MINORITY SOPHOMORE STUDENTS' ATTITUDES TOWARD READING AMONG THOSE EXPOSED TO MIRROR BOOKS AND THOSE WHO WERE NOT: A CAUSAL-COMPARATIVE STUDY

by

Valcine Dyonne Brown

Liberty University

A Dissertation Presented in Partial Fulfillment

Of the Requirements for the Degree

Doctor of Philosophy

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APPROVED BY:

Jillian L. Wendt, Ed.D., Committee Chair

Susan Stanley, Ed.D., Committee Member

ABSTRACT

The purpose of this dissertation is to conduct a quantitative, quasi-experimental, causal-comparative study to measure the impact of mirror books on high school sophomores' attitudes toward reading. This study responds to a need identified by educational researchers that the link between motivation and reading be methodically examined. This research study had 43 tenth-grade students in the treatment group and 31 in the control group, for a total of 73 out of 432 sophomore students composing a convenience sample. Groups were determined by their placement in their ELA course by the course generator used at the public high school. The participating high school had a high minority population, many of whom came from low-socioeconomic homes. The instrument of measurement, the Survey of Adolescents' Reading Attitude , consists of 18 survey questions on a six-point Likert scale with a has full scale coefficient of .96. Data was collected through the administration the SARA as a pre- and post-test to study participants. The treatment consisted of 15 minutes of sustained silent reading with the experimental group (A) reading mirror books and the control group (B) reading library circulation books that were not mirror books. The numerical data generated by the survey was analyzed using a one-way analysis of covariance which was used to test the null hypothesis. The null hypothesis was not rejected. The recommendation of this study is that this statistical study be followed up with a qualitative study to provide a more comprehensive insight into the study participants' attitudes toward reading.

Keywords: mirror books, reading attitude, sustained silent reading, culturally responsive teaching, culturally responsive pedagogy.

Copyright Page

Dedication

First and foremost, I thank God for the purpose He has birthed in me. The ability to walk in one's purpose should not be taken lightly nor overlooked. I dedicate this work to my ancestors who overcame slavery, poverty, oppression, and racism to build for me a solid base on which to plant sturdy legs. I dedicate this to my mother who modelled strength and integrity for me, whose shoulders lifted me to see over the fence, encouraging me to reach for all that my hands could grasp. I dedicate this work to my grandparents who inspired me to look for light in a sometimes-dark world and shared with me sage words of advice. I dedicate this work to my children, who I lift on my shoulders, inspiring them to go further, run faster, and reach higher heights than myself. You three have blessed my soul, and you have helped me to grow into a better person. I dedicate this to my sister friend, Migñe. God truly blessed me when He brought you into my life. I could not imagine a single day without our friendship. To my dearest friends Sherri, Heather, Tjuana, Gary, Vera, Alisa, and Ioana. Bette Midler sang it best, "You are the wind beneath my wings." To my colleagues who have become family, this is for us and all who will come after us.

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List of Abbreviations

Black Vernacular English (BVE)

College Preparation (CP)

Culturally Reflective Teaching (CRT)

Culturally Relevant Disciplinary Literacy (CRDL)

Culturally Responsive Pedagogy (CRP)

Culturally Responsive Teaching (CRT)

Culturally Sustaining Text (CST)

English Language Arts (ELA)

English Language Learner (ELL)

English Learner (EL)

Standard English (SE)

Survey of Adolescents' Reading Attitude (SARA)

Survey of Adolescents' Reading Attitude Academic Print (SARA AP)

Survey of Adolescents' Reading Attitude Academic Digital (SARA AD)

Survey of Adolescents' Reading Attitude Recreational Print (SARA RP)

Survey of Adolescents' Reading Attitude Recreational Digital (SARA RD)

Sustained Silent Reading (SSR)

CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

Overview

The purpose of this quantitative, quasi-experimental study was to measure the impact of mirror books on racial and cultural minority sophomore students' attitudes toward reading when comparing mean scores on the Survey of Adolescents' Reading Attitudes (SARA) between the treatment group and the control group. Chapter One contains background information on mirror books, including the pedagogy to which it pertains, and literature on literacy. A historical overview of the United States (U.S.) public-education system is discussed that sheds light on who is and who is not successful in the current system, as well as how this has or has not changed over time. The problem statement addresses the lack of success that minorities experience in the current public-education system. The purpose of this study is outlined in detail, along with its significance is explained. Chapter One concludes with discussing the research questions with all pertinent definitions which pertain to this study.

Background

The public school system in the U.S. has become more racially diverse over the past sixty years (National Center for Education Statistics, 2021; U.S. Census Bureau, 1965, 1996, 1999; Massar, 2022; Yokota, 1993; Yoo-Lee et al., 2014). The diversity in the public-school setting has allowed for demographical comparisons which revealed that minority students are not thriving in U.S. public schools in comparison to their White counterparts (Adam, 2021). While public education is free in the U.S., all who attend are not equally successful. Compared to their White counterparts, racial and cultural minority students are not achieving the same level of academic success. The national average for scaled reading scores for students in the United States was 220 for fourth-grade students, 263 for eighth-grade students, and 287 for twelfth-grade students on a

0-500 scaled score (National Center for Education Statistics, 2020b). At each of these grade levels, Black and Hispanic students scored below the average, while White students scored above the national average.

In an attempt to bring equity to education, culturally responsive pedagogy (CRP) as well as culturally responsive teaching (CRT) have been studied and documented to help minority students close the educational gap between them and their White peers (Hollie, 2018, 2019; Ladson-Billings, 1990, 1995; Walker & Hutchison, 2021). CRT has had a positive impact in English Language Arts (ELA) through using mirror books in elementary education (Ciampa & Reisboard, 2021). Mirror books are texts that reflect the culture, shared values, identity, and familiarities of the reader. Ciampa and Reisboard stated that mirror books, when used as a CRT strategy, have increased reading enjoyment while providing the opportunity for teachers and students to learn alongside one another.

The theoretical framework of CRP has been a topic of educational practice and documented research (Byrd, 2016; Iwai, 2019; Phuntsog, 1999; Sleeter, 2011). Additionally, CRP's improvement of students' enjoyment of reading has been demonstrated (Ford et al., 2019; Ciampa & Reisboard, 2021; Gunn et al., 2021; Martin & Beese, 2017). However, the existing research has not yet quantitatively explored the impact of mirror books on attitudes of high school students toward reading (Ford et al., 2019; Ciampa & Reisboard, 2021; Gunn et al., 2021; Martin & Beese, 2017). Toste et al. (2020) wrote that the link between reading and motivation needs to be systematically studied. Motivation is comprised of multiple elements and three hierarchical levels (Conradi et al., 2013). The first hierarchal level of motivation consists of three elements: goal orientation, beliefs, and disposition. Under each of these elements exists a second hierarchal level; in the second hierarchal level under the element of disposition, attitude is

located with beliefs about reading and interest. This study focuses on attitudes, which is just one of relational elements that contribute to motivation as researched by Conrad et al (2014).

Historical Overview

It is important to understand several historical facts regarding education in the U.S. to grasp the scope of this study and how this study will contribute to society-at-large: desegregation of schools and academic comparisons of minority students compared to White students, the impact of literacy on academic success, lifelong success, and incarceration rates, and investigations into how attitudes contribute to student engagement in reading. This section will outline these components to provide context for the societal impact of this study.

With the desegregation of schools through *Brown vs. The Board of Education* (Smith, 2020), U.S. public schools have continued to become more racially diverse (National Center for Education Statistics, 2021; Piper, 2019; U.S. Census Bureau, 1965, 1996, 1999). While the demographics of U.S. public schools were predominantly comprised of White students in 1965, 85.66%, the demographics in fall of 2020 showed that White students account for 46% of the student population, while Black students account for 15%, and Hispanic students account for 28% (National Center for Education Statistics, 2021). Juxtaposing the demographics of U. S. public schools (National Center for Education Statistics, 2021; U.S. Census Bureau, 1965, 1996, 1999), along with statistical information about literacy (National Center for Education Statistics, 2020a), dropout rates (National Center for Education Statistics, 2022; U.S. Census Bureau, 1999; 2018), and incarceration rates (Alexander, 2012; Bowman et al., 2018; Cockroft & Atkinson, 2017; Lowder et al., 2022; Tighe et al., 2019), shows the disparity of academic and lifelong success for Black and Hispanic students when compared to the academic as well as lifelong success of white students.

Lowder et al. (2022) discussed that literacy is an important factor that contributes to academic success, but literacy is an issue that often is not addressed in high school. Reporting on reading performance, National Center for Education Statistics (2020a) shared data that shows that at the fourth, eighth, and twelfth grade testing levels, Black and Hispanic students have reading averages that are consistently lower than that of their White counterparts. Addressing literacy insufficiencies is an important step to take to increasing academic success, especially in ninth grade (Lowder et al., 2022).

In discussing the changing demographics of U.S. public schools, Lowder et al. (2022) stated that a contributing factor to minorities having a higher dropout rate compared to their White peers is their lack of academic success in ninth grade. Historically, Black and Hispanic students have had a dropout rate higher that White students (U.S. Census Bureau, 1999; 2018). According to the U.S. Census Bureau (1999), 17.3% of the dropouts in 1997 were White, while 21.5% were Black, and 39% were Hispanic. While the overall dropout rate decreased from 2000 to 2021, 8.3% in 2010 and 5.2% in 2021, Black and Hispanic students still have a higher dropout rate compared to White students (National Center for Education Statistics, 2022). In 2021, 5.9% were Black, 7.8% were Hispanic, and 4.1% were White. Addressing literacy deficits can contribute to lowering the dropout rate (Lowder et al., 2022). Lowering the dropout rate is important because an increased dropout rate has a negative financial impact on lifetime earnings while also increasing the likelihood of incarceration (Alexander, 2012; Bowman et al., 2018; Cockroft & Atkinson, 2017; Lowder et al., 2022; Tighe et al., 2019).

In addition to low literacy rates impacting academic success and contributing to higher dropout rates, low literacy levels have been linked to higher incarceration rates (Alexander, 2012; Houchins et al., 2018; Hunter et al., 2022; Lowder et al., 2022). A high number of inmates

in the penal system, both juvenile and adult, read below expected levels for their age (Alexander, 2012; Tighe et al., 2019); nearly 70% are considered illiterate. Bowman et al. (2018) stated that the achievement gap between White and minority students, especially Black students, impacts the United States as a whole. As higher education levels are required to compete for 21st century jobs, the economic gap between minorities and White citizens in the U.S. widens.

Scholars have noted the importance of strong literacy skills to academic and lifelong success (Griffin et al., 2020). Likewise, scholars have discussed the importance of literacy intervention at the high school level. Motivation is an important element to improving literacy skills. Motivation is comprised of multiple elements, with attitudes being one of the elements that contribute to motivation (Conradi et al., 2013; Griffin et al., 2020). Attitude also contributes to one's self-concept as a reader (Griffin et al., 2020). Many students remark that they do not enjoy reading, stating that it is boring (Cockroft & Atkinson, 2017). In contrast to declaring that reading is boring, students state pleasure at reading books with characters that share their race, culture, and appearance (Ciampa & Reisboard, 2021; Piper, 2019).

Investigations into students' engagement with, attitudes toward, and motivation to read reported contradictory findings (Clark, 2019; Clark & Teravainen-Goff, 2020; Jang et al., 2021). A study conducted by Jang et al. (2021) stated that, as students get older, their attitudes toward reading become less positive, yet Clark (2019) and Clark and Teravainen-Goff (2020) reported on the percentage of students of the same age group who quite enjoy reading, 56.6% in 2019 and 53% in 2020. Despite reporting that students enjoy reading, studies also report that students' participation in reading outside of class are dropping. Clark reported in 2019 that 30.6% of students only read when required to do so, and 33.7% of students stated that they have trouble finding something to read that they think is interesting. Responding to Conradi et al. (2013) that

showed poor student attitude toward reading, scholars (Allred & Cena, 2020) conducted a study that showed a mean improvement in students' attitudes toward reading as well as an improved self-concept as a reader when they are given choices in what to read. Jang et al. (2021) conducted a study of over five thousand middle school students, reporting that 26.8% were "avid readers" (p. 1129), 38.9% were "willing readers" (p. 1129), and 19.8% were "reluctant readers" (p. 1129).

When designing the *Survey of Adolescent's Reading Attitudes* (SARA), Conradi et al. (2013) reported on the importance of specificity when discussing students' attitudes toward reading. The authors delineated between attitudes towards reading with regards to purpose (academic versus for pleasure) versus method of textual access (digital versus print), stating the importance of disaggregating the discussions of reading attitudes based upon these details (Conradi et al., 2013; Jang & Ryoo, 2019; Jang et al., 2021). One cannot assume that attitudes reported for one purpose or method is transferable to the other purpose or method. Some literature disaggregates between these categories, but some do not. When the authors delineated differences between these specific details, those differences are mentioned for clarity. Wilkinson et al. (2020) completed a qualitative study of high school student participants. Wilkinson et al. reported on why some students do and do not read print books. Students stated they do not read for pleasure because of lack of time, distractions such as technology, lack of desire to commit to finishing a book, plus the effort that it requires. Students stated that they had outgrown reading for pleasure, sharing that it was not seen as "cool" (p. 162). In discussing why they do enjoy reading, a connection between student reading choices and their motivation was found. There appears to be a distinction between intrinsic and extrinsic motivation to read for pleasure, but

Wilkinson et al. warned against making a clear dichotomy between these two motivational powers, outlining the limits of their research as these researchers focused on print books.

Society-at-Large

Education is a foundational element of the democratic society (Darling-Hammond, 1996; Gasoi & Meier, 2018; Kim, 2022) and fighting injustice (Piper, 2019). It is the job of the public education system to prepare students to be citizens equipped with the critical analysis skills, guiding them to understand their role to allow democracy to flourish (Michelli et al., 2018; Piper, 2019). Participants in democracy should pursue equity and advocate "for quality of life" (Michelli et al., 2018, p. 101) for all. While the history of the public education system contains successes as well as failures (Smith, 2020), this researcher's current study takes a further look at the lack of educational equity via representation as one of the issues addressed within academic literature (Banks, 2013; Bowman et al., 2018; Dyches, 2018; Phuntsog, 1999; Piper, 2019; Westbury et al., 2016). Hilaski (2020) discussed that lack of culturally responsive literacy instruction can create a culture shock for students whose background differs from that of White students. Since literacy begins in the home, students from literacy backgrounds that differ from the hegemonical norms of their White peers experience cultural and literacy "mismatch" (Hilaski, p. 358) in the educational setting that does not incorporate CRP (Hilaski, 2020; Piper, 2019). Darling-Hammond (1996) juxtaposes two systems, one for the elite and one for the poor, stating that schools that are considered "good" (p. 6) have discriminated against more than half of the students it could serve via race, lack of academic achievement, location, or economic status. These practices have resulted in a lack of equity in educational practice.

The incongruity of two education systems discussed by Darling-Hammond (1996) creates a conflict that either results in struggle against literacy or the idea that the student must give up

their cultural distinctiveness to gain academic success (Hilaski, 2020). The democratic system in the U.S. requires an educated populous for the system to work as it was designed (Darling-Hammond, 1996); that educated populous must be prepared to advocate for social change, engaging in actions that provoke change (Michelli et al., 2018; Piper, 2019). Darling-Hammond discussed the inflexibility of the current system of education, describing the history of the public education system as a cookie-cutter system that is inequitable, a system that is "a myth" (p. 5) for many. Darling-Hammond stated that the system's inflexibility caters to those whose background lack significant difficulties and trials which the learner must overcome to thrive. One of the inflexible constants addressed in academic literature is the hegemonic practices which favor Whiteness (Banks, 2013; Dyches, 2018; Phuntsog, 1999; Piper, 2019; Westbury et al., 2016). Academic authors have discussed how these hegemonic practices have led to the absence of cultural and racial representation in the ELA literary canon (Adam, 2021; Banks, 2013; Dyches, 2018; Glazier & Seo, 2005; Hilaski, 2020; Iwai, 2019; Phuntsog, 1999; Piper, 2019; Westbury et al., 2016). Additionally, within bilingual texts, English is given privilege over the other represented language (Braden & Rodriguez, 2016).

Theoretical Background

Culturally responsive pedagogy (CRP) is the foundational theory investigated and named by Ladson-Billings (1990). CRP recognizes that culture and race are elements that must be considered to help minority students achieve academic success because the public education system in the U.S. prioritizes Whiteness (Banks, 2013; Dyches, 2018; Ladson-Billings, 1990, 1995; Milner, 2020; Phuntsog, 1999; Westbury et al., 2016). Ladson-Billings (1990) investigated the practices which create an equitable learning environment for students who do not fit the model student that is educated in a hegemonic setting that favors Whiteness (Banks, 2013;

Dyches, 2018; Phuntsog, 1999; Piper, 2019; Westbury et al., 2016). Conducting research to find out what teachers were doing to help minority students achieve academic success, Ladson-Billings (1990) observed and studied classrooms and teachers. Ladson-Billings (1995) discussed a gap in the literature that addressed, recognizing culture as an element that impacts academic success.

Since its original naming by Ladson-Billings (1990), the author revisited their theory, building upon their previous work. Ladson-Billings (1995) subsequently requested that others would also continue to build on the theory (Ladson-Billings, 1995). Several authors have built upon this theory, analyzing how it is and should impact classroom instructional practices (Darling-Hammond, 2017; Hollie, 2018, 2019; Ladson-Billings, 2014; Phuntsog, 1999; Piper, 2019; Villegas & Lucas, 2007; Westbury et al., 2016). Additionally, several authors have discussed how CRP has impacted the literary canon taught in ELA classrooms (Ciampa & Reisboard, 2021; Martin & Beese, 2017; Martin & Spencer, 2020; Sleeter, 2011, 2018; Souto-Manning & Martell, 2017; Walker & Hutchison, 2021) as well as Freedom Schools (Piper, 2019), which led to academic growth for minority students (Byrd, 2016; Ladson-Billings, 1990, 1995; Phuntsog, 1999; Piper, 2019; Walker & Hutchison, 2021).

CRP is relevant to this research study because it adds to the discussion of CRP's impact on student engagement and learning. While there are multiple studies which show evidence of the effectiveness of CRP (Byrd, 2016; Ladson-Billings, 1990, 1995; Phuntsog, 1999; Piper, 2019; Walker & Hutchison, 2021), this researcher has not identified a study that specifically examines if CRP, as evidenced by the presence of culturally relevant literature--mirror books--will have an impact on students' attitudes toward reading. The presence of culturally relevant literature has been discussed by Ciampa and Reisboard (2021), Martin and Beese (2017), Martin

and Spencer (2020), Piper (2019), Sleeter (2011, 2018), Souto-Manning and Martell (2017), and Walker and Hutchison (2021). While these authors concluded that the students enjoyed and expressed a pleasure reading mirror texts, these texts did not quantify these examinations through statistical data.

Furthermore, Toste et al. (2020) stated that the link between motivation and reading needs to be studied at all grade levels. Attitudes toward reading are connected to student achievement, effecting students' reading behavior (Jang & Ryoo, 2018). Attitudes toward reading also impacts students' deliberate and active participation in reading. As attitudes are a dimension of motivation (Conradi et al., 2013), the current proposed study responds to Toste et al.'s (2020) call for investigations into the link between motivation and reading. Mirror books have been discussed in literature as a tool of CRP (Ciampa & Reisboard, 2021; Martin & Beese, 2017; Martin & Spencer, 2020; Sleeter, 2011, 2018; Souto-Manning & Martell, 2017; Walker & Hutchison, 2021); this current study focuses on the impact mirror books have on students' attitudes towards reading.

Problem Statement

Literature has revealed the educational disparity between minority students and their White peers (Clark, 2019; Clark & Teravainen-Goff, 2020; Jang et al., 2021; Piper, 2019). Thusly, scholars have investigated factors that impact reading. Literature on motivation stated that attitude and self-efficacy are part of the multidimensional elements that impact motivation (Conradi et al., 2013; Wilkinson et al., 2020). Research on the effectiveness of sustained silent reading (SSR) to improve reading skill is inconclusive (Erbeli & Rice, 2021), yet SSR was used in Allred and Cena's (2020) study that utilized SSR of student choice texts to improve students' self-concept as a reader and attitudes toward reading. Literature has discussed that most

educational curriculum is hegemonically White-centered (Adam, 2021; Banks, 2013; Dyches, 2018; Glazier & Seo, 2005; Hilaski, 2020; Iwai, 2019; Phuntsog, 1999; Piper, 2019; Westbury et al., 2016). Furthermore, current literature has provided examples demonstrating that CRP has been used to provide equity in the classroom to help minority students achieve academic success (Hollie, 2018, 2019; Ladson-Billings, 1990, 1995; Piper, 2019; Walker & Hutchison, 2021).

Reading is an integral part of academic success (Whitten et al., 2016; Wilkinson et al., 2020). Authors have discussed the positive impact of mirror books in the classroom (Ciampa & Reisboard, 2021; Martin & Beese, 2017; Martin & Spencer, 2020; Piper, 2019; Sleeter, 2011, 2018; Souto-Manning & Martell, 2017; Walker & Hutchison, 2021). While reading has been researched through multiple facets and lenses, Toste et al. (2020) stated that the need exists to explore the connections between reading and motivation across all grade levels. Attitudes are one of the multidimensions of motivation (Conradi et al., 2013; Wilkinson et al., 2020). The problem is that the literature has not fully addressed connections between reading and students' attitudes towards reading, nor fully explored if mirror books have an impact on students' attitudes toward reading.

