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"SOMOS UMA SALADA DE FRUTA": ADOLESCENT ACHIEVEMENT IN UTOPIAN BRAZILIAN AND COLOMBIAN STRUCTURES OF OPPORTUNITY

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Dedication

I dedicate this dissertation to the youth of Brazil and Colombia who have committed to serve their communities and push for their voices to be heard, even when unpopular and unfavorable.

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Abstract

How do aspects of one's humanity link to their nation's structure of opportunity? One aspect of the human experience is the ability to develop cognitive frameworks and self-perceptions of one's physical being based on interactions with the environment. Researchers have indicated that self-perceptions as well as judgments about others are often determined by physical appearance, suggesting that lighter skin is associated with attractiveness, privilege, and higher socio economic status, while darker skin is associated with inability, poverty, and unattractiveness (Glenn, 2009; Hunter, 2007). Contrary to popular discourse, empirical data links economic inequality to physical appearance, particularly in countries with national ideologies emphasizing multiculturalism. From the mid-1900s onward, constitutions and state legislations in Brazil and Colombia have implemented policies that pronounce representations of unique pluriethnic societies as democratic symbols for political and economic utopias. However, the two nations hold the lowest rates of educational mobility in the Latin American region (Viáforo López & Serna Alvarado, 2015). This dissertation takes an identity focused, ecological approach to explore how experiences within one's social environment conflict with larger national agendas and consequentially shape self-identities and postsecondary goals of emerging young adult citizens. Quantitative and qualitative measures were conducted among 737 high school seniors in two urban cities, Salvador, Brazil, and Cartagena, Colombia. Findings revealed that a), socioeconomic status significantly related to race and skin tone for both samples, b) those of African and Indigenous ancestry from the Brazilian sample and of darker skin tones from both samples were more likely to experience higher rates of discrimination, and c) Brazilian participants of African descent and darker skin tones reported the lowest academic performance in grammar courses. Thematic analyses illustrated that the most common barriers to college

access were discriminatory practices, insufficient funds, and college entrance exams, however family support was the most common reason attributed to resiliency. In examining how national discourses of multiculturalism impact academic outcomes for marginalized Brazilian and Colombian youth, this study offers new ways of understanding the interplay between patriotic agendas and ethnic difference that impact social mobility, the future directions of nations, and international relations at large.

Chapter 1: Introduction

Public education and racial inequality are incredibly sensitive and controversial topics in many countries around the world. Access to quality education is one of the most effective means to attain desired sources of employment leading to upward social mobility for most populations, however such avenues are rarely resourced equitably. For decades, researchers have found correlations between occupational prestige and racial group membership suggesting that individuals with dominant European heritage represent the highest ranks of socioeconomic statuses in a vast array of societal contexts (Harris, 2013; Monk, 2015; Telles, 2014; Taussig, 2009). In Latin America, economic and sociological studies have investigated educational attainment and occupational status as a mechanism to document social stratification of members of various racial and ethnic backgrounds as well as how groups of varying physical appearances experience opportunity (Paschel & Sawyer, 2008; Russell-Cole, Wilson, & Hall, 2013; Wade, 1995). These studies indicate that upward social mobility is often limited to European descent populations, even within countries without national discourses that represent concrete black-white racially dichotomous categories like the United States. Latin American populations of European descent predominantly occupy the highest socioeconomic positions throughout the region, while populations of Indigenous and African descent predominantly occupy positions of low socioeconomic status (Marteleto, 2012;Telles, 2014; Viáforo López & Serna Alvarado, 2015).

Researchers who adopt the theoretical rationale of Colorism conceive that social stratification is not solely linked to ethnic heritage, but also interconnected to characteristics of phenotype. The Colorism theory posits that individuals of lighter skin tones more often represent positions of high social and economic status groups, while individuals of darker skin

tones represent lower socioeconomic statuses within racial groups due to historical and present-day occurrences of racism, discrimination, and non-scientifically based negative perceptions of non-white populations. While extensive research on the Colorism phenomenon has been conducted in the U.S., a small number of studies evaluate skin color stratification in Latin American countries where racial group membership is fluid and based on physical attributes such as skin tone, hair texture, and bone structure, rather than on a stable ethnic heritage (Monk 2016; Telles, 2014). Addressing skin tone variations in occupational and educational attainment is particularly useful in countries with extreme economic divides that contradict national discourses of racial and economic homogeneity such as Brazil and Colombia. This dissertation focuses on the power of national ideologies adopted by Brazilian and Colombian policymakers and how Colorism has evolved over time to influence access to education and economic opportunity.

