stewart, 2020).

The pilot study also highlighted the resiliency of BIPOC students in DMT education despite experiences of oppression (Stewart, 2020). These protective factors occurred due to intrapersonal strengths possessed by participants, as well as interpersonal

strengths of select peers, instructors, and supervisors who chose to support BIPOC students. Regarding the theme of purpose, participants expressed their hopes and goals in the profession. This theme also captured creativity, visioning, and drive to build the DMT profession into what they wanted it to be. For some participants this was shaped by their spiritual beliefs and collectivist values. The theme of privilege defined an acceptance of educational and economic privilege. For these participants, being able to attend DMT graduate programs provided them with skills they could apply with their respective racial/ethnic groups. In addition, some participants spoke to economic privilege through the support of family members to aid in receiving their education. Lastly, acceptance and support occurred on various levels from instructors, peers, and supervisors who made a choice to support BIPOC students by creating a relationship for BIPOC students to be accepted, supported, and seen. This occurred through mentorship and advising with instructors and supervisors and friendship with peers.

This pilot study revealed ways that BIPOC students in DMT experience oppression in DMT education as well as protective factors that allowed these students to complete their programming (Stewart, 2020). These results showed consistency with critiques from BIPOC dance/movement therapists including Grayson (2015), Howard (2019), Kawano and Chang (2019), Puloka (2019), and research conducted by MDC (2009). Despite this, the need to have a deeper knowledge of embodied experience justified the need to conduct further research on BIPOC DMT students.

Research Questions

The overall aim for this research was to provide understanding of how DMT can begin to embrace an anti-oppressive pedagogy in graduate education. Clifford and Burke

(2009) stated “the intention behind anti-oppressive practice is to provide guidance in opposing or minimize, and/or overcome those aspects of relationships that express and consolidate oppression” (p. 16). With this objective the primary research question was as follows: What are the embodied experiences for BIPOC students in DMT graduate programs? The secondary question asked how might the experiences of BIPOC students in DMT graduate programs inform an embodied anti-oppressive pedagogy in DMT education? Using a qualitative research design based in phenomenology and arts-based methods, I attempted to create new scholarship for DMT education.

Research Context

This study occurred during a unique time in the world as all aspects of this study were conducted during the global pandemic of COVID-19. This pandemic caused all dance/movement therapy programs to make adjustments in (a) course delivery by moving to online platforms for hybrid or fully online learning and (b) changed learning expectations in academic courses and internship sites. Additionally, there was an awakening to anti-Black and anti-Asian sentiment with increased news coverage of the tragic murders of Black and Asian people by White men. These incidents led to protests across the nation and a call for organizations, including those of higher education, to engage in antiracist practices in their institutions.

While research has shown that BIPOC students have a challenging time in higher education, this was only exacerbated with the additional challenges’ students faced during this time (Duran, 2019; Hipolito-Delgado, 2014; Kellogg & Liddell, 2012; Museus & Park, 2015; Quinton, 2019; Robinson 2013). Some of these challenges were stress from systemic racism, having increased family responsibilities, experiences with

their own health and mental health, issues with immigration, death of family and friends, financial stress, and LGBTQ and female identifying BIPOC students experiencing more psychological harm (Blake et al., 2021; Burt & Eubanks, 2021; Syropoulos et al., 2021). There were also reported moments of resilience, optimism, and social belonging (Blake et al., 2021; Burt & Eubanks, 2021).

Research Approach

This study used a phenomenological arts-based research design informed by a three-element anti-oppressive approach to research. These elements were developing a phenomenological understanding (Brown & Strega, 2005; Lahman et al., 2011; Smith, 2012), transcorporeality (Alaimo, 2012; Strongman, 2019; Ward, 2002), and awareness of power dynamics (Hills Collins, 2013; hooks, 1994; Gilligan et al., 2013; Kawano, 2016; Ladson-Billings,1995). Eight participants were recruited and interviewed across various ADTA approved dance/movement therapy programs in the United States. I based the data collection methods on research conducted by Creswell and Poth (2018), Kellogg and Liddell (2012), Nagata et al. (2012), and Tantia and Kawano (2019). In between the two interviews, participants engaged in a one-week self-observation and embodied journaling process. They observed themselves before, during, and after taking a DMT course. They captured a brief video recording of their embodied experiences after the class and wrote about these experiences in a journal. I made audio and video recordings of the interviews and then transcribed them. I analyzed the data using two approaches to capture the embodied experiences of participants. The two approaches used were embodied listening (Kawnao, 2016) and I poems (Gilligan et al., 2013). I used member checking, reflexivity, and a rich and thick description of data as methods of triangulation

(Creswell & Poth, 2018; Cruz & Tantia, 2017; Forinash, 2012; Harrison, 2008; Hill Collins, 2013; Moosa-Mitha, 2005; Patton, 2002). I have shared the findings using an arts-based approach with poetry, photos, and video along with a detailed description of each of the four embodied states and eight embodied substates found. Furthermore, I have framed the findings using the concept of transcorporeality as described by Alaimo (2012), Strongman (2019), and Ward (2002).

CHAPTER 2

Literature Review

Antiracist pedagogy focuses on recognizing and understanding the structural roots of White supremacy, naming and talking about race in the classroom, interrogation of how race plays out in the classroom, and working in opposition to White supremacy (Dowd & Bensimon, 2015; Pollock, 2008; Young & Laible, 2000). Whereas antiracist practices are a good start in introducing equity in education, an anti-oppressive pedagogical practice which focuses not only on race but on the intersectionality of individuals as they appear throughout DMT education encompasses all of whom people are. Macey and Moxon (1996) posited anti-oppressive pedagogy is a radical process which has a more inclusive understanding of the intersections of oppression. The levels of oppression in society cut across race, gender, sexuality, class, environment, spirituality, religion, age, and abilities. Furthermore, anti-oppressive education "acknowledges the necessity to maintain the struggle against racial oppression, the need for allies, and the possibility from learning from class and feminist perspectives" (Macey & Moxon, 1996, p. 309).

One such field that could benefit from anti-oppressive pedagogy is DMT education. DMT is a form of creative arts therapy. It is defined as the psychotherapeutic use of dance and movement to promote the social, emotional, physical, and cognitive functions of an individual (ADTA, 2020). Although dance has been used as a therapeutic practice by many people of color, it became codified as DMT in the Western world in the 1940s and 1950s and graduate level training began in the 1970s (Harris, 2016). The skills of DMT were initially taught through an apprentice model with those interested seeking

out DMT practitioners (White women) who they were interested in studying with (Sandel et al., 1993). However, once DMT became a codified practice in graduate school settings, the training of DMT became more widespread with those teaching DMT having gone through little to no education in pedagogy instructing DMT (Blanc, 2019).

Furthermore, due to the growth of racial and ethnic diversity in the ADTA (Puloka, 2019), recommendations for over the past 10 years have been to critically reflect on how to be inclusive for people who are not of the dominant culture and for DMT faculty to engage in cultural sensitivity and recognize their own positionality, bring awareness to the history of power differentials in the classroom, and recognize non-Western dance forms and their healing practices (Chang, 2016; Grayson, 2015; Howard, 2019; Jenkins-Hayden, 2011). With power differentials occurring not only due to race but due to ability, gender, class, and sexuality there is clear support that DMT should move to embrace an anti-oppressive pedagogical practice. This review will explore perspectives on racial and ethnic identity development, experiences of BIPOC students in higher education, anti-oppressive pedagogy, and dance/movement therapy pedagogy.

Perspectives on Racial and Ethnic Identity Development

> Whence all the passion towards conformity anyway? Diversity is the word. Let man keep his many parts and you will have no tyrant states. Why if they follow this conformity business, they'll end up forcing me an invisible man, to become white, which is not a color but the lack of one. Must I strive towards colorlessness? But seriously and without snobbery think of what the world would lose if that should happen. America is woven of many strands. I would recognize them and let them remain. (Ellison, 1994, chapter 25, para. 1)

The preceding quote highlighted the importance and acceptance of the many rich and diverse racial and ethnic backgrounds of individuals in the United States. Theories used to develop understanding of BIPOC individuals, and their various social locations allow for their experiences to be valued within research. Watt (2015) posited that "the social construct of race on a macro-level shapes interaction on a microlevel" (p. 135), meaning our understanding of race as a society has an effect on the lives of BIPOC students. When looking specifically at the culture of graduate education, Perez et al. (2019) asserted it "(re) socializes people to racialized, gendered, class-based, heterosexist, ableist, and Christian norms that undergird the academy" (p. 60). Examining the importance of BIPOC student development during their higher education experience provides a level of understanding about how BIPOC students are conceptualizing themselves.

The theoretical understanding is that, as they accept who they are, they can embody a healthy psychological view of themselves (Cross, 1991; Helms, 1990; Watson, 2009). However, racial and ethnic groups can be "more developmentally complex within constructive-developmental theories" (Baxter Magolda, 2004; Johnson & Quaye, 2017, p. 1140). This review will cover stage theories, anti-oppressive and critical approaches, and strength-based approaches to racial and ethnic identity development.

Theories of Racial Development

Initial theories on racial identity development were stage theories regarding Black racial identity development. Cross (1971, 1991) proposed a model that consisted of pre-encounter, encounter, immersion-emersion, internalization, and internalization-commitment. During the early stages of this model there is a denial of Blackness

(Johnson & Quaye, 2017). The intermediary stages encompass a shift in life events that challenge Black identity, and a Black person is theorized to begin to reject Whiteness to explore critical Black consciousness (Johnson & Quaye, 2017). In the final stages, the Black-identifying person presents with confidence and flexibility in their beliefs and shifts from individual to collective action (Johnson & Quaye, 2017).

Another stage theory on Black identity development proposed by Jackson (1976) was characterized as naïve, acceptance, resistance, redefinition stage, and internalization. Similar to Cross's stages, the beginning stages of Jackson's model feature an absence of consciousness into one's Blackness followed by acceptance of the dominant narrative (Johnson & Quaye, 2017). The intermediary stages were characterized by passive or active resistance to Whiteness. The final stages were characterized by a change in social group interaction and no longer needing to justify their Black identity (Johnson & Quaye, 2017). This model proved similar to Cross's (1971, 1991) model.

Helms (1994, 1995) recognized limitations in these stage theories and developed a multidimensional model for BIPOC individuals. This model accounted for different racial identities (Watson, 2009). The stages of this model are conformity, dissonance, immersion, emersion, and internalization. Conformity is a lack of awareness of racial status and understanding of how racial status affects an individual's life. Dissonance is defined as occurring when someone has an interaction that highlights their race and causes them to experience stress. The immersion stage represents individuals' experience of anger regarding racism. In the emersion stage, individuals begin to explore a positive image of themselves to counteract negative stereotypes. During the internalization stage,

a person is able to hold both the dominant culture and the culture of their racial identity, allowing them to be fully integrated (Watson, 2009).

Theories of Racial and Ethnic Identity Development

The racial identity theories of Cross (1971, 1991), Jackson (1976), and Helms (1994, 1995) solely focused on racial identity development; however, more recent theories have begun to examine both racial and ethnic identity development. Central to the discourse on identity development in BIPOC individuals is the understanding of the differences between race and ethnicity, two social constructs that can sometimes be viewed interchangeably (Cokley, 2007; Cornell & Hartmann, 2007). Several theorists have posited *ethnic identity* as a "subjective sense of ethnic group membership that involves self-labeling, sense of belonging, preference for the group, and positive evaluation of the ethnic group, ethnic knowledge, and ethnic group activities" (Cokley, 2007, p. 225). Cokley (2007) defines *ethnicity* as shared history, heritage, tradition, language, beliefs, food, dress, dance, music, and art among a group of people. *Racial identity* describes the "collective identity of any group of people socialized to think of themselves as a racial group" (Cokley, 2007, p. 225). The definition of race as stated by Cokley (2007) is constructed through the use of physical markers such as skin color, hair type, and facial features.

In examining racial and ethnic identity development, Sellers et al. (1998) developed a four-part model called the Multidimensional Model of Racial Identity (MMRI). The first dimension, *racial salience*, "refers to the extent to which one's race is a relevant part of one's self-concept at a particular moment or in a particular situation" (p. 24). The second dimension, *centrality*, is how an individual defines themselves when it

comes to race, which is thought to be stable across situations. *Regard* is the third dimension of Sellers and colleagues' (1998) model. This dimension examines the positive or negative feelings an individual possesses toward one's race. The last dimension, *ideology* is concerned with beliefs and attitudes with regard to how individuals of a certain race should behave. Within these ideologies are nationalist, oppressed, assimilationist, or humanist ideologies. These ideologies are defined as being proud of the uniqueness of being Black, an awareness of oppression faced by their own race and the other groups, interacting within the systems and observing similarities to Whites, and thinking in terms of humans and not observing differences, respectively (Sellers et al., 1998).

Root (1990, 2001) was another theorist who examined multiracial and multiethnic identity development. Root (2001) proposed a fluid metamodel for biracial identity development. Components of the model were acknowledgement of the identity prescribed by others, association with a single racial group, association with both racial groups, and identification as a new racial group. Rockquemore and Brunsma (2002) posited that multiracial and multiethnic individuals can simultaneously belong to multiple identity groups that are fluid throughout their life.

Anti-Oppressive and Critical Approaches to Racial and Ethnic Identity Development

Only highlighting race or ethnic identity limits traditional models of stage theories (Johnston-Guerrero, 2016). Whereas there are stage theories of racial and ethnic identity development, there are also theories which begin to take an anti-oppressive approach. These theories encompass queer and critical race theories which examine students'

gender, ability, sexual orientation, agency, and motivation aside from solely viewing their race or ethnic identity. Furthermore, they examine power and privilege. By viewing these facets of a BIPOC student's identity a holistic picture of who this student is can be developed.

Intersectional Approaches

Duran (2019) conducted a systemic review of being BIPOC and queer (QPOC) in higher education. The goal was to build understanding around the experiences of QPOC students who identify as sexual minorities and critical perspectives used in conceptualizing these experiences. Duran (2019) used a four-step process to gather literature from peer reviewed journals, books, and dissertations from relevant electronic databases. Sixty-eight documents were found that met the criteria. After review of these documents four themes were found and three theoretical perspectives were identified in QPOC literature.

The first theme identified was *coming out and sources of support.* Research highlighted that public disclosure of sexual identity was less likely for QPOC students. Sources of support can be found in finding faculty or peers who also identify as QPOC and student clubs and organizations (Duran, 2019). *Campus climate and navigating singular identity spaces* was the second theme. QPOC students who attended historically Black colleges or Hispanic serving institutions were reported to feel disconnected and marginalized due to their sexuality. At predominantly White institutions QPOC students were marginalized both due to race and sexuality. "Navigating singular identity spaces ultimately leave QPOC students vulnerable to microaggressions and discrimination" (Duran, 2019, p. 392). The third theme was *complex individuality of QPOC students.* The

complex individuality represented the idea that QPOC individuals are not a monolith. There are a number of intersections including socioeconomic status, gender, religion, and undocumented status which make up who a QPOC person is. The last theme, *lack of resources and representation*, spoke to not being able to identify resources of faculty and staff who are QPOC on college campuses. Although single identity spaces exist such as LGBTQ centers or multicultural centers, they often do not have resources for someone who is QPOC.

Theoretical perspectives found in the literature were quare theory, intersectionality, and queer of color critique (Duran, 2019). Quare theory deconstructs QPOC identity and performance by centering race to illustrate how identity, resistance, and survival exist. By doing this it acknowledges Black queer people's intellectual contributions to this community and recognizes fluidity in the power structures that impact QPOC identity. The theory of intersectionality offers a way to both acknowledge power dynamics that exist for QPOC individuals when interacting with various systems and their overall experience as QPOC individuals. The last theory, queer of color critique, sought to examine forms of oppression that exist in economic and political areas for QPOC individuals. This theory was thought to contribute to how educational policy can begin to center QPOC experiences in their decision making for budgeting and other policies (Duran, 2019).

This systemic review of the literature helped to fill a large gap in the research on QPOC experiences. The methodological integrity exists with clearly defined steps for the literature search. Themes were defined and summarized demonstrating a rich and thick

description. The positionality of the researcher would have provided helpful context to inform reflexivity.

Another important consideration when looking at BIPOC students are BIPOC international students. Yao et al. (2019) conducted a systemic literature review to explore the experience of international students as both "highly globalized and highly racialized" in predominantly White institutions using critical race theory (p. 41). These researchers believed that critical race theory could be applied outside of its origins in the United States to international students who are living in the context of the United States. More specifically Yao et al. (2019) posited, "International students to the US., particularly those from non-White and non-English speaking countries are often othered and racialized using US constructs of race" (p.39).

Yao et al. (2019) reviewed literature from a 20-year time frame (1996–2016) from five databases using a two-step process. They found 63 articles and reports. Researchers analyzed the sources using annotation, analytic notes, and synthesizing information to uncover four themes. They framed these themes in the tenets of critical race theory. *Permanence and centrality of race and racism* was identified as the first theme which spoke to the challenges faced for BIPOC international students adjusting to being a racial minority when they were the majority in their home countries. They discussed the process of racialization in the United States which is different for White international students. There were reports of microaggressions including racism from staff, faculty, students, and the outside community. This led to academic withdrawal and self-isolation in some cases. The second theme, *Whiteness as property and White supremacy,* appeared in centering of White values, English as the predominant language, and the "assumption of

assimilation and acculturation" of BIPOC international students (Yao et al., 2019, p. 44). Researchers note that recommendations put the onus on the student to adapt, which further perpetuates White supremacy.

Intersectionality is the third theme which recognized the intersectional identities of international students including race, sex, sexual orientation, religion, and socioeconomic status and how these identities may hold places of privilege and oppression for them in the United States. The last theme, *meritocracy and interest convergence*, discussed the ways in which "economic, political, and diversity" needs are met by international student presence. Yao et al.(2019) asserted students are seen as a commodity by the university because they pay higher tuition fees and provide racial capitalism due to being non-White.

Recommendations for having BIPOC international students are to recognize these students as racialized and begin to provide structural policy changes as opposed to an international student's office which silos students (Yao et al, 2019). Another recommendation was to look at how institutional programs and policies should adapt to the people they are serving (Yao et al., 2019). Applying critical race theory to both the experience of the international student in the United States and in their home country to have a deeper understanding of their experiences was the third recommendation. Lastly, the researchers made recommendations to consider gender and sexuality and their impact on the international student's experience. This article provided a comprehensive look into the experiences of BIPOC international students and offered a unique perspective in which to understand their experiences as being racialized in the United States. The article features methodological integrity and a rich and thick description.

Integrative and Strength-Based Approaches

An integrative model proposed by Johnston-Guerrero (2016) applied a critical lens to theories of ethnic and racial identity development to bring awareness to the intersections individuals have in their identities. The critical lens approach supports understanding of students in the context of their environment. Additionally, it highlights how power and privilege appear in their education environment in relation to their racial and ethnic identity. This integrative model moved away from racist "homogenization" (Johnston-Guerrero, 2016, p. 47) of people of color to recognizing ethnic marginalized groups. An underlying belief of this model is that racial analysis may concentrate on racism and negative impact and ethnic analysis may concentrate on pride and belonging. The imagery of a zipper is used by Johnston-Guerrero (2016) to evoke intersectionality. The researcher is the person zipping together race and racial identity on one side and ethnicity and ethnic identity on the other side. This model should be applied in collaborative efforts with researchers and participants to decide whether they are using a racial analysis, ethnic analysis, or both in a study. The hope is that traditional theories of racial or ethnic identity can be inserted into this model. Taking steps to test this theory would provide stronger backing for this theoretical stance. By taking into account both students' racial identity and ethnic identity, people will support them in building racial pride and ethnocentrism which can allow for full integration (Johnston-Guerrero, 2016).

Another integrative approach which builds upon the Black racial identity model was proposed by Johnson and Quaye (2017). They explored similarities in Cross's (1971, 1991) model of black racial identity development, Jackson's (1976) model of racial identity development, critical race theory, and queer theories to create a bricolage of

theories. Johnson and Quaye (2017) posited a queer Black racial identity explored desire, performative social identities, being and becoming, and context of structural oppression. Desire is informed by attraction through how individuals relate to one another, which in turn affects their behavior. Through performative social identities an individual is thought to "behave" in a specific identity instead of "be" a specific identity. Due to this people may change their actions depending on their environment or code-switch. In being and becoming, racial identity was described by Johnson and Quaye (2017) as a continuous process which changed over time due to individual's life experiences. Lastly, the context of structural oppression discussed racism and heteronormative ways of being in a society and how an individual resisted these ways of being. Johnson and Quaye (2017) acknowledge that this theoretical model needs to be researched and can lead to a color blinding of identity development.

Whereas racial and ethnic identity theories from an anti-oppressive framework help us to understand the various intersections individuals present, an additional perspective to view identity development is through agency. The term *agency* was developed from social cognitive theory. Bandura (2001) defined it as follows: "to be an agent is to intentionally make things happen by one's actions" (p. 2). Components which help to foster agency are intentionality, self-reflection, forethought, and self-reactiveness (Bandura, 2001). Furthermore, agency can occur individually, with a proxy, or collectively (Bandura, 2001). *Individual agency* is when a person is motivated to take actions on one's own. Having a *proxy* is looking toward someone who has expertise or control in an environment which the individual does not have access to (Bandura, 2001). *Collective agency* is the notion that people are interdependent and need to work in

coordination with others to achieve their goals. Bandura (2001) asserted, “people’s shared belief in their collective power to produce desired results is a key ingredient of collective agency” (p. 14).

The student agency perspective provides a strength-based approach by considering intrapersonal factors which allow a BIPOC student to remain in higher education despite oppressive experiences. More specifically, agency provides understanding on “strategic perspectives (thought processes) and strategic actions (specific steps)” when choosing one’s educational path and career (Jaeger et al., 2017, p. 233). It centers students’ choices in career and interest in their social identity (Jaeger et al., 2017). Depending on the educational environment of the student they may find themselves using individual, proxy, or collective agency to achieve their educational goals.

This review of perspectives on racial and ethnic identity development provided an opportunity to develop insight as to the potential theoretical perspectives used to conceptualize BIPOC student experience within higher education. The following section will provide research from these various perspectives to illuminate the ways BIPOC students are experiencing higher education.