Purpose Statement

The purpose of this quantitative, quasi-experimental research study with a nonequivalent control group design was to measure the impact of mirror books on minority students' attitudes toward reading. In this study, the dependent variable was sophomore students' attitudes toward reading when examining difference among sophomore students who receive exposure to mirror books and sophomore students who do not; the independent variable was students' exposure to mirror books and was comprised of two groups, those exposed to mirror books and those who were not exposed to mirror books. The covariate for this quantitative study was the measured

difference between the nonequivalent sophomore group's attitudes towards reading. Conradi et al. (2013) stated that multiple factors influence an adolescent's engagement in reading, adding that motivation is often not discussed in research. The authors defined attitude "as a predisposition, ranging from positive to negative" (p. 566). The dependent variable was measured by utilizing the SARA (Conradi et al., 2013) as a pre and post-test to measure the covariance between the non-equivalent control groups and the degree of change in the treatment group. Mirror books, the independent variable, were texts that reflect the culture, shared values, identity, and familiarities of the reader (Ciampa & Reisboard, 2021). The population was tenth grade students at a local, public, comprehensive high school. The most represented demographic groups in the high school were Hispanic at 81.2%, White at 9.1%, and Black at 6.3%. Additionally, 97.6% of the student population were socioeconomically disadvantaged, and 26.2% were ELLs.

Significance of the Study

Toste et al. (2020) stated that the connections between motivation and reading needs to be studied at all grade levels. As attitudes are a dimension of motivation (Conradi et al., 2013; Wilkinson et al., 2020), this study used mirror books, as a tool of CRP, to study whether mirror books can be used as a tool to address the educational disparities in this country between majority and minority students. Current academic literature reveals the academic achievement disparity between White and minority students, specifically Black and Hispanic students (Bowman et al., 2018; National Center for Education Statistics, 2020a, 2020b; U.S. Census Bureau, 1999) while also stating that CRP has been successfully implemented to help close the achievement gap for minority students (Bowman et al., 2018; Hollie, 2018, 2019; Ladson-Billings, 1990, 1995; Walker & Hutchison, 2021). Bowman et al. (2018) stated that Black

students have lower test scores, earn lower grades in school, and are enrolled less often in advanced courses than other races of students. Reading benefits students by helping them achieve academic success (Montoya, 2018) and helping them fully engage in the democratic process (Darling-Hammond, 1996; Gasoi & Meier, 2018; Michelli et al., 2018; Montoya, 2018). As recent literature has discussed, mainstream curriculum remains White-centered (Adam, 2021; Banks, 2013; Dyches, 2018; Glazier & Seo, 2005; Hilaski, 2020; Iwai, 2019; Phuntsog, 1999; Westbury et al., 2016).

This study investigated the impact of mirror books, as one strategy of CRP, on students' attitudes toward reading that adds to the existing discussion of mirror books and reading motivation through attitudes as it relates to English II College Preparation (CP) courses. The English course in which most sophomore students were enrolled in the district where this study is conducted is listed as English II CP on students' transcripts, so it was used as the label for the courses in which the participants of this study were enrolled. Researchers have highlighted the lack of mirror books, the lack of canon diversity, and the importance of addressing under-representation of minorities in textbooks and ELA curriculum (Adam, 2021; Banks, 2013; Dyches, 2018; Glazier & Seo, 2005; Hilaski, 2020; Iwai, 2019; Phuntsog, 1999; Westbury et al., 2016). The results of this study could guide text selection for ELA curriculum. The results of this study could be used to help educators better understand the connection between attitudes and reading levels and offer insight on whether literary canon diversity could improve reading interest among those who are under-represented in the current literary canon, thereby improving Lexile scores and academic success (Lowder et al., 2022). As Lexile levels are important to overall academic success, this investigation could offer insight on steps to improve the academic

achievement of minority students who are currently underperforming in comparison to their White peers (National Center for Education Statistics, 2020b).

Ansary (2014) wrote about the stagnancy of textbook curriculum, stating that as a textbook editor, curriculum was often a recycled version of what has already been printed and used. In one particular instance, Ansary was called upon to revamp their own work previously done while functioning in the role of editor for another textbook publisher. Ansary remarked that the current publisher was not aware that Ansary had written the original curriculum that they were being tasked with revamping. Ansary also stated that Texas, California, and Florida are the top three textbook adoption states, additionally sharing that editors shape their curriculum to cater to these three states in hopes that their curriculum is adopted by one of these states. The results of this research study would offer empirical, statistical data that could inform the decisions of curriculum and textbook publishing companies.

Research Question

RQ1: Is there a difference in attitudes toward reading among minority sophomore students exposed to mirror books and those who were not when controlling for pretreatment differences in students' attitudes toward reading?

Definitions

1. *Attitude* – How one's feelings steadily incline them to participate in or shun a particular activity (Conradi et al., 2013; Wilkinson et al., 2020).
2. *Covariate* – The independent variable that is continuous and must be controlled for in a study using participants of non-equivalent groups (Gall et al., 2007). For this study, the covariate is the pretreatment difference in students' attitudes toward reading.

3. *Culturally Responsive Pedagogy* – Instructional methods appreciates and values the educational capacity and advantages that students bring with them into the classroom (Ladson-Billings, 1990, 2014).
4. *Culturally Responsive Teaching* – Instructional practices that values the home language, culture, and lived experiences of students instead of seeing these attributes as deficiencies (Hollie, 2018, 2019).
5. *Dependent Variable* – The variable that is measure on a continuous level that is believed to me impacted by the independent variable (Gall et al., 2007). For this study, the dependent variable is students' attitudes toward reading.
6. *Independent Variable* – The variable that is believed to have an effect on the dependent variable (Gall et al., 2007). The independent variable in this study are mirror books.
7. *Mirror Books* – Texts that reflect the culture, shared values, identity, and familiarities of the reader (Ciampa & Reisboard, 2021).
8. *Motivation* – A complex state of being, featuring many elements, that propels one to engage or avoid something. An individual either be intrinsically or extrinsically motivated (Conradi et al., 2013; Wilkinson et al., 2020). Attitude is one of the elements of motivation (Conradi et al., 2013; Wilkinson et al., 2020).

CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW

Overview

A systematic review of the literature was conducted to explore what is known about mirror books, culturally responsive pedagogy, and the attitudes of adolescents toward reading. This chapter offers a review of the research on these topics. The theory of culturally relevant pedagogy (CRP) is discussed in the first section, as it is the theory in which this research study is grounded. The CRP section is followed by an overview of the history of the public education system in the United States (U.S.) with a review of recent literature on mirror books. Lastly, the literature discussing literacy and students' attitude toward reading will be discussed, as it intersects with the importance of mirror books for the increasing number of minority students being educated in the public school system in the U.S. Finally, a gap in the literature is identified, as there is a need to study reading motivation along with how it contributes to adolescents' attitude toward reading.

Theoretical Framework

The theoretical framework that shapes this study is culturally relevant pedagogy (CRP) (Ladson-Billings, 1990, 1995, 2014). The focus of CRP is to improve instructional practices to help minority students achieve academic success through showing value and appreciation of cultural differences (Adam, 2021; Ciampa & Reisboard, 2021; Dyches, 2018; Hilaski, 2020; Hollie, 2018, 2019; Iwai, 2019; Jennerjohn, 2020; Martin & Beese, 2017; Martin & Spencer, 2020). CRP is a theory to bring equity to educational practices. The theory has three major tenets (Ladson-Billings, 1995, 2014), which will be discussed in this section. The work of Ladson-Billings has been advanced by researchers and scholars who have added to the language that is

used in discussing CRP (Colwell et al., 2021; Hollie, 2018, 2019; Iwai, 2019; Jennerjohn, 2020; Martin & Spencer, 2020).

History of Theory and Theorist

CRP was introduced by Ladson-Billings (1990; 1995) as a result of research into examining the teaching practices used by educators achieving successful instruction of Black, urban students. Ladson-Billings' theory filled a gap the researcher noticed in then current literature. Ladson-Billings' identified gap in the literature was an absence of literature that seriously considered how culture functioned as an important element in pedagogical learning theories. The purpose of that study was to observe the behaviors of educators identified as effective educators with the intent to learn what they were doing, so that their practices could be implemented in teacher preparation programs (Ladson-Billings, 1990). The study conducted by the researcher consisted of determining the definition of academic success for Black students, identifying the students who were academically successful, according to the definition outlined, and seeking recommendations from administrators and parents of educators who fostered academic success according to the shared understanding academically successful Black students. The participants of the study were the educators identified by both school administrators, as well as the parents of the students as being successful educators of their students for guiding students to academic success.

In the process of speaking with parents and administrators of the school site, the quantifying elements of successful educators and successful students began to take shape (Ladson-Billings, 1990). The study defined academic success of Black students as the ability to score well on standardized tests while avoiding paying the high cost of sacrificing their culture, identity, roots, and friendships. Ladson-Billings stated that academic success could not be based

solely on standardized test scores, pointing out that standardized tests are incapable of measuring some key aspects of intelligence and academic success that are linked to culture, such as "artistic, athletic, [and] oratorical" (p. 337) performance. The elements that addressed maintaining one's cultural identity as well as connections to the community were highlighted as important when outlined in juxtaposition to the experiences of some Black students whose academic success brought with it the label of "acting White" (p. 336). This label was characterized as students who assimilated into mainstream, European culture, denying the culture and roots of their neighborhood. Assimilated students often played alone, not having friends. One parent emphasized the importance of their child achieving a quality education while maintaining their cultural identity and connections to their roots and community. Cultural identity is defined as a co-created, group identity that incorporates the beliefs, actions, and behaviors that define and identify the group (Karjalainen, 2020). Cultural identity is not static, but it is fluid. An additional component of academic success for Black students was exhibiting "leadership, organizational skills, [and] creativity" (Ladson-Billings, p. 337).

With identifying students who met the above criteria for being considered academically successful, Ladson-Billings (1990; 1995) turned to identifying the educators of the identified students as the purpose of the study was to uncover the pedagogical strategies implemented by the teachers of successful Black students. The *beliefs* and *behaviors* of these culturally responsive / relevant educators was discussed as being a key contributing factor to the academic success of these Black students (Ladson-Billings, 1990). Ladson-Billings described the characteristics of the teachers the author interviewed, placing these teachers in juxtaposing categories, quantifying them as either culturally responsive or "assimilationist" (p. 340).

CRP is also the acronym used to refer to culturally responsive pedagogy (Sleeter, 2011). Since its naming, CRP has been the subject of various studies and books, even sparking the naming of strategies that are based on CRP. When used to discuss teaching practices, the term culturally relevant teaching (CRT) is used (Hollie, 2018, 2019; Ladson-Billings, 2014), which is also the acronym to refer to culturally reflective teaching (CRT) (Hollie, 2018, 2019; Iwai, 2019; Martin & Spencer, 2020). When CRP is applied as a lens through which texts are critically analyzed, the language of this discipline is culturally sustaining text (CST) (Jennerjohn, 2020) and culturally relevant disciplinary literacy (CRDL) (Colwell et al., 2021).

Major Tenets of Culturally Responsive Pedagogy

The academic success of students is the goal of the public education system. CRP incorporates three key aspects that work together to help minority students achieve academic success (Ladson-Billings, 1995, 2014). The first tenet of CRP is acceptance (Chase, 2019; Hollie, 2018, 2019; Ladson-Billings, 1995; Piper, 2019). CRP should communicate to students that their culture is accepted and valued (Hollie, 2018, 2019; Ladson-Billings, 1995; Piper, 2019). In the literary classroom, cultural acceptance can be communicated through literary selections and text availability that represents diversity (Ciampa & Reisboard, 2021; Ford et al., 2019; Piper, 2019). Including literary choices that reflect the cultural experience of the students sends the message that a student's culture is valued in the educational setting (Adam, 2021; Chase, 2019; Ciampa & Reisboard, 2021; Dyches, 2018; Hilaski, 2020; Iwai, 2019; Jennerjohn, 2020; Martin & Beese, 2017; Martin & Spencer, 2020; Piper, 2019).

The second tenet of CRP is affirming culture (Ladson-Billings, 1995; 2014). Culturally affirming behavior allows students to navigate a path to academic success while preserving their cultural truth (Ladson-Billings, 1990; 1995). Ladson-Billings expressed that some academically

successful Black students often must trade their cultural acceptance for academic success. Hollie (2018) created the acronym VABB: "validation and affirmation, building and bridging" (p. 10) acronym signifying the discussion of culturally affirming behaviors. VABBing describes the action performed by a teacher who validates and affirms their students' cultural primary language as well as values students' primary knowledge (Borrero et al., 2018; Chase, 2019; Hilaski, 2020; Hollie, 2018, 2019; Piper, 2019). Chase (2019) stated the importance of viewing students' funds of knowledge as assets. Hollie (2018) provided five questions that an educator who seeks to become a culturally affirming teacher can pose to themselves to self-assess their level of success at becoming a culturally affirming teacher: Is my 1) "Classroom Management Culturally Responsive" (p. 85), 2) "Vocabulary Instruction Culturally Responsive" (p. 119), 3) "Academic Literacy Instruction Culturally Responsive" (p. 141), 4) "Academic Language Instruction Culturally Responsive" (p. 157), and 5) "Learning Environment Culturally Responsive" (p. 181). Hollie dedicated a chapter to each of these questions to guide educators toward becoming more culturally affirming.

The third tenet of CRP encompasses critical consciousness (Ladson-Billings, 1995). Ladson-Billings defined critical consciousness as a student being empowered to contest injustices. The third tenet of CRP aligns with the impetus for the creation of Common Core State Standards (CCSS), which were formulated to engage students in critical thinking (California Department of Education, 2013; Kolluri, 2018). Critical thinking requires students to objectively consider and synthesize information before formulating their own opinion on the information (California Department of Education, 2013). Critical consciousness requires that students acquire social justice information to attain a deeper understanding of how that information impacts and forms their understanding of the world in which they live (Ladson-Billings 1995). The purpose

of critical consciousness within CRP is to prepare students to challenge and criticize practices that do not promote equity nor uphold democratic ideals (Ladson-Billings, 1995) or social justice (Borrero et al., 2018; Chase, 2019; Cruz et al., 2020; Piper, 2019). Juxtaposing the objectives of the third tenet of CRP, critical consciousness, with CCSS shows alignment of purpose; however, there is a lack of alignment between CRP and CCSS in what is given preference. Academic knowledge and European-centered texts are preferenced over cultural funds of knowledge and multicultural texts (Kolluri, 2018). CRP connects to critical pedagogy to shed light on oppression (Piper, 2019; Smith, 2020). In this context, oppression is preferencing "dominant ideologies" (Piper, 2019, p. 143) over and in disregard of minority social justice issues. Oppression, in this sense, contributes to the marginalization of Black students. Literature can lead to better social awareness of oneself while creating a broader understanding of the world (Linder, 2021; Piper, 2019). Self-reflection through literature can act as a form of awareness through which one can begin to critique, even question, before engaging in social democracy (Darling-Hammond, 1996) and social justice (Borrero et al., 2018; Chase, 2019; Cruz et al., 2020; Piper, 2019).

Furthermore, there is a connection between low literacy performance and the school-to-prison pipeline (Alexander, 2012; Martin & Beese, 2017). Researchers have noted the low literacy scores of juveniles who are detained (Houchins et al., 2018; Warnick & Caldarella, 2016), inmates in prison (Tighe et al., 2019), high school dropout rates (Alexander, 2012; Tighe et al., 2019), and the percentage of repeat offenders in the criminal justice system (Alexander, 2012; Tighe et al., 2019). Scholars have also discussed the lack of adequate education while juveniles are in detainment (Hunter et al., 2022; Leone & Gagnon, 2022). The education that juveniles receive while being detained does not meet federal requirements (Leone & Gagnon, 2022: U.S. Department of Education and Justice, 2014). Given the data that highlights the

achievement gap between White students and a significant population of minority students (National Center for Education Statistics, 2020b) while also illuminating the poor outcomes and diminished opportunities for those who have low-literacy skills (Alexander, 2012; Houchins et al., 2018; Martin & Beese, 2017; Tighe et al., 2019; Toste et al., 2020; Warnick & Caldarella, 2016), Toste et al. (2020) emphasized the importance of studying the link between student reading achievement and motivation, as motivation is connected to reading performance (Cockroft & Atkinson, 2017). These connections will be discussed more thoroughly in later sections.

Current Application of Theory

Since CRP was presented (Ladson-Billings, 1990; 1995), it has been used as a theoretical foundation by scholars when discussing pedagogy and teaching strategies (Acquah & Szelei, 2018; Borrero et al., 2018; Byrd, 2016; Chase, 2019; Hilaski, 2020; Hollie, 2018, 2019; Iwai, 2019; Jacobs, 2019; Love, 2019; Phuntsog, 1999; Piper, 2019; Sleeter, 2011; Souto-Manning & Martell, 2017). Hilaski (2020) discussed the impact that culturally responsive teaching (CRT) has on teaching literacy. Hilaski stated that literacy begins at home while also pointing out that CRT values the literacy skills that students bring with them when they enter the classroom, creating a culturally affirming environment. A culturally affirming and inclusive classroom is one that values, esteems, and affirms the available yet different forms of literacy that students bring with them to the classroom (Borrero et al., 2018; Phuntsog, 1999). Hilaski also stated that not recognizing the literacy skills that students bring with them to the classroom often results in cultural mismatch. Researchers (Bowman et al., 2018; Martin & Beese, 2017) recommended valuing and harnessing a student's dominant/primary language as a bridge between home and school language (Standard English) as a means of cultural affirming actions.

Culture should be considered in teaching literacy due to the changing demographics in the U.S. that are becoming much more diverse (Bowman et al., 2018; Hilaski, 2020; Jacobs, 2019; Piper, 2019). Additionally, culture consistently changes, so educators utilizing CRP must consider what is culturally relevant and authentic to the learners during that time and within that particular context (Borrero et al., 2018; Piper, 2019). Since literacy begins at home, culturally relevant literacy honors and values students' home language (Bowman et al., 2018; Hilaski, 2020; Love, 2019), which is in line with accepting and affirming one's culture (Acquah & Szelei, 2018; Hollie, 2018, 2019; Ladson-Billings, 1995; Love, 2019; Piper, 2019). Valuing the skills that students bring with them from their homes and communities reduces the deficit mindset that views difference as inferior (Acquah & Szelei, 2018; Borrero et al., 2018; Love, 2019). Bowman et al. (2018) extended the valuing of home language to African-American Vernacular English (AAVE), also referred to as Black Vernacular English (I). The authors quantified that AAVE / BVE are dialects of Standard English (SE); these dialects should not be labeled or looked at in a negative light; doing so would be engaging in deficit thinking (Acquah & Szelei, 2018; Love, 2019).

Despite the continual evolution of CRP since 1995, CRT was stagnant in many of the districts and schools studied (Borrero et al., 2018; Hollie, 2019). Stagnancy was defined as a lack of sufficient growth toward stated objectives (Hollie, 2019). Researchers have discussed the importance of CRP and CRT, as they related to multicultural literature, as a means to help minority and marginalized students achieve academic success (Gunn et al., 2021; Iwai, 2019; Jennerjohn, 2020; Martin & Beese, 2017; Martin & Spencer, 2020; Nganga, 2020; Piper, 2019; Souto-Manning & Martell, 2017). Researchers have reported on the academic growth of students

as a result of exposure to culturally relevant texts (Ciampa & Reisboard, 2021; Piper, 2019; Walker & Hutchison, 2021).

Impact of Culturally Responsive Pedagogy on Academic Achievement/Students

CRP paves the way for minority students to receive an equitable education that will prepare them for college or a career post high school graduation (Massar, 2022). As mentioned in Chapter One, Ladson-Billings (1990) investigated to learn the teaching strategies of educators who were successful with teaching Black students. After clearly detailing what was observed in the classrooms of these educators, Ladson-Billings (1995) later labelled these pedagogical actions as culturally relevant pedagogy. Culturally relevant curriculum is a vital component of sound pedagogy (Freire & Slover, 1983; Piper, 2019). Researchers have shared their findings on student academic improvement when exposes to CRP and CRT practices (Ciampa & Reisboard, 2021; Johnson et al., 2017; Piper, 2019; Walker & Hutchison, 2020). This research study that investigates the impact of mirror books on students' attitudes toward reading adds to the existing body of knowledge on culturally responsive teaching practices that intersects with curriculum and investigations into literacy.

Related Literature

The investigation of scholarly information surrounding the U.S. education system, literacy, and education pedagogy uncovered the need to advocate for necessary changes to address that many minority students are not achieving academic success compared to their White counterparts (Adam, 2021). The U.S. education system is changing demographically (National Center for Education Statistics, 2021; Piper, 2019; U.S. Census Bureau, 1965, 1996, 1999), yet the hegemonic system has not shifted to include the voices of minority students (Adam, 2021; Ansary, 2014; Dyches, 2018; Glazier & Seo, 2005; Phuntsog, 1999; Piper, 2019). Minority

students do not see themselves reflected in the literary canon used within the U.S. education system, even in advanced placement (AP) courses (Dallacqua, 2022), but when teaching practices become more culturally relevant, students respond positively (Adam, 2021; Borrero et al., 2018; Martin & Beese, 2017; Piper, 2019; Walker & Hutchison, 2021). This literature review aims to provide a meticulous portrait of the U.S. public education system, especially as it relates to literacy, the changing demographics within U.S. schools, and the lack of significant changes to reach all demographics of scholars' services by the U.S. public education system. Finally, pedagogical practices that have been proven successful in educating minority students will be discussed.