In Brazil and Colombia, social stratification that conflicts with the adoption of multiculturalist national agendas is well documented (Baños, 2010; Moraes Silva & Paixão, 2014; Urrea Giraldo, Viáforo López, & Viveros Vigoya, 2014). Historical documents on race relations in both countries have shown that national ideologies of racial mixing were developed by elite political leaders during the 19th and 20th centuries to advance their nations' economic infrastructures by providing evidence that the ethnoracial affairs of these nation-states were more homogenous than the racially segregated United States (Alberto 2012; Telles, 2004; Wade 1995). However, political ideologies suggesting that homogeneity in ethnic mixture means minimal to no existence of inequalities conflicts with the present-day social and economic realities of diverse populations residing in each country. Multiculturalist agendas perpetuate a pervasive belief that racism does not exist in these nations on the basis that the majority of the populations are offspring of biracial and multiracial pairings. Despite the existence of substantial biracial

and multiracial groups, we will see through reviewed literature and the findings of this paper that those whose physical appearance more closely represents European attributes attain the highest levels of education and occupational prestige in societies that claim to be racial democracies. This dissertation seeks to contribute to literature on educational inequality and Colorism beyond the U.S. context by exploring associations of social stratification by racial identity and skin tone on adolescent academic experiences in non-racially dichotomous countries.

The project methodology emphasizes the unique value of comparative work that brings attention to likeness and difference in the exploration of the socio-cultural norms of two nation-states. Much of literature that explores global racial and economic disparity juxtaposes Brazil with the United States. Fewer empirical studies compare data findings within Latin American countries. However, exploring how educational opportunity is structured in Brazil and Colombia reveals social inequalities that are often hidden by official multiculturalism (Wade, 2012). Micol Seigel (2005) argued that, "comparisons have provided tools with which to intervene in debates over the scope and content of racial categories, national identity, and state policy regarding both" (p. 67). A juxtaposition of racial relations between these two South American countries contributes to debunking myths of racial utopias by examining relationships between racial identity, national identity, skin color, and perceptions of socioeconomic mobility among adolescent populations as they make plans for their academic and occupational futures.

Studying the two countries side by side highlights key differences in state policies and conceptions of racial and ethnic difference between the nation-states that can be overlooked by solely focusing on one country. Examples of these differences that are addressed in chapters 2 and 3 consist of the fifty three year gap between the consistent inclusion of the black racial category since the 1940 Brazilian census versus the 1993 Colombian census, and the inclusion of

ethnic curriculum in schools and collective land rights granted to black and indigenous populations during the 1990s in Colombia versus affirmative action policies reserving admission to top universities specifically for blacks in Brazil during the 1990s. These occurrences shape how black and brown youth engage in self-identity exploration as Latin American adolescents make decisions about their future career endeavors based on how they perceive themselves in relation to differing larger social contexts. Potential implications include the possibility for differences in affirmation of African descent and Indigenous descent cultures that lend Brazilian youth to be more prideful of ethnic heritage that diverges from social conceptions of white European superiority compared with a Colombian population that conceptualizes diversity and inclusive dialogue by corroborating the usage of ethnic difference with homogenous national unity.

Furthermore, research that incorporates physical appearance in addition to racial categorization in assessing frequencies of social stratification illustrates that skin tone is a more accurate measure of educational inequality than racial classification (Telles, 2014; Monk 2015). Data from the Project on Ethnicity and Race in Latin America (PERLA) illustrated that in Brazil, light-skin toned respondents reported 7.9 years of schooling, medium-skin toned respondents reported 7.0 years of schooling, and dark-skin toned respondents reported 6.3 years of schooling (Moraes Silva & Paixão, 2014). In Colombia, PERLA data revealed that light-skinned respondents reported the highest levels of formal education at 11.9 years, followed by medium-skinned respondents with 10.1 years, and lastly dark-skinned respondents with less than 9.8 years of schooling (Urrea Giraldo, Viáforo López, Viveros Vigoya, 2014). These data show that despite extensive discourses of racial paradise and multiculturalism in Brazil and Colombia, structures of career and educational opportunity correlate with physical appearance. This project

expands upon literature on social inequality in Latin America by focusing on skin tone to highlight within racial group socioeconomic differences. Furthermore, the project contributes to research on education by examining effects of skin tone stratification on academic achievement and perceptions of socioeconomic mobility.