BIPOC Student Experiences in Higher Education

According to the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES, 2019), college enrollment rates for students aged 18 to 24 years have increased from 2000 to 2017 for BIPOC students, with African American enrollment increasing from 31% to 36%, Latinx from 20% to 39%, Asian American from 56% to 65%, Native American/Alaskan from 16% to 20%, and those who identify as two or more races from 38% to 41%. There was a

decrease in enrollment for Pacific Islanders from 36% to 33% (NCES, 2019). As the student populations within higher education institutions increasingly diversify, BIPOC students potentially face a number of unique experiences by virtue of not being of the dominant culture. This leaves one to wonder what the educational experiences of BIPOC students are. Do they experience the academic environments they enter as embracing the complexities of their identities? Daniel (2007) posited:

> Minority students often come to institutions of higher education with attitudes and behavior patterns that are different from the culture of graduate schools, making their path through school more problematic than it might be for a student with the dominant forms of social capital. (p. 26)

Subsequent sections of this review are intended to synthesize existing studies on BIPOC students and examine the experiences of oppression, as well as experiences of agency and academic achievement in higher education.

Oppressive Experiences

Increased racial and ethnic diversity in higher education without cultural sensitivity toward BIPOC students creates an environment in which these students may not feel safe due to experiences of racism, colorism, or microaggressions. There are four different forms of racism: individual, cultural, institutional, and internalized. *Individual racism* occurs when oppressed individuals are treated by people of the dominant culture as subservient due to their race (Museus & Park, 2015). *Cultural racism* occurs when beliefs of the dominant culture are prioritized over the beliefs of oppressed cultures (Museus & Park, 2015). *Institutional racism* manifests in “policies, practices, and behaviors that disadvantage racial groups within a system” (Museus & Park, 2015, p.

522). *Internalized racism* are beliefs of one's own marginalized identity to be inferior (Hipolito-Delgado, 2014).

Moreover, BIPOC students may also experience discrimination due to colorism. *Colorism* is the preference for individuals with lighter versus darker skin tone (Ryabov, 2016), a phenomenon that occurs across, within, and between racial groups. Lastly, *microaggressions* occur when BIPOC students experience subtle and unconscious discriminatory behaviors by others. Sue et al. (2007) categorized as these microaggressions as *microinvalidations*, *microinsults*, or *microassaults*. Experts define these as dismissiveness or a minimization of racism experienced by BIPOC students; subtle, often unconscious negative behaviors toward these students; and conscious verbal or nonverbal behaviors aimed at harming BIPOC individuals, respectively (Ryabov, 2016; Sue et al., 2007). This section will review oppressive experiences for BIPOC students in higher education.

In a study that looked at the impact of the different types of racism, researchers found nine themes that encapsulated Asian American students' experiences of racism on a college campus (Museus & Park, 2015). The participants ($N = 46$) recruited for this study were Vietnamese American ($n = 14$), Cambodian ($n = 10$), Chinese ($n = 7$), Hmong ($n = 5$), Korean ($n = 2$), Laotian ($n = 3$), Thai ($n = 1$), and multiethnic ($n = 4$). Variations in gender ($n_{female} = 34$, $n_{male} = 12$) and generation with second-generation students ($n = 36$) also occurred. All participants were enrolled in universities in varying geographic areas throughout the United States. Researchers collected data through 60- to 90-min interviews and analyzed them using open and axial coding. Within the data analysis, the

researchers peer debriefing and member checking to ensure trustworthiness (Museus & Park, 2015).

The themes that emerged were (a) *racial hostility*, (b) *vicarious racism*, (c) *racial isolation*, (d) *pressure to racially segregate*, (e) *pressure to racially assimilate*, (f) *racial silencing*, (g) *the forever foreigner myth*, (h) *the model minority myth*, and (i) *the inferior minority myth* (Museus & Park, 2015). These findings illustrated that participants experienced racial bullying slurs, racial profiling, witnessing a racist incident directed at someone else of Asian descent, active marginalization, pressure to segregate, pressure to behave like people of the dominant culture, being denied a voice in mainstream curriculum, being perpetual foreigners, negative assumptions that generalized academic abilities, and being characterized as "ghetto" due to being lower class or having darker color skin, respectively (Museus & Park, 2015).

Museus and Park (2015) made recommendations for educators to provide safe spaces for students, provide inclusive curriculum with Asian American voices, receive training in order to not perpetuate racial stereotypes, and not assume that Asian Americans are self-segregating in predominantly White environments. This study brings the Asian American experience of racism in higher education to the forefront. Strengths of this research can be found in methodological integrity, thick description of findings, and triangulation of data. Additionally, Museus and Park (2015) also recommended that future research should study the effects of colorism in Southeast Asian American communities. The limitation of this study is that limited information was provided about negative case analysis.

A quantitative study that focused on Helms' theory of racial identity examined the impact of internalized racism on U.S.-born Latinx students' ethnic identity development. Hipolito-Delgado (2014) used hierarchal linear regression analysis that showed statistical significance with internalized racism (β. = −.19, t [327] = −3.89, $p < .001$) and perceived racism (β. = .30, t [327] = 6.24, $p < .001$) as predictors of ethnic identity development. The researchers recruited 373 Latinx participants representing 66 different colleges through the American College Personnel Association. Of the 66 different colleges 70.5% came from public institutions and 29.5% from private institutions. Additional descriptive breakdown of participants' gender showed 69.2% identified as female, 30.3% male, .3% transgender, and .3% declined to state their gender. Lastly, participants represented first-generation (60.1%), 1.5 generations (17.2%), second-generation (5.1%), 2.5 generation (4.0%), third-generation or more (9.1%), and deferred (4.6%). The labels 1.5 and 2.5 generation refer to individuals who move to the United States as teenagers and individuals who have one parent born in the United States and another born in a different country, respectively. The researcher used an online survey to collect data. Measurements utilized were the Multigroup Ethnic Identity Measure (five-point scale), the Abbreviated Multidimensional Acculturation Scale-Spanish Language Competence subscale (five-point scale), and the Everyday Perceived Racial Discrimination index (five-point scale; Hipolito-Delgado, 2014). The Cronbach's alpha coefficients were .90, .97, and .92, respectively. The Mochichua Tepehuani scale (seven-point scale) was another measurement used, but it did not have a Cronbach's alpha coefficient.

This article provided insight into how racism impacts ethnic identity development for an underexamined population. The author provided a comprehensive description and

clear rationale for the sample. Despite a thorough description of each measure, information regarding validity and reliability of some instruments was lacking. Due to a large focus on public institutions in this study, it may not be generalizable to students at private institutions. Implications for college counseling suggested by Hipolito-Delgado (2014) are for counselors to explore the origin of any stereotyped beliefs from students and help with processing perceived racism. This study could be improved with a larger sample size for external validity and greater transparency in methods used to retrieve data (Hipolito-Delgado, 2014).

In further research using the metamodel approach to multiracial identity (Root, 2001), Kellogg and Liddell (2012) conducted a qualitative study with multiracial students to explore how critical incidents in higher education shape racial identity. They used snowball sampling to recruit participants ($N = 14$; $n_{female} = 11$, $n_{male} = 3$) from two predominantly White institutions in the Midwestern region of the United States. Participants self-identified as biracial, multiracial, monoracial, mixed, or with all of their parents' racial groups, and were between the ages of 18 and 23 years. Researchers collected data through two interviews, each 55 min in length. Between the first and second interviews, seven of the 14 participants submitted a journal or brought in an artifact about critical incidents they experienced on campus due to their multiracial identity. Nine participants attended a focus group to review the emerging themes. The researchers analyzed the data using the constant comparative method. They also used member checking, reflexive journaling, and an audit trail (Kellogg & Liddell, 2012).

Findings showed four categories with eight subcategories (Kellogg & Liddell, 2012). The first category was *confronting race and racism* with the subcategories of

realizing race and *encountering racism*. The researchers defined this as students being aware of how race was affecting them academically and experientially. The second category, *responding to external definitions*, contained subcategories of *racial ambiguity* and *checking one box*. The researchers designated this as moments when participants had to define their racial identity or begin to understand how others viewed it. *Defending legitimacy* was the third category, with subcategories of *academic legitimacy* and *racial legitimacy*. In this category, participants felt challenged by others either defending their academic place or racial identity. The last category was *affirming racial identity*, with subcategories *having shared experience* and *acquiring knowledge about one's race*. Participants felt validated and comfortable with their racial identity. These results showed that participants had an array of experiences that they defined as critical incidents throughout their college career (Kellogg & Liddell, 2012).

This study captured the experience of multiracial students in higher education and the impact of oppressive experiences on their racial identity development. The researchers described a possible limitation being the disproportionate number of female to male participants. However, they expressed this as consistent with other research on multiracial students. They did not provide a gender breakdown of multiracial students. The strengths of this study were triangulation, methodological integrity, and personal integrity. Triangulation was achieved through multiple methods, including peer reviews, reflexive journals, and member checking.

An effect of institutional racism known as *tokenism* emerged from a qualitative study that explored the education experiences of Black women in a graduate program (Robinson, 2013). This study, framed in a Black Feminist approach, defined tokenism as

being the only Black female voice in a graduate program. Robinson recruited participants through a nonprofit organization that worked with African American graduate students. Eleven female African American students participated including doctoral (n = 4), transitional masters to PhD (n = 3), and Masters (n = 4) participants. Their ages ranged from 24 to 67 years old. The researcher used a Black Feminist framework to inform data collection and analysis, which consisted of semistructured interviews and narrative analysis. Interviews ranged from 45 min to 6 hr. Two major themes emerged from this data, and the researcher depicted them through poetry. The first theme was *spoketokensim*. Robinson (2013) reported this as the experience of African American women being a token in White academic spaces and having to make a choice regarding when to speak up and advocate. Participants discussed the positive and negative aspects of being a token person, which included being able to educate, lead, and instigate. The second theme, *represent*, examined the risks and consequences of pushing back due to racial oppression. This theme contained stories of participants needing to advocate for themselves due to unjust situations (Robinson, 2013).

This research illuminated the experiences of African American women and the effects of institutional racism in academia (Robinson, 2013). Although levels of methodological and interpersonal integrity are displayed in this research, limitations are observed in lack of triangulation of data. It is not clear if any steps, such as member checking or peer review, were completed, which affects credibility.

Using the concepts of ingroup and outgroup, Quinton (2019) sought to understand the predictive factors which effect international students when it comes to how they are perceived by domestic students and the prejudice they experience. Researchers recruited

389 (n_{female} = 246, n_{male} = 143) first-year college domestic students over the course of two months from a large research university in the Northeastern United States. Racial demographics were White (*n* = 281), Asian (*n* = 46), Black (*n* = 28), Latino (*n* = 21), Middle Eastern (*n* = 6), other (*n* = 5), and American Indian (*n* = 2). The overall hypothesis tested several variables including "university identity, socialization with internationals, cumulative grade point average (GPA) standardized college admissions test scores, positive and negative stereotypes of internationals, conservatism, support for Trump, and race/ethnicity" (Quinton, 2019, p. 159). To test these variables the following measures were used: Psychological Sense of School Membership scale (seven-point Likert scale), three adapted questions from Glass et al. (nine-point Likert scale; 2014), a review of academic records including GPA score and college admission test scores, a stereotyping measure by Quinton et al. (scale not discussed; 2016), the Social and Economic Conservatism scale (scale of 0–100), and a measuring testing slogan "Make America great again" (10-point Likert scale). The Cronbach's coefficients were .88, .86, .88 and .84, .82, and .92, respectively.

Use of correlation results showed "higher levels of university identity (*r* = −.13), socialization with internationals (*r* = −.16), SAT/ACT (*r* = −.10), and positive stereotypes (*r* = −.37) predicted lower negative attitudes toward international students" (Quinton et al., 2019, p. 162). The aforementioned correlation scores are small, and SAT/ACT scores demonstrated no correlation. Additionally, non-White race/ethnicity (*r* = −.14) was associated with decreased negative attitudes as well. Correlation also showed that increased negative attitudes toward international students were observed with negative stereotypes (*r* = .39), conservatism (*r* = .25), and support for President Trump (*r* = .41).

These results demonstrate the importance of university identity, socializing with international students, those who are less challenged academically to have positive attitudes toward international students. In the same accord, non-White students may understand themselves as "sharing some core concepts of identity with internationals which may lead them to see internationals as sharing more ingroup than outgroup characteristics" (Quinton et al., 2019, p. 166). Furthermore, results demonstrated negative stereotyping, conservatism, and support for President Trump were predictors of negative stereotyping of international students. This was unique in that it looked toward current behaviors and attitudes held by domestic students and their influences on a positive or negative academic environment for international students. Although a larger sample size can be used to increase external validity of results, this study clearly demonstrated construct validity and reliability throughout its review of literature and methodology (Quinton et al., 2019).

These studies illustrate some of the ways BIPOC students experience oppression through various degrees of racism, colorism, and microaggressions. These experiences can be perpetuated by peers within their group, outside of their group, faculty, and their experiences in the outside world. Due to this it is important to build understanding of the protective factors which allow BIPOC students to succeed in challenging and oppressive educational landscapes.

Agency and Academic Achievement

The use of agency provides a strength-based approach to view BIPOC students' experiences. As discussed in previous sections, there are several types of agency including individual, proxy, or collective agency (Bandura, 2001). Some factors which

have been stated to support BIPOC students are cultural resiliency, mentorship, student community of peers who share similar social locations to name a few. Cultural resiliency was identified as a protective factor for Native American students by HeavyRunner and Marshall (2003). *Cultural resiliency* is defined as factors such as spirituality, elders, and ceremonial rituals that support Native American families, students, and culture (DryWater-Whitekiller, 2010). When looking at the experiences of other BIPOC students, academic achievement and retention are supported by having professors of diverse backgrounds and mentorship (Johnson-Bailey, 2004; Tuitt, 2012). This section will review literature on BIPOC students' interpersonal and intrapersonal strengths through agency to help them achieve their academic goals.

Individual Agency

Chee et al. (2019) explored individual agency with frameworks of MMRI (Sellers et al., 1998) and Bandura (2001) to understand the impact of academic stress on Native American students. They recruited Native American students ($N = 158$) from various tribal communities in a university in the Southwest region of the United States. Recruited participants were female ($n = 93$) and male ($n = 65$), and the Navajo tribe had the largest representation ($n = 82$). Researchers examined variables of ethnic identity, cultural congruity, and self-beliefs. They measured the variables using the Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale (10 items), a modified Multidimensional Inventory for Black Identity Scale (eight items), the Cultural Congruity Scale (13 items), and the Daily Hassles Index for College Stress (29 items). The Cronbach's alpha scores for these measures were .84, .69, .74, .74, and .91, respectively. Researchers administered a paper survey to participants during class time. Correlation test showed academic self-efficacy was a significant predictor of

academic stress, ß = −.37, $t = -3.69$, $p < .01$. A hierarchical regression analysis found that ethnic identity and cultural congruity were also found to be significant at $\Delta R^2 = .101$, $\Delta F(4,150) = .498$, $p = .001$. There was a relatively small effect size for this study. These results showed Native American students' belief in self-efficacy produced lower levels of academic stress. Additionally, increased acceptance and knowledge of one's ethnic identity and cultural congruity was associated with less academic stress. This study highlighted the power of individual agency in a student's ability to succeed in their academic education. Strengths of this study were the reliability of measures and construct validity. Future research can use a larger sample to increase external validity and more diversity in tribal affiliations (Chee et al., 2019).

A qualitative study which used the MMRI theory explored the experience of first-year African American students in higher education (Baber, 2012). The researcher used purposive sampling to recruit 15 students ($n_{female} = 9$, $n_{male} = 6$) at a university in the Mid-Atlantic region of the United States. Three semistructured, 1-hr individual interviews happened over the course of 9 months. Additionally, the researcher provided participants with a journal to record their experiences between interviews and a small stipend for participation. Through use of phenomenological analysis, Baber (2012) ascertained five major themes.

The first theme, *established racial identity development*, described ways in which individuals were informed of their African American identity before college (Baber, 2012). The second theme, *reconsidering identity through heterogenous experience*, encompassed participants' connections to other African American students and creating cultures for support. *The conflict of ideologies* was the third theme, in which participants

described tension with parts of their identity that formed prior to and during higher education. The fourth theme was *racial regard resiliency*, in which participants encountered moments of resistance to embodying racial prejudices imposed on them, or one way of being African American. In the final theme, *complexity of identity*, participants began to realize the intersectionality of their identity. Baber (2012) suggested that continued research should be done to comprehend the effects of socioeconomic status on African American racial identity.

Baber (2012) provided an in-depth glimpse into the experience of African American students and their use of individual agency. The use of prolonged engagement, peer review, bracketing, thick description, and reflexivity makes this study highly credible and transferable. Lastly, this study offers educative authenticity in the way it informs others about the experience of BIPOC students. One limitation of this study is a lack of focus on other factors that can contribute to the BIPOC student experience, including socioeconomic status.

Proxy Agency

Proxy agency was explored through mentorship in a study by Shalka (2017). This researcher examined the importance of developing leadership skills through mentorship of international students. The research question pondered, "how does mentorship contribute to socially responsible leadership development for international undergraduate students over and above perceived leadership efficacy" (Shalka, 2017, p. 140). The sample for this study was pulled from a larger study using the Multi-Institutional Study of Leadership (MSL). Participants were international students (n = 3,038) and domestic students (n = 3,038). The demographics of international students were Asian (55.3%),

White (18.2%), Latino/Hispanic (7.2%), Black (7.2%), Middle Eastern (4.1%), multiracial (3.1%), and American Indian/Alaska Native (.5%). Participants were female (52.7%), male (46.9%), and transgender (.4%). Participants were also spread fairly evenly across year in school. The researcher collected data through five measures. They were an adapted version of the Socially Responsible Leadership Scale (71 items), MSL (items unknown), Leadership Empowerment Scale (items unknown), Personal Development Scale (items unknown), and Leadership Self-Efficacy Scale (items unknown). The Cronbach's alpha scores for the aforementioned scales were .96, .89, .88, and .88, respectively. Analysis of data used hierarchical regression and found that leadership self-efficacy (F [2, 1326] = 490.569, $p < .001$) and mentorship for personal development ($\Delta R^2 = .113$, $p < .001$) were strong predictors for socially responsible leadership. It is important to note despite this report the effect size was small. These results indicate that when more mentorship is provided to international students, they are more likely to achieve academically. This study makes a large contribution to the field in that it strives to find the strength of what works for international students. Strengths of this study are its large sample size and diversity across gender and race.

Collective Agency

Burt et al. (2019) studied the idea of collective agency. Researchers used grounded theory to explore factors which allowed Black males ($N = 30$) to be persistent in completing their graduate level education in STEM programs across three universities. Demographics of participants showed those that attended predominantly White institutions ($n = 25$) and HBCUs ($n = 5$). They also had mothers ($n = 21$) and fathers (n =18) with postsecondary education. Researchers collected data using a demographic

questionnaire and one semistructured interview over the course of 1 hr. The findings of this study illustrated *Etic* and *Emic strengths* which allowed for Black males to graduate from their programs. Etic strengths were identified as "strengths that are universally and generally beneficial to all students" (Burt et al., 2019, p. 52). This included social support from families and social support from faculty members. The second finding, emic strengths, highlighted "strengths that are group specific or relevant for a particular community" (Burt et al., 2019, p. 52). Under emic findings researchers identified *spirituality and faith-based communities* which provide a place of "strength, encouragement, and support" (Burt et al., 2019, p. 55). Although this study provided insight into how Black males are succeeding in graduate STEM programs, methods of triangulation would help to improve this study. Furthermore, in this study the power of collective agency was described through its findings.

A mixed method study explored collective agency, aiming to both "investigate the relationship between Black students' racial identity and their sense of connectedness to their college campuses" and "highlight the ethnic diversity within the Black college student group" (Thelamour et al., 2019, p. 266). The researchers used qualitative and quantitative findings due to this being a mixed method study, and they used both the constant comparative method and multiple tests to analyze the data. The findings revealed two themes. The first theme, *racial identity and social connectedness*, illustrated ways in which Black Americans who had a strong connection to their racial identity felt more marginalized at predominantly White institutions. A hierarchical multiple regression analysis showed that racial identity was shown to be a significant predictor of connectedness for Black American students only. *Ethnic friendship patterns* was the

second theme which described the degree of closeness of different ethnic groups within the Black community. Quantitative findings using post hoc Tukey test suggested that Black Americans were significantly closer to Black American peers ($M = 4.72$, $SD = .98$), African students were significantly closer to their African peers ($M = 4.80$, $SD = 1.42$), and Caribbean students were significantly closer to their Caribbean peers ($M = 4.73$, $SD = 1.03$; Thelamour et al., 2019).

The demographics of this study were Black identified students ($n = 345$) of which 59.8% were Black American, 26.2% were first or second generation African, and 16.3% were Caribbean. In terms of gender identity there were female (75.7%), male (22%), and transgender, gender queer, or other at 2.3% (Thelamour et al., 2019). Researchers collected data using an online survey and interviews. Of the 345 participants only 25 agreed to participate in interviews. This study filled a significant gap in the literature by focusing on ethnic identity within the Black community and investigating how collective agency is formed within and among groups. There is a rich description of findings and methodological integrity for this study. Future research would benefit from having more diversity in terms of gender and considerations of other factors including socioeconomic status (Thelamour et al., 2019).

Runner-Rioux et al. (2018) conducted a study which highlighted individual and collective agency, and which focused on the Native American community. Researchers examined academic persistence, academic support, and completion of graduate study to understand their relationship for Native American graduate students. They conducted recruitment for the study through listserv and Facebook posts. Researchers used a modified survey from another quantitative study. There were 41 tribes represented by the

54 participants, whose age ranged from 22 to 55 years. In other demographics, 78% of participants identified as female, 17% as male, and 5% as other, which included gender fluid, nonbinary, two spirit, and transgender. Eighty-four percent of participants reported attending tribal events, and 60% of participants reported not being fluent in tribal language (Runner-Rioux et al., 2018).

Using bivariate correlation, one statistically significant relationship was found between spirituality and persistence ($p < .05$; Runner-Rioux et al., 2018). Furthermore, the results showed strong correlations with Native American graduate programs (all $p < .01$) between family and the following factors including social well-being (.91), mental well-being (.90), physical well-being (.82), spiritual well-being (.80), and experience (.72). Experience for the purpose of this study included experience of stress, sickness, social life, and depression, among other things. These results suggested that the four types of well-being were protective factors, and experiences informed the level of resilience in Native American graduate students. A multivariate linear regression yielded a 21.8% variance and illuminated significant relationships between Native American graduate student persistence against the variables of success factors, Native American programs, and perception of self (Runner-Rioux et al., 2018).