Education in the U.S.

Public education in the U.S. began in 1785 with the Northwest Ordinances (Koppelman, 2020). Public education transitioned to the Common School Movement in the early 1800s. Horace Mann believed that the more schools there were, the fewer prisons there would be, seeing education as a tool to deter crime. Scholars have stated the importance of public schools for producing an educated populous, outlining the connection between education and a strong democracy (Gasoi & Meier, 2018; Michelli et al., 2018). Scholars pursuing equal and equitable access to education for minorities have written about the importance of education for freedom and liberation (Love, 2019; Morris, 2016). However, the education system was not intended to educate Blacks, for the U.S. had anti-literacy laws from 1740 to 1834 (Oakland Literacy Coalition, 2022). Anti-literacy laws pertained to enslaved and free Blacks (Koppelman, 2020; Oakland Literacy Coalition, 2022). For the past two centuries, the U.S. public education system has been addressed by federal legislature to mandate and oversee educational improvements: Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) (Koppelman, 2020), No Child Left Behind

(NCLB) (U.S. Department of Education, 2001), Race to the Top (U.S. Department of Education, 2011), and Every Student Succeeds Act (U.S. Department of Education, 2015). These pieces of government legislature have each attempted to address education shortcomings to see that public school students were better educated and prepared to enter society (Koppelman, 2020; U.S. Department of Education, 2001, 2011, 2015). The Common Core State Standards (CCSS) initiative began in 2010. CCSS was implemented to unify educational standards to ensure that students in different states were still being educated to a high standard (California Department of Education, 2013).

Changing Public School Demographics

Demographics in U.S. schools have shifted to become much more diverse (National Center for Education Statistics, 2021; Piper, 2019; U.S. Census Bureau, 1965, 1996, 1999; Villegas & Lucas, 2007). Overall, minorities are closing the educational gap between themselves and White students (National Center for Education Statistics, 2020a, 2020b). The U.S. Census Bureau (1965, 1996, 1999) published statistics about the U.S. education system. School enrollment increased from 54 million to 65 million from 1965 to 1996, becoming much more diverse (U.S. Census Bureau, 1965, 1999). In the U.S. Census Bureau (1965) statistical information, the population was disaggregated into two categories: White and Non-white. White students accounted for 42,881 of the kindergarten through high school enrollment, while Non-white students accounted for 7,180, making the White student enrollment 85% of the total students enrolled (U.S. Census Bureau, 1965).

By 1994, demographical information was disaggregated into the categories of White, Black, and Hispanic Origin. White students accounted for 76% of school enrollment, while Black students accounted for 13.6%, and Hispanic Origin students accounted for 9.49% (U.S.

Census Bureau, 1996). The demographics as of 2018 showed a much more diverse school enrollment (National Center for Education Statistics, 2021). From the fall of 2009 to the fall of 2018, the population of White students in public schools fell from 55% to 47%. The percentage of Black students went from 17% to 15%, while the percentage of Hispanic students rose from 22% to 27%. An additional change was the reporting of race; additional categories were Asian, Pacific Islander, American Indian / Alaska Native, and those who are two or more races.

Data showed that White students were no longer the overwhelming majority, with their percentage of the school population dropping from 85% to 47% in just a little over 50 years (National Center for Education Statistics, 2021; U.S. Census Bureau, 1965). These same reports showed that minority students have increased their percentage within schools from 15% to 53%, with Black and Hispanic students accounting for 15% and 27%, respectively. These numbers showed that U.S. schools have undergone a dramatic shift in the demographics of their schools in 53 years.

Along with considering the change in demographics of U.S. schools, data showed that minority students are less successful than their White counterparts (Ladson-Billings, 1990; Piper, 2019; U.S. Census Bureau, 1999). The high school dropout rate for minorities was much higher than the dropout rate for White students; in 1975, 21% of White students dropped out of high school compared to a dropout rate of 36% for Black students and 55.8% for Hispanic (U.S. Census Bureau, 1999). In 1997, the margins closed, but minorities still had a higher dropout rate: White students – 17.3% compared to Black students - 21.5% and Hispanic students – 39%. Collectively, the data on changing demographics and dropouts disaggregated by race showed that, while minority students have a higher percentage of students who attend school, they were

not as successful as their White counterparts (National Center for Education Statistics, 2021; U.S. Census Bureau, 1965, 1999).

Curriculum: Past and Present

Rote memorization was used to educate students in the first one-room schoolhouses in the U.S. (Smith, 2020). Curriculum is now a field of study that incorporates many pedagogical considerations, from human development to learning theory (Parkay et al., 2014; Schunk, 2020; Smith, 2020). Curriculum is also linked to a billion-dollar textbook industry (Ansary, 2014). However, textbook publishers do not create textbooks for the greater public as a whole; they compete to gain the business of the top three adopting states: California, Florida, and Texas, which serve more than 13 million students, and delegating "more than $900 million for instructional materials" (p. 343). Textbook publishers compete to have their textbooks adopted by these top three states by studying the school boards for the top adopter of these three, Texas. The result is that the rest of the nation is offered textbooks from publishers who were considering, even catering, to one key state. The result of these targeted campaigns of textbook publishers is that curriculum is centralized, hegemonic (Adam, 2021; Ansary, 2014; Borrero et al., 2018; Phuntsog, 1999; Piper, 2019), and lacking cultural relevancy (Borrero et al., 2018; Ciampa & Reisboard, 2021; Piper, 2019; Russell, 2020; Westbury et al., 2016). Despite the fact that diversity matters when making decisions about curriculum (Hattan & Lupo, 2020), Piper (2019) stated that much of the curriculum produced further marginalizes minority students.

Teachers' Experiences with Culturally Responsive Teaching

Teacher experience with CRT is important because self-efficacy with CRT improves with experience (Cruz et al., 2020). High self-efficacy has been shown to have a strong, positive impact on student learning (Cruz et al., 2020; Ormrod, 2011; Schunk, 2020). Despite the

scholarly literature that has been written over the past two decades on the topics of CRP and CRT since it was first observed (Ladson-Billings, 1990) and labeled (Ladson-Billings, 1995), researchers continue to find that this pedagogy of equity is under-utilized and misunderstood (Borrero et al., 2018; Cruz et al., 2020). Many teachers in the field of education have a limited or non-existent understanding of or experience with culturally responsive teaching (Borrero et al., 2018). Educator self-efficacy with implementing CRT shows the need for investing time and resources to improve implementation of CRT (Cruz et al., 2020).

Borrero et al. (2018) interviewed first and second year teachers in the K-12 U.S. public school setting who were well versed in CRP. These 13 study participants found themselves among veteran teachers at 10 different K-12 school sites. The study participants reported that the veteran teachers with whom they were in contact possessed shallow or false understandings of CRP and CRT. The participants reported that some of their colleagues thought race and culture interchangeable terms. The study participants also reported that they saw multiple examples of shallow CRP being implemented in the form of what Banks (2013) referred to as “heroes-and-holidays approach” (p. 74). The lack of preparation to teach students from different cultures and backgrounds decreases an educator’s self-efficacy (Massar, 2022). The findings in Borrero et al.’s study are consistent with the lower self-efficacy mean scores with regard to CRT implementation reported by Cruz et al. (2020). Among credentialed teachers and teachers in educator preparation programs within the U.S. participating in a research study through which they self-reported self-efficacy scores of implementing CRT, some of the lowest mean scores pertained to one particular tenet of CRP, affirming culture. Self-efficacy scores for some of the participants in the study revealed a lack of confidence about the culture of their students as well as a lack of confidence to engage in cultural discussions.

The participants in Borrero et al.'s (2018) study discussed obstacles to optimal implementation of CRP. The researchers noted several recuring themes: a lack of resources, time, modeling, and conflicting demands. One participant commented on the curriculum being used at their school site, stating that it was framed toward the dominant culture and did not utilize CRP, due to its lack of counter narrative. Because the curriculum was not created with CRP in mind, the educator had to create supplemental material to introduce the counter narrative; this required time. Several participants discussed that there were few teachers available to be observed from whom they could gain practical and authentic modeling of CRT. Conflicting demands was also a recuring theme as well as observation of the study participants, as the participants discussed that provided curriculum and demands from administrators focused heavily on preparation for standardized testing instead of the development of critical analysis skills.

Teacher Preparation Programs and Mirror Books

Research supports the implementation of CRT to provide intervention and support for the academic success of minorities (Bowman et al., 2018; Piper, 2019). Just as Ladson-Billings (1995) wrote that a quality education is necessary for U.S. citizens to engage in a social democracy, teacher preparation programs that prepare teacher candidates to teach in a multicultural, multiracial school system are necessary for social justice (Acquah & Szelei, 2018; Chase, 2019; Cruz et al., 2020; Love, 2019; Piper, 2019; Tschida et al., 2014). Few teachers leave their teacher preparation programs and enter the classroom prepared to educate today's diverse population that make up the student body of U.S. public schools (Acquah & Szelei, 2018; Colwell et al., 2021; Cruz et al., 2020; Massar, 2022). Research shows a limited level of self-efficacy of cultural knowledge that prohibits some educators from feeling confident about the

culture of the students they teach when the students have a different cultural background from the teacher (Cruz et al., 2020). This limited cultural knowledge presents a stumbling block to these educators engaging in cultural discussions in the classroom. In comparing the self-efficacy of teachers with a single-subject credentials, educators who held an English Literature credentialed had lower self-efficacy scores than other single-subject credential holders. Researchers suggest that the first few years after a new teacher enters the profession is a pivotal time for new educators to engage in professional development to build self-efficacy of CRP and in CRT.

Teacher preparation programs need to incorporate social justice components into their programs (Chase, 2019; Cruz et al., 2020; Love, 2019; Piper, 2019). Teacher candidates, especially White teacher candidates, need to be self-reflective and aware of the privilege and/or biases that they bring with them to the teaching profession (Chase, 2019; Love, 2019; Piper, 2019). Teacher candidates should reflect on their beliefs; this reflection should occur continually (Chase, 2019; Love, 2019; Piper, 2019). Colwell et al. (2021) shared that some educators in their preservice teacher programs leave the program reluctant to implement CRDL in their classrooms. These future educators reluctant to use CRDL also expressed sentiments that align with viewing some of their students through a lens of deficit mindset, each referring to some students' as "lower level learners" (p. 205). Teachers need to come into the profession understanding that trauma leaves a mark that requires a pursuit towards continual healing and engaging in Black Joy and resilience (Love, 2019). These educators need to be prepared to discuss intersectionality of identities to help students engage in resistance. Love (2019) referred to this process as White wellness and becoming coconspirators.

Teacher preparation programs are not adequately addressing the cultural gaps that exist when minority children are taught by predominantly White educators, especially when these educators have not examined the education field through the lens of White rage, White supremacy, and White privilege (Love, 2019). Love referred to this as the "teacher education gap" (pp. 126-129). Teacher preparation programs have begun to address the importance of CRT and the theory on which it is built, CRP, yet scholars who write in-depth about CRT and CRP note that neither of these topics are addressed significantly enough in teacher preparation programs (Acquah & Szelei, 2018; Cruz et al., 2020; Love, 2019; Piper, 2019). A study conducted, which included teacher candidates, noted that there are inconsistencies with understanding CRP and its role in education, as well as shallow understanding of CRP (Chase, 2019). The teacher candidates in the study shared that fellow teacher candidates who were not participants in the study presented a "reductive and marginaliz[ed]" (p. 60) understanding of CRP, one which often limited the discussion of CRP to food, holidays, and customs, similar to the "heroes-and-holidays" discussed by Banks (2014, p. 74). These study participants also noted that their fellow teacher candidates not participating in the study seemed unwilling to brave discomfort to acquire a deeper understanding of CRP or challenge "dominant ideologies" (Chase, p. 58).

Obstacles to producing a stronger understanding of CRP and CRT within the educator workforce along with the roles that CRP and CRT hold in equitable education appears to be a mistaken belief that, since the U.S. has had a Black president, the country has entered "into a post-racial society" (Chase, 2019, p. 52). This belief is false because, since 2016 when Trump was elected, there has been an increase of racial, gender, and sexual hate speech (Darling-Hammond, 2017). Darling-Hammond pointed out that after Trump's election win for the

presidential seat of the U.S., hate speech, tagging utilizing racial slurs and anti-Sematic language, and graffiti appeared on school campuses in Illinois, Massachusetts, Michigan, Minnesota, Pennsylvania, and Washington. Discussing the connection between teaching and social justice, Darling-Hammond pointed out that "divide and conquer" (p. 136) has been a tool that encourages division, promoting othering, which is defined as seeing those as different than yourself as *other*. Darling-Hammond stated the importance of teaching for social justice: to remember the dark, racial past of the U.S. and be proactive to fight against racism wherever it appears.

Literacy

Before moving into the review of the literature on literacy, it will be important to be clear on how literacy is defined within the education system. Literacy is defined as "the ability to identify, understand, interpret, create, communicate and compute, using printed and written materials associated with varying context" (Montoya, 2018, p. 2). Literacy is broken into categories based on format: digital, print, and audio. Key aspects of literacy are the continual growth of skills and "knowledge" that will enable one "to participate fully in their community and wider society" (p. 2).

After considering how literacy is defined, it is vital to understand how literacy is assessed. Currently, there are six literacy assessments used across 80 countries (Montoya, 2018). These six assessments were compared in four categories. All six assessments measured on a continuum. All but one, the *Action Research: Measuring Literacy Programme Participants' Learning Outcomes* (RAMAA), measured the "full range of skill" (p. 6) using "statistical methods" (p. 6) that "support comparison" (p. 6). The U.S. is one of the countries whose

definitions and assessments affirm the four categories under which the assessment comparisons were made.

Reading Scores in U.S. Public Schools

The definition of literacy in the United States is holistic (Montoya, 2018). Additionally, students are routinely assessed in literacy (National Center for Education Statistics, 2020a, 2020b). However, data shows that the academic system is unsuccessful in helping Black and Hispanic students achieve the same level of success as their White counterparts (National Center for Education Statistics, 2020b). Both public and private school students in the U.S. are assessed in reading in fourth, eighth, and twelfth grade. At each of these assessment levels, Black and Hispanic students score below average and below their White counterparts. Holistically, fourth-grade students averaged 220 on a 0-500. White students averaged 230, Black students averaged 204, and Hispanic students averaged. As a whole, eighth-grade students averaged. White students averaged 272, Black students averaged 244, and Hispanic students averaged 252. Comprehensively, twelfth-grade students averaged. White students averaged 295, Black students averaged 266, while Hispanic students averaged 276. The study of literacy has become a focal point in education due to the statistical dichotomy between learners of different demographics (Colwell et al., 2021). Lowder et al. (2022) measured the impact of literacy intervention on academic success, reporting that literacy intervention had a significant impact on student success. The study of literacy related to culturally relevant pedagogy has been labeled culturally relevant disciplinary literacy (CRDL).

Impact of Low Literacy on Adults

Subpar literacy has an economic impact (Cockroft & Atkinson, 2017; Rossi & Bower, 2018). Adults with low literacy “are more likely to earn less money and experience poverty”

(Cockroft & Atkinson, 2017, p.42). Data shows that more than 70% of inmates in prison are functionally illiterate (Alexander, 2012; Tighe et al., 2019). Around 50% of released prison inmates are functionally illiterate. Seventy-five percent of adults in prison score below one to level two on the Programme for the International Assessment of Adult Competencies (PIAAC) (Tighe et al., 2019). There are six levels on the PIAAC ranging from zero to level five, with levels zero to two indicating below proficiency while level three indicates at or above proficiency. Juxtaposing the data that shows that 75% of adults in prison scored between levels one and two on the PIAAC with the data that shows that 54.5% of adults in the U.S. score below one to level two allows one can begin to see a portrait of the impact of low literacy (Alexander, 2012; Tighe et al., 2019). Alexander (2012) and Tighe et al. (2019) suggested that adults with low reading levels are statistically more likely to end up in prison. The difference in literacy levels between incarcerated and non-incarcerated adults is discussed as an element of the school-to-prison pipeline (Alexander, 2012; Martin & Beese, 2017).

Impact of Low Literacy on Youth

Literacy is a fundamental element in early childhood education (Bowman et al., 2018). Bowman et al. (2018) stated that low literacy is connected to unwanted behaviors, which in turn impact social skills. The juvenile justice system also shows the impact of illiteracy (Houchins et al., 2018; Warnick & Caldarella, 2016). Many of the juveniles entering a youth detainment facility read below grade level (Houchins et al., 2018). In fact, 44% of adolescents in juvenile custody read at the elementary level (Warnick & Caldarella, 2016). While many juveniles in the court system have low literacy skills, significant strides are not being made to intervene to help them improve their skills while in detainment (Hunter et al., 2022; Leone & Gagnon, 2022). In 2014, federal mandates were made to ensure that incarcerated youth were appropriately educated

(Leone & Gagnon, 2022; U. S. Department of Education and Justice, 2014). Hunter et al. (2022) noted a lack of compliance with the 2014 mandate, calculating that only 26% of adolescents in youth detention centers are receiving educational instruction. Additionally, the instruction these detained youth receive lacks alignment with Common Core State Standards.

Adolescent Attitude Toward Reading

Literature discussing motivation to and attitudes toward reading often use motivation and attitude as interchangeable terms (Conradi et al., 2013). However, attitude is identified as one of the factors that impact one's disposition, which in turn, impacts motivation (Conradi et al., 2013; Griffin et al., 2020). Attitude toward reading is also connected to one's view of themselves as a reader as well as their self-efficacy and self-concept.

Current Data on Adolescent Attitude Toward Reading

A summary of reports focused on studying various aspects of literacy were published yearly by the *Journal of Educational Research* from 1952 - 1972. The report on the twelve-month period from July 1950 to July 1951 did not report investigations into students' attitudes or desire to engage in reading (Gray, 1951). Concerning school-aged children, reports that addressed student literacy focused on the impact of television on reading, audio broadcasts of classic children's literature, reading achievement, reading curriculum, reading readiness, and reading difficulty. One report focused on children's areas of reading interest. The report published in 1953 (Gray, 1953) showed that, of the top 20 leisure activities in which children engaged, reading was ranked number three. In 1972 (Otto et al., 1973), an attitude-assessing, Likert scale instrument of measurement was developed by Estes (1971). A search in ProQuest revealed that this instrument was cited in 20 articles. The articles that cited Estes discussed

attitudes toward reading in conjunction with other phenomena being studied, none of which related to CRP or CRT.

For students in the U.S., current research on the topic of attitudes toward reading for adolescents is not as prevalent as research on elementary-aged students (Jang et al., 2021; McKenna, 1995; Nootens et al., 2019). However, *National Literacy Trust* (Clark & Foster, 2005; Clark, 2019; Clark & Teravainen-Goff, 2020) has published regular reports discussing what some students prefer to read and their motivations for reading, the first of these regular reports was published in 2005. The reports published by *National Literacy Trust* focus on students in the United Kingdom (UK). Conradi et al. (2013) stated that they often find conversations discussing the issue of encouraging adolescents to engage in reading. Some research discussed attitudes toward reading disaggregated based on gender differences (Scholes, 2019), while other research discussed how attitudes toward reading change with age (Nootens et al., 2019). Lupo et al. (2017) researched the relationship between attitudes and reading achievement, disaggregating between digital and printed text. When considering the attitudes toward reading, some data is disaggregated based on reading for pleasure versus academic purposes and print versus digital text (Jang et al., 2021). Gathering research data from 5080 participants across 23 schools across the U.S., 26.8% were quantified as "*avid readers*," 19.8% as "*reluctant readers*," and 38.9% as "*willing readers*" (p.1129). This research does not provide racial or socio-economic information on the participants. Only the grade levels and gender of the participants were provided. As young people age, they engage less in reading for enjoyment outside of school, describing reading as "boring" (Cockroft & Atkinson, 2017, p. 47). Attitudes toward reading is also documented as a factor contributing to reading success (Cheema, 2018; Jang & Ryoo, 2019; Petscher, 2010).

Using Data on Adolescent Attitude Toward Reading to Provide Intervention

Research studying reading at the secondary level, such as the study conducted by Allred and Cena (2020), is not as abundant as research that studies reading at the elementary school level (Jang et al., 2021; McKenna, 1995; Nootens et al., 2019). Hence, Toste et al. (2019) stated the need to study the connection between motivation and reading at all levels. As attitude is just one of the elements that contribute to motivation, understanding attitudes will lead to a deeper understanding of motivation (Conradi et al., 2013; Griffin et al., 2020). A more recent instrument of measurement of student attitude towards reading was developed to focus on adolescents (Conradi et al., 2013). This tool could be used to gather data to fill in the gaps left by prior research, which mainly focused on elementary-aged children (Jang et al., 2021; Nootens et al., 2019). The instrument created by Conradi et al. (2013) is a multiple choice, Likert scale survey of 18 questions that disaggregates students' responses into four categories: academic print, academic digital, recreational print, and recreational digital. Nootens et al. (2019) studied fifth through eighth grade students' attitudes toward reading. This participant pool incorporated the last two years of elementary as well as the first two years of middle school. The disaggregated responses of one student were used to ascertain his low attitude toward reading for academic and personal purposes but his favorable attitude toward science fiction. Using this information, the student's science teacher found non-fictional articles of interest to the student. Subsequently, the student's reading intervention specialist recommended that the student be given access to science fiction books in which the student might be interested.