Numerous studies involving black and brown youth in Latin America and the U.S. have shown that socioeconomic status (SES) and physical appearance affect students' educational outcomes (Marteleto, Gelber, Hubert, & Salinas, 2012; Smalls, White, Chavous, & Sellers, 2007; Spencer, et al., 2012). While the mechanisms used to group individuals into SES categories vary across continents and countries, similar predictive relationships between SES and educational achievement have been witnessed in the western hemisphere. PERLA data illustrate that individuals of higher socioeconomic status and lighter skin tones tend to have more years of schooling than their lower income and darker skinned counterparts. Furthermore, adolescent children of high earning parents generally have higher rates of high school retention, attendance, graduation, and college acceptance than the children of parents from low socioeconomic backgrounds (Greenwald, Hedges, & Laine, 1996). Bourguignon, Ferreira, and Menéndez (2005) found that in addressing intergenerational mobility in Brazil, parental earnings was the most prominent indicator of high academic achievement for Brazilian adolescents. Ardila, Rosselli, Matute, and Guajardo (2005) indicated years of parental education to be predictive of advanced neurocognitive functioning of their offspring, thus relating to higher levels of academic achievement among Latin American children. This is in large part due to the amount of resources that children of high earning parents have access to compared with those of low-earning parents (Wilson & Allen, 1987). Such resources may include exceptional quality of teaching, student to teacher ratios, ratio of guidance counselors to students, availability of

textbooks, type of technology available in schools, and access to college entrance exam preparatory courses among other facets.

Some researchers argue that it is imperative to gain access to these resources at the start of one's educational matriculation (i.e. elementary school) in order to be a competitive job candidate in societies with large racial gaps between the rich and the poor (Currie, 2001; Heckman, 2011). Alternatively, these researchers suggest that academic interventions and social support are mechanisms to counter a lack of access to quality resources during formative years as well as during adolescence. Furthermore, adolescent development theorists emphasize the important role of social identity in conceptualizing how individuals experiencing this unique period of pubertal growth make decisions about their future academic and career endeavors (Arnett, 2000; Muss, 1996; Spencer, 2005). Fergus (2009) explored the relevance of skin color variation in constructing racial/ethnic identity and the influence of schooling experiences of Latino adolescents in the U.S. The study indicated that the ways in which students discussed opportunities associated with their self-identified ethnic group and the ethnic group that peers and teachers perceived them to be a part of based on phenotypic features, influenced their academic orientation. Additional research on the educational attainment of minority youth indicates that the resources available to students within their schools impacts what students believe they have access to and how they go about achieving those goals (Greenwald, Hedges, & Laine, 1996; Spencer, 1995; Wenglinsky, 1997). The purpose of this dissertation is to examine how adolescents negotiate their developing social, educational and career identities within systems of stratified educational opportunity. The following excerpt is taken from my Master's thesis that explored racial identity, and educational and occupational aspirations among Brazilian adolescents:

"And so, here in Brazil it's a complicated thing because we're all mixed. **Somos Uma Salada de Fruta (**We're like a fruit salad). Simply speaking, I am black. But people will say, 'no you're not black, you're 'cafe com leite (coffee with milk). You're chocolate like a morena'. No, and then they invent pardo, moreno. The color of jambo (a Brazilian fruit). So many colors! Only to define oneself. For this reason, I needed to study more. First, what region am I in? I am in Bahia. I am in the blackest city of Brazil. So, I can't say that I am white. I can't say that I am parda (brown or mixed with African/Indigenous ancestry). Of course, I have these influences in my culture. Yes, I can say that I have these in my family".

I identify this adolescent's experience as a strong contribution to literature on current race relations in Brazil because it illustrates the complexity of racial identity development in social contexts that communicate a plethora of ambiguous racial categories under the umbrella of multicultural discourses. This specific excerpt was from a 16-year-old medium brown skinned female who identified as negra (African descent) and attended a public high school in Salvador, Bahia, Brazil. I incorporate her words into the title of the dissertation "Somos Uma Salada de Fruta" as I believe conceptualizing racial identity in relation to the mixture of a fruit salad highlights the difficulties in assessing identity, social class, and skin color discrimination in Latin American countries. Thus, the dissertation is an extension of my Master's thesis and is organized into three parts. Part one (chapters 2 and 3) illustrates how black and Indigenous populations have struggled to be recognized as productive citizens in the nationhood of Brazilian and Colombian societies over time. Part two (chapters 4 and 5) addresses how adolescents come to understand themselves as racial and cultural beings within their nation's structures of opportunity. Lastly, part three (chapters 6 and 7) moves beyond identity to explore how

experiences of discrimination within schools and neighborhoods relate to academic performance and perceptions of economic opportunity of emerging young adult youth.