Contributions of this study are that it built upon previous research and theories, substantiated research regarding the need for community, culture, and relationships and their contributions to persistence, and discussed the need for further discourse on Native American retention (Runner-Rioux et al., 2018). Researchers made suggestions for higher education institutions to include Native American students in the strategic plan for programming. Lastly, more information providing the reliability of the survey would

have strengthened the study, while a larger sample size would increase external validity (Runner-Rioux et al., 2018).

Individual, Proxy, and Collective Agency

In a study which explored all three forms of agency, Perez et al. (2019) explored how graduate students ($N = 44$) from a variety of disciplines experienced agency after oppressive experiences in higher education. Researchers recruited participants from two universities in the Midwest. Demographics showed participants were female ($n = 27$), male ($n = 15$), agender ($n = 1$), and transgender ($n = 1$). In terms of sexual orientation there were heterosexual ($n = 28$) and LGBT+ ($n = 14$) participants. Racially participants were White ($n = 16$), Black ($n = 13$), multiracial ($n = 7$), Asian/Asian American ($n = 4$), and Hispanic/Latinx ($n = 4$). Researchers collected data through two interviews and a visual art self-portrait. Perez et al. (2019) had multiple researchers from a variety of social locations analyze the data using a comparative case analysis.

The findings revealed students engaged in *self advocacy, created community*, *conserved energy*, and *created space for identity-conscious scholarship and practice* (Perez et al., 2019). Self-advocacy involved students educating peers and faculty when they did harmful behaviors and providing education. In creating community, students created various identity groups or affinity clubs to meet with people of similar identities. The conservation of energy occurred when students monitored the environment and people who they were around. Students chose to stay away from negative people, "choosing their battles." Lastly students may find themselves conducting research and in positions to provide further education around diversity, equity, and inclusion (Perez et al., 2019). These positions can be due to building their network to have a paid position in

which they work toward diversity, equity, and inclusion. The study provided examples of individual, proxy, and collective agency. Furthermore, its strengths are in triangulation of data through multiple researchers which demonstrated personal integrity, diversity of participants, and a thick description of findings (Perez et al., 2019).

These studies convey the unique experiences of BIPOC students in higher education. Their experiences are often marred with racism, colorism, microaggression, feelings of being out of the group, or finding ways to continue their education through protective factors. While some of the protective factors which help BIPOC students remain in higher education are mentorship, family, and various forms of well-being (spiritual, psychological, etc.), it leads one to wonder: How could changes in their educational experience through more inclusive teaching pedagogy support BIPOC students throughout their educational tenure?

Anti-Oppressive Pedagogy

"We must learn to think for ourselves as individuals and also to act collectively. We are each unique, yet each of us is part of something bigger" (Hill Collins, 2013, location 2290, para. 1). To take an anti-oppressive approach to education means that an educator must assess those parts of education in which oppression exist and take action through teaching and advocacy to eliminate it (Clifford & Burke, 2009; Macy & Moxon, 1996). Additionally, an anti-oppressive education "acknowledges the necessity to maintain the struggle against racial oppression, the need for allies, and the possibility from learning from class and feminist perspectives" (Macey & Moxon, 1996, p. 309). This approach is grounded in a myriad of theories. Some of these theories are critical theories, critical race theory, and queer theories. This collective approach to theories

recognizes power and privilege and allows for inclusivity of all individuals across race, gender, sexuality, class, environment, spirituality, religion, age, and abilities.

The role of the educator in an anti-oppressive approach is to "develop students' understanding of how certain knowledge, values, behaviors, and roles have become privileged and normalized" (Galloway et al., 2019, p. 487). The educator through their teaching provides opportunities of unlearning of the dominant narrative and an assessment of what or who is missing in the curriculum (Galloway et al., 2019). Essentially, an anti-oppressive pedagogy allows educators to explore the ways in which the dominant narrative is exhibited in schools (Kumashiro, 2000).

Educational theorists who center an anti-oppressive perspective on teaching are Freire (1970/2001), hooks (1994), Ladson-Billings (1995), Hill Collins (2013), Hammond (2014), and Paris and Alim (2017). While their educational approaches can also be viewed as critical approaches to education, I prefer anti-oppressive because critical does not highlight the "importance and interconnectedness of structural social difference in equality and ethics" (Clifford & Burke, 2009, p. 16). These theorists explored how power and privilege appear within the educational system (Collins, 2013; Freire, 1970/2001; Hammond, 2014; hooks, 1994; Ladson-Billings, 1995; Paris & Alim, 2017). The following section reviews each aforementioned educational theorist to contribute to a robust understanding of what anti-oppressive pedagogy entails.

Foundational Theorists

One of the earliest educational theorists to lay a foundation for an anti-oppressive perspective in teaching was Freire (1970/2001). Freire (1970/2001) discussed the way education has been used as a tool of oppression through the banking concept of

education. With this concept students are “receiving, filing, and storing” information as passive learners and “receptors” to be filled with knowledge (Freire, 1970/2001, p. 72). The role of the teacher in this concept is one of the authority, power, and regulator over “how the world enters into the students” (Freire, 1970/2001, p. 76). The teacher disciplines, leads lecture, and has choice over the material, and the students receive this information without questioning the world being presented to them. The solution proposed by Freire (1970/2001) was for teacher and students to be collaborators with interchangeable roles of teacher and students. The method for individuals to free themselves from the banking system of education was through *praxis*. Praxis was described as human activity comprised of both action and reflection to help liberate individuals who are oppressed (Freire, 1970/2001). Theory amplified praxis and transformed the work. A *liberatory praxis* is one in which there is a rejection of the banking system of education, recognition of consciousness in humans, and problem posing education. This encourages dialogue, critical thinking, reflections, collaboration, communication, and creativity in the classroom. The teacher is seen as “always cognitive” encouraging students to actively participate in class as coinvestigators in material being taught (Freire, 1970/2001, p. 80).

Using Black Feminist thought, hooks (1994) expanded on Freire’s (1970/2001) work by noting several critiques. The first critique offered to Freire’s work was the binary and sexist tone throughout this work which hooks (1994) identified as his blind spot. However, hooks (1994) noted that Freire’s pedagogy gives space to interrogate this blind spot.

Another critique and place to begin exploring hooks's (1994) contributions to anti-oppressive pedagogy was the emphasis on liberatory praxis's sole focus on the mind and cognition of the teacher and student. The body and spirit were missing from Freire's liberatory praxis. hooks posited an integration of the mind, body, and spirit as educator was an *engaged pedagogy.* An engaged pedagogy empowered both teachers and students to grow intellectually and spiritually. The methods to achieve this growth are through vulnerability, critical thinking, responsibility for actions, transforming the curriculum, and free expression. The engaged pedagogy integrated Freire's work and the Buddhist teachings of Thich Nhat Hanh to see the individual as a whole. This means that teachers must take care of their inner well-being in order to empower their students. Building pedagogy from a place of passion was an important value in work. She posited, "entering the classroom determined to erase the body and give ourselves more fully to the mind, we show by our beings how deeply we have accepted the assumption that passion has no place in the classroom" (hooks, 1994, p. 192). Furthermore, this awareness of the body in the classroom is a form of resistance to traditional "denial and repression" of the body in the classroom (hooks, 1994, p. 191). Teaching from a place centered in passion and love is not a neutral stance.

Other important aspects of building an engaged pedagogy discussed the importance of having a diverse classroom, engaging in open dialogue with educators, and the use of language as free expression. In having a diverse classroom, hooks (1994) spoke to the effects of colonialism being a cultural genocide in which individuals are continuously fed misinformation. To rectify this, hooks (1994) asserted,

> To create a culturally diverse academy we must commit ourselves fully. Learning from other movements for social change, from civil rights and feminist liberation efforts, we must accept the protracted nature of our struggle and be willing to remain both patient and vigilant. To commit ourselves to the work of transforming the academy so that it will be a place where cultural diversity informs every aspect of our learning, we must embrace struggle and sacrifice. We cannot be easily discouraged. We cannot despair when there is conflict. Our solidarity must be affirmed by shared belief in spirit of intellectual openness that celebrates diversity, welcomes dissent, and rejoices in collective dedication to truth. (p. 33)

These words spoke to the type of environment and persistence needed to maintain the pursuit of a multicultural informed classroom which decentered Whiteness and interrogated power and privilege.

In addition, hooks (1994) spoke to the importance of dialogue with other educators proclaiming that most educators were taught based on a "single norm of thought" (p. 35). There was an emphasis on training and seminars to provide educators with the space to learn how to make changes to their curriculum in order to decenter White theorists. Not only should these trainings be practical but there should be space for educators to voice their fears and thoughts which arise throughout this process (hooks, 1994).

The acceptance of diverse voices through recognition of other languages outside of standard English and vernacular is also brought to the forefront. hooks (1994) discussed the power of language and how it has been used to dominate those who are

oppressed. As a method of survival and place of resistance enslaved Africans used the English language and transformed it into something of their own in order to continue community and survive. This recognition of language also brought acknowledgement to the difference in class dynamics and how people express themselves in what is deemed appropriate or inappropriate in a classroom setting. Often those who are observed as being quiet, passive, and following social order are being good students (hooks, 1994). These contributions are rich and provided educators with a pedagogy which was informed by various intersections of race, class, and gender. hooks's (1994) work created a foundation to continue to explore how to build a multiculturally informed academy. Lastly, this work has created a space for educators and researchers to center Black Feminist thought into their own pedagogical practices and create classroom spaces that are equitable.

One such educator and researcher, Hill Collins (2013) discussed the importance of critical pedagogy. In what Hill Collins (2013) called teaching for a change. This critical approach to pedagogy tasked the educator with asking the question what pedagogical components help to tackle the needs of those who are not of the dominant culture. There are two components Hill Collins (2013) discussed. These are *developing a critical consciousness* and *institutional transformation.* Developing a critical consciousness involved creating a classroom environment were students think for themselves, social action, and developing alternative truths. By creating a classroom environment were students think for themselves, teachers are supporting students with socially locating themselves and understanding the history of oppression and injustices. Hill Collins (2013) stated developing this understanding of self leads to social action. Once students

begin to question the inequities, it becomes time to do something about it and "be bold" (location 2169). Lastly, in developing critical consciousness, the student begins to discover alternative truths and does not hold on to the facts as stated in the dominant culture.

The second component, institutional transformation, examines institutional reform starting in the classroom by focusing on pedagogical practices. Hill Collins (2013) stated, "we might imagine possibilities of the classroom as they actually exist using a 'bottom up' approach" (location 2198). This approach stressed that educators pay attention to how they are teaching using empathy, creating spaces of safety in the classroom, everyone in the classroom actively creating knowledge, and creating moments of dialogue between students. In this way the classroom becomes a space of improvisation. Hill Collins used the analogy of the three-legged stool to demonstrate how these processes are interconnected. The legs of the stool represent processing new information, developing critical thinking skills around new idea, and affective learning. Essentially, in this process, instructors are providing new information and ways of thinking to students; are supporting students in analyzing, synthesizing, and evaluating information; and are invested in the feelings emerging in the classroom, respectively. Developing critical consciousness and institutional transformation represent Hill Collins's (2013) form of anti-oppressive pedagogy. While there are similarities in the steps toward developing critical consciousness, which can be seen from hooks (1994) and Freire (1970/2001), the metaphor of the stool in institutional transformation is an important contribution to anti-oppressive practice in understanding how all of these parts work together in the classroom.

Another researcher and educator, Ladson-Billings (1995) conducted a qualitative ethnographic research study which explored the experiences of eight teachers to understand *culturally relevant teaching pedagogy.* This is a model which supports students in "accepting and affirming their cultural identity while developing critical perspectives that challenge inequities that schools (and other institutions) perpetuate" (Ladson-Billings, 1995, p. 469). The focus of this study were teachers who instruct elementary students in a predominantly African American community with low-income students in the Western region of the United States. To recruit teachers the researcher spoke with parents and principals to understand their own assessment criteria to identify excellent teachers in their school. The researcher recruited eight teachers ($n_{\text{African American}} = 5$, $n_{\text{White}} = 3$). Over the course of two years, Ladson-Billings (1995) implemented four phases of the study. These phases were ethnographic interview, classroom observation and audio recording, videotaping observation, and research collective collaboration. In the final phase participants contributed their own meanings to the data collective in order to highlight their voices from their own unique perspectives.

The findings of this study included three criteria and three theoretical foundations (Ladson-Billings, 1995). In the first finding, *student achievement*, the researcher found that despite standardized test scores students were achieving and progressing in problem solving, reading, and developing their own questions. *Cultural competence*, the second finding of this study, revealed that students must balance their cultural integrity while trying to be in educational environments centered on the dominant culture. Students should be encouraged to have pride in their cultural ways of being in the classroom. The final finding, *cultural critique* featured teachers instilling critique of social inequities by

building awareness and comprehension in their students. While these were skills being integrated into students' experiences, the findings also revealed teacher's qualities and values in how they taught. These findings were *conception of self and other*s, *social relations*, and *conception of knowledge*. For conception of self and others, teachers held beliefs in all students achieving success, being members of a community, and pedagogy that is ever evolving. In social relations, teachers encourage students to work collaboratively, have fluid teacher and student relationships, demonstrate connection to all students, and foster a community of learners. Lastly, the conception of knowledge recognized that knowledge is ever changing and needs to be viewed critically, that teachers demonstrate passion to learn, and that assessment must highlight multiple levels for students to reach success (Ladson-Billings, 1995).

This seminal work has been a huge contribution to the literature. Additionally, this study demonstrated several forms of integrity and authenticity. Forms of integrity are methodological, personal, and interpersonal. These forms of integrity are seen in the detailed description of design, the researcher's description of social location, and detail in discussing forms of interaction with teachers. This study exhibited prolonged engagement with the researcher taking two years to collect data. Ladson-Billings (2017) critiqued culturally relevant pedagogy evolution over the past 20 years. Unfortunately, Ladson-Billings (2017) critiqued ways in which her pedagogical stance has been watered down. Ways in which this has lost its meaning include through adopting a limited view of what constitutes success in the classroom, understanding cultural competence of having a BIPOC author, or having critical consciousness from a White perspective. Examples of this are success which is rooted in assimilation, including BIPOC authors, without

introducing alternative perspectives to the dominant paradigm, and recognizing that culture is not static, respectively.

Contemporary Theorists

Hammond (2014) extrapolated from Ladson-Billings's (1995) definition of culturally responsive pedagogy as encompassing, "social emotional, relational, and cognitive aspects" to develop a form of teaching which used theories of cultural responsiveness and theories of neuroscience and brain-based learning. This form was called *culturally responsive teaching and the brain*. It is defined as,

> An educator's ability to recognize student's cultural displays of learning and meaning making and respond positively and constructively with teaching moves that use cultural knowledge as a scaffold to connect what the students knows to new concepts and content in order to promote effective information processing. (Hammond, 2014, p. 15)

This form of teaching is used to support BIPOC students to become independent learners and helps to illustrate the benefits of this process through neuroscience.

Hammond (2014) proposed the *ready for rigor framework* to support educators in adopting this pedagogical approach in the classroom. The four components of this approach are (a) *awareness*, (b) *learning partnerships*, (c) *information processing*, and (d) *community building*. Awareness encourages educators to gain knowledge about larger macro levels concerns affecting BIPOC students on a political, economic, and social level. It also encourages individuals to gain a sense of the "dimensions of culture" (p. 21), explore implicit bias, and create a learning environment which encourages learning from the neocortex. In learning partnerships, educators focus on the brain being "wired for

connection" and build on this knowledge by creating genuine connection with BIPOC students. The purpose of these connections is to build trust with, validate, and affirm BIPOC students so they can fulfill high standards in the classroom. The third component is information processing for the purpose of building the intellectual capacity of a student. The educator focuses on how they are teaching students using oral traditions, challenging students to increase knowledge, and providing culturally relevant examples based on the student's community. Many strategies are provided based on how information is processed in the brain through input, elaboration, and application. The ultimate goal is to build new neural pathways for students. In the final component, community building, the educator constructs classroom environments to be socially and academically safe. This is done by an environment which illustrates support and care (Hammond, 2014). By doing this the educator is supporting BIPOC students' nervous systems and allowing for students to be in the limbic region of their brain. The integration of neuroscience and culturally responsive teaching was a necessary aid in supporting the relevance of this work to pedagogy.

Researchers Paris and Alim (2017) build upon the work of theorists Freire (1970/2001), hooks (1994), Ladson-Billings (1995), Hill Collins (2013), and Hammond (2014) in their book *Culturally Sustaining Pedagogies: Teaching and Learning for Justice in a Changing World*. They created a space for BIPOC scholars and educators to explore *culturally sustaining pedagogies* (CSP). Building from Ladson-Billings (1995) culturally relevant pedagogy or CSP seeks to not only recognize the relevance of BIPOC culture but to maintain the cultural practices of BIPOC students in the classroom environment.

> CSP seeks to perpetuate and foster-to sustain-linguistic, literate and cultural pluralism as part of schooling for positive social transformation. CSP positions dynamic cultural dexterity as a necessary good, and sees the outcome of learning as additive rather than subtractive, as remaining whole rather than framed as broken, as critically enriching strengths rather than replacing deficits. Culturally sustaining pedagogies exists wherever education sustains the life ways of communities who have been and continue to be damaged and erased through schooling. (Paris & Alim, 2017, p. 1)

CSP reframes the centering of Whiteness in the school setting and instead centers the "dynamic" (p. 3) cultural attitudes of BIPOC students rather than focus on the dominant culture or White gaze. The stance is to stop critiquing BIPOC students against White middle-class norms and to critique the oppressive systems. By taking this stance schools are maintaining "longstanding cultural practices of communities of color" (p. 5) which have been traditionally erased when entering schools.

Throughout this text various methods for CSP practicing with BIPOC students are offered. Some of the offerings are recognizing the strengths in writing for Black youth (Kinloch, 2017), honoring the language and creative use of Spanglish for Latinx youth (Bucholtz et al., 2017), building indigenous education (Lee & McCarty, 2017), the use of the arts and performance to critique inequities for Pacific Island youth (Wong & Pena, 2017), and beginning to envision how to teach youth through use of hip hop and other culturally present practices (Ladson-Billings, 2017). The goal is to stop creating discourses which further marginalize BIPOC students. The book by Paris and Alim (2017) and all contributing educational theorists and researchers provide active examples

of how educators are creating equitable classroom spaces. This work also highlights the use of the arts through poetry, hip hop, theater, and dance to center the rich cultural ways of knowing and learning which exist for BIPOC students. The use of the arts in critical pedagogy is a major contribution of this work to anti-oppressive practice.

Creative Art Therapies and Critical Pedagogy

While there is sparse research on critical pedagogy and the field of creative art therapies (dance/movement, drama, art, music, and poetry), a direct application of critical race feminist approach for therapists, researchers, and artists in the creative art therapies was proposed by Sanjani (2012). The critical race feminist approach is grounded in the work of Lorde (1984), hooks (1994), Gagnon (2000), Shohat (2001), Wu (2002), and Hua (2003). These theorists explored the intersections of race from holding different racial perspectives to ensure the dialogue was not a binary (Black and White) discussion. Sanjani (2012) spoke to centering this approach as the "*ability* to *respond* amidst suffering and against oppression" (p. 189). This response to oppression was called "response/ability" (Sanjani, 2012, p. 189). In the outlining of this approach four factors are outlined for how this approach can support creative art therapist. These factors are (a) broadening of discussion on witnessing, identification, and representation within the work; (b) focus on collaboration in clinical practice which centers client as expert and provides transparency of the therapist; (c) understand and build awareness around the therapist and clients social, political, and cultural context; and (d) recognition of the dominant perspective on interventions and willingness to have interventions which are informed by more diverse perspectives (Sanjani, 2012). These suggestions are for the creative art therapist, researcher, and artist.

Within the field of creative art therapies, the framework of anti-oppressive practices has been discussed through the perspective of clinicians. Some of this research includes Baines's (2013) discussion on music therapy and anti-oppressive practice, Baines and Edwards's (2018) exploration of the use of music therapy in a long-term care facility, Scrine and McFerran's (2018) exploration of gender and power, and Haen and Thomas's (2018) discussion on undoing racial unconsciousness in group therapy. Furthermore, in the field of dance/movement therapy the literature addresses topics such as DMT and belly dance with survivors of gender-based violence (Moe, 2014) and hair as a resource for empowerment (Barkai, 2016) to address an anti-oppressive stance. Furthermore, discussion exist on cultural awareness and DMT, such as DMT and Hispanic mothers (De Valenzuela, 2014), cultural identity and collaboration (Capello, 2012), healing aspects of bomba (Rivera, 2008), autoethnographic perspectives of a DMT international student (Nishida, 2008), understanding issues of race and cultural competency in DMT (Jenkins-Hayden, 2011), examination of the Black Lives Matter movement and implications for DMT (Jenkins-Hayden, 2015), somatic experience of White privilege through DMT approach (Allen, 2019), an exploration of youth identity (Thomas, 2015), moving blind spots (Nichols, 2019), and posttraumatic slave syndrome and dance/movement therapy approaches (Campbell, 2019).

These are just some of the examples of anti-oppressive approaches in clinical work which exist in the creative art therapies literature. However, continued work needs to be done in applying this approach to the pedagogy of dance/movement therapy. The next section builds from this literature in critically assessing dance/movement therapy.

Dance/Movement Therapy Pedagogy From a Critical Lens

The history of DMT and DMT pedagogy has historically been told from the perspective of those of the dominant culture. This section is an attempt to share the history from a critical perspective. I will use a critical race theory framework to both share the history and examine the way it has been told to develop a deeper understanding of the various levels of oppression embedded within DMT and DMT pedagogy. Chaiklin (1969) at the ADTA conference *What Is Dance Therapy Really*, asserted that dance/movement therapists had "the difficult task of finding out what it knows, what it doesn't know, and what it needs to know." This task is still relevant today as the field is ever growing and changing. This section will examine the roots of DMT, the transition of DMT into higher education, and DMT education and curriculum.

Examining the Dance Roots of DMT

One of the first forms of oppression in DMT can be found in examining the historical roots of this profession. Before DMT became a codified practice in the United States, dance was embedded into cultural practices for rituals of transition in life, healing, cultivation, celebration, and spiritual connection by various ethnic communities for centuries. Garfinkel (2018) posited five stages of the evolution of dance. These stages were (a) individual courtship dance, (b) dance in rites of passage, (c) dance and trance, (d) dance and calendrical rituals, and (e) professional dance. These stages integrate the idea that dance was used for "cult and religion, healing, gender, sex, trance, drugs, social cohesion, folk dance, identity, resistance, and professional dance" (p. 285).