Reflective Books and Multicultural Literature

Bishop (1990) started the use of the terms mirrors and windows as adjectives to describe a function of literature. Prior to the use of the terms mirrors and windows, multicultural literature

was the common term used to discuss literature provided for an audience emerging post-Civil Rights Movement (Banks, 2013). This section will discuss the emergence of multicultural literature along with the terms *mirrors* and *windows*. The definition together with importance of cultural authenticity is discussed, along with a brief history of and recent increase of actions taken to ban books in the U.S.

Emergence of Multicultural Literature

Multicultural literature spawned from the development of multicultural education (Banks, 2013, 2014; Koppelman, 2020; Sleeter, 2018). Banks (2013) pointed out that one of the key effects of the Civil Rights Movement was the demand by Black people in the U.S. to have an accurate telling of history that went beyond "heroes-and-holidays" (p. 74). What emerged post-Civil Rights Movement was the field of Ethnic Studies whose focus was ethnic and racial minority groups in the U.S. (Banks, 2013; Yokota, 1993). Banks (2013) wrote that during the 1960s and 70s, cultural deprivation theory was developed.

Cultural deprivation theory drew a connection between cognitive achievement and a negative social environment (i.e., poverty and familial organization) (Banks, 2013). Cultural deprivation theory claimed that negative social environments had a negative impact on cognitive achievement, resulting in "irreversible cognitive deficits" (p. 75). Cultural deprivation theory was challenged by cultural difference theory, which does not see negative social environment as an insurmountable obstacle but as opportunities to bridge learning through recognition of the strong cultural knowledge that students bring with them to the classroom (Banks, 2013; Ladson-Billings, 1995). In the mid 1980s, Ethnic Studies transitioned to multicultural education, as it incorporated into its courses for ethnic and racial groups from outside of the U.S. while broadening its understanding of culture (Banks, 2013). This broadened understanding of culture

included the voices of others, as they shared their lived experiences with classism, sexism, heterosexism, and ableism (Koppelman, 2020). Banks (2014) defined five dimensions that can be used to govern the caliber of multicultural literature and education: content integration, the knowledge construction process, prejudice reduction, an empowering school culture and social structure, along with an equity pedagogy. Adherence to these five dimensions would greatly improve the quality of multicultural education as well as the academic achievement of students. Content integration connects to the inclusion of diverse literature that is culturally authentic, refrains from stereotypical depictions of minorities.

Scholarly information discussing the definition of multicultural literature has historically lacked consensus (Yokota, 1993). For the purpose of their research, Yokota (1993) deferred to the understanding that multicultural literature must depict the culture being represented with "accurate portrayal and rich detail" (p. 157). More recently, scholars have shifted to disaggregate the discussion of what constitutes multicultural or cultural literature by content, "literature, arts, history, geography, and festivals…[versus] clothing, food, housing, transportation, and patterns of behavior" (Zhang & Wang, 2021, p. 2), along with cultural authenticity (Adam, 2021; Bishop, 2003; Yokota, 1993; Zhang & Wang, 2021). Cultural authenticity, which addresses the manner in which a culture is represented and who that representation is an accurate depiction of (Yokota, 1993; Zhang & Wang, 2021), will be discussed in more detail in subsequent pages.

Multicultural education has been charged by scholars with reforming the educational system, including challenging racism and discrimination in the vast forms through which they appear (Koppelman, 2020; Yokota, 1993; Zhang & Wang, 2021). The discussion of multicultural education often includes the discussion of multicultural literature (Banks, 2013; Glazier & Seo, 2005; Koppelman, 2020; Yokota, 1993). Linder (2021) discussed that multicultural literature can

be used to facilitate social emotional learning (SEL) as well as social awareness. Scholars (Nilsson, 2005; Yokota, 1993) have called for multicultural literature that reflects the changing demographics of education. Glazier and Seo (2005) defined multicultural literature "as literature that represents voices typically omitted from the traditional canon" (p. 686). The need for as well as the benefits of multicultural literature, which includes mirror books, have been discussed by scholars as having a vital role in education (Adam, 2021; Banks, 2013, 2014; Ciampa & Reisboard, 2021; Dyches, 2018; Ford et al., 2019; Glazier & Seo, 2005; Iwai, 2019; Jennerjohn, 2020; Johnson et al., 2017; Milner, 2020; Nganga, 2020; Yokota, 1993; Zhang & Wang, 2021).

Lack of Representation in the Literary Canon

While the demographics of U.S. schools have shifted to be more multicultural, the literary canon of school curriculum has not become more inclusive (Adam, 2021; Alexie, 2013; Borrero et al., 2018; Dallacqua, 2022; Glazier & Seo, 2005; Piper, 2019; StudySync, 2022; Tschida et al. 2014), maintaining the hegemonic practices aimed at an audience of White men (Dallacqua, 2022; Dyches, 2018; Glazier & Seo, 2005), the dominant culture (Adam, 2021; Borrero et al., 2018; Piper, 2019). Literacy experts and researchers expressed the importance of culturally responsive literature and curriculum (Kelly-Howard, 2021; Tschida et al., 2014). A survey of literacy experts together with literacy professionals stressed the importance of high-quality, multicultural literature to advance literacy. Multicultural literature is intended to act as windows and mirrors, yet the literary canon in literature arts classrooms remained largely monocultural and monoracial, preferencing the "dominant (read as White, middle class) culture" (Glazier & Seo, 2005, p. 687), silencing the voices and experiences of minorities. Alexie's (2013) article recounted how it felt to be a native in U.S. public schools who was not given access to literature that reflected his race and culture. The hegemonic practice of excluding the

voices of others outside the dominant culture is silencing (Adam, 2021), amounting to feelings of erasure to marginalized community groups (Dallacqua, 2022). There is power in having the ability to silence the voices of minorities (Glazier & Seo, 2005). Silencing communicates the idea that the lived experiences, culture, and race of those outside of the majority population are immaterial.

Scholars (Adam, 2021; Agosto et al., 2003; Pescosolido et al., 1997; Yokota, 1993) have reported numerical data on minority representation in literature curriculum. Yokota (1993) reported data on the representation of minorities in children's literature across four decades. From 1962 – 1964, 6.7% of the published children's literature featured African American representation. From 1973 to 1975, 14.4% of the published children's literature during this time had African American representation. From 1979 – 1984, 1.5% of the published children's literature featured African American representation. In addition to reporting on the number of children's literature published that featured minority populations, Yokota noted that these titles were not appearing on recommended reading listed for elementary students.

Pescosolido et al. (1997) conducted a study to calculate the representation of Black characters in children's picture books published between 1937 and 1993 in three sets of titles: Caldecott Medal recipients and Caldecott Honor books (235), those available in *Children's Catalog* (1,190), and those published by *Little Golden Books* (1,023). These three lists resulted in 2,448 being evaluated for the presence of Black characters during this period. Adjusting for the number of books that contained only animal characters (481), Pescosolido et al. evaluated 1,967 titles. Considering all three sets of books that contained human characters, 18.4% of the relevant titles had at least one was Black character; 3.9% of these titles had only Black characters.

Agosto et al. (2003) conducted a study to calculate the representation of minority protagonists in children's literature published from 1992 to 2001 aimed at a middle school audience. The calculations showed that 661 of the 4,255 titles, 16%, published during this time that targeted this audience had minority protagonists (Agosto et al., 2003). The remaining 3,594 titles, 84%, had White protagonists. Of the 661 titles reviewed by Agosto et al., the top three minority groups represented were African American at 32%, American Indian at 25%, and third most represented groups were tied at 10% each – Hispanic and Asian American.

Adam (2021) audited 2413 children's books in four preschools for children ages 0-5. Adam reported that 18% of these books "contained any representation of cultural diversity" (p. 8), but only 2% could be considered "Culturally Authentic" (p. 8) based upon the evaluative criteria used. This percentage is an increase from the 2016 statistics that reported that 12.5% of children's literature books published in 2016 were written about and by minorities (Johnson et al., 2017). Adam reported that 1% of books analyzed in this study presented the ideology and viewpoints of the non-dominant culture. Considering the seven-decade timespan of these studies (Adam, 2021; Agosto et al., 2003; Pescosolido et al., 1997; Westby, 2022; Yokota, 1993), representation increased from 6.7% in the early 1960s to 14.4% by 1975 but dipped to 1.5% from 1979 to 1984 (Yokota, 1993). Representation was calculated to be 18.4% in the 1990s (Pescosolido et al., 1997), but it dipped to 12.5% in 2016 (Johnson et al., 2017) before rising to 23% in 2018 (Westby, 2022) and falling again to 16% in 2021 (Adam, 2021). During the last seven decades, representation of minority characters has fluctuated between 1.5% and 23% (Adam, 2021; Agosto et al., 2003; Pescosolido et al., 1997; Westby, 2022; Yokota, 1993), which is far below demographic enrollment data in U.S. public schools (U.S. Census Bureau, 1965, 1996, 1999, 2020). Juxtaposing the discussed fluctuation of culturally inclusive literature, from

1.5% to 23% (Adam, 2021; Agosto et al., 2003; Pescosolido et al., 1997; Westby, 2022; Yokota, 1993), with the recent enrollment demographic in U.S. public schools, 53% minority and 47% White (National Center for Education Statistics, 2021), showed that even at its highest percentage of representation, there is disparity in the lack of representation in children's literature. The lack of representation of minority / non-dominant cultures in books used in school settings contributes to viewing non-dominant culture / minorities as "others" (Adam, 2021, p. 10), a process titled "othering" (p. 10).

The literary canon needs to be examined for critical consciousness (Dyches, 2018; Nganga, 2020). Nganga (2020) recommends the "critical multicultural lens" (p. 97), while Dyches (2018) recommends the application of "critical curriculum theory" (p. 540). Research on pre-service teacher programs, specifically analyzing the extent to which teachers were prepared to use children's literature to engage in a multicultural focus while examining the hidden biases within current literary practices, revealed that pre-service teachers did not have a solid understanding of multicultural education, nor did they possess the skills to use the appropriate lens to examine literature for hidden biases (Nganga, 2020). These hidden biases are also referred to as hidden curriculum practices (Dyches, 2018). While Nganga and Dyches recommend different pedagogical theories to implement to solve the problem of hegemonic practices that are prevalent in literary canon selection, both researchers agree that hegemony is a present problem that needs to be addressed.

A current examination of StudySync (2022), a digital English Language Arts (ELA) curriculum adopted in the Southern California school district where the current study will be conducted, provides a numerical image of the hegemonic practices prevalent in the current literary canon (Dyches, 2018; Nganga, 2020). StudySync's digital platform allows educators to

engage in search of their digital library utilizing filter to return text suggestions based on grade level, themes, Lexile level, and many other filter options. A search for excerpts for the Lexile range 765-938, grades nine and ten, returned 229 texts (StudySync, 2022). Of these results, 23 (10%) were by Black authors, four (1.7%) were by Chicano authors, five (2.1%) were by Latin-American authors, and 71 (31%) were by women authors. The remaining number of results, 126 (56.2%), were by White men. The largest racial group in this district that serves 22, 464 students is Hispanic with 80.2% (Ed-Data: Education Data Partnership, 2022). The next two largest groups are White at 9.5% and Black at 4.4% (Ed-Data: Education Data Partnership, 2022). Juxtaposing the numbers representing the lack of multicultural, multi-racial, and multi-gender representation of available texts within the StudySync curriculum and the numbers discussed earlier on the multi-racial demographics of the current education system (National Center for Education Statistics, 2021), one can see that the current literary canon does not provide mirror books for a vast majority of school attendees in the U.S.

Evolution of Mirrors, Windows, and Sliding Glass Doors

Alexie (2013) wrote about the absence of seeing their culture and race reflected in the literature taught at school. Bishop (1990) started the use of the terms mirrors and windows as adjectives to describe functions of literature. When one reads literature that predominantly features characters that do not share the same race or culture as the reader, this literature functions as a window--a means for one to become culturally aware of others (Bishop, 1990; Glazier & Seo, 2005; Johnson et al., 2017). When one reads literature that predominantly features characters that share the same race or culture as the reader, this literature functions as a mirror--a lens through which the reader can see themselves positively reflected. Additionally, literature can function as a sliding glass door (Johnson et al., 2017). Recognizing that literature

impacts the reader through the “values, emotions, and experiences” (p. 570) that the reader brings to the reading, this interaction that has the ability to change the reader empowers literature the ability to function as a sliding glass door.

Literature has the power to end loneliness, allowing the reader to feel connected to society (Bishop, 1990). The literary canon communicates values. Being conspicuously absent from literature sends the message that one’s culture is not valued. Viewing multicultural literature as mirrors and windows, mirror books have self-affirming power, and windows can support cultural awareness through books (Zhang & Wang, 2021). Key benefits of mirror books are that they are culturally affirming (Bishop, 1990; Zhang & Wang, 2021), a characteristic of CRP (Ladson-Billings, 1995, 2014).

As researchers build, expand upon, and incorporate mirrors, windows, and sliding glass doors of diverse literature in the classroom, experts stress the importance of knowing your students and avoiding “foggy mirrors” (Enriquez, 2021, p. 104). Enriquez (2021) defined foggy windows as literature that could be seen as stereotyping the students to whom the books are suggested. Enriquez shared two anecdotes of foggy mirrors when well-intentioned educators shared texts that were not culturally connected to the students to whom the books were suggested. The characters and the experiences of the characters in the texts were vastly different from the students to whom the books were suggested. Instead, these characters faced hardships that were far from the experiences of these students; the only thing the students had in common with the characters were their race. Colwell et al. (2021) noted that well-meaning educators, unaware of the bias that they bring to the classroom as well as their cultural disconnect from their students, misidentify what they believe to be problems with which their students are concerned only to find out that they are incorrect. Educators are encouraged to strive for student

lead selection as well as student engagement of texts to provide the opportunity for texts to function as clear mirrors rather than teacher led selection and guidance which runs the risk of inviting cultural disconnect when the teacher and students do not share the same cultural backgrounds. Scholars also encourage educators to incorporate multicultural reflective books as themes within units of study and across content, not in isolation (Enriquez, 2021).

Cultural Authenticity in Mirror Books

Cultural authenticity is a vital issue and component of mirror books (Adam, 2021; Bishop, 2003; Yokota, 1993; Zhang & Wang, 2021). Despite the importance of cultural authenticity when discussing minority representing literature, scholars note the lack of consensus of the definition of culturally authentic (Yokota, 1993; Yoo-Lee et al., 2014; Zhang & Wang, 2021). In the absence of a clear definition, scholars have narrowed down the understanding of culturally authentic to discussing the attributes of culturally authentic literature, what must be present along with what must be avoided (Yokota, 1993; Zhang & Wang, 2021). Considering a text to be culturally authentic strongly hinges on the text being recognized as authentic by those within the culture. The literature must be considered culturally accurate by the culture being represented (Yokota, 1993). Additionally, Yokota (1993) emphasized the importance of quality in multicultural, fiction literature.

Scholars have made it clear that the caliber of content and instruction are important elements when utilizing multicultural or cultural literature (Banks, 2013; Banks, 2014; Southard et al., 2014; Yokota, 1993; Zhang & Wang, 2021). When discussing the history plus the evolution of multicultural education, Banks (2013) pointed out that much of the curriculum published post-Civil Rights Movement defaulted to a “heroes-and-holidays approach” (p. 74). Banks described this approach as segregated material that was not strategically integrated into

current curriculum in a way that was natural. Adam (2021) observed a pattern of educators' beliefs that engaging in culturally diverse teaching was satisfied with teaching about cultural practices along with the celebrations of minority populations. Additionally, Banks (2013) pointed out that the discussion of historical figures was limited to figures viewed as "safe" (p. 74), historical figures, such as Sacajawea, who held the cultural appeal and acceptance of the dominant culture. The study conducted by Southard et al. (2014) emphasized that alone, exposure to culturally authentic texts was not enough. Exposure to culturally authentic text needs to be supported by context.

Scholars have emphasized the distinction between quantity and quality when discussing the availability of cultural literature (Gast, 1967; Yokota, 1993; Yoo-Lee et al., 2014; Zhang & Wang, 2021). Besides noting the historical absence of cultural representation of children's literature featuring minority characters, scholars discussed how the cultural characters were represented. Scholars have critically examined literary content for minority groups: Latino / Hispanic (Braden & Rodriquez, 2016; Yoo-Lee et al., 2014), Chinese (Zhang & Wang, 2021), Asian American (Yoo-Lee et al., 2014), and Black (Yokota, 1993; Yoo-Lee et al., 2014). Braden and Rodriguez (2016) noted that even in bilingual children's literature, English is given privilege over Spanish, and character portrayals of Hispanic culture are devoid of substance. Yokota (1993) drew a clear distinction between those writing from within or outside of the ethnic culture being represented. Authors have discussed the appearance of stereotypes along with stereotypical behaviors in children's literature (Gast, 1967; Zhang & Wang, 2021). Yoo-Lee et al. (2014) discussed the availability of picture books with Hispanic, Asian American, and Black characters along with whether the depiction of these characters were stereotypical or culturally authentic. The authors noted that most were culturally authentic, but some still portrayed stereotypical

behavior of major and minor characters. While researchers have noted that the quality of subsequent literature is becoming less stereotypical, the authors also noted the need for more modern texts as well as improved consistency of authentic representation (Pescosolido et al., 1997; Zhang & Wang, 2021).

Banned Books

Court cases in the U.S. deliberating on the banning of books are documented as having reached state supreme courts and even the U.S. Supreme Court (Collins, 2023). California's Supreme Court ruled that the King James Bible would be allowed in school libraries, for it falls under freedom of speech, the First Amendment. The New York State Supreme Court ruled in favor of not banning *The Merchant of Venice* nor *Oliver Twist*. Similar cases striking down the banning of books have been heard and decided in Kansas, Louisiana, Michigan, and Ohio, just to state a few (Collins, 2023; Kim, 2022). The U.S. Supreme Court has ruled against banning books, stating that they fall under the protection of the First Amendment, providing that they do not promote hate and are not obscene (Collins, 2023). Additionally, in the U.S. Supreme Court case *Island Trees Union Free School District v. Pico*, Justice Brennan stated that the First Amendment protects the rights of a community to read and contemplate of ideas as a part of "a democratic society" (Kim, 2022, p. 63). Justice Brennan wrote of the importance of differing ideas within a pluralistic society. In reviewing the motivation to seek the banning of some books, Collins (2023) noted that the underlying cause in attempting to get books banned is often political in nature, concluding that the U.S. Supreme Court decision in the *Pico* case set a precedent to prevent book banning as a means of political influence and control. The U.S. Supreme Court decision in the *Island Trees Union Free School District v. Pico* case underscored

the importance that books cannot be banned to foster one ideology over others, nor to attempt political persuasion (Kim, 2022).

The American Library Association's (ALA) annual report for 2022 stated that more books have been challenged and targeted for banning in 2022 than any other year in the last 21 years the ALA has kept record (Garcia, 2023). The ALA reported that 1,269 titles were challenged in 2022, which is significantly more than the 729 titles challenged in 2021. The ALA keeps track of all challenges to books, those connected with schools and public libraries; 58% of the challenges focused on school related books, and 41% focused on public libraries. The director of the Office for Intellectual Freedom for the ALA, Caldwell-Stone, noted that many of the recent challenges to books came from "organized censorship groups" (para. 6), which is different than in the past. ALA President, Pelayo-Lozada, stated that some of these requests sit in direct opposition to the wishes of students and their parents for access to these titles. Pelayo-Lozado stated that the challenges to these books disrupts the library's mission "to provide access to information" (para. 10).

As the ALA advocates for "access to information" (Garcia, 2023, para. 10) and courts in the U.S. weigh in on the banning of books, AP English teachers and students commented on the impact of banned books on students' ability to see themselves reflected in literature and feel empowered by that connection (Dallacqua, 2022). AP English students of minority heritage have remarked on the lack of inclusive literature among the list of AP texts that are considered to have "literary merit" (p. 134). One AP student remarked on the lack of seeing herself in the literature that has been presented in their AP English class. Additionally, these students stated that they view the recent attempts to ban a record number of books in a single year as an attempt at erasure of minority identities.

Summary

CRP provides the cultural consideration needed to educate the diverse population of U.S. public schools (Hilaski, 2020; Hollie, 2018, 2019; Ladson-Billings, 1995; Massar, 2022). CRP shows acceptance and affirmation of diverse cultures and prepares students to think critically and be prepared to engage in a democratic society (Darling-Hammond, 1996; Hollie, 2018, 2019; Kim, 2022; Ladson-Billings, 1995). The U.S. education system now educates a historic number of minority students (National Center for Education Statistics, 2021), yet the literary canon predominantly taught in public schools remains racially and culturally stagnant (Adam, 2021; Ciampa & Reisboard, 2021; Dyches, 538; Hilaski, 2020; Martin & Beese, 2017; Milner, 2020; Souto-Manning & Martell, 2017), especially in proportion to the shifting demographics of public schools (National Center for Education Statistics, 2021). There has been a large increase to the number of books being challenged and targeted for banning; meanwhile, the ALA advocates against censorship of books so that everyone can have access (Garcia, 2023). Additionally, minority students continue to score below their White counterparts in reading performance (National Center for Education Statistics, 2020b), and low reading performance has been connected to the school-to-prison pipeline (Alexander, 2012; Martin & Beese, 2017). CRP has had a positive impact on the academic achievement of minority students as measured by standardized testing at both elementary and secondary levels (Ladson-Billings, 1995; Martin & Beese, 2017; Walker & Hutchison, 2021). CRP has evolved to impact curriculum pedagogy and implementation strategies that have resulted in culturally relevant teaching which focuses on cultural and racial affirming behaviors and actions taken on the part of educators (Ciampa & Reisboard, 2021; Hilaski, 2020; Hollie, 2018, 2019; Jennerjohn, 2020; Ladson-Billings, 1995, 2014; Phuntsog, 1999).