Research Questions and Hypotheses

The project is framed by two overarching questions: 1) what associations are prevalent between deprived educational resources and academic performance for Brazilian and Colombian adolescents, and 2) how do skin tone and perceived discrimination relate to perceptions of socioeconomic mobility? These questions add to empirical studies providing evidence that conducting scholarly research on social inequalities in structured educational domains help to debunk myths of racial harmony and miscegenation or racial mixing. Additional literature that specifically focuses on phenotype suggests that studying skin tone variations exposes differences in social treatment and socioeconomic realities of ethnic groups that are perceived to have homogenous experiences (Monk, 2015; Telles, 2014). Therefore, I incorporate skin tone and discrimination measures in order to examine what adolescents understand about social inequalities in their environments and how they envision themselves as productive adult citizens based on these observations in order to address the proposed research questions and ultimately break new ground in the fields of Latin American racial and educational studies.

I hypothesize that: 1) students of darker skin tones are more likely to be of lower SES and believe that they have less access to higher education opportunities in comparison to other Brazilian or Colombian adolescents, 2) students of darker skin tones and low SES will report experiencing higher rates of discrimination than students of lighter skin tones, and 3) students who report experiencing higher rates of discrimination will display lower academic performance. Given findings on the impact of available resources on perceptions of opportunity, my fourth hypothesis is that students attending schools in middle to upper class neighborhoods will display

higher rates of college attendance as a postsecondary goal as opposed to seeking job employment after high school, than students attending schools in poor to working class neighborhoods. Lastly based on findings from adolescent resiliency studies that illustrate positive correlations between a strong sense of pride in one's heritage and nation of origin and academic success as well as civic involvement (Fergus, 2009; Huddy & Khatib, 2007; Kao & Thompson, 2003), my final hypothesis is that having positive racial and/or national identities will serve as protective factors against discriminatory experiences in depicting a positive sense of self.

A thorough exploration of these hypotheses will provide empirical evidence of how experiences of discrimination based on physical appearance and socio-economic status contribute to postsecondary goals for adolescents in two urban cities, Salvador of Bahia, Brazil and Cartagena of Bolívar, Colombia. I explore how social inequalities and skin color stratification in education are understood differently among youth in two cities with similar histories and economic inequalities, but with divergent discourses of racial difference. Throughout my fieldwork in Salvador between 2014 and 2017, I witnessed an increase in outward expressions of African descent pride in the forms of women wearing their hair naturally (i.e. not chemically straightened), young men and women wearing shirts that displayed the phrase "black power" with hair picks (i.e. hair combs primarily used with afro styles) with images of black people wearing afros, and more frequent occurrences of social groups advocating for black rights on prominent university campuses such as the Federal University of Bahia (UFBA). While a small group of students also advocating for human rights of black Colombians organized on the campus of the University of Cartagena, I did not witness a similar sense of community amongst non-college attending African descent Colombians to the extent of what I observed in Salvador, during my fieldwork in Cartagena from 2015 to 2017. My

observations of such stark differences led me to further exploration of the evolution of racial discourses in Salvador and Cartagena, specifically as it relates to the ways in which black and brown adolescents develop a positive sense of self in one city that openly expresses appreciation of African descent heritage compared to another whose racial pride is less apparent.

City Backgrounds

Salvador is the third largest city in Brazil and hold's the nation's largest population of African descent people. The city is located in the poorest region of Brazil, the Northeast. Salvador plays a significant role in the economic foundation of the nation-state as it was founded as the first capital of Brazil in 1549 (Perry, 2013). During the colonial period between 1500-1822, the city's location on the coast of the northeast region made it a prime port of entry for the importation of enslaved Africans. The city flourished as the country's economic center due to slave work on tobacco and sugar plantations from the 1700s to 1800s. For decades, it was the country's richest and most highly populated city. Salvador remained the capital of Brazil until 1763, when the nation's wealth shifted to a new capital, Rio de Janeiro (Paschel, 2009). However, Salvador is the present capital of the state of Bahia and is currently the third largest city in Brazil with a population of 2.9 million (Pinho, 2015). While researchers indicate that Salvador holds the second highest population of people of black African descent in the world, Brazilians with white European physical features make up over 90% of the city's elite population. (Perry, 2013; Pinho, 2008).