The first stage of dance encompassed the link to dance and sexuality demonstrated through individual mating activities (Garfinkel, 2018). These dances

expressed the health and strength of the person seeking a mate. Dance as a rite of passage was said to have begun in the middle paleolithic stages with humans demonstrating an awareness of the cycle of life in community which helped to provide organization and social order. During the upper paleolithic period, dance and trance were thought to have begun with rituals around spirituality which brought people into an alternate state of consciousness. The fourth stage, dance and the calendrical rituals, included the use of trance dance and rite of passage in coordination with the agricultural calendar. Dancing occurred during set times of the year. The final stage dance as performance began in the fourth millennium BC during the growth toward a hierarchal society. At this time dance began to be used as entertainment for others (Garfinkel, 2018).

As dance entered capitalist societies, there was a loss of the integration of dance due to colonialism. There was the beginning of oppression on free expression of the body. From a dance anthropological perspective Reed (1998) discussed the politics of dance and how it was affected by colonialism. Indigenous dances were seen as both "political and moral threats to colonial regimes" and a place of "desire" for the colonialist (Reed, 1998, p. 506). Due to dance being seen as forms of resistance, rebellion, unity, and power, rules and laws prohibiting dance were enacted (Reed, 1998). This can be seen in the United States with enslaved Africans who were banned from participating in drumming and dancing on the plantation as well as with Bharata Natayam and devadasi dances of India (Reed, 1998). Reed (1998) expressed, "dances of the colonized were often appropriated and refigured as adjuncts to the civilizing mission, variously reinforcing stereotypes of mystical spirituality and excessive sexuality" (p. 509). McCarthy-Brown (2017) posited that an automatic default to Whiteness exists in concert

dance as well as in United States society at large. Foulkes (2002) spoke to the history of discrimination toward modern dancers of color such as Edna Guy, Pearl Primus, and Katherine Dunham and obstacles they faced in the field with being able to train and take classes and perform. Reed (1998) stated despite this, dances from people who were marginalized and experiencing oppression were a "means of remembering a mode of 'cultural record keeping' and a form of 'cultural inscription'"(p. 526).

DMT History

The emergence of DMT occurred after World War II in the United States with individuals trying to merge the divide between mind, body, and spirit. At this time the development of group therapy treatment emerged across mental health disciplines due to the severity of peoples' experiences during and after the war. The development of DMT in Western culture was defined as

> a specific use of rhythmic body action employed as a tool in the rehabilitation of patients in present day institutions. While it makes use of those elements in dance which have caused it to be helpful at all times to all men, dance therapy is a purposeful and knowledgeable use of expressive action as a potent means of direct communication. (Chace, 1964a, p. 46)

This definition describes how dance movement therapy was being used by one of the early theorists in DMT for Western society.

Bartenieff (1972) posited, "those of us working in the field who have our roots in the dance world of the thirties and forties—or even further back—see it as a direct outgrowth of modern dance with its rebellious philosophy, here and in Europe" (Bartenieff, 1972, p. 246). Additionally, she stated, "key notions of modern dance" exist

within the first-generation DMT theorists who built this framework (Bartenieff, 1972, p. 247). In this review the first generation DMT theorists, Franziska Boas, Marian Chace, Lilian Espenak, Trudi Schoop, and Mary Whitehouse, are discussed as having a common thread due to the war which took them from performing artists into the role of "community healer" (Bartenieff, 1972, p. 250). Educators and psychologists are also expressed as influencers of DMT theory. These people include Elizabeth Polk, Hilda Midlin, Blanch Evan, Alexander Lowen, William Reich, and Judith Kestenberg. Various applications and settings that DMT can be used in were also discussed.

Unlike Bartenieff (1972) who spoke to psychological and dance education influences of the time, Schmais (1980) provided deeper insight into the mental health field and directly what happened to mental health treatment and research after World War II. There was a major shift in psychology in working with veterans which focused less on the unconscious and focused directly on systemic factors impacting people. Along with these changes was also a renewed interest in research on nonverbal communication with researcher Birdwhistell. However, in a similar manner to Bartenieff (1972), Schmais (1980) asserted the "revolutionary changes in dance" were led by Isadora Duncan and Mary Wigman against the European classical ballet form (p. 7). With an emphasis on free expression, it was thought that a "new definition of dance" emerged which would inform DMT (Schmais, 1980, p. 8). The discussion included the work of dance movement therapists Marian Chace and Mary Whitehouse along with psychoanalytic influences from Reich, Sullivan, and Jung. Schmais (1980) offered three assumptions and four characteristics of DMT. The DMT assumptions were expressed as (a) movement reflects personality, (b) the relationship established between the therapist and patient through

movement supports and enables behavioral change, and (c) significant changes occur on the movement level that can affect total functioning (p. 10). The characteristics of DMT were described as expressive, developmental, physically integrative, and inclusive. Lastly, the unique observational skills dance movement therapist possess are discussed as significant contributions in both clinical and research practice (Schmais, 1980).

Chace (1964a), Bartenieff (1972), and Schmais (1980) provide insight into the early history of defining DMT and sharing early DMT theorists and influences in the Western world. When looking at social locations, the early theorists of DMT in the United States were White women who studied various forms of dance. Some of these theorists such as Marian Chace, Trudi Schoop, Blanche Evan, and Mary Starks Whitehouse, wrote about and were guided by their teachings from early modern dance teachers. According to Levy (2005) these teachers were Mary Wigman, Bird Larson, Ruth St. Denis, Dalcroze, and Hanya Holm. These teachers were pulling from Greek education in the Dalcroze eurhythmic technique (Rogers, 1966). Denishawn dance technique derived from Asian and African countries including Japan and Egypt (Kruman, 2020). Furthermore, other DMT theorists identified studying Spanish and other ethnic dances (Levy, 2005).

Critical Analysis of DMT History

When one begins to examine the roots of this profession, one sees that some DMT theorists and their teachers were studying and using dances which were not part of their own cultural or ethnic background. In fact, some of the latest critique on the work of Ruth St. Denis and Isadora Duncan is that their work was culturally appropriated (Desmond, 1991; Kee, 2016; McCarthy-Brown, 2017; Reed, 1998; Toback, 2012). Cultural

appropriation is defined as “the act of taking something for your own use, usually without permission” or “the act of taking something such as an idea, custom, or style, from a group or culture that you are not a member of and using it for yourself” (Cambridge Dictionary, 2020). Another definition provided by Hayes as written by Schaefer (2019) described appropriation in dance as,

> taking external trappings of cultural traditions and using them as decorations on your own history without developing mutually supporting relationships in the community that you are taking from … the power dynamic matters. It’s very different for someone who is in a position of privilege to borrow from a dance form from a marginalized community. (para. 8–9)

What does this mean about the roots of DMT and its pedagogy? Knowing that early practitioners and theorists were influenced by modern dance teachers, one must consider how this form of cultural appropriation gets passed down intergenerationally through continued teaching and practice of DMT. Based on these historical accounts, the modern dance root of DMT is one of the earliest forms of oppression within the profession.

Critical Look at DMT in Higher Education

“Education itself is a colonizing process” (Fenwick, 2000, p. 258). The act of bringing DMT into the higher education system is another way in which DMT has acculturated into an oppressive system by entering the academy. Early DMT theorists in the 1940s and 1950s taught through an apprentice model (Chace, 1964a; Levy, 2005; Sandel et al., 1993). There were differing views on what they called themselves and if they had a name for the field of DMT. Some theorists did not consider themselves

dance/movement therapists until the profession became more codified, and then they adopted the title of dance therapist which in later years shifted to dance/movement therapist (Levy, 2005).

Development of Academic Training

One example of this apprenticeship model was with DMT theorist Marian Chace who often had interested prospects seek her out and apply to train at Turtle Bay Music school (Stark, 1980). Her apprentices worked with her in the field at St. Elizabeth Hospital or Chestnut Lodge (Leventhal, 2016; Sandel et al., 1993; Stark, 1980). Chace (1964b) spoke to her apprenticeship model and the initial skill a dance/movement therapist must have despite not having training standards or any academic programming. It was expressed that the dance/movement therapist should be able to use freedom of expression, be spontaneous and creative, and be sensitive. Additionally, academic courses which covered child development, abnormal psychology, group dynamics, group leadership, cultural anthropology, kinesiology, choreography, music theory, art appreciation, and dance were described as necessary to develop skills. Aside from academic training, the clinical training was also emphasized as an important phase in professional development which was estimated to take six months to one year with trainees working with a professional dance/movement therapist. During this training a trainee would work with different populations, learn to work in team setting, and come to a deeper understanding of their role and the role of others on a treatment team. The learning objectives to be achieved were understanding of psychological and emotional functioning of patients, developed awareness of body action, and ability to identify where DMT can be used in a treatment setting (Chace, 1964b).

Other early theorists such as Whitehouse and Schoop had a similar apprentice model approach (Stark, 1980). However, Stark (1980) described intensive training to be a challenge with only workshops being offered. These workshops and apprenticeships solely focused on DMT clinical skills with little attention to theory. With the formation of the ADTA came the first graduate school of DMT with educational standards and approval set forth by the ADTA (Stark, 1980). The apprentice model was adapted into field training with students having internship experiences as well as classroom instruction (Bunney, 2013; Leventhal, 2016; Stark, 1980).

With the development of graduate programs Lohn (1980) described the development of the St. Elizabeth's apprenticeship model into an internship for master's level students. At this time students were provided a stipend and interned for five to 10 months. The major areas of focus were orientation to site, clinical practice, supervision, seminars, course work, and documentation and journaling, as well as nine different criteria for a professional training model being provided. These were to have (a) a credentialed dance therapist onsite; (b) a credentialed dance therapist assign responsibility for student to begin to work with clients; (c) intern training full time for 10 months; (d) intern exposed to a broad range of clinical populations; (e) intern provided with orientation to the site; (f) intern attend ongoing DMT seminar that covers theory, observation, and methodology, movement observation, etc.; (g) intern spend time attending courses or with case presentations; (h) intern spending at least half the time with patients; and (i) intern assessed through midterm and final evaluations (Lohn, 1980). Furthermore, there was an acknowledgement of this internship model being one type of

internship model due to their being a limited number of schools which provided DMT training (Lohn, 1980).

Critical Analysis of Academic Training

With the growth of DMT in academia came the ability to develop theory and research. Stark (1980) spoke to DMT's ability to establish it's "power and privilege" in the professional world (p. 18). The history of DMT's development into academia outlines the way in which the profession began to mirror the patriarchal society. Once DMT entered into higher education, it began to "perpetuate social stratification" which can be observed in our society when looking at race, class, gender, religion, and ability (Perez et al., 2019, p. 58). This stratification emphasized the dominant paradigm within academia, which was heterosexist, White, male, middle-class, and able bodied. Although higher education is predominantly male, DMT has thrived as a predominantly female profession since its inception (Capello, 2010). In fact, Caldwell and Leighton (2016) asserted DMT education has been "normed largely on straight, cisgender, able-bodied, White, middle class people, all of whom identified as female" (p. 280).

In an effort to understand the changing demographic makeup of the ADTA and the experience for those who are marginalized the Multicultural Diversity Committee (MDC, 2009) conducted a mixed method study. Researchers conducted recruitment for the study by emailing current ADTA members and nonmembers. They also implemented an online demographic survey for the quantitative portion of the study. The study did not discuss the design of the survey. It showed that, of 117 participants, 88% identified as White, 95% as female, and 90% as heterosexual. The report did not include the response rate of participants or results of non-White. When looking specifically at race and

ethnicity, results showed 59% reported cultural knowledge of the population they serve; 73% reported having attended a multicultural class; 55% considered ADTA to be antiracist; 68% replied strongly to respect for ADTA members in regard to race and ethnic identity; and 62% believed ADTA should provide more training on diversity.

The researchers conducted the qualitative portion of the study through telephone or in-person interviews using a structured set of questions; however, the type of structure and length of interviews are unknown. All interviewers had training in DMT. Participants (n_{female} = 10, n_{male} = 3) were White (n = 5), Black (n = 4), Asian (n = 1), and Asian and White (n = 1). Sexual orientations of participants were heterosexual (n = 8) and LGBT (n = 4). Lastly, age groups of participants were 18–33 (n = 6), 34–49 (n = 4), and 50–65 (n = 3) years.

The report did not discuss data analysis. However, two themes emerged. The first was *invisible/misunderstood,* in which participants disclosed feelings of not being seen or heard in the ADTA. The second theme was *experiences in training and experiences in curriculum*, in which participants shared moments of not having their marginalized identity acknowledged in the classroom or in the curriculum.

This unpublished report from MDC (2009) highlighted the experiences of people of color and made recommendations for continued education and future studies on research with marginalized communities. Improvements to both qualitative and quantitative portions can be made. For the qualitative portion, demographic information does not always equate to the total number of participants in the study, which reduces credibility. A fuller understanding of the interview guide and analysis methods would

improve methodological integrity. The quantitative portion of the study could increase external validity with a larger sample size and more diverse population.

With a number of recommendations for over a decade by Chang (2016), Grayson (2015), Howard (2019), and Jenkins-Hayden (2011) the ADTA has begun to take active efforts to be more inclusive and make changes. However, the results of this progress are still unfolding.

Whose Body Is Embodied in DMT Pedagogy?

In an effort to examine the use of DMT across population, Siegel (1969) discussed the transition to DMT beginning to define itself in a conference hosted by the ADTA and the committee of research and dance at the Postgraduate Center for Mental Health in New York. The work of Sharon Chaiklin, Mary Whitehouse, and Rod Rodgers was watched and then discussed in relation to DMT. An ethnomusicologist, Alan Lomax, who studied music and its connection to dance styles noted the difference in cultural backgrounds of dance/movement therapist and clients. He stated,

> Dance therapy has to take into account the cultural backgrounds of both patients and therapists before it can change behavior. “We can’t expect people to grow to something they can’t relate to.” He stated, “when people are dancing they are basically communicating their cultural pattern.” Lomax questioned the effectiveness of trying to impose middle class standards on poor southern White or Black patients. “Our success system says everyone has to learn the same language. But there is validity to the minority language”. (Lomax, 1969, p. 93)

This passage highlights a critical critique at the onset and development of DMT embodying one type of body. It was noted that cultural differences are being “ignored”

(Siegel, 1969, p. 93). However, Schmais later stated that a dialogue needed to begin to address this.

In the same year, dance anthropologist Pearl Primus (1969) spoke at the ADTA conference on *Life Crises: Dance From Birth to Death.* She stated,

> I am a product of something that is strongly for me, anyway, implied in what is called dance therapy, "the prevention art." I think the dance has been my way of coming through—the way that I have gone through life facing certain problems individual and group, problems which have sometimes shrunken other individuals. In a society such as we live in where individuals of various groups are sometimes not considered as humans, it could have been a bit traumatic. (Primus, 1969, p. 1)

Primus spoke directly to her experience of being a Black woman and the forms of racism she experienced and observed in her neighborhood. She described dance as her way of surviving and spoke to major life transitions and how DMT can be used through each one.

Despite these early discussions about the development of DMT, the pedagogical framework in which DMT is taught can also be considered a form of oppression for non-White and nongender conforming individuals due to the early history of the profession being rooted in White, able-bodied, modern dance culture in the United States. Kawano and Chang (2019) provided critical critique on DMT pedagogy and its state in education through examining their own lived experiences as "two cis, heterosexual, educationally privileged, Asian (one biracial Chinese American, and the other multicultural Japanese immigrant DMT educators)" (p. 236). They asserted two forms of oppression placed on

the body in DMT; these were “the marginalized positions of the professional identity of dance movement therapist” and “unexamined cultural practices in the field” (p. 240). The researchers also expressed that

> The views that are represented in the DMT curriculum and literature—the historical gaze of the practitioners and the knowledge that have been and are transmitted—are rooted in European-North American modern dance and academic institutional, patriarchal norms where *other* voices are invisible and barely recognized. (Kawnao & Chang, 2019, p. 241)

The method in which DMT is taught can become oppressive for students who are not of the dominant paradigm based on their own cultural use of movement and dance not being reflected in the curriculum due to modern dance aesthetic being emphasized in training through first-generation DMT theorists.

DMT Educational Standards

For context, when training standards began to develop with the start of the ADTA and graduate programs in the 1970s, there was an emphasis on curriculum development to maintain the quality of education (Stark, 1980). Chaiklin (1980) offered a look at curriculum development for undergraduate and graduate programs. Undergraduate courses were thought to prepare the student for more advanced training by covering “dance and movement, biological study of the body, and human behavior” (p. 64). Programs emphasized that “modern educational dance should be the core of dance training” and other forms of dance like jazz, ballet, folk dance, tai chi, and yoga could also bring physical awareness (Chaiklin, 1980, p. 63). There was an innate bias being

expressed with modern dance as primary dance form and other dance and movement forms as adjunctive.

At the graduate level DMT students are trained to begin their own practice, conduct research, and develop scholarship (Chaiklin, 1980). The courses provided to them should cover theory, practice, specialization in working with specific populations, and research. It was shared that receiving a master's in DMT was not the only way to pursue credentialing as a registered dance/movement therapist. Highly structured training programs in various facilities with trainees who could meet the professional standards could also produce dance/movement therapists (Chaiklin, 1980).

While Chaiklin's (1980) review on curriculum in early DMT educational programs provided an overview of curriculum development, the ADTA has grown in becoming aware of these biases in dance and movement, education, and clinical application. Action steps to the critiques on culture have been integrated into the standards of education and code of ethics. This is done in order to help maintain the professional identity of DMT.

The *Standards for Education and Clinical Training of the ADTA* and the *Code of Ethics and Standards of the ADTA and Dance/Movement Therapy Certification Board* are two documents which discuss cultural understanding or multicultural competence in DMT (*Standards for Education and Clinical Training*, 2021; The Code of Ethics and Standards, 2015). *The Code of Ethics and Standards* (2015) outlines multicultural competence in practice and advocacy and promotion of social justice. Multicultural competence in practice is defined as the dance/movement therapist "considering the cultural context in the practice of therapy and continuously attend to developing the

awareness, knowledge, and skills needed to competently work with diverse client groups" (The Code of Ethics and Standards, 2015, p. 11). Pursuing multicultural competence means that one must examine their own background and cultural beliefs; build understanding of other cultural beliefs; look for strengths within cultural groups; be sensitive to individual differences; be aware of cultural norms; consider the impact of power, privilege, and oppression; and inquire about concerns regarding racism and language barriers (The Code of Ethics and Standards, 2015).

The core competencies of DMT education are nested within culture. Kawano and Chang (2019) elaborate on the core competencies being dance, human development through the lifespan, neuroscience, relationship, and assessment, positing that they all are informed by culture. The *Standards for Education and Clinical Training* of the ADTA (2021) emphasized:

> Student understands that the therapist elicits and works with competencies for the identified culture(s) of the client and brings knowledge of how personal culture(s) may bias perceptions and understanding of the client and influence core competencies. (p. 6)

Kawano and Chang (2019) made several suggestions as to how to best decenter the dominant paradigm in the DMT curriculum These suggestions are in the areas of theoretical foundations courses, assessment courses, supervision, and ethics and cross-cultural communication courses. For theoretical foundations it was recommended to consider the perspective being shared when it comes to the development of DMT and to critically analyze the language when speaking about DMT theorists. Critical analysis should be applied to assessment measurements which were often used in White

populations, and consideration should be made for using these measurements with BIPOC individuals. Dance/movement therapist in training should also be encouraged to critically analyze their own biases in interpretation of body assessment measures and how this is informed by their dance, cultural, and racial background. Lastly, supervisors should provide cross-cultural and racial relatedness support for students of marginalized backgrounds who often find themselves in a position of not being able to express what they are feeling in their educational journey (Kawano & Chang, 2019).

The Transcorporeal Body

One concept which can help to enhance the understanding of individuals in DMT educational programs is the notion of transcorporeality. The term transcorporeality has been discussed across disciplines including theology, feminist theory, and critical race theory. The transcorporeal body is a concept which resists this idea of the body of individuals as a blank slate (Strongman, 2019). The transcorporeal body encompasses the notion of the human body's interconnection to spirituality, religion, the nonhuman world, and other environments such as nature or community (Strongman, 2019; Alaimo, 2012; Ward, 2002). Strongman (2019) asserted that the experience of enslavement and colonization on Black people was due to the conceptualization of the body of these individuals as empty or blank by colonizers. However, it was further asserted that the denial of the Black body to move in its traditional and ancestral ways was the greater form of oppression (Strongman, 2019).

Alaimo (2012), another researcher who explored transcorporeality, held a feminist and environmental justice framework to understand the notion of transcorporeality. In relation to speaking about people of color, she emphasized the impact of racism and how

it manifests in the body of the worker (Alaimo, 2012). By looking through an environmental justice lens, she emphasized awareness of environmental factors and their effect on the body. Chang (2016) spoke to her own lived experience when she posited the dancing body of BIPOC individuals has been ignored until recently by some DMT educators (Chang, 2016). Additionally, within DMT pedagogy there are social attitudes of instructors and students, biological makeup of individuals, political environment, spiritual environment, and social environment which all manifest in the body of BIPOC students.

Transcorporeality provides a window into how one can begin to understand the BIPOC DMT student experience. Through critically examining the several forms of oppression which exist through the origins of DMT, DMT's entrance into higher education, and pedagogical practices used and their effects on people who are non-White provides a space for possibility and expansion for how educators can strengthen their teaching pedagogy to be more inclusive of the individual BIPOC experience in DMT.

Establishing the Need for Research of BIPOC DMT Students

While the ADTA is currently taking steps to be more inclusive and multicultural through changes to the educational standards, a deeper exploration into how DMT is being taught and experienced by BIPOC students can enhance understanding of how DMT can move toward an anti-oppressive pedagogy. Now is the time to assess if these practices are being put into place and how these practices are being received by students. The review of literature in this section was intended to bring attention to racial and ethnic identity development, BIPOC experiences in higher education, anti-oppressive pedagogies, and critically examine DMT's history. With limited research on BIPOC

DMT student experiences, this study will attempt to build from the aforementioned research and utilize a phenomenological arts-based approach to begin to understand the embodied experiences of BIPOC DMT students.