While research has shown that mirror books increase literacy levels, academic performance, self-esteem, and feelings of empowerment (Dallacqua, 2022; Ford et al., 2019; Johnson et al., 2017; Martin & Beese, 2017; Piper, 2017; Walker & Hutchison, 2021), a gap exists in the literature that explores the correlation between mirror books and students' attitudes toward reading. By examining the correlation between mirror books and students' attitudes toward reading, educators can consider whether including more culturally affirming literature in the classroom will increase attitudes toward reading, which could increase literacy scores and the overall academic success of minority students.

CHAPTER THREE: METHODS

Overview

The purpose of this quantitative, quasi-experimental, causal-comparative research study with a nonequivalent control group design was to measure if there is a statistical relationship that shows the impact of mirror books on minority students' attitudes toward reading. The methods section will discuss the design of the research study. It explains the demographics of the participant sample and the study participants, including how the participants were chosen via a convenience sampling. The research question and null hypothesis are stated. This section provides details on the instrument of measurement, the Cronbach's alpha for the instrument that was used, and the statistical analysis method for the study. The procedures for the study are outlined in detail along with the process for data analysis.

Design

A quantitative, quasi-experimental, causal-comparative, nonequivalent control-group design was used to determine if there is a causal-comparative relationship between exposure to mirror books and the attitudes of sophomore students toward reading within the public high school setting. A causal-comparative research study is used to determine if there is a statistical relationship between two variables (Gall et al., 2007; Warner, 2021). Gall et al. (2007) proclaimed the power of experiments in quantitative research to represent the causation between variables. The required elements of a nonequivalent control group design are that the participants are not randomly assigned to a group and that all participant groups take both a pre- and post-test. The absence of participants being randomly assigned to a group is statistically accounted for using both a pre- and post-test. The limitation of a nonequivalent control group design is that post-test difference could be "due to pre-existing group differences" (Gall et al., 2007). This

limitation is minimized by the use a pre-test on both the control and treatment groups. Syahrial et al. (2019) used a quasi-experimental, nonequivalent control group design to measure the effectiveness of a program whose aim was to improve students' attitude towards valuing culture.

A quasi-experimental, nonequivalent control-group design was chosen because it will provide statistical data on the possible causal-comparative relationship between the treatment group students' attitudes toward reading as a result of exposure to mirror books in comparison to the attitudes toward reading of the control group, while statistically accounting for nonequivalent difference using the pretreatment attitudes of both groups. This design was the most appropriate for the current study because administering both a pre- and post-test to both groups will render the rate of change of the sophomore students' attitudes towards reading. In this current study, the independent variable was exposure to mirror books, and the dependent variable was students' attitudes toward reading. The covariate in this quantitative study was the difference between the nonequivalent group's attitudes toward reading. The study involved two groups: Group A, the treatment group, and Group B, the control group.

A causal-comparative design was chosen because it examines the statistical relationship between two variables, independent variable and dependent variable, measuring if the independent variable can predict the outcome of the dependent variable or whether the independent variable causes a change in the dependent variable (Gall et al., 2007; Warner, 2021). For the current study, the causal-comparative relationship between mirror books (the independent variable) and students' attitudes toward reading (the dependent variable) was statistically measured to see if exposure to mirror books (the independent variable) can cause a change in students' attitudes toward reading (the dependent variable). By statistically analyzing the pretest and post-test scores of students' attitudes toward reading of the control group and the

treatment group, the impact of the treatment, exposure to mirror books, was measured to see if this exposure influenced or caused a change in students' attitudes toward reading. Asefi and Imani (2018) used the causal-comparative research design to determine that "active strategic model" (p. 218) teaching improved the critical thinking and creativity of architectural students in comparison to the control group.

Research Question

RQ1: Is there a difference in attitudes toward reading among minority sophomore students exposed to mirror books and those who were not when controlling for pretreatment differences in students' attitudes toward reading?

Hypothesis

The null hypothesis for this study is:

$H_0$1: There is no difference in attitudes toward reading, as measured by the SARA, between minority sophomore students exposed to mirror books and those who were not when controlling for pretreatment differences in students' attitudes toward reading.

Participants and Setting

This section will describe the participating high school in Southern California where the study was conducted, the sophomore participants, the sampling technique, and the sampling size. Additionally, this section will provide an overall description of the setting, including the overall demographics of the school.

Population

The following demographic data pertains to the participating high school during the academic year when the research study was conducted. The student enrollment was 1663 students, grades nine through 12. The racial demographics of the student population consisted of

American Indian or Alaska Native – 84 (5%), Black – 173 (10%), Filipino – 16 (<1%), Hispanic – 1341 (81%), White – 406 (24%), and two or more races – 48 (3%). Females accounted for 766 (46%) of the student population, males accounted for 886 (53%), and 11 (<1%) are non-binary.

The school district serviced 20416 students, and 1663 students were enrolled in the high school where the current study was conducted. Within the district, 96% of the students were unduplicated pupils, and the participating high school had 98% unduplicated pupils. The California Department of Education (CDE) (2023) defines unduplicated pupils as students who are eligible for free or reduced-price meals, English Learners (ELs), and/or foster youth, and these students can only be counted as one of these categories even if they fit into multiple. Most of the students, 95% in the district and 97% at the participating high school, qualified for free and reduced-price meals. The population of ELLs were 28% within the district and 26% at the participating high school.

Participants

The participants of the study were drawn from a convenience sample of sophomore students who attended one of the four local, comprehensive, public high schools in a school district in Southern California during the 2023-2024 academic school year. The sample size was 151 participants which exceed the required minimum of 96 for a one-way Analysis of Covariance (ANCOVA) with two groups when assuming a medium effect size with the covariate of $r = .5$, a statistical power of .7, and alpha level, $\alpha = .05$ (Gall et al., 2007). The 151-sample population was a convenience sample of the students based upon the course in which they are enrolled with their respective teachers. These two teachers were selected using the process described below.

During the academic year of the study, the high school had 432 sophomores enrolled.

Twenty-eight of the students in the sophomore grade level were taught in special education (SpED), non-inclusive English II classrooms, 63 of the sophomore students were taught in three English II Honors classrooms and 11 students were taught in an English course cohorted for one of the career and technical education (CTE) pathways on the campus. The remaining 330 students were enrolled in one of the remaining 11 sections of English II CP. These 11 sections of English II CP were taught by five teachers, and each teacher taught between one and three sections of English II CP. This educator was not one of the educators teaching English II CP during the year the current study was conducted. The breakdown of those 11 sections of English II CP were as follows: three teachers taught three sections, and two educators taught one section.

Seeking to have the maximum number of research participants, this researcher met with the English department and asked if anyone who taught multiple sections of English II CP were willing to participate in the research study. This researcher explained that the volunteers would need to allow 15 minutes of SSR four school days for a period of six weeks, allow students to choose from a selection of books provided by the researcher, and administer an 18-item survey at the beginning and end of the six-week period of the study. Teachers A and B responded that they were willing to participate in the study, so these two educators were chosen as the convenience sampling that would render nearly-equal groups. To determine which educator would comprise the treatment group and which would comprise the control group, this researcher discussed with both educators their upcoming lesson plans and what texts they intended to read for these units. The teacher for Group A shared that they intended to read a novel. This novel was one of the texts listed on the researcher's list of mirror books, so this class was chosen. Teacher A taught Group A, the treatment group, which consisted of 80 students, and Teacher B taught Group B, the control group, which consisted of 73 students. The study population consisted of 151

students. The study population was diminished to 73 participants when only factoring in surveys of students who completed both a pre- and post-treatment survey. Of the 73 participants, 25 (34.2%) were 15 years old, 46 (63%) were 16 years old, and two (2.7%) were 17 years old. Thirty (41.1%) of the 73 participants were female and 43 (58.9%) were male. All but one (1.4%) of the 73 students were sophomores; one student was a junior repeating the course. Four (5.5%) of the participants were Black, five (6.8%) were White, nine (12.3%) were multi-racial, and 55 (75.3%) were Hispanic or Latino.

Setting

The setting of the research study, for both the treatment and control group, was in the English II CP traditional classroom. The classroom for Group A had a teacher area at the front of the class that had a desk and chair for the teacher. This classroom had 36, sled-style desks. The desks were set in a cooperative learning style of four students within each group and the students faced inward toward their cooperative group. The nine groups had four students in each group and facing inward, each student had a should partner that sat to the right/left of them, and they each had a partner that they faced. The classroom for Group B had a teacher area at the front of the class that had a desk and chair for the teacher. This classroom had 30, sled-style desks for the student with a separate double wide table at the back of the classroom with two chairs. This table was not used for regular classroom seating while class is in session. The 30 desks faced the front of the classroom in rows and were paired, so each student sat shoulder-to-shoulder with their partner. When entering the room, the first three double rows had eight seats each, and the last double row held six seats for a total of 30. The school had two semesters per academic year: one fall and one spring. SSR was implemented for 15 minutes four days a week, Monday, Tuesday,

Thursday, and Friday. Each group, both the treatment and control group, engaged in SSR in their English II CP classroom.

Sophomore students attended school five days a week and had six classes each day. The English II CP classroom was one of their six, daily classes. The school had a 2-1-2 weekly schedule, which means that four academic days (Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, and Friday) had the same bell schedule, and Wednesdays had a shortened schedule. On Wednesdays, the academic minutes of periods one, three, four, five, and six were 43 minutes each, and second period was 45 minutes to allow additional time for the pledge and daily announcements. On the other four days of the week, periods one, three, four, five and six were 58 minutes, and second period was 60 minutes, allowing additional minutes for the pledge and daily announcements.

Instrumentation

The Survey of Adolescents' Reading Attitude (SARA) (Conradi et al., 2013), was used to measure the dependent variable, sophomore's attitudes toward reading. Consult Appendix A to view the survey instrument. Conradi et al. (2013) stated that the purpose of the SARA was to measure adolescents' attitude toward reading because attitude impacts students "engagement in reading" (Conradi et al., p. 566). The SARA has been used in several studies (Jang & Ryoo, 2019; Jang et al., 2021; Lupo et al., 2017; Sparks et al., 2018; Wang et al., 2020). The instrument was also translated into Chinese and used for a study (Wang & Jin, 2020).

Construct validity of the SARA was attained through conducting "a pilot study of 913 students grades 7-12" (Conradi et al., 2013, p. 568). Following the collection of numerical data, the team conducted several interviews and compared the data collected in the interviews with previous numerical data (Conradi et al., 2013). This process led to subscales of attitudes toward reading: reading print for academic purposes (AP), reading print for recreational purposes (RP),

reading digital text for academic purposes (AD), and reading digital texts for recreational purposes (RD) (Conradi et al., 2013). Conradi et al. (2013) and McKenna et al. (2012) stated that research into reading must be considered at the minute levels, where researchers examine attitude as a dimension of motivation and disaggregate the study of attitude towards reading for the purpose of academia from reading for pleasure. The interviews that followed the collection of numerical data confirmed that the SARA was targeting the attitudes they wished to measure and resulted in a few modifications to the initial survey (Conradi et al., 2013). To confirm construct validity, the SARA was administered on a national level to 4,491 students, not utilizing random sampling because the team wanted to make sure that the participant sampling provided a strong representation of the population in the United States (Conradi et al., 2013). The team used confirmatory factory analysis to ensure construct validity (Conradi et al., 2013). Based on Cronbach's alpha, the combined reliability coefficient for the SARA is .96, and the subscales are: AP - .78, AD - .82, RP - .86, and RD - .80 (Conradi et al., 2013).

The SARA is an 18-item survey with four subscales (Conradi et al., 2013). Subscales AP, AD, and RP have five items each, accounting for 15 of the 18 items (Conradi et al., 2013). The remaining three items are for subscale RD (Conradi et al., 2013). The SARA features a Likert scale of one to six in which one indicates "Very Bad" and six indicates "Very Good" (Conradi et al., 2013, p. 569). To discourage response set, the survey items and their categorical subscales are intermixed.

The combined possible score for the SARA is between 18 to 108 (Conradi et al., 2013). A score of 18 is the lowest score, indicating that the participant has a very negative attitude toward reading, while a score of 108 is the highest score and indicates that the participant has a very positive attitude toward reading (Conradi et al., 2013). However, the authors emphasized

the importance of looking at subscale scores instead of the holistic SARA score (Conradi et al., 2013). The possible subscale scores are: 5-30 for AP, 5-30 for AD, 5-30 for RP, and 3-18 for RD (Conradi et al., 2013).

To score the SARA, Conradi et al. (2013) recommended that participants Likert scores from printed survey be entered into a spreadsheet in which column one is the participant identifier, and each subsequent column contains the score for each item. Administration takes "less than 10 minutes" (Conradi et al., 2013, p. 568). Conradi et al. recommend utilizing a printed SARA that will allow students to write comments on it. While not an official part of the data being collected, Conradi et al. reported that comments written by participants were "telling" (p. 568). For scoring, Conradi et al. utilized a formula to calculate the average for each subscale by targeting the item number for each subscale. The authors have provided these features through an Excel spreadsheet that is available for download from the journal's website. Permission to use the SARA has been granted by the creators. See Appendix B for approval of the use of this instrument.

Procedures

Prior to approval by the Internal Review Board at Liberty University to collect data (see Appendix C), the principal at the participating high school granted permission for the researcher to seek out volunteer teachers who would utilize 15 minutes of SSR in their classroom four days a week for a period of six consecutive weeks. With the principal's permission (see Appendix D), the researcher contacted the teachers who were teaching English II CP for the 2023-2024 academic school year. After obtaining volunteers, the researcher chose two English II CP teachers whose rosters yielded nearly-equal number of participates so that one classroom would serve as the treatment group, Group A, and the other classroom would serve as the control group,

Group B. Once IRB approval was attained, the researcher visited the classrooms of both Teacher A and B.

The researcher read the prepared verbal recruitment letter (see Appendix E) and allowed time for students to ask follow-up questions. Students sought clarification on the purpose of the research study. One student asked, “What are you studying?” The researcher responded, “I’m studying of certain books changes students’ attitudes toward reading. Research says that students don’t find reading pleasurable, so I want to find out if reading specific books changes students’ attitudes toward reading. For instance, do they feel, ‘Reading isn’t so bad’ or ‘Nah. I still don’t like it.’” Another student said, “I’m lost. What do you want to know?” The research responded, “I want to know your opinion on reading. How do you feel about it? And from there, I want to know if reading certain books, mirror books, changes your opinion on reading. After reading mirror books, do you still feel the same, like reading a little more or a little less.” One student asked, “What are we going to do when we come back [from Spring Break]?” The researcher responded that when students return from Spring Break, they will be doing the normal curriculum that their teacher has prepared. As they have already been doing SSR for 15 minutes a day, they will just be choosing from the books provided by the researcher instead of checking out books from the school library. One student asked what books would be provided, wanting to know the grade level of the books. The researcher responded that there is a variety that spans different grade levels. Following answering the questions asked by students, an opt-out form will be given to the principal, the two educators of the participant groups for the English II CP courses, and each student (see Appendix F). The opt-out form was chosen as the study involves minimal risk to participants. Two Parental Opt-Out forms were returned from the control group; no opt-out forms were returned from the treatment group.

Book selection for the 15-minutes of SSR was determined by the following means. For Group A, the demographics of the sample population was considered, as it is an important factor of this current study. This researcher chose 10 titles that have the characteristics of mirror books and were considered culturally authentic, as discussed in earlier sections of this document (see Appendix G for the list of books that were provided to Group A). For Group B, this researcher received a list of the high-interest books available in the school library. High-interest was determined by the school librarian who used circulation data to select the most frequently loaned books in the last five years. Some selections were eliminated as books for Group B because they were considered mirror books by the researcher as determined by the definition outlined previously in this manuscript. These titles were eliminated as selections by Group B, so that the data could more accurately reflect that only the treatment group, Group A, was provided with and exposed to mirror books. Some of the selections on the list were not available, for they were currently checked out by students. This rendered 16 available books from the school library. The librarian agreed to allow the books to remain in the classroom of Group B's teacher for the duration of the study. Being that Group B needed a minimum of 30 books available for SSR, the researcher purchased additional copies of these same titles, so that 45 books were available for Group B's SSR (see Appendix H for the list of books that were provided to Group B).

The researcher prepared a script that the two educators should read to the students prior to giving the SARA pre-test. See Appendix A for the SARA survey and Appendix I for the pre-test script. The teachers read the pre-test script before distributing the SARA to the participants. The teacher set a timer for ten minutes and then collected the paper forms from the participants at the end of the ten minutes. Students who needed additional time were allotted the time they requested. Each teacher placed the completed forms in a large, legal-size envelope and gave

them to the researcher. The books were delivered to the respective classrooms, mirror books to the classroom for Group A and high-interest library books to the classroom of Group B, and students began their six weeks of SSR, 15 minutes a day, four days a week. SSR reading was held after attendance was taken, and the teacher had completed the beginning of class activities that were custom for their classroom. These activities included bell work as warmups and reviewing the agenda and daily class objective. At the end of the six weeks of SSR, the teachers read the post-test script before distributing the SARA to the participants (see Appendix J). The teachers set a timer for ten minutes and then collected the post-test paper forms from the participants at the end of the ten minutes. Students who needed additional time were allotted the time they requested. The researcher also prepared a demographics script (see Appendix K) that was shared with both participating teachers to read to their students prior to asking the study participants to complete a demographics questionnaire (see Appendix L). Students were given five minutes to complete the demographics questionnaire. Students who needed additional were allotted the time they requested. Each teacher placed the completed forms in a large, legal-size envelope and gave them to the researcher.

Paper survey response forms and demographic questionnaire were stored in a locked file cabinet. Only the researcher had access to the contents of the cabinet. Numerical information from the forms were entered into a spreadsheet, and the data was stored in password protected cloud storage. Data from the demographics questionnaire were entered into a spreadsheet, and that data was also stored in a password protected cloud storage. Only the researcher had access to the password. Data, both paper forms and digital, will be retained for five years post the conclusion of the study.

Data Analysis

A one-way ANCOVA was used to statistically measure the numerical data of the pre- and post-test of the SARA for both Group A (treatment group) and Group B (control group). The one-way ANCOVA was the appropriate statistical method of analysis for this research study because the study utilized both pre and posttest data to measure one independent variable (students' attitudes toward reading) amongst two groups (Group A – treatment group and Group B – control group) in relation to one dependent variable (exposure to mirror books), while statistically controlling for covariant (pretest mean difference between nonequivalent groups) (Gall et al., 2007). To control for covariant, a one-way ANCOVA was used on the pretest data of Group A and Group B to account for differences between the nonequivalent groups. After controlling for the covariant, a one-way ANCOVA was used on the posttest data of Group A and B to measure the difference between the two groups at the end of the six-week period during which students engaged in SSR. The one-way ANCOVA requires that the dependent variable be continuous, and that the independent variable be categorical (Warner, 2021). The one-way ANCOVA also allows for statistical comparison of data for two or more independent groups (Gall et al., 2007). Prior to running any statistical tests, the data was screened to look for missing and inaccurate entries. Accuracy of entries was ensured by double checking the transference of paper information to its digital form. Any missing data was removed pairwise. When the data successfully passed screening for information accuracy, data analysis proceeded by the following method.

The one-way ANCOVA requires several assumption tests (Barthlow et al., 2023). A box-and-whiskers plot is required to test for extreme outliers (Barthlow et al., 2023). The Shapiro-Wilk test is required to test for normal distribution (Barthlow et al., 2023; Grande, 2017). The assumption of normal distribution is determined by probability value (*p*) (Grande, 2017; Warner,

2021). A *p* value greater than .05 means the assumption is met; a *p* value less than .05 means the assumption is violated (Grande, 2017; Warner, 2021). Levene's test was used to test for equality of variances to satisfy the assumption of homogeneity of variance (Barthlow et al., 2023; Grande, 2017). The output of Levene's test is reported in a *p* value (Grande, 2017; Warner, 2021). If the *p* value is less than .05, the assumption is violated; if the *p* value is greater than .05, the assumption is met (Grande, 2017; Warner, 2021). Additionally, a one-way ANCOVA requires an assumption of linear relationships and an assumption of homogeneity be met (Barthlow et al., 2023). The test for a linear relationship was performed by creating a scatterplot that is grouped (Barthlow et al., 2023), looking for an elliptical pattern for each grouped scatterplot (Grande, 2016). The test for homogeneity of regression slopes is done by viewing the box-and-whiskers plot that is also used to determine if there were extreme outliers (Barthlow et al., 2023) or by running a statistical analysis of the treatment group times the covariate statistical difference (Grande, 2016). A value of less than .05 means the assumption is met; a value greater than .05 means the assumption was not met (Grande, 2016).