Cartagena is also situated in one of its nation's poorest regions, located on the northern coast of Colombia. The city was founded on June 1, 1553 (Wade, 1995). Cartagena was the first Colombian city authorized for the trade of African slaves. During its colonial era from 1533-1717, the city's coastal location made it a primary trading port for gold, silver, and enslaved

African people; which has contributed to a high population of African descendants in the city today (Telles, 2014). Similar to Salvador, Cartagena is also the capital of its state, the Bolívar state of Colombia. It is currently the fifth largest city in Colombia with a population of 988,000 (2011 Census). As a whole, the country holds the western hemisphere's fourth largest population of black African descent people (Wade, 2009).

While Cartagena and Salvador have similar colonial pasts and large populations of African descent people, conceptions of black identification are quite distinct. The political language of African descent culture is more dominant in Salvador than any other city in Brazil (Perry, 2013; Pinho 2008). Salvador residents associate pride with African heritage while still appreciating the country's multiethnic national discourse that glorifies Brazil's unique biracial and multiracial population in comparison to many monoracial societies in other parts of the world (Pinho, 2015). However, many Cartagena residents who are physically representative of African-descended populations frequently identify as mulatto or mixed race rather than black despite having one of the highest African descent populations in the nation (Lasso, 2006; Streicker, 1995). I argue that the divergence in discourses of blackness and ethnic difference between the two cities represent variances in how populations within each country have conceptualized national ideologies of multiculturalism over time in response to census categorizations, scholarly leadership, and social organizations. Thus, the present study provides a comparative analysis to investigate how national discourses and perceptions of race have evolved to carry divergent connotations in Brazil and Colombia by examining their most prominent city members of the African diaspora, Cartagena and Salvador.

Theoretical Contribution and Chapter Outline

This dissertation contributes an interdisciplinary approach to research on global education and social stratification. The project is informed by a systems theoretical framework that uses phenomenology, development, and sociocultural perspectives to understand how two adolescent samples perceive a sense of self in socially stratified multiculturalist societies. The Phenomenological Variant of Ecological Systems Theory (PVEST), created by Margaret Beale Spencer, recognizes how individuals construct meaning of different self-identities and statuses, based on their experiences within a larger ecological system (Spencer, 1995). The theory posits that all groups are subject to human vulnerability and that viewing a reciprocal relationship between self and environment assesses levels of vulnerability that develop into modes of behavior and ways of perceiving the world. Individuals experience a plethora of risks that can work to limit a positive perception of self as well as access to resources and necessities that permit healthy physical and psychological development throughout the life span. However, there are often a multitude of available supports to offset these risks, thus providing opportunities to persevere in the midst of difficult trials. While much of literature on inequality and minority groups emphasizes overarching deficits that perceived subordinate racial groups encounter, this dissertation takes an assets based approach which focuses not only on the challenges that low income and black and brown South American youth experience in achieving their academic goals but also social supports that motivate them to supersede barriers to economic success.

The goal of the paper is to illustrate a narrative of adolescent self-perceptions and decision-making in multiethnic societies with large socioeconomic gaps in educational attainment and occupational status. Chapter 2 introduces a historical overview of the development of multiculturalist policies in Brazil and Colombia in order to better understand the

origin of present day racially democratic misconceptions. Chapter 3 includes a detailed account of the evolution of social and economic stratification by racial identity in both cities and their respective countries. Chapter 4 narrows the lens of economic inequality by focusing on the role of underrepresentation of minority groups in higher education and the importance of illustrating a youth perspective. Chapter 5 illustrates three frameworks, PVEST, Bronfenbrenner's Ecological Systems theory, and the Critical Race theory in conjunction with empirical formulations of social identity processing during adolescence, which the paper uses to conceptualize adolescent self-identity, relationship of self to the environment, and the role of human vulnerability as it contributes to decision making. Chapter 6 includes the methodology and results of the present study, illustrating first hand accounts of adolescent experiences in Brazilian and Colombian systems of stratified opportunity. Finally, chapter 7 culminates the study's findings by situating the results within the three theoretical frameworks and providing further implications for intervention methods in assets based research among minority youth. I use the content of these chapters as well as the data findings to argue that economic inequalities and discriminatory practices based on physical appearance persist despite national ideologies of multiculturalism and racial harmony.