CHAPTER 3

Methods

The central question of this study sought to understand the embodied experiences of BIPOC students in DMT graduate programs. This question asked, "What are the embodied experiences of BIPOC students in DMT programs?" The secondary question stated, "How might these embodied experiences of BIPOC students in DMT graduate programs inform an embodied anti-oppressive pedagogy in DMT education?" These two questions rooted in phenomenology, arts-based research methods, and an anti-oppressive approach were designed to develop a deeper understanding of BIPOC student experiences.

Anti-Oppressive Research Framework

The use of anti-oppressive practices in research fosters critical questions and exploration. The elements of researching back, transcorporeality, and awareness of power dynamics and structure are three important elements that were used throughout the recruitment of participants, data collection, and data analysis process.

The first element, researching back, was my continuous attempt to construct knowledge toward an anti-oppressive practice in DMT through building phenomenological understanding (Brown & Strega, 2005). The term *researching back*, developed by Smith (2012), refers to using research as a tool for topics pertinent for people who are on the margins in a given community. In this case BIPOC DMT students are on the margins despite the origins of DMT coming from Indigenous, Black, Brown, and Eastern origins. This is due to institutional racism which can be seen in the centering of White theorists and White dance forms in the academy. Through centering their

experiences, it was my hope to begin to develop a framework which comes directly from the needs of BIPOC students. This can help educators to begin to decolonize teaching practices and support BIPOC students in valuing their inherent knowledge and what they already bring to the field of DMT.

One example of how this was conducted was through using culturally responsive relational ethics (CRRE). Recommendations by Lahman et al. (2011) in CRRE are to ensure that participants throughout the process know they have a choice to participate in the study. While this is a vital stipulation for the Institutional Review Board (IRB), CRRE highlights the relational component. By emphasizing the relational nature and valuing the relationship with participants with equanimity researchers are using reflexive methods (Lahman et al., 2011).

The use of CRRE was extremely pertinent with the COVID-19 pandemic, anti-Black sentiment, and anti-Asian sentiment which were present in the United States and subject of media coverage throughout the data collection process. I reminded participants in each interview, during the 1-week self-observation and embodied journaling, and during data analysis that participation was voluntary. This became important because many if not all of the participants experienced two significant traumatic events of anti-Asian and anti-Black sentiment with the Atlanta murders of Asian American women in March 2021 and the trial of George Floyd's killer in March and April 2021. I reached out to participants during the self-observation and embodied journaling week to let them know they had a choice to continue participating in the research process. All participants reported appreciation for awareness around what was happening in the news and how this was affecting them in and out of the classroom.

The second anti-oppressive practice element of this study was transcorporeal connections. Alaimo (2012) asserted *transcorporeality* is a realization that humans are interconnected to their environments and the more than human world (nonhuman creatures, spirits, ecological systems, nature). The transcorporeal factors of this study are the interconnections which exist on micro, mezzo, and macro levels. These include interconnections among the classroom, instructors, students, the politics and culture of the institution, and the politics and culture of the larger community and nation. All of these elements have a physical impact on the body. How do these connections inform the embodied experience of BIPOC students? Centering their embodied experiences in this study, I was curious about how BIPOC students embodied responses before, during, and after their classroom experience.

One example of the transcorporeal perspective is in the one-week self-observation. I asked all participants to reflect through improvisational movement and journal writing on their social locations and how they interacted with the transcorporeal elements. This was intended to allow for a deeper level of understanding of who and what the participant interacted with while in the DMT classroom. This was an opportunity to understand the embodied experiences participants had with the classroom, instructors, students, course materials, and culture and politics of the institution and the larger community.

The final element of the anti-oppressive framework applied in this study was informed by the power dynamics and structures at play both in data collection and data analysis. For the data collection process, Black Feminist theorists such as hooks (1994), Hill Collins (2013), and Ladson-Billings (1995), speak to the power dynamics at play

when educating in the classroom, developing a critical consciousness to understand what is occurring, and developing critical applications. One example of this existed in the initial interview. I asked participants to share their movement backgrounds and if they were able or felt comfortable using them in the DMT classroom.

This element of power dynamics was also present in the data analysis process. For this reason the study used Kawano's (2016) embodied listening method and Gilligan and colleagues' (2003) I poems. Both of these methods are grounded in feminist frameworks which seek to deeply listen to each participant's voice. Furthermore, both approaches allow for the participants to review the voices and themes that emerge before finalizing themes. These steps support the breaking down of power that exists between researcher and participant to create an environment where the participant remains the expert on their lived experience.

Application of the anti-oppressive practice framework was informed by queer Black racial identity development (Johnson & Quaye, 2017), an integrative model of racial identity development (Johnston-Guerrero, 2016), CRRE (Lahman et al., 2011), multiple research identities (Nagata et al., 2012), embodied listening (Kawano, 2016), and I poems (Gilligan et al. 2003).

Participants

I used purposive and snowball sampling methods to recruit participants ($N = 8$) from February 2021 to May 2021. For recruitment, I emailed a flyer to affinity groups of the ADTA's Multicultural Diversity Committee (AAPIDIA, Black Magic, Native American, Spirituality, and LGBTQIA), regional chapters of the ADTA (Eastern, Central, and Western), and the ADTA's Secretary who was in charge of membership.

Additionally, I posted the recruitment flyer on the ADTA's Facebook web page. Lastly, I asked research participants if they knew of other BIPOC DMT students who might want to participate in the study. Please see Appendix A for the recruitment flyer.

These efforts produced eight participants for the study. Kellogg and Liddell's (2012) study with a similar design showed a minimum of seven participants and maximum of 14 participants as a point of saturation. In phenomenological research, the number of participants varies (Creswell & Poth, 2018). For the present study, the point of saturation was found with eight participants. All participants met the inclusion criteria of being currently enrolled and actively taking class in a DMT graduate program and having completed at least one DMT class prior to participating in the study. Furthermore, they all signed consent forms and were provided the incentive of a $25 visa gift card. This incentive was provided to participants after signing consent forms and before the first interview as stated in the approved IRB applications.

Because the aim of this study was to highlight BIPOC student experiences, it was important to capture the demographics in a way that not only recognized their race but other intersectionalities to have a fuller representation of who the participants were. Utilizing a strength-based approach to understanding racial and ethnic identity as emphasized by Johnson and Quaye's (2017) approach to queering black racial identity and Johnston-Guerrero's (2016) integrative model of racial and ethnic identity supported being able to understand participants as full beings and recognize their intersectionalities.

Participants identified as Black/African American (n = 1) Black/African American and Jamaican (n = 2), Latinx/Brazilian (n = 1), Asian/Chinese (n = 1), Asian/Filipino American (n = 1), Asian/Chinese and Taiwanese American (n = 1), and

Asian/Chinese American and White (*n* = 1). Six of the participants were raised in the United States. Of these participants there were first generation (*n* = 4), second generation (*n* = 1), and several generations (*n* = 1). Two of the participants were international students who self-identified as BIPOC. One participant was an adoptee. The socioeconomic status of participants varied with participants from the lower class (*n* = 1), lower middle class (*n* = 1), middle class (*n* = 5), middle class high (*n* = 1), and upper middle class (*n* = 1). The age of participants ranged between 22 and 45 years old. All participants identified as cisgender women. Sexual orientation varied with responses of heterosexual (*n* = 4), queer (*n* = 1), bisexual (*n* = 1), and heterosexual and queer (*n* = 1). In terms of spirituality or religious practices participants identified as spiritual (*n* = 3), no spiritual or religious practice (*n* = 3), yoga (*n* = 2), Christian (*n* = 1), Zen Buddhist (*n* = 1), and Umbanda Orisha (*n* = 1). In terms of ability, one participant disclosed having a mental illness.

All participants attended approved ADTA graduate programs during the time of the study. Out of the participants there were full time (*n* = 5) and part-time (*n* = 3) students. These students were in their first year (*n* = 3), midway through (*n* = 2), and in their last term (*n* = 3). Lastly, participants identified a rich background in movement including aikido, ashtanga yoga, ballet, capoeira, Chinese dance, contemporary, dancehall, forró, funk, hip hop, improvisation, jazz, modern, samba no pé, swing, tap, and West African dance forms. These demographics illustrate the rich backgrounds of these participants to help us have a fuller understanding of who they are.

Data Collection

Participants engaged in a three-part process of an interview, one-week self-observation and embodied journaling, and a second interview. Please see Appendix B and C for interview guides and 1-week self-observation prompt. This process was informed by researching back, embodiment, and transcorporeal connections as discussed in the anti-oppressive framework section.

Due to COVID-19, all interviews were conducted virtually at an agreed upon time which worked for participants. The one-week self-observation occurred between the first and second interviews. The initial interview was semistructured. The process included collection of demographic data, building rapport, dance/movement, and providing instruction on the one-week self-observation and embodied journaling. The length of the interview was 1 to 1.5 hr. I collected both verbal and nonverbal data. As part of researching back, the interview included multiple research identities as suggested by Nagata et al. (2012). This skill required a balance of having professional distance as a researcher but also building rapport through parts of the researcher's identity which may intersect with participants. Through use of multiple research identities, a researcher maintains integrity, builds relationships with participants, and fosters collaboration (Nagata et al., 2012). Throughout this process, I joined with participants in sharing parts of my identity, experience of current events around anti-Black and anti-Asian sentiment, or other educational experiences.

The second portion of the data collection was the one-week self-observation and embodied journaling. This engaged participants in improvisational movement and a written response after they attended a DMT class over the course of 1 week. In a previous

study by Kellogg and Liddell (2012) with a similar design, 1 week was sufficient time to gather data. I instructed participants to dance and write about their somatic responses to any activating or any significant event in the classroom for them. Participants were then instructed to use the video capability from their phone, computer, or another device to capture a 5-min or less movement improvisation of their experience. Throughout this self-observation week participants were reminded via email to capture their video and embodied journal entries. Participants were prompted to email me all embodied journal entries and improvisational dance videos two days before the second interview. The embodied approach of participants engaging in improvisational dance after being in the DMT classroom was intended to tap nonverbal ways of knowing which are valued by dance/movement therapists (Tantia & Kawano, 2019).

The final data collection process involved a second interview. This was a semistructured interview in which I asked participants to view and interpret their own improvisational dance videos and discuss any significant events that emerged during the one-week process. Additionally, I asked follow-up questions from the first interview. The length of this interview was 1 to 1.5 hr. This final interview was another opportunity for researching back and providing space for participants to share the meaning of their movements. This time allowed for participants to give a direct account of what occurred for them without interpretation from me as the researcher.

Data Analysis

I conducted audio recording, video recording, and transcribing of all interviews using Zoom and OtterAI software. I asked participants to review transcriptions of their interviews as a form of member checking.

There were two phases to analyze the data. In the first phase, I coded data, and generated themes using a modified embodied listening process. The embodied listening process was developed by Kawano (2016), and there were originally eight steps to this approach. I utilized five of these steps due to my previous experience using Kawano's embodied listening in my pilot study (Stewart, 2020). It was more pertinent for me to understand the participants' perspective through poetry as opposed to analyzing my movement. The three omitted steps are having a movement analyst review the researcher's movement profile, the creation of dances, and creating a video recording of the researcher moving to audio recording. Instead of creating dances, I created poems to help identify voices and themes. Cancienne and Snowber (2003) emphasized this approach of dancing to writing. Gilligan et al. (2003) first introduced this specific method of creating "I poems" in the listening guide. It is a feminist method that centers the voice of participants to help the researcher identify the nuances which emerge in an interview. The following list outlines Phase 1 steps.

Phase 1 entailed:

1. Listen to the audio recordings of interviews in a dance space
2. Immediately after, use a reflexive journal to record procedural occurrences
3. Create and use "I Poem" to identify, compare, and synthesize voices and themes in movement
4. Email participants poem and themes to receive their feedback
5. Integrate feedback and formalize themes

The second step of data analysis used the thematic structure created to generate guidelines for an anti-oppressive pedagogical practice in DMT. Please see the following list.

Phase 2 entailed:

1. Review research on anti-oppressive pedagogy
2. Compare research on anti-oppressive pedagogy to themes generated in initial phase of analysis
3. Create guidelines based on themes

Themes and guidelines generated were meant to capture the experiences of BIPOC students and efforts DMT educators can make to improve the quality of education for BIPOC students.

Trustworthiness

For researchers using qualitative methods establishing credibility is essential. It is through these methods of establishing credibility that qualitative research becomes trustworthy. Methods of trustworthiness used for this study were expressed using Creswell and Poth's (2018) approach for understanding trustworthiness from the researcher's lens, participant's lens, and reader's lens.

Tools to Create Credibility and Trustworthiness

Developing methods of trustworthiness is crucial in qualitative research for BIPOC participants due to past harms and misinterpretations from the research community. For this reason it was important to employ methods of reflexivity to maintain integrity throughout the study. Reflexivity is defined as "the importance of self-

awareness, political/cultural consciousness, and ownership of one's perspective" (Patton, 2002, p. 64).

Stance of the Researcher

As the primary researcher, my positionality is that I believe anti-oppressive approaches found me. I am a dance/movement therapist and social worker who was burnt out from community mental health and forensic settings, and I sought more balance for my life. This craving for balance led me to anti-oppressive practices working with two organizations rooted in this framework. My intention in re-establishing myself in working at a group private practice serving Black and Brown communities and a nonprofit organization serving adolescents in public schools was to create a social justice informed practice. Through collaboration and discussion, my colleagues and I would meet to discuss what an anti-oppressive community mental health practice looks like. Additionally, teaching as a clinical supervisor to social work and dance/movement therapy students, I implemented anti-oppressive clinical practices. Despite this implementation of anti-oppressive practices, I had to explore how this is done in DMT with much of the teaching and literature based in social work theory.

This inquiry of anti-oppressive practices and DMT led me to begin doctoral work to explore what it means to teach and practice DMT from an anti-oppressive framework. As an educator for the past 3 years in a predominantly White institution, I have learned different methods to implement anti-oppressive practices as informed by disciplines outside of DMT (social work, gender studies, etc.). I have also learned from mentors and other BIPOC colleagues from different disciplines. I became highly aware of my intersections when teaching White students. As a full-time educator and administrator, I

gained access and power in the academic world, which was unfamiliar, new, and at times overwhelming. Despite these factors, I recognized the importance of access and power and being able to continuously create spaces and give back to others. However, the question of what an embodied anti-oppressive pedagogy in DMT education truly looks like still prevailed.

When epistemology and ontology are informed by an anti-oppressive research framework they embrace "socio-historical experiences of people that are simultaneously multiply positioned" (Moosa-Mitha, 2005, p. 65). Within anti-oppressive practice, I acknowledge the importance of social location due to the impact it may have on the study. Through social location a researcher identifies their privileged and oppressed experiences (Moosa-Mitha, 2005). I identify as a first-generation Jamaican American of African and Chinese ancestry who is an able bodied, cisgender woman with middle-class socioeconomic status. I grew up in a working-class intergenerational household of women in Los Angeles, Bronx, and upstate New York. I was supported by family members in my exploration of the arts. Additionally, I am in an interracial marriage with my husband who is first-generation Chinese American with parents from Madagascar and mainland China and live in a multicultural household. Furthermore, I acknowledge having a light skin complexion and the privilege this holds. I value the knowledge the body holds and believe in the use of dance and poetry in the meaning making process of research. Additionally, I value critical reflection on race and gender issues as they appear for people of color in academia. Due to these social locations, there are multiple intersections within my identity in which experiences of oppression or privilege live depending on the environment.

Due to these multiple intersections, I identify as an *outsider within*. This term first used by Hill Collins (2013) was meant to capture what it means to be a BIPOC researcher or scholar that exist within multiple worlds. More specifically, Hill Collins (2013) posited these were individuals in the academy who are on the edge of different cultural groups that have unequal power. A researcher who holds this perspective is able to share their insights which did not originate from the dominant culture but come from a *collective social location.* As an African American woman, Hill Collins (2013) noted a collective social location existed among Black women who experienced disempowerment in race, class, and gender. Furthermore Harrison (2008) spoke to this experience as a Caribbean identifying woman. My biases may emerge throughout this study due to this; the next section will explore methods of reflexiveness used throughout this study.

Reflexivity and Integrity

Before implementing the study, a research assistant, who was a BIPOC graduate student from Antioch University New England, helped to develop and shape the interview guide, instructions for one-week self-observation, and format for the interviews. This helped contribute to the methodological integrity of the study. The method was "flexible and appropriate for the topic" (Forinash, 2012, p. 149). By engaging a BIPOC student in these activities I was able to hold open discussion and test interview guides before using them with participants.

At the onset of this study, I used a reflexive journal. During the data collection process, I used the journal during each interaction I had with participants to record any feelings which emerged, to account for bias, and to bring awareness to my own somatic responses. This supported both the personal and the interpersonal integrity of the

research. There were moments when my own perspectives and experiences would emerge when I conducted interviews or reviewed transcriptions. This step was imperative to acknowledging these factors as they emerged.

Member Checking

It was important to have continued engagement throughout the data analysis process. I employed member checking of transcriptions to ensure voices were being captured accurately throughout (Creswell & Poth, 2018; Cruz & Tantia, 2017; Forinash, 2012). I contacted participants to contribute their thoughts before results became finalized. Both of these steps were to ensure interpersonal integrity. Additionally, collaborating with participants was another method employed in the process of the second interview and review of I poems to understand participants' own interpretations of movement in the 1-week self-observation and to understand their interpretation of I poems before finalizing themes.

Rich and Thick Description

I employed rich and thick description of the data collection, analysis, and findings throughout to ensure readers had the full context of information (Creswell & Poth, 2018; Cruz & Tantia, 2017). Through providing a detailed account of the participants, methods of data collection, analysis, and robust information in findings, I attempted to ensure transferability of the study. These attempts at trustworthiness using reflexivity, member checking, collaboration, and rich and thick description provide credibility to the study.

These three methods of rich and thick description, member checking, and reflexivity were to help triangulate results of the study to ensure that my own personal stance as a researcher was transparent throughout the study. The ultimate goal was to

create a research design and analysis which replicated best practices and provided insight by using theoretical frameworks which had not been applied in research prior to this study.

CHAPTER 4

Results

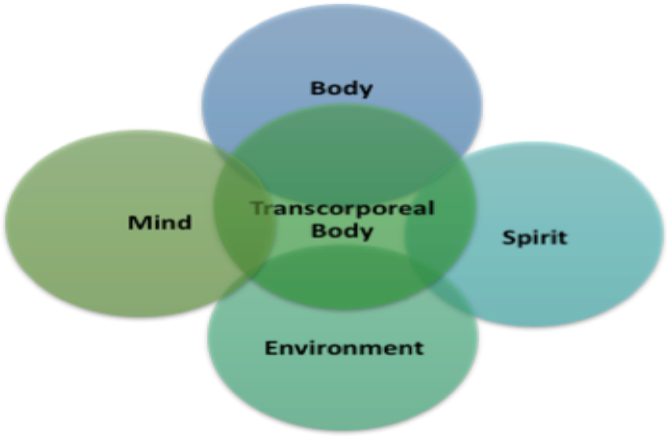
After analyzing the data using a modified approach to embodied listening (Kawano, 2016) and the listening guide (Gilligan et al., 2003), I used the framework of the transcorporeal body to characterize the findings. The following provides an explanation for use of this framework and an overview of the results.

Transcorporeal Body

The transcorporeal body is informed by the notion of interconnection among human bodies, spirituality, religion, the nonhuman world, and other environments such as nature or community (Alaimo, 2012; Strongman, 2019; Ward, 2002). The aim of using this framework here is to provide a holistic understanding of these results in which the interconnection of the body's experience is related to the thoughts being conveyed verbally. The results aim to highlight the body, mind, spirit, and environmental connection that existed for participants. It is important to note some participants did not have or speak to a spiritual connection. Figure 1 illustrates the transcorporeal connection.

Figure 1

Transcorporeal Connection



Overall, there were four major embodied states and eight embodied substates. The four embodied states identified were *the wounded body, the critical body, the intersectional body*, and *the flourishing body*. These states captured participants' embodied experience of being a BIPOC DMT graduate student. The eight substates identified were *the body ignored, drained and depleted body, critical assessment and reflection, critical action, the body of multiplicity, the body of conservation, support*, and *purpose*. The embodied substates conveyed ideas stated by the BIPOC DMT graduate students in their interviews, videos, and journal entries. A review of the participants is provided in the following section before deeper explanation of the embodied states and embodied substates.

Participants

I asked participants to provide pseudonyms to identify themselves. Three out of the eight participants chose pseudonyms and others had a pseudonym assigned by the researcher. There are several significant events which occurred in 2021 during the data collection process. These events include the global COVID-19 pandemic, the sentencing of George Floyd's killers, and the murder of Asian American women in Atlanta, Georgia. The sentencing of George Floyd's killer was the epitome of anti-Blackness within the United States. For context, George Floyd was an unarmed Black male who used a counterfeit $20 bill in May of 2020. This incident led to him being publicly killed by police in Minneapolis, Minnesota. The murder of six Asian American women in a spa in Atlanta, Georgia in March 2021 was the personification of anti-Asian sentiment in the United States. These women were killed by a White male. These major deaths made headline news and led to protests around the nation calling on people to be aware and

take action in working against White supremacy due to both incidents being perpetuated by White men. All of the participants experienced being in the pandemic and taking class over Zoom in either weekly or intensive formats. For some of the participants the data collection process occurred simultaneously with these events. Some of the participants spoke directly to how these events impacted their DMT educational experience.

Natalie

This participant identified as Black, African American, and Jamaican, cisgender female, heterosexual, lower middle class, and spiritual. Natalie expressed a shift in her socioeconomic status due to returning to school, however, still being able to "not worry about basic needs" due to scholarships, work study, and family support. She described herself as not practicing a religion but having an "ancestor altar." Natalie described her parents having roots in the Southern states of the United States and one parent who immigrated from Jamaica. She reported not having much "contact with Jamaican culture" but feeling her family in the South as a "large interconnected close-knit family." She expressed current dance/movement practices as ashtanga yoga and samba no pé. However, she had also practiced ballet and contemporary movement but was moving away from these styles of dance. For Natalie, samba no pé was an activity she first explored with a family member that allowed space to "discharge energy" with faster movements. Ashtanga yoga allowed her "to calm down" and "slow down" when needing relaxation and processing. It aided her in increasing "body awareness" and breaking away from movement patterns.