The sample size was 73 participants, which exceeds the required minimum of 63 for a one-way ANCOVA when assuming a medium effect size with the covariate of r = .5, a statistical power of .5, and alpha level, $\alpha = .05$ (Gall et al., 2007). Assuming for a medium effect size, an effect size *p* value less than .05 means a statistically, significant difference (Grande, 2016). The lower the value, the higher the significance (Grande, 2016). However, if a statistically significant difference is not determined and the null hypothesis is rejected, the Bonferroni post hoc is recommended to be used to reduce the risk factors for a Type I error (Warner, 2021), which can occur if any of the assumption tests were violated. The Bonferroni post hoc test is conservative and flexible, but it increases the likelihood of Type II errors (Warner, 2021).

CHAPTER FOUR: FINDINGS

Overview

This chapter discusses the statistical investigation into the impact of mirror books on sophomore students' attitudes toward reading via using a one-way analysis of covariance (ANCOVA) utilizing the Survey of Adolescent Reading Attitudes (SARA) as an instrument of measurement. This chapter contains the descriptive statistics obtained from the ANCOVA as well as a detailed description of the step taken to run the statistical calculations, such as the assumptions test run and the steps taken when Shapiro-Wilk test for normal distribution was not satisfied for one of the SARA subscales. Detailed descriptive statistics are provided for both the SARA holistic score and its four subscales: Academic Print (AP), Academic Digital (AD), Recreational Print (RP), and Recreational Digital (RD).

Research Question

RQ1: Is there a difference in attitudes toward reading among minority sophomore students exposed to mirror books and those who were not when controlling for pretreatment differences in students' attitudes toward reading?

Null Hypothesis

The null hypothesis for this study is:

$H_0$1: There is no difference in attitudes toward reading, as measured by the SARA, between minority sophomore students exposed to mirror books and those who were not when controlling for pretreatment differences in students' attitudes toward reading.

Descriptive Statistics

Descriptive statistics were obtained on the impact of mirror books on sophomore students' attitudes toward reading. The covariate, nonequivalent sophomore group's attitudes

towards reading, was controlled for by utilizing the SARA as both a pre- and post-treatment test to account for the nonequivalent groups. SARA holistic post-treatment scores for attitudes towards reading were slightly higher for Group B (M = 70.35, SD = 16.06) compared to Group A (M = 68.55, SD = 16.28) (See Table 1). SARA AP subscale post-treatment attitudes towards reading were slightly higher for Group A (M = 17.69, SD = 4.80) compared to Group B (M = 17.03, SD = 4.83) (Table 2). SARA AD subscale post-treatment attitudes towards reading were slightly higher for Group B (M = 20.13, SD = 4.71) compared to Group A (M = 18.60, SD = 4.52) (Table 3). SARA RP subscale post-treatment attitudes towards reading were slightly higher for Group A (M = 18.88, SD = 6.57) compared to Group A (M = 18.06, SD = 7.00) (Table 4). SARA RD subscale post-treatment attitudes towards reading were higher for Group B (M = 15.13, SD = 3.07) compared to Group A (M = 13.38, SD = 3.70) (Table 5).

Table 1

Descriptive Statistics: SARA Holistic

Dependent Variable:	Attitudes Post		
Treatment	*n*	*M*	*SD*
Group A	42	68.55	16.28
Group B	31	70.35	16.06
Total	73	69.32	16.10

Table 2

Descriptive Statistics: SARA AP

Dependent Variable:	Attitudes Post		
Treatment	*n*	*M*	*SD*
Group A	42	17.70	4.80

Group B	31	17.03	4.83
Total	73	17.41	4.79

Table 3

Descriptive Statistics: SARA AD

Dependent Variable:	Attitudes Post		
Treatment	*n*	*M*	*SD*
Group A	42	18.60	4.52
Group B	31	20.13	4.71
Total	73	19.25	4.63

Table 4

Descriptive Statistics: SARA RP

Dependent Variable:	Attitudes Post		
Treatment	*n*	*M*	*SD*
Group A	42	18.88	6.57
Group B	31	18.06	7
Total	73	18.53	6.72

Table 5

Descriptive Statistics: SARA RD

Dependent Variable:	Attitudes Post

Treatment	*n*	*M*	*SD*
Group A	42	13.38	3.70
Group B	31	15.13	3.07
Total	73	14.12	3.54

Results

Data Screening

Prior to conducting statistical calculations, data was screened to ensure only data from participants who completed both a pre- and post-treatment survey were used for statistical calculations. The teacher for both Group A and Group B assigned identification numbers to each of the participants. Fifty-two participants from Group A completed a pre-treatment SARA, and 45 participants from Group B completed a pre-treatment SARA. Forty-two participants from Group A completed a post-treatment survey, and 31 participants in Group B completed a post-treatment survey. The researcher used the identification numbers on each of the pre-treatment surveys to cross reference and remove the pre-treatment data for Group A and Group B participants who did not complete a post-treatment survey. The remaining number of participants were 42 for Group A and 31 for Group B. Additionally, box and whiskers plots were created to identify extreme outliers in both the pre- and post-treatment data (Figures 1 & 2). No extreme outliers were identified.

Figure 1

Box and Whiskers Plots (covariate: SARA Pre-treatment Data)

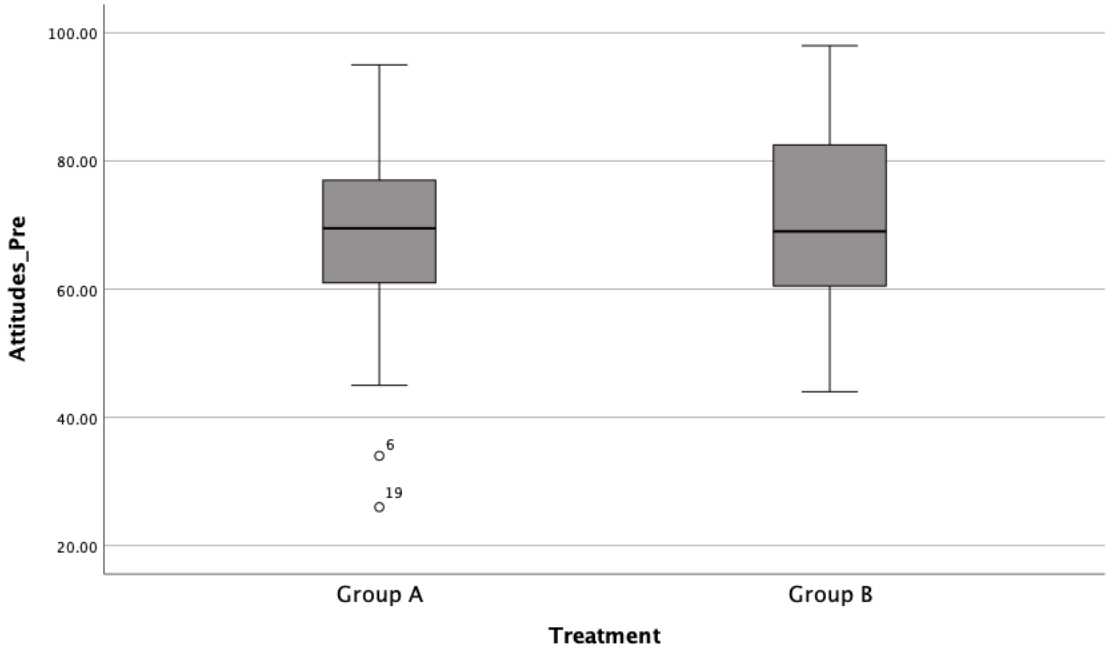
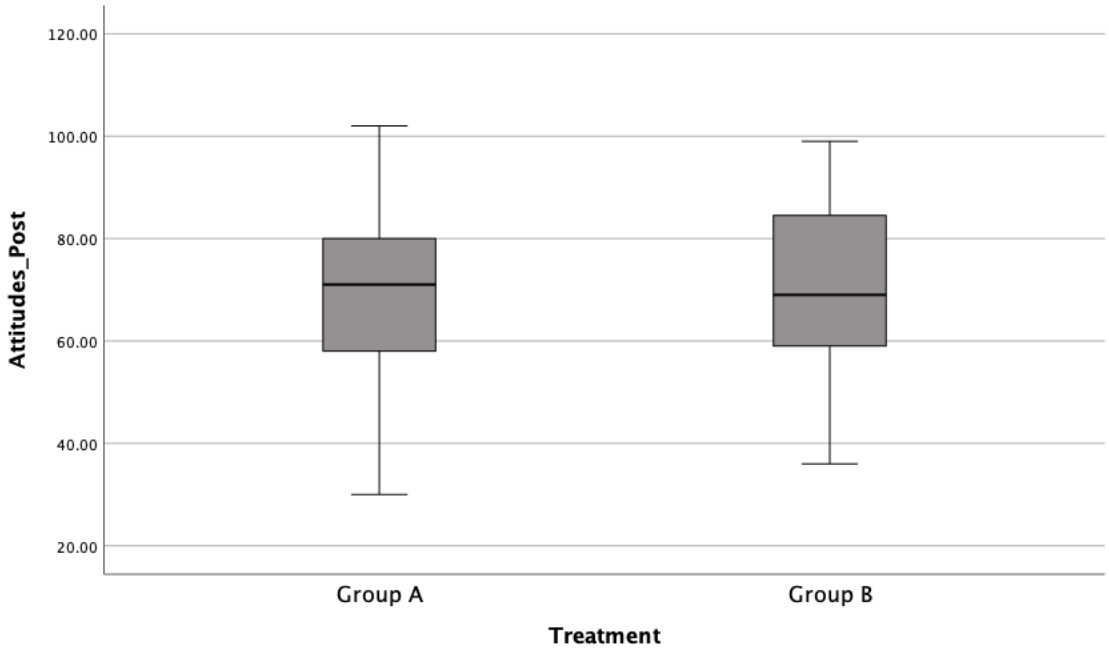


Figure 2

Box and Whiskers Plots (dependent: SARA Post-treatment Data)



Assumptions

An ANCOVA was used to test the null hypothesis. The ANCOVA required that the

assumptions of normality, assumption of linearity and bivariate normal distribution, assumptions of homogeneity of slopes, and the homogeneity of variance, are met.

Normality for the SARA holistic score as well as the four subscales was examined using a Shapiro-Wilk test. No violations of normality were found as the Shapiro-Wilk test indicated that the attitudes toward reading scores were normally distributed for the SARA holistic scaled scores, Group A, $W(42) = .96$, $p = .152$, and Group B, $W(31) = .97$, $p = .575$ (Table 6), the SARA AP subscale, Group A, $W(42) = .95$, $p = .084$, and Group B, $W(31) = .96$, $p = .214$ (Table 7), the SARA AD subscale, Group A, $W(42) = .98$, $p = .589$, and Group B, $W(31) = .99$, $p = .937$ (Table 8), and the SARA RP subscale, Group A, $W(42) = .97$, $p = .359$, and Group B, $W(31) = .96$, $p = .238$ (Table 9). However, for the SARA RD subscale, a Shapiro-Wilk test indicated that the attitudes toward reading scores were not normally distributed, Group A, $W(42) = .93$, $p = .013$, and Group B, $W(31) = .852$, $p = <.001$ (Table 10).

Table 6

Tests of Normality Post-treatment Score Attitudes: SARA Holistic

		Shapiro-Wilk		
	Treatment	Statistic	*df*	Sig.
Attitudes Post	Group A	.960	42	.152
	Group B	.972	31	.575

* This is a lower bound of the true significance.

a. Lilliefors Significance Correction

Table 7

Tests of Normality Attitudes Post-treatment Scores: SARA AP

	Treatment	Shapiro-Wilk

		Statistic	*df*	Sig.
Attitudes Post	Group A	.953	42	.084
	Group B	.955	31	.214

*. This is a lower bound of the true significance.

a. Lilliefors Significance Correction

Table 8

Tests of Normality Post-treatment Scores: SARA AD

		Shapiro-Wilk		
	Treatment	Statistic	*df*	Sig.
Attitudes Post	Group A	.978	42	.589
	Group B	.985	31	.937

*. This is a lower bound of the true significance.

a. Lilliefors Significance Correction

Table 9

Tests of Normality Post-treatment Scores: SARA RP

		Shapiro-Wilk		
	Treatment	Statistic	*df*	Sig.
Attitudes Post	Group A	.971	42	.359
	Group B	.957	31	.238

*. This is a lower bound of the true significance.

a. Lilliefors Significance Correction

Table 10

Tests of Normality Attitudes Post-treatment Scores: SARA RD

		Shapiro-Wilk		
	Treatment	Statistic	*df*	Sig.
Attitudes Post	Group A	.930	42	.013
	Group B	.852	31	<.001

a. Lilliefors Significance Correction

When a Shapiro-Wilk test for normality of distribution shows that data is not normally distributed, there are three options a researcher may use to move forward with a one-way ANCOVA (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2013). One of those options is to transform the data. The researcher chose to explore transforming the data using the methods for moderately, negatively skewed (Table 11), strongly, negatively skewed (Table 12), and moderately, positively skewed (Table 13).

Table 11

Tests of Normality Attitudes Post-treatment: SARA RD

(Moderately, Negatively Skewed)

		Shapiro-Wilk		
	Treatment	Statistic	*df*	Sig.
Attitudes Post	Group A	.916	42	.004
SQRT	Group B	.815	31	<.001

a. Lilliefors Significance Correction

Table 12

Tests of Normality Attitudes Post-treatment (Strongly, Negative Skewed): SARA RD

		Shapiro-Wilk		
	Treatment	Statistic	*df*	Sig.
Attitudes Post log10 ref	Group A	.885	42	<.001
	Group B	.901	31	.007

a. Lilliefors Significance Correction

Table 13

Tests of Normality Attitudes Post-treatment (Moderately, Positively Skewed): SARA RD

		Shapiro-Wilk		
	Treatment	Statistic	*df*	Sig.
Attitudes Post SQRT ref	Group A	.935	42	.020
	Group B	.906	31	.010

a. Lilliefors Significance Correction

All three of these attempts to transform the data were unsuccessful as each significance value was below .05, the value needed to meet the assumptions of normal distribution (Barthlow et al., 2023; Grande, 2017; Warner 2021). Tabachnick and Fidell (2013) stated that one may move forward with a one-way ANCOVA despite the assumption for normality of distribution not being met because the one-way ANCOVA is robust. In light of this, the researcher chose to

move forward with calculations using the one-way ANCOVA.

A scatterplot was used to test for the assumption of linearity, and the scatterplot showed a linear relationship between the pre- and post-treatment scores for the SARA holistic scores and each of the subscales. Figure 3, Figure 4, Figure 5, Figure 6, and Figure 7 include the scatter plots for each group.