Part I: How Black and Indigenous Populations Became Recognized as Citizens

Chapter 2: Historical Overview of Multiculturalist Policies in Brazil and Colombia

Multiculturalism in Brazil

Research on social stratification of skin color is particularly salient to Brazil, as it houses the largest population of people of African descent outside of Africa (Mitchell, 2010). Researchers have indicated Brazil as one of the most racially heterogeneous countries of the world constituting a try-hybrid population of Europeans (primarily represented by the Portuguese), Africans, and Amerindians (Parra et al., 2003). It is common knowledge amongst many scholars and non-academics alike that the diverse ethnic backgrounds that represent the Brazilian nation are conveniently utilized by the state to promote a misconceived national identity of a racial democracy. I describe this effort as a mechanism to create strategies of stratification with public policies under the zeal of integration mechanisms. Arocena (2008) identifies two integration strategies imposed on minority or subordinate ethnic groups by the majority population: (1) the assimilation strategy, which was defined as a process implemented by the state, a public policy, in which groups of people are required or convinced with incentives to adopt the cultural patterns of the dominant population such as language, religion, education, clothes, family relations, etc., and (2) the multiculturalism strategy: a process favored by the state in which policies are implemented to recognize and protect cultural diversity as well as a method adopted by integrated groups to express a sense of belonging to their nation state but to also distinguish their own cultural values, often by developing hyphenated identities (e.g. Afro-Brazilian, Afro-Colombian). Many scholars would argue that racial democracy is not about multiculturalism in the least, rather it pervades a racially mixed homogenous culture (Paschel, 2010; Telles, 2014). I incorporate multiculturalism as a currently existing strategy developed to

challenge the antiquated government policies of miscegenation that provided leverage for the racial utopia ideology and gives credence to the evolvement of independent cultures under the umbrella of a unified national identity. I use the following section to describe a brief history of racial politics in Brazil as they relate to the development of multiculturalist policies, however by no means is this meant to be an extensively descriptive overview of conceptualizations and theoretical perspectives of race in Brazil.

State initiatives and government policies have the power to shape social identities and influence understanding of racial transformations in a society at large over time. Htun (2004) argued that in addition to the ability to extract resources and redistribute wealth, states implement processes of legality and policy instruments that monopolize the way citizens construct meaning of race and difference. The author describes the census as a prime example in which policy tools categorize formations of racial meaning. In the U.S., individuals with black and white parents have been traditionally classified as black rather than biracial, giving credit to the historical "one drop rule"; whereas in some Latin American countries, such as Brazil and Colombia, the census recognizes intermediary racial categories such as mulatto and pardo (brown). Traditionally, the Brazilian government has condemned the racist ideologies and practices of the United States by encouraging racial mixing, described as individuals of African and Indigenous ancestry mating with a white partner. While mestiçagem or miscegenation is the most commonly represented ideology of Brazil, the ideology of whitening the population persisted during the ending of the slave trade nearing the end of the 19th century. Blanqueamento (whitening) can be compared to present day nationalist ideologies in the U.S. that suggest that European ancestry is and should be the dominant race because of their superior intelligence and economic advantage. After the abolition of slavery in 1888 (following the U.S.

abolition of slavery in 1865), Brazilians sought additional sources of human capital that aligned with persisting ideologies of race; such ideologies conceptualized blacks and natives as inferior, violent, and unintelligent, and whites as highly skilled and educated people that contributed to society. Thus, European immigration was subsidized to encourage growth of the European population as an effort of political elites to expand white superiority and political power (Mitchell, 2010). Since the ending of free labor created a need for cheap skilled labor, some Brazilian social thinkers such as literary critic José Veríssimo argued that hiring literate populations from developed European societies would be a cheaper source of labor than training and providing basic educational instruction to ex-slaves (Skidmore, 1990). Such social and economic strategy, often subtle and incoherent, conveniently fit into the whitening ideology. The subsidization program ended in 1927 after over two million European immigrants had become Brazilian residents.

The whitening thesis has been disputed and challenged by Brazilian academics, politicians, and community organizers since the early 1900s. Elitists such as professor and jurist Francisco Oliveira Vianna and anthropologist and physician Raimundo Nina Rodrigues continued to argue that only whites were capable of leading a successful economy, while other scholars challenged this ideology and promoted intermixing between white immigrants and non-white Brazilians (Neves, 2008; Telles, 2014). Brazilian sociologist and anthropologist, Gilberto Freyre, is viewed as the forefather of the national ideology, democracia racial or racial democracy. In his well known novel, *Casa Grande e Senzala* published in 1933 (published in English in 1986 as *The Masters and the Slaves)*, Freyre presented a detailed account of plantation life in Brazil and the formation of Brazilian civilization. In the novel, Freyre refuted the notion of a race problem existing in Brazil and instead emphasized the positive aspects of