During the embodied self-observation and journal week, Natalie experienced the trial and final verdict for the murder of George Floyd. She reported ways in which one

instructor acknowledged this in class stating, “my Black body is tired.” This statement resonated for her as she described “I feel like when people are at the end of their rope but like I’m the singed end of like a burnt end of that rope” (Interview 2). For Natalie this modeling by the instructor by a BIPOC instructor allowed for a space of connection. She also expressed that while predominantly White academic institutions can hold support groups there are “limits,” and she is not interested in sitting with White people to discuss her feelings.

During her DMT education Natalie reported a moment of not being recognized as an African American person in a lecture which focused on working with African American clients (“It’s one of those things where like we address it, but we don’t necessarily address the differences in the room” [Interview 1]). In this moment Natalie noted that the class was being guided from a perspective of the therapist being White working with African American clients. She felt unrecognized due to the instructor not facilitating a discussion or having materials for African American therapists working with African American clients. The class materials and instruction were being directed to only the White students. She described this moment as a “weird disconnect” and reflected on whether she needed to say something. She reported feeling “anger” and “frustration” which led to withdrawing and not participating at times and seeking support from her partner, family, and therapist.

Natalie described another instance in which she felt recognized in her DMT education. She discussed a professor who she felt “connected” to and allowed her to “hold my locations a little closer to the surface” (“This is somebody that is going to tell

me what's up and they're not going to allow any of my peers get away with like whatever kind of comments" [Interview 1]).

Aurora

This participant identified as Filipino American, heterosexual, queer, with pronoun as Siya (representing her heritage as a Filipino woman). She reported coming from an upper middle-class family but currently being middle-class due to the pandemic and shift in employment. She stated she was born in the Philippines and moved to the United States as a toddler. She shared feeling "strong" in her Filipino heritage but at times feeling "misplaced." Aurora discussed connecting with her heritage through being in a yoga club for Filipinos. Aurora's movement practices, aikido and yoga were informed by her spiritual practice of Rinzai Zen Buddhism. She reported these movement practices helped her to feel "strong and confident as a person" and to have a relationship with power in which she is "prepared" for things she cannot control in her environment.

As part of her graduate school experience, Aurora also spoke to the anti-Asian sentiment with Asian women being murdered in Atlanta, which occurred the same week of her self-observation and which led her to feel "drained," not able to "hold it together," and "unable to articulate what happened" due to it just occurring. Because her classes occurred all in one day, she described it as a "long flight" and reported feeling "tension."

In speaking to her DMT graduate experience, in relation to peers she described having five people who identified as BIPOC in her classes. She shared there were Asian American identified peers in the classroom who she felt "close" to and "challenged" by. She reported appreciating structures used in one of her classes and how Zoom allowed her to arrange her classmates in different formations.

> I even remember arranging my screen, like, I could put people in my screen and sometimes I would organize my screen so that I could see where all the BIPOC people are …. I guess I was just trying to notice like who was going up to speak and, like, how we were supporting and challenging each other. (Interview 2)

This quote illustrated the ways in which Aurora found support and used technology to be able to see her classmates.

Stacy

This participant identified as Brazilian, female, queer, middle-class, and spiritual. Stacy discussed a shift in socioeconomic status and physical presentation in order to study in the United States. She reported moving from lower middle class in Brazil to middle class living in the United States with the support of her partner. Stacy noted that she changed her appearance in order to look like a "traditional White" or a "wealthy Latina." Some of the changes made were to wear hats to protect her skin from getting darker, removing her piercings, going from a shaved head to growing out her hair, and doing her nails. She reported being "a bit paranoid" and filled with "anxiety" and "stress" with thinking about dealing with people at the border. As a White presenting "Latina" she reported having European heritage from Italy and Portugal as well as Senegalese, Native American, and Middle Eastern heritage. She stated, "I identify as a Latina person of color in the U.S." However, she reported the identity as "confusing." She expressed, "we were put in the blob of Latina and there are so many countries." Stacy shared feeling like an "alien" in the United States at times. She shared her queer identity not being "explored" or existing in the United States as she is mainly around White heterosexual people.

Her queer, ethnic, and spiritual identity informed her dance/movement practice. Stacy described playing soccer and being in social dances with her friends and at school who were predominantly BIPOC. She shared that these dances were called “axé,” “funk,” and “forró.” She described these dances as a “freedom to be sexy without being exotified.” These dances were a part of her queer community in Brazil. She reported not having places she feels “comfortable” to do that in the United States. Instead practicing improvisational dance and yoga were the activities that made her feel “eligible” to apply to a DMT program. However, she reported being on a “search” with exploring capoeira. Although yoga had helped to connect to a spirituality within herself, she was now exploring Umbanda. Both of these traditions are rooted in Brazilian culture.

In her DMT education she reported not being recognized in the classroom when an instructor guided the students to create a small phrase at the end of their movement experience. Stacy’s movement background was based in social dance, so creating dance phrases was not a common way she expressed herself prior to the DMT program. Stacy discussed creating these “marked” movements as “erasing” her experience due to not processing movement in this way. Due to having a dance background which was not studio or choreography based, she shared feelings of “guilt,” “frustration,” “like I have to catch up,” and “anger.” Stacy stated, “I haven’t done this right.” She discussed having doubts about being in the program. Stacy found herself in a position of organizing students in certain courses to understand if they were having similar experiences in the classroom and seeing if they wanted to take action in voicing their concerns.

Faith

This participant identified as Asian American, female, heterosexual, and described herself being "middle class high" which was defined as being able to afford quality dance education but still living modestly. She was born in China and adopted by parents who are White from the United States and Canada. She described herself as growing up in a predominantly White neighborhood but in a multicultural household speaking French and English, learning Canadian customs, being a part of a group of children adopted from China to learn Chinese culture. She shared friends who were predominantly White making comments to her like "You are the whitest girl I know." She shared, "because that's the dominant group like that's all I can see. I feel like that's also influenced the way that I see, like, racial identity and myself" (Interview 1). However, she also described not growing up in a "well rounded Asian community." She reported having "imposter syndrome" due to not knowing enough about her Chinese cultural heritage. She also reported attending an event as an undergraduate student where she began to recognize herself as a person of color.

Faith reported her dance/movement practices as ballet, modern, jazz, hip hop, and swing dance. She described enjoying ballet but not being sure of the origins of her liking this practice ("I love ballet, but I also feel that others love ballet for me" [Interview 1]). She described stereotypes that she believed were used by her dance teachers ("Oh Asian, you're so gentle, so delicate, so graceful" [Interview 1]).

The embodied self-observation and journaling for Faith occurred during the week of the murder of Asian women in Atlanta. This participant felt a "dissociation" and what

she described as a “denial ball.” She reported making decisions to keep herself safe while running errands.

She described a moment during her DMT education of being invisible in the classroom when a White classmate made a comment toward another Asian student in the classroom (“Yeah, so the instructor for that class … I was also shocked by her lack of reaction … I think that she’s just kind of has this very hands off teaching method” [Interview 1]). She also questioned herself about not saying something to this student in the moment “I should have defended them because … what my classmate said was wrong.” She expressed feeling “shocked” and “confused.” Faith shared active steps she would take if she experienced herself or a classmate experiencing a microaggression in class.

Imani

This participant identified as Black American, female, middle-class, and spiritual. When describing her racial identity, she stated, “I’m American. I don’t have an ethnicity because I am here … I define as Black” (Interview 1). She reported coming from a lower middle-class family but now living as “comfortable” middle class. She described having explored many religions but now only believing in God. Imani shared that “presence matters” to her in how she expresses her Blackness. She described her culture as “rich.” Throughout her predominantly White office space she described having her “sheroes” and other art which represented her culture. She described the importance of creating “comfort” not only for herself but for people who look like her. Imani’s dance/movement practices were jazz and modern dance. She reported due to the pandemic being unable to take dance class in a way that she felt safe.

During her DMT education she discussed an instance of the cultural difference being acknowledged and another instance in which it was not acknowledged. Imani reported her instructor for a movement assessment course allowing her to bring in different music to reflect her cultural heritage and movement. She described herself as feeling "excited" due to music being an art she enjoyed greatly. Imani described another instance where the movement interventions she learned in the DMT classroom did not "resonate with her" and when attempted did not translate to her population of BIPOC inner city youth. She stated, "I was being instructed on methods that … I thought would transfer … well thankfully my students know I'm silly so I can easily pass it off" (Interview 1). She was taught DMT movement interventions which were not culturally informed for working with BIPOC youth.

Imani expressed her purpose to do DMT as creating a practice that is "Afrocentric body based." For this reason she has been motivated throughout her educational experience to support Black peers in the classroom experience through group projects and other assignments.

Pamela

This participant identified as Asian American, Chinese and Taiwanese, cis female, bisexual, upper middle-class, and having mental health diagnoses. She described no shift in her socioeconomic status. Pamela described growing up in a predominantly White neighborhood in the suburbs. She shared coming from parents who were first- and second-generation to the United States from China and Taiwan. Pamela reported not speaking "any Asian languages" because the only shared language between her parents was English. She described herself as "very American" and "I don't really strongly

identify with Asian culture." Pamela discussed practicing both Chinese and American holidays in a similar manner using "Asian foods and Asian cooking." She also reported practicing certain Asian customs like taking "shoes off" and "gift giving." She shared experiencing "internalized racism" and moments of not feeling "Asian enough." Pamela described a term used by her mother, "hollow bamboo," being Asian on the outside and "nothing on the inside."

Dance and movement practices Pamela used were West African, jazz, tap, improvisation, modern, and ballet. She would consider herself a "modern contemporary dancer." She reported feeling most "welcomed and accepted" in the African American Dance Company she was a member of. She reported feeling that her identity did not inform her movement practices.

Pamela's embodied self-observation and journaling occurred while activists were holding rallies for "Stop anti-Asian hate." She reported waiting outside for her vaccination shot for COVID-19 while a Stop Anti-Asian Hate march passed by, and she shared participants made direct eye contact and waved at her. She reported feeling "seen" and "cared" for.

In her DMT education Pamela shared not being recognized. She spoke to the nuisance of understanding the Asian American experience as not only an "immigrant" experience that focuses on "language barriers" but of recognizing "second- and third-generation and adoptee" experiences. She proposed focusing on the generational acculturation experiences of the Asian diaspora to help when speaking about diversity in classroom discussions. Pamela discussed some examples of issues which may arise due to acculturation as mental health challenges, concerns with "body image," and concerns

with “reputation” and status. Pamela spoke to having concerns more so with her mental health than her race and ethnicity. She reported taking steps throughout her DMT educational experience to maintain her mental health and well-being.

Nia

This participant identified as first generation Black and Jamaican American, cisgender female, middle-class, and Christian. Nia shared her parents are from the United States and Jamaica. She reported not growing up with her father and experiencing the death of her mother as a child. For this reason she was adopted by family members, some of whom had also passed during the pandemic. She reported having “strong Jamaican roots living in the U.S.” However, she also reported still feeling “a pull between the American and Jamaican” sides (“I’ve been criticized for being Americanized by family too” [Interview 1]). Nia described herself as “multi-faceted” and “confident” when speaking to her identity. She spoke to the nuance of being Black Jamaican when growing up around African and African American peers. She described these differences appearing in the food that she eats during holidays and breakfast: “curry goat,” “jerk pork,” and “ackee and salt fish.” She also shared artifacts in her home that represent aspects of Jamaican culture including “the market woman” and “the fisherman.”

Nia expressed how she experienced music and dance as different from her peers. She shared dance/movement practices as dance/hall, contemporary dance, and trap. She stated, “I’m very polyrhythmic … Whereas I notice some of my peers tend to start from the shoulders … my feelings start from the waist and goes down” [Interview 1]. She also described “trying to conform” to gogo and trap music that were present in her community growing up, but she shared it was “hard” and she was often questioned. She ultimately

reported “I can’t conform to make other people feel comfortable, but I definitely felt that pull especially in the way I move.”

Moments of recognition and not being recognized were in her DMT graduate education, respectively. She reported feeling seen in a course where the students were made to feel “uncomfortable.” She reported critical questions and rich discussions on the history of the *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Health Disorders* (5th ed.; *DSM*-5; American Psychiatric Association, 2013) and prejudiced mental health diagnosis in the African American community. Moments of not being recognized in her DMT education occurred in a course where she reported the death of a family member during the pandemic and the instructor’s lack of empathy, “minimizing,” and lack of structure in the course. She reported her personal information was “disclosed” to the entire class without consent, the instructor shared her own loss in comparison, and the instructor tried to set up space to review grief without “grounding” or “shared agreements” (“We teach how to create a safe space and how to enter the therapeutic space with our clients. But we don’t practice that same safety and care with students” [Interview 1]).

With all of these DMT graduate school experiences Nia described a fire which circulated from the heart which led her to speak from the heart. In these moments, she reported receiving mentorship from BIPOC instructors to turn some of her assignments into something which could support inclusivity of marginalized students in DMT.

Sage

This participant identified as Asian from Hong Kong, female, and middle-class. Sage noted that being from Hong Kong that some people call themselves “Hong Kongers,” but she was still open to being considered Chinese. Sage reported it was a

"privilege" to study here as freedom of speech is "eroding" in Hong Kong. She expressed "deviating from the cultural norm" from Hong Kong to study in the United States. She reported feeling "stuck" in United States and Hong Kong culture ("When I'm in Hong Kong I want to break out and when I'm here, I realize the beauty of some of the things of my country. So really in between" [Interview 1]). A part of this feeling stuck Sage described as happening in social settings and differences in taking up space with "voicing your needs." Sage shared that in Hong Kong she is "very aware of the impact of space that's being 'taken' and 'conforming' to the community." She expressed, "I find myself admiring and valuing Western values more than the values of my roots … I want to be more outspoken."

Dance/movement practices Sage described were traditional Chinese dance, hip hop, and jazz. She had a different movement vocabulary from peers in the DMT classroom who practiced ballet and contemporary dance styles. She reported trying to adapt and "release" her body in the way she observed her peers in class. Sage spoke to the notion of conforming when she expressed, "my culture is very good … at just observing, reading the room and kind of adapting." However, she described feeling unseen when peers "mirrored" back her movements. She felt her movements were "unwelcomed."

As an BIPOC international student Sage discussed feeling "disconnected with the body on Zoom" after "investing" in moving to the United States to take classes online. She also experienced the murder of Asian American women during the embodied self-observation and journaling week. Sage expressed having a White instructor who lived in an Asian country who created space for herself and other Asian and Asian American

students in the classroom to talk about the murder. She reported “appreciating” the acknowledgement of anti-Asian violence but “not having anything to say.” Sage discussed being “stressed” when asked to discuss feelings while still needing to process the event.

In the DMT classroom Sage described a moment where she did not feel culturally recognized by a peer in the classroom who questioned her frequency in verbal contributions in class. This led her to reflect on the time she has shared her thoughts in class and how they were being perceived. Sage expressed the terminology of “oppression” being new and something that was not taught from her country of origin. However, she also noted the lack of awareness around different ways of taking information which she called “internal sensing.” Sage described not always having “the means to verbalize” for various reasons and using art to express her “truth.” She reported wishing her classmates would want to have deeper discussion by “joining her” in times that she has shared and becoming “curious” on topics discussed instead of saying “thank you for sharing” and moving on. These experiences have led Sage to be a more active member in the school community through participating in a student leadership role.

These brief synopses were meant to introduce the eight participants and provide context on their experiences in DMT education thus far. The following section will provide explanation on overall results after analysis of embodied states and embodied substates.

Embodied States and Embodied Substates

After analysis, I chose identified embodied states and embodied substates to emphasize the importance of the embodied experience as well as verbal communication.

There were four embodied states identified: the wounded body, the critical body, the intersectional body, and the flourishing body. They represented how participants described their bodies that could be reflected in the transcorporeal model. The embodied states captured the impact of the environment, thoughts, emotions, and spiritual factors on the bodies of participants. The descriptions of their bodies included somatic and physical movement responses through interviews and journal entries of participants' graduate experiences as a BIPOC student. Each embodied state has a poem and still photo which can be found as figures. Poems from the participants' listening guide analysis have been used to capture embodied states. Videos and additional photos also capture movement which can be found in Appendix D.

The study also identified eight embodied substates through analysis using embodied listening (Kawano, 2016) and the listening guide (Gilligan et al., 2003). Table 1 displays the embodied states and the eight embodied substates that were identified. A brief description as well as direct quotes from participants illustrate these substates.

Table 1

Embodied States and Embodied Substates

Embodied states	**Embodied substates**
The wounded body	The body ignored
	Drained, depleted, and disengaged
The critical body	Critical assessment and reflection
	Critical action
The intersectional body	The body of multiplicity
The flourishing body	The body of conservation

Support

Purpose

The Wounded Body

The wounded body captured interactions and experiences for participants in their DMT education which were harmful. These experiences occurred in classroom interactions with peers and instructors, interactions with course materials, outside of the classroom in office hours, and through later reflection in the participants' own time. The experiences described led to detrimental emotions. Some examples of these feelings as reported by participants were invisibility, isolation, hypervigilance, anger, annoyance, burden, and exhaustion. Participants described these experiences leading them to feel shame, disengagement, misattunement, and confrontation, and to distrust their peers, instructor, and course materials. This embodied state manifested for all of the participants. The poem and image in Figure 2 were the researcher's work to embody experiences expressed by participants.

Figure 2

Wounded Body

I don't think anyone is paying attention to me
Not only do I not feel seen, I feel dismissed
Am I suited for this?
I can't do this anymore
I cringed
I'm not breathing
I feel a little bit angry
I could speak up but I'm afraid I'll be seen as short tempered
I want to be somewhere else right now
I don't share anymore
I withdrew
I just never found a place where I feel comfortable

Should I be here?
I feel tokenized
I don't know myself to be a caretaker
I could just leave if I wanted to
I really just want to give everyone the benefit of the doubt

Embodied Substate 1: The Body Ignored

The first embodied substate, the body ignored, spoke to moments of participants not being seen in their DMT education. This substate appeared for all participants. These encounters happened with classroom materials, discussion, or experiential exercises not reflecting their identities. In these moments participants described being ignored and forgotten which led them to feel unsafe, overwhelmed, and confused. Participants Nia and Natalie spoke to their racial and ethnic identity not being acknowledged in the classroom when talking about African Americans. Nia described a classroom discussion

where the instructor did not recognize her ethnic identity as a part of the African Diaspora. She stated,

> I'll say my community wasn't worth diving into deep discussion like other communities, because my peers are silent. And my teacher didn't even … facilitate these very important discussions … I felt dismissed.

Natalie had a similar response to her racial identity as a member of the African American community not being recognized in the classroom. She reported,

> There was a presentation about … working with African Americans, and it's one of those things where like we address it, but we don't necessarily address the difference in the room.

As a person dealing with her own mental health diagnoses, Pamela spoke to her experience of learning about disorders in the classroom. She reported,

> It was very uncomfortable for me, because I felt like I was being targeted … This is what depression looks like because they walk like this and this mapping and they narrow their body and I'm like, we're just talking about me right now.

This moment highlights the importance for instructors to be sensitive to students who may have mental health diagnoses. As an BIPOC international student from Hong Kong, Sage expressed that her research interest was often forgotten by her instructor. Sage stated,

> And I feel like I'm losing my nation basically and like they're trying to erase our language, and, you know, taking out like all the freedom of speech, for example … I was presenting on my topic, and it didn't seem like the professor remember too much like what I wanted to do. So that was kind of frustrating …

Lastly Nia spoke to the use of Zoom during the pandemic making it easier to be ignored through "avoidance" than when in the in-person classroom. Nia expressed,

> But what's different now is that Zoom, the eye contact piece is missing, which is I think is a huge engagement piece with connection that has now been a disconnect being virtual because now you don't know who I'm looking at because our screens are different … So, I still get … avoidance.

These experiences highlight the body being ignored in the DMT classroom.

Embodied Substate 2: Drained, Depleted, and Disengaged

The drained, depleted, and disengaged embodied substate encapsulated participants' expressions of emotions due to interactions of not being fully heard or understood in the classroom. This occurred for seven out of the eight participants. Participants spoke to exhaustion when making a choice to confront peers or instructors. Several participants also described being activated, angry, hypervigilant, or dissociated which led them to disengage from the classroom materials, discussion, or experiential exercises. It also brought up caretaking of their peers or instructor and tokenizing. Aurora, Sage, and Stacy spoke to additional efforts they have to make due to caretaking, English as a second language, and class material not covering what it should, respectively. Aurora shared having to put more "effort" when a White female classmate shared her own personal needs around an assignment. In this moment Aurora described feeling she was being placed in a caretaker role to assist her White classmate with the need she described.

> I remember thinking like okay, I know I am able to adjust to that. I can like finagle a little bit but it's more effort on my part.

Sage discussed having English as a second language reading articles in her first language and then needing to translate this information for assignments. She shared the extra effort it took by stating,

> I just feel I have to like double the effort, to try to convey something, and also like this topic I'm … reading a lot of a news articles that I have to translate.

Stacy expressed the additional steps she would have to take to get her educational needs met. She stated,

> How important is movement observation? It's like I'm wasting my time doing assignments that feel like I'm not taking anything out of them. And at the same time, it's like, I might have to go search for things on my own.

Several participants also spoke to feeling depleted due to not having peers from similar cultural backgrounds in class, stress, and having to provide education to peers, faculty, or staff on areas of diversity and equity which affected their own learning as a student. Nia spoke to the physical impact of feeling drained due to the demands of class, internship, and experiences with peers and instructors.

> I'll disclose to you that I started feeling even more dizzy and lightheaded … Umm, and literally that morning all my symptoms hit me like a brick. And I was I was just tired.

Sage spoke to feeling that she was being called on to educate others after the Atlanta murder of Asian women in March 2021 due to peers who were not of Asian or Asian American culture remaining quiet. She described,

> I just felt like a little uncomfortable like I have to say like it's always just, it's always just us talking it feel like we have to, like, almost like exhaust ourselves

> even more to, you know, educate others or like prove a point that, like hey this is real for us.

Several participants spoke to this leading them to feel disengaged, frustrated, and fearful in the classroom due to voluntary or involuntary somatic or cognitive responses to lecture, experiential exercise, or discussion. Stacy spoke to her somatic responses in stating,

> Yeah, but it was out of noticing the, like, almost, I felt like, while I was noticing myself in that class there's this alert. Umm like I felt like I was in constant alert. Like there's danger. That's how my body felt.

These moments of expressed feelings of being drained, depleted, and disengaged emerged in various ways throughout the DMT graduate experience.