Figure 3

Scatterplot of Scores: SARA

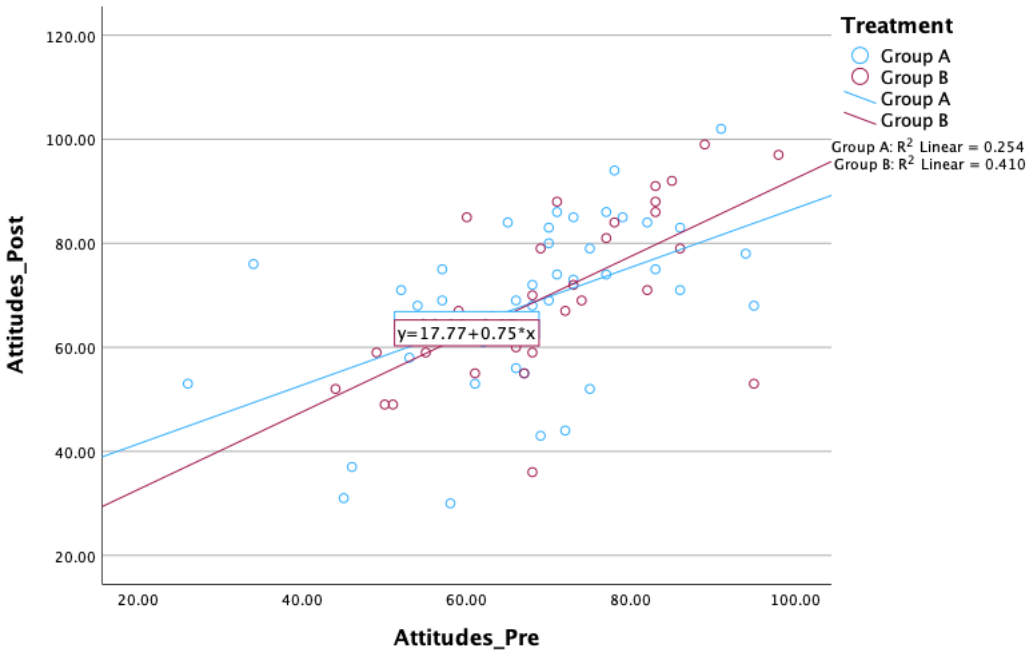


Figure 4

Scatterplot of Scores: SARA AP

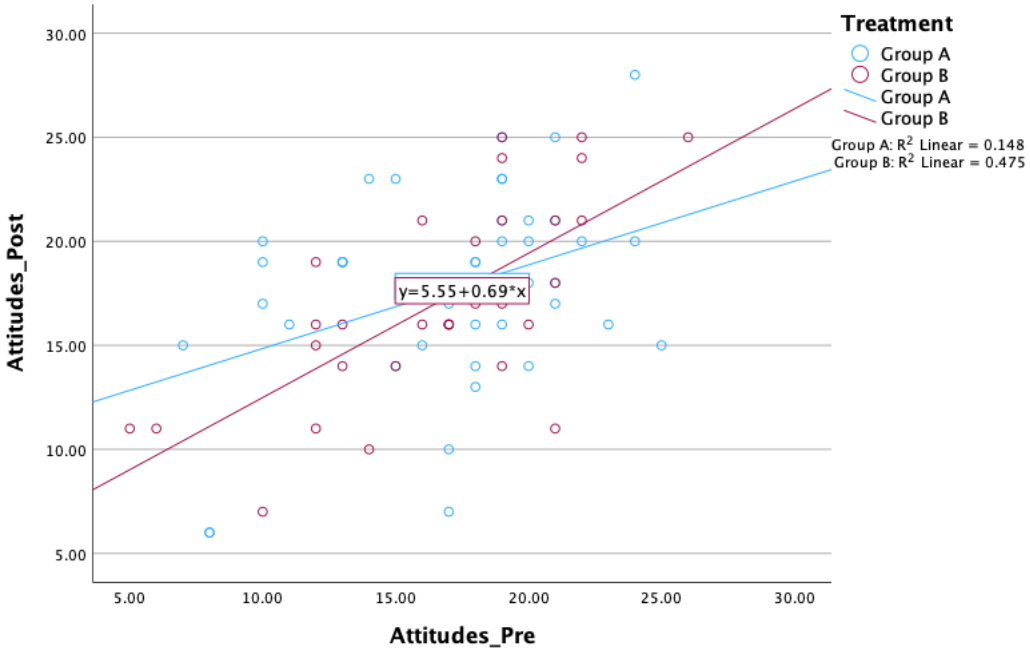


Figure 5

Scatterplot of Scores: SARA AD

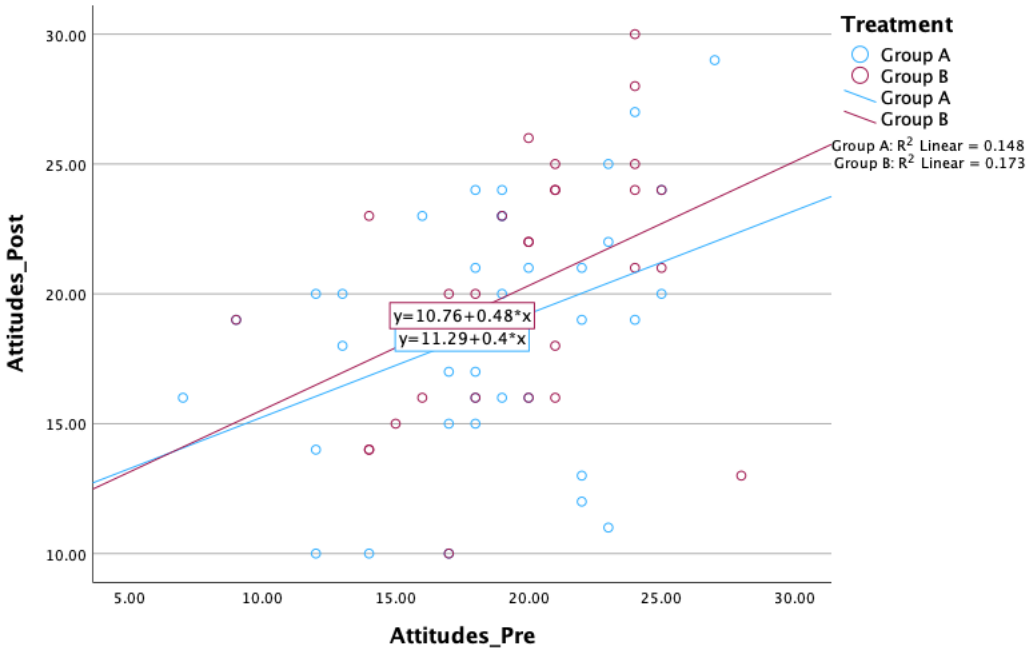


Figure 6

Scatterplot of Scores: SARA RP

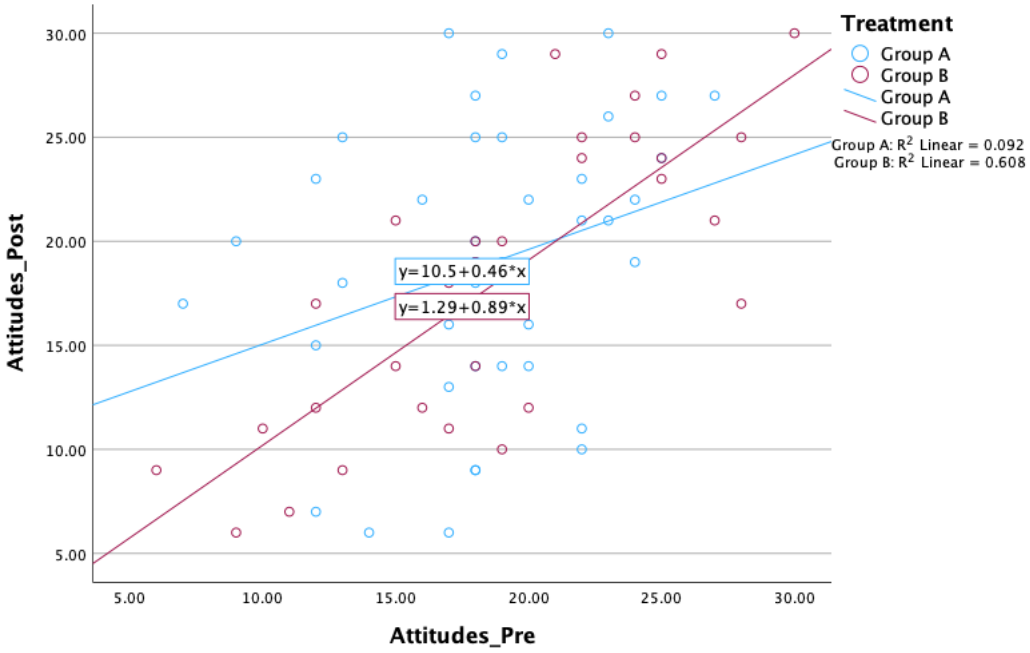
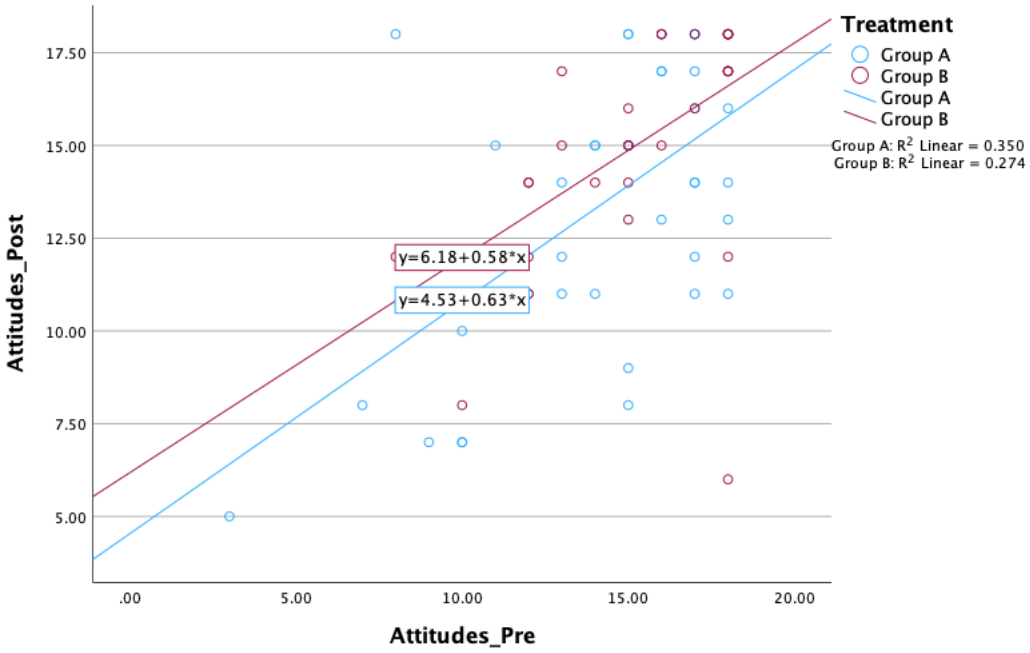


Figure 7

Scatterplot of Scores: SARA RD



F tests were performed to show the interaction between treatment and pre-treatment attitudes scores for SARA holistic scores shows, $F(1,69) = .61$, $p = .436$ (Table 14), SARA AP

subscale scores, $F(1,69) = 1.92$, $p = .170$ (Table 15), SARA AD subscale scores, $F(1,69) = .11$, $p = .742$ (Table 16), SARA RP subscale scores, $F(1,69) = 2.77$, $p = .101$ (Table 17), and SARA RD subscale scores, $F(1,69) = .04$, $p = .840$ (Table 18).

Table 14

Tests of Between-Subjects Effects: SARA

Dependent Variable: Attitudes Post

Source	Type III Sum of Squares	*df*	Mean Square	*F*	Sig.
Corrected Model	5996.565[a]	3	1998.855	10.883	<.001
Intercept	1572.642	1	1572.642	8.562	.005
Treatment	104.935	1	104.935	.571	.452
Attitudes Pre	5910.246	1	5910.246	32.179	<.001
Treatment * Attitudes Pre	112.706	1	112.706	.614	.436
Error	12673.188	69	183.669		
Total	369404.000	73			
Corrected Total	18669.753	72			

a. *R* Squared = .321 (Adjusted *R* Squared = .292)

Table 15

Tests of Between-Subjects Effects: SARA AP

Dependent Variable: Attitudes Post

Source	Type III Sum of Squares	*df*	Mean Square	*F*	Sig.
Corrected Model	479.146[a]	3	159.715	9.415	<.001

Intercept	339.153	1	339.153	19.992	<.001
Treatment	35.167	1	35.167	2.073	.154
Attitudes Pre	460.276	1	460.276	27.132	<.001
Treatment * Attitudes Pre	32.598	1	32.598	1.922	.170
Error	1170.526	69	16.964		
Total	23779.000	73			
Corrected Total	1649.671	72			

a. *R* Squared = .290 (Adjusted *R* Squared = .260)

Table 16

Tests of Between-Subjects Effects: SARA AD

Dependent Variable: Attitudes Post

Source	Type III Sum of Squares	*df*	Mean Square	*F*	Sig.
Corrected Model	281.127[a]	3	93.709	5.114	.003
Intercept	388.756	1	388.756	21.214	<.001
Treatment	.227	1	.227	.012	.912
Attitudes Pre	235.117	1	235.117	12.830	<.001
Treatment * Attitudes Pre	2.010	1	2.010	.110	.742
Error	1264.434	69	18.325		
Total	28587.000	73			
Corrected Total	1545.562	72			

a. *R* Squared = .182 (Adjusted *R* Squared = .146)

Table 17

Tests of Between-Subjects Effects: SARA RP

Dependent Variable: Attitudes Post					
Source	Type III Sum of Squares	*df*	Mean Square	*F*	Sig.
Corrected Model	1069.492[a]	3	356.497	11.270	<.001
Intercept	173.688	1	173.688	5.491	.022
Treatment	105.800	1	105.800	3.345	.072
Attitudes Pre	840.306	1	840.306	26.564	<.001
Treatment * Attitudes Pre	87.661	1	87.661	2.771	.101
Error	2182.672	69	31.633		
Total	28329.000	73			
Corrected Total	3252.164	72			

a. *R* Squared = .329 (Adjusted *R* Squared = .300)

Table 18

Tests of Between-Subjects Effects: SARA RD

Dependent Variable: Attitudes Post					
Source	Type III Sum of Squares	*df*	Mean Square	*F*	Sig.
Corrected Model	329.083[a]	3	109.694	13.260	<.001
Intercept	77.340	1	77.340	9.349	.003
Treatment	1.822	1	1.822	.220	.640
Attitudes Pre	230.233	1	230.233	27.831	<.001
Treatment * Attitudes Pre	.340	1	.340	.041	.840

Error	570.807	69	8.273
Total	15461.000	73	
Corrected Total	899.890	72	

a. *R* Squared = .366 (Adjusted *R* Squared = .338)

Levene's test for equality of variance indicated that the assumption for homogeneity of variance was met for SARA holistic scores, $F(1,71) = 1.09$, $p = .300$ (Table 19), SARA AP subscale scores, $F(1,71) = 2.73$, $p = .103$ (Table 20), SARA AD subscale scores, $F(1,71) = .05$, $p = .826$ (Table 21), SARA RP subscale scores, $F(1,71) = 3.03$, $p = .086$ (Table 22), and SARA RD subscale scores, $F(1,71) = 3.49$, $p = .066$ (Table 23).

Table 19

Levene's Test of Equality of Error Variances[a]: SARA

Dependent Variable: Attitudes Post			
F	*df1*	*df2*	Sig.
1.090	1	71	.300

Tests the null hypothesis that the error variance of the dependent variable is equal across groups.

a. Design: Intercept + Attitudes Pre + Treatment

Table 20

Levene's Test of Equality of Error Variances[a]: SARA AP

Dependent Variable: Attitudes Post			
F	*df1*	*df2*	Sig.
2.731	1	71	.103

Tests the null hypothesis that the error variance of the dependent variable is equal across groups.

a. Design: Intercept + Attitudes Pre + Treatment

Table 21

Levene's Test of Equality of Error Variances[a]: SARA AD

Dependent Variable: Attitudes Post			
F	*df1*	*df2*	Sig.
.049	1	71	.826

Tests the null hypothesis that the error variance of the dependent variable is equal across groups.

a. Design: Intercept + Attitudes Pre + Treatment

Table 22

Levene's Test of Equality of Error Variances[a]: SARA RP

Dependent Variable: Attitudes Post			
F	*df1*	*df2*	Sig.
3.029	1	71	.086

Tests the null hypothesis that the error variance of the dependent variable is equal across groups.

a. Design: Intercept + Attitudes Pre + Treatment

Table 23

Levene's Test of Equality of Error Variances[a]: SARA RD

Dependent Variable: Attitudes Post			
F	*df1*	*df2*	Sig.

3.489	1	71	.066

Tests the null hypothesis that the error variance of the dependent variable is equal across groups.

a. Design: Intercept + Attitudes Pre + Treatment

Results for Null Hypothesis

A one-way ANCOVA was used to examine if exposure to mirror books impacted sophomore students' attitudes towards. Group A was the treatment group, and Group B was the control group. The SARA was used as a pre-treatment instrument of measurement to control for the covariate, pre-treatment differences in attitudes toward reading. The program used for statistical analysis was the Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) version 29. The instrument of measurement was the SARA. The one-way ANCOVA was used to measure statistical differences for the SARA holistic scaled score and the subscales, AP, AD, RP, and RD.

Examining the SARA holistic scores, the researcher failed to reject the null hypothesis at a 95% confidence level, $F(1,70) = .004$, $p = .951$, $\eta_p^2 = .000$ (Table 24). The effect size of the SARA holistic score was minimal. After controlling for pre-treatment attitudes toward reading, SARA holistic post-treatment scores for attitudes towards reading were slightly higher for Group B ($M = 70.35$, $SD = 16.06$) compared to Group A ($M = 68.55$, $SD = 16.28$) (Table 1 above).

Examining SARA subscales, the researcher failed to reject the null hypothesis at the 95% confidence level for all subscales. After controlling for pre-treatment attitudes toward reading, SARA AD subscale post-treatment attitudes towards reading were slightly higher for Group B ($M = 20.13$, $SD = 4.71$) compared to Group A ($M = 18.60$, $SD = 4.52$) (Table 3 above), $F(1,70) = 1$, $p = .321$, $\eta_p^2 > .01$ (Table 25). The effect size of the SARA AD subscale was small. After

controlling for pre-treatment attitudes toward reading, SARA RD subscale post-treatment attitudes towards reading were higher for Group B (M = 15.13, SD = 3.07) compared to Group A (M = 13.38, SD = 3.70) (Table 5 above), $F(1,70) = 1.89$, p - .174, η_p^2 <.03 (Table 26). The effect size for the SARA RD subscale was small.

The researcher failed to reject the null hypothesis at the 95% confidence level for SARA subscales AP and RP. After controlling for pre-treatment attitudes toward reading, SARA AP subscale post-treatment attitudes towards reading were slightly higher for Group A (M = 17.69, SD = 4.80) compared to Group B (M = 17.03, SD = 4.83) (Table 2 above), $F(1,70) = 1$, p = .32, η_p^2 > .014 (Table 27). After controlling for pre-treatment attitudes toward reading, SARA RP subscale post-treatment attitudes towards reading were slightly higher for Group A (M = 18.88, SD = 6.57) compared to Group A (M = 18.06, SD = 7.00) (Table 4 above), $F(1,70) = .70$, p = .407, η_p^2 > .01 (Table 28).

Table 24

Post-treatment Tests of Between-Subjects Effects: SARA

Dependent Variable: Attitudes Post

Source	Type III Sum of Squares	*df*	Mean Square	*F*	Sig.	Partial Eta Squared
Corrected Model	5883.859[a]	2	2941.929	16.106	<.001	.315
Intercept	1850.478	1	1850.478	10.131	.002	.126
Attitudes Pre	5825.607	1	5825.607	31.894	<.001	.313
Treatment	.705	1	.705	.004	.951	.000
Error	12785.894	70	182.656			

Total	369404.000	73				
Corrected Total	18669.753	72				

a. *R* Squared = .315 (Adjusted *R* Squared = .296)

Table 25

Tests of Between-Subjects Effects: SARA AD

Dependent Variable: Attitudes Post

Source	Type III Sum of Squares	*df*	Mean Square	*F*	Sig.	Partial Eta Squared
Corrected Model	279.117[a]	2	139.559	7.714	<.001	.181
Intercept	428.202	1	428.202	23.668	<.001	.253
Attitudes Pre	237.159	1	237.159	13.108	<.001	.158
Treatment	18.050	1	18.050	.998	.321	.014
Error	1266.444	70	18.092			
Total	28587.000	73				
Corrected Total	1545.562	72				

a. *R* Squared = .181 (Adjusted *R* Squared = .157)

Table 26

Tests of Between-Subjects Effects: SARA RD

Dependent Variable: Attitudes Post

Source	Type III Sum of Squares	*df*	Mean Square	*F*	Sig.	Partial Eta Squared

Corrected Model	328.743[a]	2	164.372	20.145	<.001	.365
Intercept	87.178	1	87.178	10.685	.002	.132
Attitudes Pre	274.242	1	274.242	33.611	<.001	.324
Treatment	15.407	1	15.407	1.888	.174	.026
Error	571.147	70	8.159			
Total	15461.000	73				
Corrected Total	899.890	72				

a. *R* Squared = .365 (Adjusted *R* Squared = .347)

Table 27

Tests of Between-Subjects Effects: SARA AP

Dependent Variable: Attitudes Post

Source	Type III Sum of Squares	*df*	Mean Square	*F*	Sig.	Partial Eta Squared
Corrected Model	446.548[a]	2	223.274	12.990	<.001	.271
Intercept	362.020	1	362.020	21.063	<.001	.231
Attitudes Pre	438.820	1	438.820	25.531	<.001	.267
Treatment	2.569	1	2.569	.149	.700	.002
Error	1203.124	70	17.187			
Total	23779.000	73				
Corrected Total	1649.671	72				

a. *R* Squared = .271 (Adjusted *R* Squared = .250)

Table 28

Tests of Between-Subjects Effects: SARA RP

Dependent Variable: Attitudes Post

Source	Type III Sum of Squares	*df*	Mean Square	*F*	Sig.	Partial Eta Squared
Corrected Model	981.831[a]	2	490.916	15.136	<.001	.302
Intercept	139.992	1	139.992	4.316	.041	.058
Attitudes Pre	969.943	1	969.943	29.906	<.001	.299
Treatment	22.540	1	22.540	.695	.407	.010
Error	2270.333	70	32.433			
Total	28329.000	73				
Corrected Total	3252.164	72				

a. *R* Squared = .302 (Adjusted *R* Squared = .282)

CHAPTER FIVE: CONCLUSIONS

Overview

This chapter revisits the theory on which the study is based, CRP, and the scholarly literature that encompasses mirror books and literacy. It reorients the reader with the problems identified in scholarly literature that are both curricular and pedagogical issues. This study enters its statistical findings into a literature gap, the absence of scholarly literature on adolescents' attitudes toward reading. This chapter also discussed the implications of the study conducted, its limitations, and future recommendations.

Discussion

The purpose of the study was to conduct a quantitative, quasi-experimental research study with a nonequivalent control group design to measure the statistical impact exposure to mirror books had on sophomore students' attitudes toward reading. The null hypothesis was that there would not be a significant change in students' attitudes toward reading when exposed to mirror books.

The data suggests that there is not a significant improvement in sophomore students' attitudes toward reading among the sample population studied when exposed to mirror books. As the SARA survey is viewed in terms of its holistic score and four subscales, the analysis of data for each of these components needs to be considered. For three aspects measured, the results of this study were the exact opposite of what existing literature (Ciampa & Reisboard, 2021; Johnson et al., 2017; Piper, 2019; Walker & Hutchison, 2020) suggested the study would find. The mean scores for Group B, the control group, were higher for the SARA holistic score, SARA AD subscale, and SARA RD subscale than the mean scores for Group A, the treatment group. Although, the difference was minimal for Group B scores over Group A, existing

literature (Ciampa & Reisboard, 2021; Johnson et al., 2017; Piper, 2019; Walker & Hutchison, 2020) suggested that the mean scores for Group A, the treatment group, would have been higher than the mean scores for the control group since Group A was exposed to mirror books. Examining the mean scores for SARA AP subscale and SARA RP subscale, the mean score for Group A, the treatment group, were slightly higher than the mean scores for Group B, the control group, showing an improvement in students' attitudes toward reading. Although the difference in mean scores of Group A over Group B in these two subscales were statistically insignificant, the findings of this research appear to be in line with what literature (Ciampa & Reisboard, 2021; Johnson et al., 2017; Piper, 2019; Walker & Hutchison, 2020) suggests. Overall, the data does not suggest that exposure to mirror books may improve students' attitudes toward reading.

The theoretical framework for this study was CRP. The major tenets of CRP are cultural acceptance (Chase, 2019; Hollie, 2018, 2019; Ladson-Billings, 1995; Piper, 2019), affirming of culture (Ladson-Billings, 1995; 2014), and critical consciousness (Ladson-Billings, 1995). Cultural acceptance demonstrates to students that their culture is valued and accepted. In the ELA classroom, acceptance can be shown by the availability of culturally reflective literature for students to read. Affirming culture means recognizing and supporting students to maintain their cultural identity simultaneously with navigating academic success; cultural identity should not be sacrificed in order to achieve academic success. The focus of critical consciousness is to empower students to challenge injustice. Existing research (Ciampa & Reisboard, 2021; Johnson et al., 2017; Piper, 2019; Walker & Hutchison, 2020) suggested that the use of mirror books during SSR would improve students' attitudes toward reading as expansion of the literary cannon to include mirror books meets the tenets of cultural acceptance and affirming of culture.

This researcher was surprised to find that there was not a statistically measured

improvement of the treatment group's attitudes toward reading post-treatment since existing literature (Ciampa & Reisboard, 2021; Johnson et al., 2017; Piper, 2019; Walker & Hutchison, 2020) suggests that the statistical findings of this study would show a significant improvement in students' attitudes toward reading with the exposure to mirror books. While it would be impossible to ascertain the reasons that the results of this research study did not align with what current literature (Ciampa & Reisboard, 2021; Johnson et al., 2017; Piper, 2019; Walker & Hutchison, 2020) suggested because student responses were anonymous, this investigation into adolescents' attitudes toward reading does offer some hope with the improvement of mean scores in the SARA AP subscale and SARA RP subscale. Given the improvement in mean, post-treatment SARA subscales AP and RP scores, a closer look at students' attitudes toward printed materials could yield further insight into means to improve students' attitudes toward reading. Allred and Cena (2020) measured whether providing students with literary choice and restructuring class practices impacted students' motivation to read. In their mixed method study, Allred and Cena measured a statistically significant difference in means. Perhaps utilizing a mixed-method study would allow a researcher to qualitatively identify the most impactive ways to restructure classroom curriculum and/or procedures with mirror books.

Furthermore, as attitudes are an attribute that develop over time (Cheema, 2018; Jang & Ryoo, 2019; Petscher, 2010), it is possible that the six-week period devoted toward the study was not a significant enough period to show a statistically significant improvement in attitudes toward reading of printed materials. Walker and Hutchison (2020) conducted a 10-week study utilizing culturally relevant text to guide instructional practices and noticed an improvement in literacy achievement scores. Perhaps time was a factor in this study and a longer study would yield a statistically measurable improvement of students' attitudes towards reading.