miscegenation. He argued that romantic pairings of Brazilians from various racial backgrounds would create a racial utopia ultimately ending the idea of racism in Brazil (Mitchell, 2010). Freyre spent much of his career promoting the rich ethnic history of the country, specifically highlighting the unique blending of European, African, and Amerindian cultures. In collaboration with Franz Boas at Columbia University, Freyre disputed theories that linked white nationalist ideologies in Brazil to those in North America by supporting the contribution of African culture to Brazilian civilization. He believed that Portuguese settlers who colonized the country did not occupy the same racial prejudices exhibited in North America because the dark brown skinned Moors of Africa had historically conquered the Portuguese. Thus, white Brazilians did not ascribe to the racist ideologies that deemed African physical features as inferior, which was characteristic of North American settlers, according to Freyre.

While the miscegenation theory created a positive view of racial mixing in Brazil that greatly differed from the one-drop philosophy in the U.S., black and brown Brazilians lived a very different social and economic reality from white Brazilians. Brazilians of European descent thrived at the highest ranks of labor, including those who were of low socioeconomic standing, while Brazilians of African and Indigenous descent were succumbed to menial employment positions if employment was achieved at all (Telles, 2004). Black political organizations began to evolve striving for equal housing and employment opportunities for Brazilians of African descent. One such movement, believed to be the most significant Afro-Brazilian organization of the 1930s, was the Frente Negra Brasileira political party, which lasted from 1931 to 1937 (Butler, 1988). The group was founded by a group of Brazilian men in São Paulo in 1931, who identified themselves as Afro-Brazilian and whose initial goal was to challenge racial discrimination and the massive European immigration that created additional obstacles for

Brazilians of African and Indigenous descent to obtain employment opportunities (Helg, 1997). The group entered the electoral politics during the presidential administration of Getulio Vargas after membership increased to thousands and expanded to other cities. However, the party struggled to mobilize a nationwide black constituency and did not recruit a large enough following to compete with mainstream political parties (Helg, 1997). Although the party was forced to disband in 1937, the Frente Negra Brasileira is one of several attempts on the behalf of oppressed Brazilian groups to challenge discrimination and nationalist ideologies by means of political and organizational advancement.

Although historical and political contexts have changed since Freyre's work, his contributions helped to shape a colorblind nosology that became the country's narrative for decades after his book was published and is still believed among some Brazilians and many foreigners today. This ideology impacts self-presentation and racial identity of the country's inhabitants in a variety of ways (Htun, 2004). Despite the country's affirmation and promotion of a racial utopia, the reality is that the lighter one's skin tone is the more likely they are to be wealthy, and the darker their skin tone, the more likely an individual is to be poor (Russell, et al., 2013). Countless scholars have utilized the term 'myth of racial democracy' to describe the racial ideologies of the country (Mitchell, 2010; Russell et al., 2013; Santos & Anya, 2006; Telles, 2004). The discrepancy may be explained by a tendency to attribute inequalities between Brazilians with European phenotypic features and Brazilians with African phenotypic features to economic disparities rather than racial discrimination (Mitchell, 2010). Additionally, at least 70 percent of Brazil's homeless population is Black and more than 67 percent of Blacks in Brazil are living in poverty. Since skin color has been linked to poverty and unemployment, it is important to examine the relationship between color identification and occupational aspirations

for youth of color who are in the process of forming adult identities. Chapter 3 will discuss why youth are an important population of which to focus a lens on the effects of historic multiculturalist policies on the occupational choices of today's emerging citizens. Before addressing youth perspectives on occupational opportunity as it relates to national ideologies, next I introduce an evolution of multiculturalism in Colombia to provide an additional lens of which racially democratic prowess both builds its back on and binds access to social mobility for black and brown Latin American populations.

Multiculturalism in Colombia

In considering the dissemination of populations of African descent and the displacement of Indigenous peoples in South America, Colombia follows Brazil holding the region's second largest population of blacks as well as the fifth largest Indigenous population (Wade, 2009). Despite such large ethnic representation, black and brown groups are most often situated within the lowest socioeconomic ranks of their countries. In hindsight, Colombia and Brazil represent both similar and contrasting historical occurrences of ethnoracial dominance that shape current ethnic and skin color inequalities in education and labor that are detailed in the skin color stratification section at the end of this chapter. There is historical evidence illustrating the two divergent processes of *blanqueamiento/blanqueamento* or whitening and *mestizaje/mestiçagem* or racial mixing in both countries between the 1930s and 1950s, however the ways in which such processes have been enforced and have evolved into multicultural euphemisms operate in distinctive ways. The Mexican model of mestizaje emphasized racial mixing as a critical component of advancing a democratic national identity whereas the Argentinean model advocated for immigration of indentured servants from European nations to whiten Spanish America and ultimately wipe out Indigenous and African descent populations (Urrea Giraldo,

Viáforo López, Viveros Vigoya, 2014). The nation-state of Colombia adopted the Mexican model due to failed efforts to beckon European immigration. This portion of the chapter seeks to address the role of strategic nation building practices in influencing shifts in identity politics within a perceived mestizo nation.