The Critical Body

The critical body embraced experiences of contemplation and/or action based on injustices and inequities for various marginalized groups in the DMT educational experience. This embodied state appeared for all participants. In these moments some participants questioned themselves or others' actions. Many participants reflected being in a decision-making process. Some participants chose to confront and advocate peers or instructors. In the poem and image below the researcher illustrates her interpretation of participants' embodied experience of critical reflection and assessment and critical action.

Figure 3

Critical Body

I stand widely, looking up a little bit
I observe them

I see all my choices
I want to offer
I want to contribute
I want to fight
It was that moment where I started to wonder, what are we really teaching
I have an internal fight with myself
I could speak up
I did speak up once
I always speak up

Embodied Substate 3: Critical Assessment and Reflection

All participants are represented in this embodied substate. They discussed moments in which they asked themselves, peers, or instructors critical questions in relation to power dynamics, inequities, or other injustices regarding their interactions

with classroom discussion, experientials, or course materials. These moments happened in internal dialogue, with small groups of trusted peers, with instructors, or with the entire class.

Several of the participants spoke to their observations of movement. Natalie spoke to what she observed in the DMT classroom when she stated, “We talk about other dance styles but we don’t really explore them.” She also reported,

> In the classroom space, I find myself doing more of the stretching movements that stay like closer to my body … Yeah, I don’t feel like I bring like the dancing aspect of samba no pé into class, like, hardly if at all.

Additionally, Nia noted the difference in body size and how peers were facilitating movement exercises that caused her to reflect. She expressed,

> And then also my, my peers are thin … I’m a thick Black girl … this peer, she said something about feeling like our rib cages and our abs. Right ... I can’t feel that, but she kept giving directions like that.

Within their critical assessment participants often asked critical questions of themselves and others in the classroom space. Many participants discussed this being an internal dialogue. Faith discussed a moment where she was contemplating how to support an Asian classmate. She stated,

> And I was like, Am I ... am I like … an ally to like, bring this up more directly with the professor … or just to ignore it because it wasn’t aimed at me.

Aurora spoke to a classmate leading an experiential exercise and she questioned their use of the word “Namaste” at the end of the exercise due to it not being framed in an Indian

or Hindu framework. She wondered, “what does this mean to other people.” In this questioning she shared,

> I knew it was strange because it felt accessible, up until that point, like that that was something that took me out of it, where sometimes I think about accessibility as like, you can decide to go in, or you can decide to go out, but it felt this was something that was like you can come in but you can’t leave.

Several participants spoke to critical assessment of the course or course materials. Nia expressed that text and materials used in the class were outdated.

> Like, why am I reading a book that was written by a man who was in his 30s in the 1970s … Why do I only see one woman author and she’s a co-author not seeing you know, any women of color? Where are Latina Latinx? Where are our Asian? Where are our Black what like, why am I only seeing White middle aged men?

Imani discussed having a professor of color teaching a course but noticed her teaching style to be “accommodating” a predominantly White classroom. She stated,

> I’m curious if she would be like … if the instructor were White, would they be as accommodating? If the class was the majority of color.

These critical thoughts and questions are some examples of what participants shared.

Embodied Substate 4: Critical Action

The substate of critical action included reported moments of participants’ advocating for themselves or others either inside or outside the classroom experience. This substate appeared in five out of the eight participants. These moments often included challenge, confrontation, and courage. Some participants also spoke to future steps they

would take to advocate. Several students spoke to taking on current leadership roles as based on their experiences of injustice or inequities throughout their DMT education. Sage shared,

> Recently I've been kind of pushing myself to be more of a student leader role, like, you know, really noticing the resources within [name of school] … that I can reach out to and people that I feel connected to like other international students coming together as a community to speak about our experiences … having the company and having community is really important.

Nia discussed using her experiences to work on a project with DMT mentors:

> But I took the opportunity to take on a project with … with a peer. I did a dictionary of the harmful words in our books, and turn them to what should be appropriate terminology, with examples and references inside of them all.

Stacy found herself in a space of trying to organize her classmates due to not being satisfied with one of her courses.

> But like besides that a lot of my time was spent like sending a message to the whole cohort and being kind of like, "Hey, I'm not getting anything out of that class. Should we do something," but then not getting many responses.

These approaches to critical action highlight the creative ways in which students attempted to improve their educational experience in DMT programs through individual and collective efforts.

The Intersectional Body

The intersectional body represented a conscious awareness of various intersectionalities participants held. Participants discussed developing understanding and

being secure around their intersectional identities. This body also described how participants navigated these intersectionalities. Participants often described making choices to adapt or conform to social or cultural norms while others chose not to. This embodied state existed for all participants. Figure 4 was the researcher's interpretation of the intersectional body.

Figure 4

Intersectional Body

I cannot be boxed in
I feel like I'm very weird
I've been criticized

I cannot be boxed in
I adapt
I deviate from the cultural norm
I'm stuck
I don't know conforming

I cannot be boxed in
I come home
I have now accepted
I hold those identities
I feel confidence

I cannot be boxed in

Embodied Substate 5: The Body of Multiplicity

In this embodied substate participants reported their interpersonal dialogues in trying to understand their various identities. In these moments participants discussed their rich and dynamic intersections. They acknowledged moments of rationalizing, managing expectations of others, and choosing to adapt or not adapt. This voice appeared for all participants. Pamela spoke to this when describing being a first-generation Taiwanese and second-generation Chinese person.

> Just feelings of not feeling Asian enough … and being White, also because of not being Asian, and it's been growing in me, of trying to teach myself that it's not like that I'm White, it's American not White.

Sage spoke to her experience as a BIPOC international student,

> I'm like kind of stuck in between, like, I'm like when I'm in Hong Kong I want to break out and when I'm here, I realize the beauty of some of the things like of my country. So, really, in between.

Faith spoke to being an adoptee living in the United States and having a parent from Canada who has taught her French.

> Like a multicultural individual it's kind of confusing when I think about it too much.

Nia expressed her multiplicity as Jamaican American individual.

> So, I understand that I am a Black, Jamaican American woman who is in higher education, who has been influenced by Black and West Indian culture. Growing up in the age of technology and use of social media.

The ideas of adapting or conforming to various different cultural standards were discussed by several participants. In these moments participants shared when they had chosen to adapt or chosen to conform. Stacy described her queer community in Brazil and the social dances and movements she experienced; however, she noted she changed her movement practice when she moved to the United States. She expressed,

> I started taking modern dance classes and yoga, which was what made me interested in dance/movement therapy, or at least what made me feel eligible for it or something.

Nia shared her stance on not conforming. She stated,

> I know that I no longer have to conform to just one thing. I used to want to put a label on who I was so that I'm just one thing.

The preceding quotes illustrate the understanding of participants' social locations. They also share the differences in where they are in the process of understanding themselves as a BIPOC individual.

The Flourishing Body

The flourishing body is comprised of intrapersonal and interpersonal supports participants described resourcing to continue with their DMT education. These efforts were made consciously or unconsciously. For some participants this encompassed intentions for pursuing DMT education, building community, finding supports, and using dance and movement as a resource when engaging in a DMT course either before, during, or after the course. The flourishing body appeared for all participants. The poem and image in Figure 5 were the researcher's interpretation of the flourishing body.

Figure 5

Flourishing Body

I checked in with my body
I noticed I carried this sensation
I want to be free but I can't

I'm learning
I wanted everything to just go out of my body
I dance
I move
I feel seen

I checked in with my body
I noticed me trying to balance
I have the desire to take up space
I have the desire to portray my cultures
I was able to let loose

I'm discovering
I'm finding my connection to my body, breathe, and voice
I can't be the person all the time to speak to inequities
I feel better because I feel protected by my community

I think for me it feels like conserving energy

Embodied Substate 6: Purpose

In the embodied substate of purpose participants reported their own interpersonal connection to pursuing DMT education. The voice of purpose appeared in four out of the eight participants. Some participants described being motivated by spiritual practices or having a vision of their DMT career. This brought feelings of attunement, engagement, trust, and protection. These experiences also reminded them of their purpose for pursuing DMT education. Stacy defined this purpose in terms of her spiritual exploration.

> And that's why I ended up in this program anyways, I kind of realized that the safest way for me to connect with spirituality was through, like my own body and like getting into my body.

Aurora also spoke to her own spiritual connections to pursuing DMT education when she stated,

> And I think being in like, a movement therapy program has been helpful in just remembering that like, my body is the land … Maybe this is also a yoga thing, too. This is the like the humanness.

Nia spoke to being one of the few BIPOC students and how this motivated her.

> But yeah, it made me I would probably say in this instance, it made me want to go harder. It made me want to advocate even harder, the beauty of being unapologetically Black.

These examples of purpose through spirituality and one's personal vision to achieve are some of the ways in which participants demonstrated their individual agency.

Embodied Substate 7: Community Support

Throughout data collection participants spoke to various levels of support they received from peers or instructors in the classroom, mentors, family, friendships outside of the program, and therapists. These forms of support existed for all of the participants. These relationships helped them stay with their DMT education and continue to excel in their classroom experiences. Some participants spoke to receiving or providing peer support which helped them to feel validated or open to expressing their views in the classroom. Imani shared intentionally being in a mock DMT session with all Black students,

> I have to support them, I'm gonna be in their group … I guess they had the same idea … In addition to the joy, pride, thankfulness, celebration. We made it! We finally found our group!

Classroom instructors' structures and facilitation styles were also described as creating a supportive environment. Faith spoke to virtual class and how the instructor unintentionally allowed for space for classmates to connect:

> But recently, like, the group has started to like come together as a class to like speak with each other without the professor's presence, which I think is interesting but also, like …, so it's not just in this class where we're finding connections with each other.

Stacy described a feeling of connection to her peers through an experiential assignment which led other students to share and be vulnerable about their experiences. She reported,

> Like she brought that, and it made me feel connected to her and kind of like, oh, there is. It made me feel more welcomed in class, or like there's more space for me too.

Sage spoke to the knowledge their DMT instructors held that led them to feel supported. Sage discussed this when she had a White instructor who lived for a significant time in various countries in Asia.

> So, it's, it's interesting to have her because I like just her understanding where we come from, like, where these countries are like the languages that we speak like the cultural values that we hold like means a lot, build that like trust for us to speak up because I feel that she has knowledge.

Familial support, support groups, and therapy were mentioned as additional resources for students when experiencing the stress of their DMT programs. Natalie shared,

> I think more support comes then from like, my family unit, and also my partner … So that feels supportive … Part of the support is just knowing that like some

> stuff I'm gonna have to let go, and whether that's a good thing or a bad thing or in between.

Faith reported joining a group for adoptees during her DMT education which has been a resource for her. She expressed,

> I joined this Facebook group for Asian adoptees. And I've literally never felt more seen in my life.

Natalie shared therapy was supportive for her particularly with COVID-19 and racial reckoning along with her experiences in school.

> I have my personal therapist, so she's been a huge support.

Aurora spoke to spiritual support that helps her throughout her DMT education.

> I practice yoga and I have a martial arts background. So, having that Sangha, that community that, umm, that pillar really has been really helpful to me. And that is based in Rinzai Zen Buddhism.

The embodied substate of community support was broad. Each participant found their own ways to sustain themselves throughout the DMT educational process.

Embodied Substate 8: The Body of Conservation

This final embodied substate spoke to efforts made to take care of self and find balance. Participants made choices about whether they would advocate or engage in critical dialogue or discussion. For some it was a reminder that they do not have to engage in critical discussion or action every time an inequity appeared. It was an opportunity to see if others would do this. These choices were made in an effort to protect their energy in the program. Many participants spoke to the embodied journal process and

described the movement they were doing and its meaning after attending a course. The body of conservation existed for seven out of the eight participants.

Several participants spoke to using movement to release tensions that arose in class. Pamela described a moment of being triggered by a memory of a microaggression experienced at her internship during classroom discussion. She shared,

> Moments of hugging, trying to comfort myself. And a little bit of trying to love myself. Giving myself that acceptance. A lot of like the shaking and jumping is kind of getting it out, I'm like shaking it off in order to move on with the rest of my day kind of thing.

Several participants spoke to groundedness in various parts of their body when going through class or trying to find it after class. Sage expressed her movement during and after class of balance and boundaries in remaining grounded.

> Yeah, there was a lot of like just balancing like where to look for me. Yeah, it felt nice to just honor that boundary like being really like I have to be really close and then I like I remember that I like kind of fell to the ground. Just feeling that support there.

Some participants spoke to movements that supported relaxation and allowed them to be present and movement as a form of protection. Faith described her movement as protection after having a moment of not feeling seen in the classroom. She expressed,

> I think that the underlying movement behind the shock would be something more like caressing or like closed. So, just so you can see it you have it recorded like yeah, like, kind of like a self-hug, but because it's reassuring to me about it but also it's a protective stance as well as being like ahh, caressing.

Several participants described this moment of flow with their bodies. This usually emerged for participants when they were exploring movement practices which felt comfortable in their bodies. Stacy described her return to a movement practice that is from her cultural roots.

> Now I am a fan of doing a lot of capoeira, which is something I did as a really little kid. And now I'm back in it and, and it feels really natural, just by the way, the movement is … And I feel like that's becoming part of my movement history too.

The wounded body, critical body, intersectional body, and flourishing body highlight the embodied experiences of participants in their DMT education. The eight embodied substates represented these participants' cognitive expression of their experiences. Both embodied states and substates attempt to provide a window into the experiences of BIPOC students.

CHAPTER 5

Discussion

The primary purpose of this phenomenological arts-based research study was to explore the embodied educational experiences of BIPOC DMT students. The secondary objective was to understand how these experiences can inform an anti-oppressive pedagogical approach in DMT education. The findings of four embodied states and eight embodied substates add to the limited research on students pursuing DMT education and more specifically BIPOC DMT student experiences. The students who participated in this study shared verbal and nonverbal accounts of their experiences of the educational environment as oppressive and their interpersonal and intrapersonal strengths that allow them to stay the course throughout their DMT education. The following section will reveal the connection of these findings to the existing literature. Recommendations on how these findings support an anti-oppressive pedagogical practice will be discussed.

Wounded Body

The embodied state of the wounded body was a common experience among all BIPOC students sharing various accounts of when harm occurred with peers, instructors, and course materials. These students reported feeling invisible, hypervigilant, isolated, angry, and exhausted. Overall participants described accounts of individual, cultural, and institutional racism as well as microinvalidations, microinsults, and microassaults (Museus & Park, 2015; Sue et al., 2007). The movements associated with this state often appeared in concavity or enclosing of the chest or the body shrinking downward for many of the participants.

The body ignored is an embodied substate that explained moments in which BIPOC students were not seen in their DMT education. The phenomenon of being ignored was consistent with literature from the Multicultural Diversity Committee (MDC; 2009) which reported participants feeling invisible/misunderstood. Despite previous research from over a decade ago, these BIPOC DMT students continued to report accounts of feeling that various parts of their identity were not recognized in the classroom. This was also described as a more active avoidance when trying to engage in critical dialogue or discussion. Participants spoke to this occurring specifically with recognizing the difference between racial and ethnic identity. This research also supports research by Thelamour et al. (2019) which explored Black students' racial and ethnic identity at predominantly White institutions. Thelmour et al. focused on a more nuanced discussion when looking specifically at Black racial identity and various ethnic groups (African, Caribbean, etc.). This allowed for a deeper understanding of the Black experience which was discussed by some of the Black identifying participants.

Interactions in which these BIPOC DMT students were not fully heard or seen in the classroom represented the embodied substates drained, depleted, and disengaged. Participants reported feeling burdened by caretaking of White instructors or peers, as well as moments of not being recognized which led to hypervigilance, exhaustion, and disengagement in the classroom. The idea of spokentokenism as discussed by Robinson (2013) existed in the accounts of students sharing feeling that they needed to educate peers or their instructors in the classroom. There was a sense of responsibility some students described of caretaking or an assumed caretaking role which was assigned to them by peers and instructors. For the BIPOC DMT international students they

specifically encountered Yao and colleagues' (2019) finding of intersectionality and Whiteness as property and White supremacy. The idea of Whiteness as property and White supremacy spoke to the experience of both BIPOC international students adapting to English language and Western contemporary dance structure of constructing a dance. These students reported having the same time as their domestic counterparts to do assignments that they would have to translate due to English being their second language. Another student described their context for dance and movement as being through sports and social dances in their community, so creating dances and movements into phrases was a new skill to acquire. The idea of intersectionality spoke to one participant's account of being in a mainly White heterosexual community despite identifying as BIPOC and queer in her home country. Lastly, the concept of defending legitimacy (Kellogg & Liddell, 2012) with participants feeling challenged by others to defend their academic standing or racial identity existed for some participants.

Critical Body

The BIPOC DMT students all described moments of being in the embodied state of the critical body through either the substate of critical assessment and reflection, critical action, or both. The ideas of contemplation and/or action were based on the injustices and inequities for various marginalized groups in DMT education. This manifested in the body in different ways depending on where students were in the process of developing critical consciousness as discussed by Hill Collins (2013). This notion asserted that students were in an environment which fostered independent thought to develop alternative truths through learning about their social location and history of oppression and injustices (Hill Collins, 2013). This then allowed a student to be bold and

take social action. Examples of how this was expressed in the body were taking a wide stance and posture with the torso and legs and moving indirectly through the space. However, unlike Hill Collins's suggestion of the classroom instructor creating this environment for half of the BIPOC students, development of critical consciousness was informed by their own lived experiences and was not facilitated by their instructor. The other half reported having at least one instructor during their DMT educational experience that facilitated development of critical consciousness.

The embodied substate critical assessment and reflection addressed critical questions in relation to power dynamics, inequities, or other injustices regarding classroom discussion, experientials, or assignments. Participants reflected on curriculum, the use of prompts in experiential exercises, dance styles being used in class, and contemplating advocacy. These findings were consistent with the research discussing training and experiences in curriculum from MDC (2009). Students discussed curriculum or training materials which were not reflective of diverse perspectives or authors. While efforts are being made to change this in the ADTA *Standards for Education and Clinical Training* (2021), some BIPOC DMT students reported not seeing a change. The use of prompts in experiential exercises was addressed by Kawano and Chang's (2019) discussion on the bodies of non-White individuals and how they are perceived. This notion of one's body as being seen as loose or porous and the consequences of punishment are present based on difference in movement or body type (Kawano & Chang, 2019). The students described practicing dance styles that they did not bring into the educational space and feeling that they were being asked to do certain activities that were not being guided in a manner which allowed for inclusivity of all body types.

A similar notion was expressed with how students choose to verbally express and assert themselves. Several students spoke of wanting to speak up but did not want to be perceived as “negative” or “aggressive” by instructors or peers. hooks (1994) spoke to the power of language and acknowledgement of socioeconomic class dynamics and differences in how individuals express themselves about what is seen as being appropriate and inappropriate in the classroom.

In the embodied substate of critical action, these BIPOC students noted actively taking social action steps during their educational experience through attempts at organizing, creating resources, or stepping into leadership positions. These findings are consistent with Perez and colleagues’ (2019) observations on self-advocacy, create community, and creating space for identity-conscious scholarship. The BIPOC DMT students found themselves in a role of self-advocacy when choosing to speak and educate peers and instructors. Some chose to build community by looking for individuals in their programs who had similar values and beliefs. Several students choose to use their assignments in class toward building scholarship on inequities which were important to them. One student reported stepping into a leadership role in order to continue to create and build community.

Intersectional Body

The intersectional body encompassed participants’ awareness, understanding, and choices around conformity to social norms of their own intersectional identities. This embodied state existed for all participants; however, how each BIPOC student choose to navigate their intersectional identities was unique to who they were. This finding was consistent with findings from Baber’s (2012) study using the themes racial regard

resiliency and complexity of identity. Racial regard resiliency spoke to encountered moments of resistance in embodying racial prejudices imposed on BIPOC students or one way of being. Complexity of identity referred to participants' recognition of the various intersectionalities in their identity. For many participants this was not allowing oneself to be boxed in. There was a variety in movement for this theme with tension in the hands to outstretched arms along a horizontal plane to full circular and sweeping body movements.

All participants reported experiencing the embodied substate, body of multiplicity. The BIPOC DMT students shared their interpersonal dialogues in trying to understand their various intersectionalities. There was a wide range of understanding their own intersectionalities. Some participants reported being multicultural, stuck between two identities, American, and embracing their multiplicity. There are several researchers who support this finding including Root (2001), Rockquemore and Brunsma (2002), Sellers et al. (1998), and Helms (1994, 1995). These researchers spoke to identity development for multiracial, multiethnic, Black, and various individual racial identities. Additionally, several participants identified as queer or bisexual. One of these participants expressed figuring out how to navigate singular identity spaces. This notion of singular identity space and complex individuality as discussed by Duran (2019) speaks to being marginalized due to both race and sexuality. Furthermore, Johnson and Quaye's (2017) performative social identities appeared to be present due to the participants using code switching. This is the idea that a BIPOC DMT student will behave differently depending on the environment they are in. Lastly, for BIPOC international students, the theme of intersectionality from Yao and colleagues' (2019) study of one's various

intersectionalities was also present as they discussed their various socioeconomic statuses, spiritual beliefs, genders, and sexual orientations.

Flourishing Body

The conscious or unconscious efforts of resourcing through various interpersonal and intrapersonal supports was the final embodied state, the flourishing body. While all participants expressed experiencing this state, the types of supports needed differed for each student based on previous life experiences, current needs in the program, and what was accessible to them. Throughout the flourishing body, the concept of agency (Bandura, 2001) was evident for all the BIPOC DMT students. Participants embodied the intentionality, self-reflection, and forethought which is thought to foster agency (Bandura, 2001). The BIPOC DMT students were found to use individual, proxy, or collective agency depending on their educational environment. This manifested in the body through various forms of release through use of breath, jumping, spiraling of hips, and quick rhythmic movements.

The embodied substate of purpose was captured by half of the participants who spoke to their motivation to pursuing DMT education. The types of motivation discussed included wanting to prove to others they could accomplish this goal, being led by their spiritual practice, and having a community and population who they wanted to provide with DMT services. Both individual and collective agency existed for the BIPOC students when discussing their purpose. Consistent with the literature, students shared their thought processes and specific steps toward completing their educational goals (Jaeger et al., 2017). The notion of collective agency is observed in the ideas of Burt and colleagues' (2019) emic strengths and DryWater-Whitekiller's (2010) cultural resiliency.

Emic strengths and cultural resiliency both allude to a BIPOC student's spiritual guidance and support as a source of encouragement. However, contrary to Chee and colleagues' (2019) research, which found that having self-efficacy decreased academic stress, several students reported mental health or physical health symptoms due to stress in the program. This affected students' ability to be at internship or complete coursework.