It is also possible that the results would be different if students could preselect the books prior to the beginning of the study instead of the researcher selecting the books. It could be that even though the books chosen were mirror books as perceived by the researcher, they were not books that the students would have chosen for themselves if given a choice. Given students' unique identities, perhaps the students did not perceive the books as reflective of themselves, and therefore, did not view them as mirror books. Allred and Cena's (2020) study suggested that student choice improves students' perceived value in reading. The researchers measured a statistically significant difference in means of students perceived value in reading, and thereby, improves reading motivation with the implementation of student choice. As attitudes are a component of motivation (Conradi et al., 2013; Griffin et al., 2020), studying attitudes towards reading and incorporating students' choice, could yield a statistically measurable improvement in attitudes toward reading.

While the results of this study did not align with what current literature suggested (Allrked & Cena, 2020; Ford et al., 2019; Walker & Hutchison, 2020), the results can be discussed in terms of what scholars have written about the importance of mirror books. Research has shown that mirror books increase literacy levels, academic performance, self-esteem, and feelings of empowerment (Dallacqua, 2022; Ford et al., 2019; Johnson et al., 2017; Martin & Beese, 2017; Piper, 2017; Walker & Hutchison, 2021). Allred and Cena (2020) investigated the impact of literary choice and SSR on students' self-identity as readers and perceived value in reading. When measuring, Allred and Cena noted a statistically significant difference in means when the students are given choice. Ford et al. (2019) reported that Black girls felt empowered as readers when seeing themselves reflected in the literature they read. Walker and Hutchison (2021) used culturally relevant texts to improve literacy achievement for Black male students in

middle school. Their study noted a statistically significant improvement in literacy scores from Fall to Spring semesters of the academic school year.

The above researcher highlights the measured improvement on students' self-identity as readers, engagement, motivation, and literacy levels when exposed to mirror books. However, there is much that is not yet known, for Toste et al. (2019) stated that there is a need to perform methodical and thorough inquiry into reading motivations at all grade levels. Conradi et al. (2013) provided the terminology to discuss the multiple factors that impact motivation, some of which is attitudes, beliefs about reading, and beliefs about self. With this gap identified by Toste et al. and the terminology defined by Conradi et al, these findings offer a glimpse into future opportunities for further exploration.

Implications

Despite the lack of statistically significant findings of the present study, these results add to the existing body of literature, as it fills in an existing gap and answers the call for investigations into studying motivation towards reading at the high school level. Scholars have noted that there is an absence of scholarly literature investigating motivation towards reading and that the connection between motivation needs to be investigated at all levels of education (Toste et al., 2019). Motivation is comprised of multiple components, and attitude is one of those components (Conradi et al., 2013; Griffin et al., 2020). By examining attitudes, this study looks at one of the dispositions that impacts motivation. As attitudes toward reading have been documented as a factor contributing to reading success (Cheema, 2018; Jang & Ryoo, 2019; Petscher, 2010), this study also fills in a gap in investigations at the high school level, as most of the literature on literacy focusses on elementary-aged students, and this literature primarily discusses literacy (ability), not attitudes (Jang et al., 2021; McKenna, 1995; Nootens et al.,

2019).

This study builds on the investigations into the impact of mirror books by scholars who noted the importance of considering the presence of and lack of culture in books (Bishop, 1990; Banks 2013). Researchers have pointed out that mirror books increased literacy levels, academic performance, self-esteem, and feelings of empowerment (Dallacqua, 2022; Ford et al., 2019; Johnson et al., 2017; Martin & Beese, 2017; Piper, 2017; Walker & Hutchison, 2021), and the statistical findings in this study adds another element to consider when discussing the literary canon and public-school curriculum.

The results of this study may offer insight into awareness of potential ways to address motivation and attitudes toward reading. While this study failed to reject the null hypothesis for the SARA holistic score and all subscales, there was a small increase in Group A's mean score in subscales AP and RP. As there is limited data on attitudes towards reading in the U.S., this researcher cannot state whether or not these findings support or contradict other studies that specifically investigate attitudes toward reading at the high school level.

This study offers insight into adolescent attitudes toward reading and suggests an avenue to improve adolescent's attitudes toward reading through utilizing mirror books. Literacy is strongly linked to academic success, and academic success is linked to lifetimes earning. Studies show that a large population of correctional facility inmates, both juvenile and adult, have low literacy acquisition.

Limitations

Limitations of this study are sample size, self-reporting measures, and lack of prior research studies on the topic. The sample size was limited by the availability and importance of having nearly equal class sizes teaching the same level of English II CP and the need to have the

largest sample size possible. This factor was controlled by the master schedule established by school administration staff and teaching assignments. The participant size rendered two groups comprising of 151 students, of whom 73 submitted both a pre-treatment and post-treatment SARA. The participant size was diminished by student absences, either due to illness or poor attendance in general, and three participants who opted out of participation. Students who were absent on the day of administrating either the SARA pre-treatment or post-treatment survey were removed from the participant sample. A larger sample size might provide different data and results.

In discussing self-report measures, Rosenman, Tennekoon, and Hill (2011) stated that a limitation of self-report measures is that they can be prone to response bias. Response bias is a phenomenon in which a self-report participant does not respond accurately to questions on a questionnaire. Response bias can occur when the participant answering self-report questions responds in a way that would be seen more favorably by society or the researcher collecting the data. This phenomenon has also been called the social desirability effect. However, attitudes are based on perception, so self-reporting is appropriate to research characteristics, such as attitudes (Howard, 1994; Schmitt, 1994; Spector, 1994). The research sought to limit the impact of social desirability effect by keeping participant responses anonymous.

In addition to research identifying self-reporting measures as an appropriate means to gather data on participant characteristics, such as attitudes, construct validity is a vital component of self-report measures (Bett Razav, 2011). Construct validity of the SARA was measured through conducting “a pilot study of 913 students grades 7-12” (Conradi et al., 2013, p. 568). Construct validity for the SARA was confirmed through administration on a national level to 4,491 students, not utilizing random sampling. Conradi et al. used confirmatory factory

analysis to ensure construct validity. Based on Cronbach's alpha, Conradi et al. calculated that the combined reliability coefficient for the SARA is .96, and the subscales are: AP - .78, AD - .82, RP - .86, and RD - .80.

An additional limitation of this study was the violation of the assumption of normality of distribution for the SARA RD subscale. Tabachnick and Fidell (2013) offer multiple means to progress with statistical calculations when the assumption of normality is not met. One of those methods are to transform the data. Attempts to transform the data did not satisfy the assumptions of normality, and the researcher chose to move forward with the statistical calculation as the ANCOVA is robust against violations of assumptions of normality (Tabachnick & Fidell). While the ANCOVA is robust against violations of assumptions of normality, a limitation is that the statistical calculations did violate the assumption of normality.

Another limitation of the study was a lack of prior research studies on the topic. As most of the scholarly literature on literacy focuses on elementary aged students or is limited to Lexile ability, this researcher has not encountered another study such as this study which examines the impact of mirror books on adolescents' reading attitudes. Without a similar study to juxtapose with this study, the researcher is unable to view this study in contrast to the findings of other researchers.

Recommendations for Future Research

Very little research exists about U.S. adolescents' attitudes toward reading. This researcher recommends that future studies need to be done to investigate adolescents' attitudes toward reading. Some ideas include:

- a longer study, perhaps one school year where the students' attitudes are surveyed at the beginning and end of the school year;

- a study where students' choice is not limited to books preselected by the researcher;
- surveying attitudes towards reading by a wider demographic of adolescent students and at different grade levels;
- a correlational study that looks at the relationship between adolescents' attitudes toward reading and their Lexile levels;
- a mixed methods study that incorporates the elements of this study and adds a qualitative component that can be used to enhance understanding of the statistical findings;
- a mixed methods study that utilized the SARA and adds a qualitative component that enhances the understanding of adolescents' attitudes toward reading.

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APPENDIX A

Survey of Adolescents' Reading Attitude (SARA)

1. How do you feel about reading news online for class?	Very Good 6 5 4 3 2 1 Very Bad
2. How do you feel about reading a book in your free time?	Very Good 6 5 4 3 2 1 Very Bad
3. How do you feel about doing research using encyclopedias (or other books) in class?	Very Good 6 5 4 3 2 1 Very Bad
4. How do you feel about texting or emailing friends in your free time?	Very Good 6 5 4 3 2 1 Very Bad
5. How do you feel about reading online for a class?	Very Good 6 5 4 3 2 1 Very Bad
6. How do you feel about reading a textbook?	Very Good 6 5 4 3 2 1 Very Bad
7. How do you feel about reading a book online for class?	Very Good 6 5 4 3 2 1 Very Bad
8. How do you feel about talking with friends about something you've been reading in your free time?	Very Good 6 5 4 3 2 1 Very Bad
9. How do you feel about getting a book or a magazine for a present?	Very Good 6 5 4 3 2 1 Very Bad
10. How do you feel about texting friends in your free time?	Very Good 6 5 4 3 2 1 Very Bad
11. How do you feel about reading a book for fun on a rainy Saturday?	Very Good 6 5 4 3 2 1 Very Bad
12. How do you feel about working on an internet project with classmates?	Very Good 6 5 4 3 2 1 Very Bad
13. How do you feel about reading anything printed (book, magazine, comic book, etc.) in your free time?	Very Good 6 5 4 3 2 1 Very Bad
14. How do you feel about using a dictionary for class?	Very Good 6 5 4 3 2 1 Very Bad
15. How do you feel about using social media like Facebook or Twitter in your free time?	Very Good 6 5 4 3 2 1 Very Bad
16. How do you feel about looking up information online for a class?	Very Good 6 5 4 3 2 1 Very Bad
17. How do you feel about reading a newspaper or a magazine for class?	Very Good 6 5 4 3 2 1 Very Bad
18. How do you feel about reading a novel for class?	Very Good 6 5 4 3 2 1 Very Bad

(Conradi et al., 2013, p. 569)

APPENDIX B

Permission to use SARA

From: Conradi, Kristin [redacted]
Sent: Monday, May 22, 2023 6:13 AM
To: Brown, Valcine Dyonne <[redacted]
Subject: [External] Re: Seeking Permission to Use the SARA

[EXTERNAL EMAIL: Do not click any links or open attachments unless you know the sender and trust the content.]

Hi Valcine,
You are more than welcome to use it. We published it in JAAL so that anyone who wants to can take advantage of it.
Best of luck with your dissertation!
Kristin

Kristin Conradi Smith, Ph.D.
Associate Professor, Curriculum & Instruction
Coordinator, Elementary Education Program
@Kconradismith
Zoom: h[redacted]

APPENDIX C

Date: 6-11-2024

IRB #: IRB-FY23-24-1307
Title: Minority Sophomore Students' Attitudes Toward Reading among Those Exposed to Mirror Books and Those Who were Not: A Causal-Comparative Study
Creation Date: 2-4-2024
End Date:
Status: Approved
Principal Investigator: Valcine Brown
Review Board: Research Ethics Office
Sponsor:

Study History

Submission Type Initial	Review Type Expedited	Decision Approved

Key Study Contacts

Member Jillian Wendt	Role Co-Principal Investigator	Contact [redacted]
Member Valcine Brown	Role Principal Investigator	Contact [redacted]
Member Valcine Brown	Role Primary Contact	Contact [redacted]

APPENDIX D

8 November 2023

[redacted]

Dear Valcine Dyonne Brown:

After careful review of your research proposal entitled The Statistical Difference in Minority Students' Attitudes Toward Reading Among Those Exposed to Mirror Books and Those Who were Not, I have decided to grant you permission to conduct your study at Desert Hot Springs High School.

Check the following boxes, as applicable:

☒ I grant permission for Valcine D. Brown to contact English Language Arts teachers to invite them to participate in her research study.

☒ I am requesting a copy of the results upon study completion and/or publication.]

Sincerely,

[redacted]

[redacted]

APPENDIX E

Hello English II Scholars,

As a student in the School of Education at Liberty University, I am conducting research as part of the requirements for a Philosophical Degree in Curriculum and Instruction. The purpose of my research is to understand if mirror books improve students' attitudes toward reading, and if you meet my participant criteria and are interested, I would like to invite you to join my study.

Participants must be enrolled in English II CP. Participants, if willing, will be asked to complete an 18-question survey about their attitudes toward reading (10 minutes), engage in sustained silent reading in their English II CP class for fifteen minutes, four days a week during the research study, and then take the same 18-question survey at the end of the study (10 minutes). Your student identification number will be requested as part of this study, but the information will remain confidential.

A Parental Opt-Out consent document will be sent home with you to take to your parent(s)/guardian(s). The Parental Opt-Out consent document contains additional information about my research. If you choose to participate, you will not need to sign the Parental Opt-Out Form. If you choose not to participate, please complete the Parental Opt-Out form and return it to your child's English II CP teacher (Mrs. Perez or Mr. Stelle).

Thank you for your time. Do you have any questions?

APPENDIX F

Consent Form

Parental Opt-Out

Title of the Project: Exploring the Impact of Mirror Books on High School Students' Attitudes Toward Reading
Principal Investigator: Valcine Dyonne Brown, Doctoral Candidate at Liberty University, School of Education, Liberty University

Invitation to be Part of a Research Study

Your student is invited to participate in a research study. To participate, he, she, or they must be a sophomore student at Desert Hot Springs High School. Taking part in this research project is voluntary.

Please take time to read this entire form and ask questions before deciding whether to allow your student to take part in this research project.

What is the study about and why are we doing it?

The purpose of the study is to study the impact of mirror books, culturally reflective books, on students' attitudes toward reading.

What will participants be asked to do in this study?

If you agree to allow your student to be in this study, I will ask them to do the following:

1. Complete an 18-item survey about their attitude toward reading. Completing the survey should take about 10 minutes.
2. Read 15 minutes a day, four days a week in their English II CP course, for XX weeks.
3. Complete an 18-item survey about their attitude toward reading. Completing the survey should take about 10 minutes.

How could participants or others benefit from this study?

The direct benefits participants should expect to receive from taking part in this study are improving their reading skills.

Benefits to society include how the results of this study could shed light on future curriculum changes, modifying curriculum so that students become more engaged in their English classroom.

What risks might participants experience from being in this study?

The expected risks from participating in this study are minimal, which means they are equal to the risks your student would encounter in everyday life.

I am a mandatory reporter. During this study, if I receive information about child abuse, child neglect, elder abuse, or intent to harm self or others, I will be required to report it to the appropriate authorities.

How will personal information be protected?

The records of this study will be kept private. Published reports will not include any information that will make it possible to identify a subject. Research records will be stored securely, and only the researcher will have access to the records.

Data collected from your student may be used in future research studies. If data collected from your student is reused, any information that could identify your student, if applicable, will be removed beforehand.

- Paper forms will be stored in a locked file cabinet, and digital data will be stored on a password-locked cloud system. After seven years, all paper forms will be shredded and electronic records will be deleted.

Is study participation voluntary?

Participation in this study is voluntary. Your decision whether to allow your student to participate will not affect your or their current or future relations with Liberty University. If you decide to allow your student to participate, they are free to not answer any question or withdraw at any time without affecting those relationships.

What should be done if a participant wishes to withdraw from the study?

If you choose to withdraw your student from the study or your student chooses to withdraw, please contact the researcher at the email address/phone number included in the next paragraph. Should you choose to withdraw them, or should your student choose to withdraw, data collected from your student will be destroyed immediately and will not be included in this study.

Whom do you contact if you have questions or concerns about the study?

If the researcher is a faculty member, the sponsor's name and email information may be removed. Otherwise, **it is required**.

The researcher conducting this study is Valcine D. Brown. You may ask any questions you have now. If you have questions later, **you are encouraged** to contact them at [redacted]. You may also contact the researcher's faculty sponsor, Dr. Jillian Wendt, at [redacted].

Whom do you contact if you have questions about rights as a research participant?

Do not remove or alter the IRB's contact information or the disclaimer.

If you have any questions or concerns regarding this study and would like to talk to someone other than the researcher, **you are encouraged** to contact the IRB. Our physical address is Institutional Review Board, 1971 University Blvd., Green Hall Ste. 2845, Lynchburg, VA, 24515; our phone number is 434-592-5530, and our email address is irb@liberty.edu.

Disclaimer: The Institutional Review Board (IRB) is tasked with ensuring that human subjects research will be conducted in an ethical manner as defined and required by federal regulations. The topics covered and viewpoints expressed or alluded to by student and faculty researchers are those of the researchers and do not necessarily reflect the official policies or positions of Liberty University.

Your Opt-Out

If you would prefer that your child NOT PARTICIPATE in this study, please sign this document, and return it to your child's teacher by [date].

_____

Printed Child's/Student's Name

_____

Parent/Guardian's Signature Date

APPENDIX G

List of Books for Group A (Treatment Group)

Bowen, N. (2021). *Skin of the Sea*. Random House Books for Young Readers.

Cervantes, J.C. (2019). *The Fire Keeper.* Disney.

Cervantes, J.C. (2018). *The Storm Runner*. Disney

de la Pena, Matt. (2010). *Mexican WhiteBoy*. Ember.

Hernandez, C. (2019). *Sal & Gabi Break the Universe*. Rick Riordan Presents.

Maldonado, C. (2022). *No filter and other lies*. Holiday House.

Martinez, V. (1996). *Parrot in the Oven*. Harper Collins Publisher.

Sanchez, E. L. (2019). *I am not your perfect Mexican daughter*. Random House Children's Books.

Thomas, A. (2017). *The Hate U Give*. Balzer + Bray.

Vargas, J.A. (2010). *Dear America, Notes of an Undocumented Citizen*. Dey Street Books.

APPENDIX H

List of Books for Group B (Control Group)

Brooks, M. (2006). *World War Z: An Oral History of the Zombie War*. Crown.

Fredericks, M. (2013). *The Girl in the Park*. Random House Children's Books.

Hatke, B. (2017). *Mighty Jack and the Goblin King (Mighty Jack, 2)*. First Second.

Jackson, H. (2022). *Five Survive*. Delacorte Press.

Kinney, J. (2007). *Diary of a Wimpy Kid (Diary of a Wimpy Kid #1)*. Amulet Books.

Kinney, J. (2009). *The Last Straw (Diary of a Wimpy Kid #3)*. Amulet Books.

Kinney, J. (2015). *Old School (Diary of a Wimpy Kid #10)*. Harry N. Abrams.

Kinney, J. (2017). *The Getaway (Diary of a Wimpy Kid Book 12)*. Amulet Books.

Kinney, J. (2019). *Wrecking Ball (Diary of a Wimpy Kid Book 14)*. Harry N. Abrams

Kurti, R. (2015). *Monkey Wars*. Delacorte Press.

Riordan, R. (2011). *The Last Olympian (Percy Jackson and the Olympians, Book 5)*. Disney Hyperion.

Rowling, J. K. (1998). *Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone (1)*. Scholastic Press.

Siegel, M. (2019). *5 World Book 3: The Red Maze: (A Graphic Novel)*. Random House Graphic.

Sparks, N. (1999). *The Notebook*. Grand Central Publishing.

Stevens, R. (2019). *Mistletoe and Murder*. Simon & Schuster Books for Young Readers.

APPENDIX I

SARA Pre-test Script

Thank you, Scholars, for agreeing to participate in this research study that looks at students' attitudes toward reading. In order for the research findings to be true and accurate, it is important that you answer the 18 questions on today's survey as honestly as possible. You will not put your name on the survey, so your responses will be anonymous. With your responses being anonymous, your responses will not impact your grade nor your participation in this course. On the top of your survey, you will record the number that I will assign to you, so that we can ensure that we have the same number pre-tests as post-tests. When you are done, please turn the survey face-down on your desk. I will collect it and place it in an envelope to give to the researcher. Your responses will be kept secure, and only the researcher will have access to the data. Tomorrow, we will start our 15 minutes of SSR which we will do four days a week. Because multiple classes are participating in this research study, the books in our classroom library are not available to be taken home or removed from class.

APPENDIX J

SARA Post-test Script

Thank you, Scholars, for agreeing to participate in this research study that looks at students' attitudes toward reading. Our six-weeks of SSR for this study has concluded. As a reminder, in order for the research findings to be true and accurate, it is important that you answer the 18 questions on today's survey as honestly as possible. You will not put your name on the survey, so your responses will be anonymous. With your responses being anonymous, your responses will not impact your grade nor your participation in this course. On the top of your survey, you will record the number that I will assign to you, so that we can ensure that we have the same number pre-tests as post-tests. When you are done with the survey, please turn the survey face-down on your desk. I will collect it and place it in an envelope to give to the researcher. Your responses will be kept secure, and only the researcher will have access to this data.

APPENDIX K

Demographics Script

An important element to a research study is knowing the demographics of the group that is being studied. Demographical information allows readers of the study to understand for whom this information might be relevant and transferable. Please complete this demographic questionnaire. You will not put your name on the questionnaire, so your responses will be anonymous. When you are done with the questionnaire, please turn it face-down on your desk. I will collect it and place it in an envelope to give to the researcher. Your responses will be kept secure, and only the researcher will have access to this data.

APPENDIX L

Demographic Questions

Please indicate your age.

A. Under 14
B. 15
C. 16
D. 17
E. 18

Please indicate your current English course level

A. Freshman English
B. Sophomore English
C. Junior English
D. Senior English

Please indicate your race/ethnicity.

A. Hispanic or Latino
B. Black or African American
C. White
D. American Indian
E. Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
F. Multiracial

Please indicate your preferred gender identity.

A. Male
B. Female
C. Transgender Male
D. Transgender Female
E. Gender Variant/non-conforming
F. Other
G. Prefer not to answer