Community support, another embodied substate, consisted of various supports that existed as forms of proxy or collective agency (Bandura, 2001). All participants spoke to access they had to family, groups, partners, mentors, or therapists to maintain themselves throughout their DMT education. These findings were aligned with Shalka's (2017) research on mentorship for international students, Burt and colleagues' (2019) etic strengths, and Perez and colleagues' (2019) creating community. Although participants spoke to connecting with peers in their cohort, only two people spoke to making direct connections to peers of the same racial or ethnic identity which supported Thelamour's (2019) racial identity and social connectedness. However, a majority of participants spoke to support from peers from other historically marginalized backgrounds, people with disabilities, LGBTQIA, or people from other racial and ethnic groups outside of their own, due to a limited number of BIPOC students with similar identities in class. Some students spoke to having White instructors who were allies by creating spaces of support in the classroom. Other students spoke to having BIPOC instructors who provided them with mentorship and guidance throughout their education.

The last embodied substate, the body of conservation, included conscious and intentional efforts for self-care and creating balance. This existed for seven out of the eight participants. These moments of conserving oneself often consisted of these BIPOC

students actively making decisions to not respond or engage as advocates in critical dialogue or discussion. They also addressed taking steps to ground and center themselves through various self-care activities before, during, and after classes. This finding aligns with individual agency (Bandura, 2001) and conserving energy (Perez et al., 2019). This sense of individual agency could be influenced by their DMT education and what they were learning as dance/movement therapists in training. These BIPOC DMT students may have applied the skills they were learning to use in the field to their classroom experiences. Furthermore, the idea of conserving energy was expressed as the BIPOC students monitoring their environment and choosing their battles.

When looking at all four embodied states and eight embodied substates as their own individual themes and subthemes, one can see they are actually interconnected to one another. This aligns with the transcorporeal framework of Alaimo (2012), Strongman (2019), and Ward (2002). For example, the students' experience of recognizing their intersectional selves supports them in being able to flourish and have a deeper understanding of what they need as support.

The existing literature aligns with a majority of the findings. The unique findings of this discussion could lead to further investigation on dance movement therapy training and professional identity development for BIPOC students and an exploration of historically marginalized identities and how they can provide spaces of support and solidarity in the DMT classroom.

Recommendations for Embodied Anti-Oppressive Pedagogy

To address the second research question, "How might these embodied experiences of BIPOC students in DMT graduate programs inform an anti-oppressive

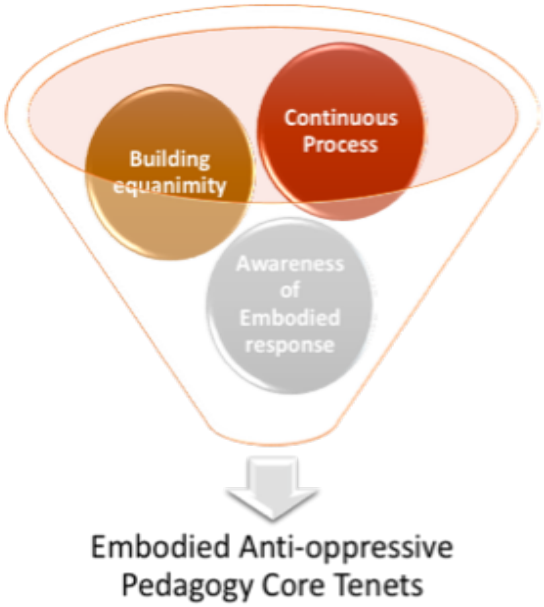
pedagogy in DMT education?" this study used the aforementioned embodied states and substates to inform recommendations for an embodied anti-oppressive pedagogy in dance/movement therapy education. These recommendations were also informed by the current literature in anti-oppressive pedagogies by Freire (1970/2001), hooks (1994), Hill Collins (2013), Ladson-Billings (1995), Hammond (2014), and Paris and Alim (2017). The hope is that the collective literature and research findings can begin to create an embodied anti-oppressive classroom for DMT students. This would benefit both students and instructors from varying backgrounds as they work together.

Inherent to the development of an embodied anti-oppressive pedagogy are three core tenets. The first tenet is to have power within the classroom be shared by everyone present. Many of the participants spoke to power dynamics in the classroom which led them to feel isolated, angry, annoyed, or sad. This idea of shared power is promoted through collective discussion and building equanimity. For this reason, these recommendations are for instructors, students, and any individual who inhabits the DMT classroom space (teaching assistant, etc.). The second tenet is an anti-oppressive pedagogy is a continuous process. Several participants spoke to the facilitation of instructors, peer interactions, and their own intrapersonal reflections and application. These recommendations require constant awareness and application. The final tenet is the importance of including the body's somatic response and artistic expression (dance/movement, art, poetry, music, etc.) into the process through experiential exercises. This last tenet speaks to the power of the use of creative art therapies to be attuned to critical dialogue and application. Throughout this study several participants spoke to the one-week self-observation and embodied journaling process allowing them to make

additional meaning through moving their body. It provided an outlet for individuals in the DMT classroom to express themselves which can help make meaning. Figure 6 illustrates the three tenets. This section reviews seven recommendations.

Figure 6

Core Tenets in Anti-Oppressive Pedagogy



Recommendation 1

The first recommendation is to create a syllabus that centers diversity, equity and inclusion. The syllabus is usually one of the first opportunities for DMT students to begin to have an understanding of the course through readings, assignments, and activities. Fuentes et al. (2021) discussed eight considerations when promoting equity, diversity, and inclusion in the classroom for psychology students. These considerations were to (a) engage in reflexivity, (b) adopt a diversity centered approach, (c) highlight diversity in the course description and acknowledge intersectionality, (d) develop diversity centered learning objectives, (e) include a diversity statement, (f) decolonize the syllabus, (g)

foster a family friendly syllabus, and (h) establish ground rules for communication (Fuentes et al., 2021).

The first step is for instructors to engage in reflexivity by acknowledging their own sociocultural background (Fuentes et al., 2021). The second consideration requires instructors to be centered in culture so that there is a full integration of cultural topics as related to the course throughout the syllabus. In the third consideration, one should ensure diversity and intersectionality is discussed in the course description. Having objectives which are centered in culture is the fifth consideration. The sixth consideration, creating a diversity statement, helps students to know the instructor's teaching approach. The methods for decolonizing the syllabus are providing education on how to use office hours, acknowledging other cultural holidays, using creative assignments, examining attendance and grading policies, and centering authors of marginalized backgrounds in the syllabus. The last two considerations were to acknowledge the caretaking responsibilities for students and establishing agreements and methods for communication (Fuentes et al., 2021).

These steps offered by Fuentes et al. (2021) provide detailed structure for how to approach building a syllabus for a course. Additionally, this recommendation aligns with engaged pedagogy (hooks, 1994) and institutional transformation (Hill Collins, 2013). Because the syllabus is the foundation of a course, it is imperative to include diverse authors and multiple perspectives in course materials. This may require going beyond DMT research and including text from other creative art therapies, dance, and other disciplinary neighbors such as psychology, anthropology, sociology, counseling, marriage and family therapy, or social work.

Recommendation 2

The second recommendation calls for everyone in the classroom to build awareness on the various intersectionalities of yourself and other intersectionalities held within the classroom community. Building awareness on the various intersectionalities is a critical foundation for creating a classroom space where individuals are provided an opportunity to choose to share intersectionalities they possess. This is a form of engaging in reflexivity with community which encompasses students and instructor. Methods of exploring intersectionality can be through use of the social identity wheel (Voices of discovery, n.d.) or power flower (Arnold et al., 1991). The social identity wheel encourages students to reflect on their various intersections and how these intersections are perceived by themselves and by others. The power flower is another activity which encourages reflection on specific questions in relation to how one thinks critically about their identity through use of a flower with petals that represent different intersections of one's identity (Arnold et al., 1991). An instructor can facilitate either activity during the first few classes to begin to process who the individuals are in the classroom. It is also imperative for the instructor to model this sharing by continuously doing their own exploration of their various intersectionalities and how they impact the DMT course.

This recommendation is consistent with awareness (Hammond, 2014) and conception of self and others (Ladson- Billings, 1995). Furthermore, this practice in the classroom helps to build dance movement therapists who are able to process their political, social, and cultural context when working with clients as discussed by Sanjani (2012).

Recommendation 3

The third recommendation is to create space for an embodied critical assessment, reflection, and dialogue of self and community. Being able to have an embodied understanding of self within community allows for an individual to have a deeper understanding of who they are beyond a specific label. Furthermore, creating space for individuals to share their unique dance/movement forms sets the tone for BIPOC students to bring in their dance/movement practices outside of the modern dance style which DMT in Western culture was founded on. By welcoming students' cultural ways of being from the beginning of the course the class can work in collaboration on encouraging one another to maintain and integrate their own dance/movement practice during their DMT course.

In a presentation titled *Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion in DMT Education: Moving and Deepening the Dialogue* (Beardall et al., 2020) presenters Nancy Beardall, Meg Chang, Angela Grayson, Erin Holmes, Christina Hudgins, Ebony Nichols, Rodney Simpson, Chevon Stewart, Domonique Terrell, and Jessica Young discussed the use of exploring a "Roots Dance." The roots dance is an exploration of one's sociocultural locations through movement. There are three factors to consider when observing a roots dance: (a) enter into a posture and mindset of acceptance as you prepare to witness others, (b) consider how being observed affects the movement of the mover, and (c) notice what biases arise as you observe others moving in their roots dance (Beardall et al., 2020).

To begin the roots dance individuals can begin to examine what these intersectionalities they hold mean to them which allow for individuals to attune to

somatic responses and create movement expression. A nonverbal dialogue facilitated by the instructor can begin by providing a space to share their roots dance and provide a nonverbal artistic response to what was observed by the individual sharing. After sharing and responding nonverbally a verbal dialogue can ensue. This can then lead to a deeper critical examination of themselves with the community or systems they interact with. Although individuals may share similar intersections, our experience of them may vary. Through facilitated dialogues the instructor along with students can create a space for their embodied sense of self and community to be shared. This recommendation sets the foundation for a culturally sustaining pedagogy as suggested by Paris and Alim (2017).

Recommendation 4

Build a collective consciousness for classroom structure is the fourth recommendation. With a developing understanding of the individuals in the DMT classroom the instructor and students can begin to create a classroom environment which fosters critical dialogue and examination of multiple perspectives. Through creation of agreements and expectations in the classroom, discussions on ways to provide support and empathy, and allowing space for critical dialogue that challenges the dominant paradigm, the instructor facilitates an environment which helps to build a collective consciousness.

Hill Collins (2013) posited that the development of critical consciousness is fostered by students thinking for themselves, supports students through social action, and brings to awareness alternative truths. Additionally, the ideas of cultural critique (Ladson-Billings, 1995) and community building (Hammond, 2014) are also aligned with this recommendation. It is crucial that instructors create a nurturing and supportive

environment because it can be challenging and vulnerable for everyone to share their thoughts and feelings in critical dialogue.

One way to approach this is creating enough time for critical dialogue in each class. This can be done through small group or larger group discussion and reflection. This collective consciousness is flexible and emergent with space for growth and change throughout the duration of the course.

Recommendation 5

The fifth recommendation is building a practice of body conservation. These practices of body conservation can be done both inside and outside of the classroom. Research by Perez et al. (2019) discussed the use of BIPOC students conserving energy when navigating their graduate school education. It is important for instructors to provide reminders and opportunities in the classroom for students to take care of themselves. This can be done inside of the classroom through experiential exercises or open-ended prompts that encourage exploration of somatic responses and artistic expression to course discussion, readings, and activities. The classroom space can model ways that the individual can begin to resource embodied practice. By providing space to explore these practices individuals within the classroom can become conscious and build awareness of their body needs around specific course topics. The insights from doing these experientials do not need to be shared but can be for continued processing for the student and their professional development as a dance movement therapist.

Resourcing can also reach outside of the classroom to include spiritual practices, therapy, and familial and friendship support. This can support all members of the classroom to be stronger teachers, therapists, or colleagues. This recommendation also

aligns with hooks's (1994) engaged pedagogy by acknowledging the presence of the body and spirit within the classroom space. Instructors are not just developing conscious minds; they are also developing conscious bodies. It is imperative that students through their professional development learn how to create space for support from themselves and others.

Recommendation 6

Becoming an anti-colonial accomplice for historically marginalized identities in the classroom is the sixth recommendation. The concept of anti-colonial accomplice is an indigenous perspective which grew out of the commodification of the ally industrial complex created by Indigenous Action (2014). Indigenous Action (2014) offered several suggestions for how to actively work against oppression and colonization. Some of these suggestions are to communicate your relationship to indigenous peoples on the land an individual occupies, listen with respect, be motivated to do the work not through shame or guilt, and provide mutual trust and receive consent by acting alongside historically marginalized people (Indigenous Action, 2014).

To begin, instructors and students can begin to acknowledge the land their university occupies and seek out indigenous people who live in the surrounding community. Additionally, instructors or students can verbally contribute perspectives of historically marginalized identities. By critically reflecting and speaking to perspectives that may not be their own, students and instructors are providing support to their colleagues who do come from historically marginalized identities. This can be done through asking critical questions in the class and offering perspectives that are not of the

dominant paradigm. This contributes to a collective awareness and takes the pressure off of the individuals who hold historically marginalized identities.

Recommendation 7

The final recommendation is to foster and create space for embodied critical action. The ultimate goal in an anti-oppressive classroom is for individuals to be moved to act and contribute to reducing injustices and inequities which surface throughout the DMT course of studies. Hill Collins (2013) and Paris and Alim (2017) speak to being able to support students in being bold when working toward fighting injustices. This is an important step in the continued professional development of dance movement therapists. They can learn to advocate for clients through clinical practice, research, and policy. This action can be facilitated through course assignments and activities that encourage students to explore possible solutions and work toward collaboration to create equanimity, inclusivity, and transparency with the DMT graduate experience.

These seven recommendations and three tenets are meant to provide those within the DMT education system with guidance on how to approach anti-oppressive education from an embodied perspective. By creating classrooms which practice the methods one hopes to use as dance movement therapist, instructors and peers can create dance movement therapists who are rooted in anti-oppressive practices.

Limitations

The graduate experience of BIPOC students in DMT is a complex process which cannot be fully captured in one study. There are at least three limitations to this study. The first limitation is the types of students who responded to the study recruitment efforts. Methods of recruitment were through purposive sampling by reaching out to

affinity groups. Students who responded tended to be students who were actively engaged in their school community. It is possible that that students who were less engaged in their school community were overlooked. Another limitation is in gender and racial diversity. While attempts were made to recruit from various groups within the ADTA-approved graduate programs, there were no male identifying or nonbinary identifying individuals in the study. Furthermore, individuals from Native American communities were not represented in this study.

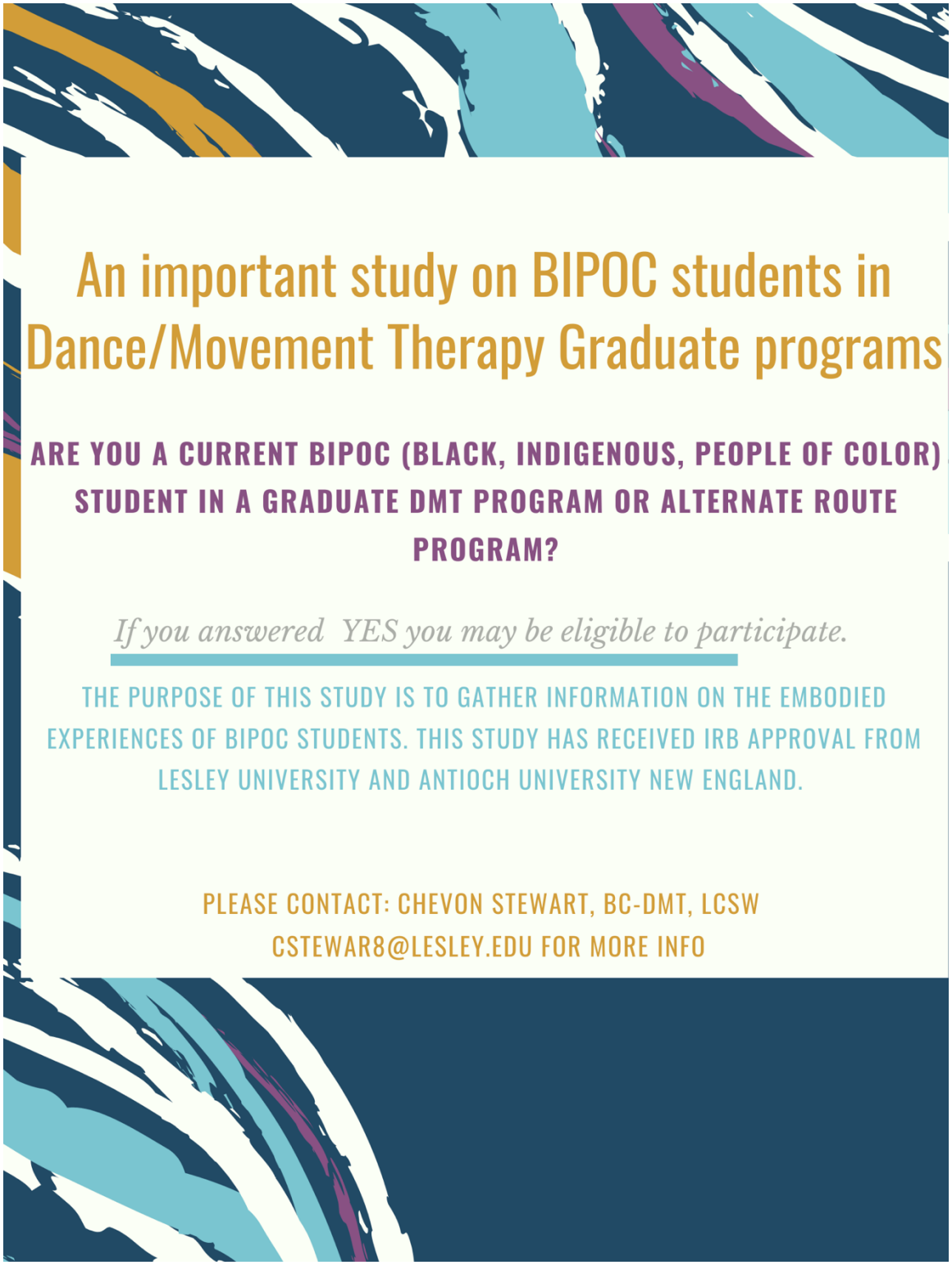
Due to the context of this study taking place during the worldwide pandemic of COVID-19, prolonged engagement and persistent observation did not occur to reduce the level of stress on participants. Ideally the design of the study would have allowed for students to do a self-observation in their DMT classes over several weeks instead of 1 week. However, due to the many changes of how students needed to adapt to learning online and other factors which have affected them (financial security, family responsibility, health and mental health considerations, etc.), condensing the time for engagement in the research design was thought to possibly increase the participants' engagement and be more humane.

Implications for Future Research

This phenomenological arts-based research study explored the embodied graduate experiences of eight BIPOC students and provided recommendations for anti-oppressive pedagogy in DMT education attempted to fill a gap in the DMT literature. Areas of consideration for future research include other historically marginalized communities' and anti-colonial accomplices' interactions with one another and how growth in professional development impacts BIPOC student experiences. When looking

specifically at embodied anti-oppressive pedagogy in DMT, it can be helpful to research instructors' use of recommendations to gain a deeper understanding of this pedagogical process. Overall, there is still much to learn about BIPOC student experiences and anti-oppressive pedagogy in DMT. This study provided a glimpse of the many possibilities that lie ahead for shaping DMT education.

APPENDIX A: Recruitment Flyer



APPENDIX B: Interview Guides

Interview Guide One

1. What type of educational program are you currently apart of?
2. Can you tell me your age?
3. How do you identify your gender?
4. Where do you live?
5. What is your current socioeconomic status? Has this changed from when you grew up?
6. What spiritual or religious beliefs do you practice if any?
7. Tell me about your ethnic and racial identity.
8. How do you understand yourself culturally?
9. What dance forms do you practice?
10. How are your movement practices informed by your social location?
11. Can you remember a time when your social locations were not recognized in an educational environment? How did that make you feel?
12. How can you move that feeling? Do you feel comfortable sharing the movement as I witness?
13. Can you remember a time when your social locations were accepted in an educational environment? How did that recognition make you feel?
14. How can you move that feeling? Do you feel comfortable sharing the movement as I witness?
15. Provide instructions for one-week self-observation and embodied journaling
16. Do you have any questions?

Interview Guide Two

1. What emerged during the course of the week?
2. For each video, please share which DMT class you attended.
3. For each video, what was the racial/ethnic background, gender background, and any other known identifiers of instructor in the course?
4. For each video, what was the racial/ethnic, gender background, and any other known identifiers of peers in the course?
5. Please share what emerged for you during your classroom experience in each video.
6. As you watch the video are there any movements, thoughts, feelings, images which stand out?
7. Is there any other information you would like to share?
8. Do you have any questions?

APPENDIX C:

Instructions for One-Week Self-Observation and Embodied Journaling

Step 1:

Please share days and times you have dance/movement therapy class during the next week.

Step 2:

Please share how you would prefer to be contacted through email, text message, or phone call for reminders to complete embodied journal process. Please provide contact information.

Step 3:

Please share if you have a video recording device for embodied journal. Please identify how you would like to record written journal through use of Microsoft word document, Google document, PDF or other form.

Step 4:

Over the course of 1 week after each dance/movement therapy graduate course participants are asked to complete an embodied journal reflection. Participants will use a video recorded device and do improvisational dance/movement to respond to the following prompts in 5 minutes or less for each class they attend:

1.Based on your social locations, what did you observe in your body while in class?

2. What thoughts emerged while in class in relation to your social location with classmates, instructor, course material, experiential exercises?

3. What feelings emerged while in class in relation to your social location with classmates, instructor, course material, experiential exercises?

(Repeat this step for each DMT class you attend)

Step 5:

After this participant are asked to reflect further on what emerged in movement using text. Please use Word, Google doc, PDF or other accessible word processing format.

(Repeat this step for each DMT class you attend)

Step 6:

At the end of the week submit all videos and written journal entries via email to the lead researcher at cstewar8@lesley.edu.

APPENDIX D: Additional Photos

Wounded Body

Critical Body

Intersectional Body

Flourishing Body

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