Social science researchers are working diligently to unveil the inequalities of which imaginative national unities seek to obscure. Multicultural policies put forth by groups holding political power and prestige often work to hide economic and social inequalities by portraying a deceptive racially democratic national image that represents much of the national discourses surrounding ethnic and racial pride in both countries. La nación mestizo (the mixed nation) is an ideology adopted by many Latin American countries to signal rupture from an oppressive colonial past and divergence from the racially repressive practices represented in capitalist nations of Europe and North America (Chaves, 2005). As mentioned earlier, bringing ethnic recognition to the forefront of political agendas illustrates intentional efforts to distinguish from the racial inequalities that so strongly represent the images of the most economically advanced countries of the world. Thus, celebrating a multiplicity of ethnic heritages within a nation creates an ideology of racial harmony that is nearly impossible for racially dichotomous nations to portray. In the nineteenth century, this ideology was used as a path to whiteness by diminishing the cultural practices of black and indigenous populations, expanding the presence of white European heritage, and promoting racial mixing as a means of achieving national unity. However, researchers argue that twentieth century discourses of la nación mestizo incorporates a shift towards reclaiming Indigenous and African heritage proposing the birth of a new era of nationhood (Chaves & Zambrano, 2006). Whether or not this shift in reclaiming ethnic heritage has benefited the economic standing of oppressed ethnic groups is debatable.

The shift towards multiculturalism has occurred throughout Latin America over the last few decades as an effort to respond to global demands of economic restructuring such as deindustrialization, mobility of financial capital, and free trade zones as well as regional pressure of citizens advocating for the social and sexual rights of women and underrepresented ethnic groups among others (Chaves & Zambrano, 2006). This has been demonstrated by regional cultural activism, religious movements, and progressive projects and partnerships of NGOs to advocate for the human rights of oppressed groups. Contributions of nationally recognized activist groups to policy changes for the benefit of marginalized groups are discussed in this chapter. A key mechanism to advance economic change, or at least the perception of movement towards drastic change, on a national level that coordinated with the international market has been to highlight the unique multicultural heritages of Latin American populations by enforcing collective rights for ethnic minorities. These rights are contrived from efforts on behalf of national elites to promote nation building under the umbrella of mestizaje by creating reforms that recognize cultural diversity. Chaves and Zambrano (2006) argue that mestizaje or racial mixing is a critical component of identity politics shaped by national ideology projects in Colombia. The authors posit that the celebration of multiculturalism perpetuates an ambivalence of nationalist ideologies that partially assimilates black and indigenous populations while enhancing racial hierarchies that further expand social inequalities. Bocarejo (2009) contended that multiculturalism has been used as a "democratic symbol" to promote progressiveness from pre-established exclusion and recognition of ethnic and cultural ownership. Such ownership is expressed through legal state initiatives of granting collective rights via territorial agreements and educational practices that have historically been denied or simply unacknowledged.

Researchers argue about the purposes behind expanding collective rights and promoting the language of inclusion and representation of historically marginalized groups through practices of mestizaje. Many Latin Americanists or scholars whose research primarily focuses on Latin American populations posit that mestizaje is an oppressive ideology that perpetuates systems of racial hierarchy and social inequality under the umbrella of homogenization (Bocarejo, 2009; Paschel, 2010; Wade, 1993). After all, if the national agenda is to encourage cohabitation of all ethnic groups then the country could not possibly be at fault for any resultant economic inequalities correlated with racial difference. Other influential scholars believe that advocating for a national ideology of mestizaje brings attention to the achieved goal of establishing a nationally and internationally represented racial democracy (Jaramillo, 2011; Telles, 2004). Furthermore, Wade (2003) highlights the complexity in racial identity fluctuations in Colombia as a result of the country's perceived harmonious coalescence of its white, Indian, and black inhabitants. The promotion of mixing the offspring of differing racial groups rather than a deliberate effort to create cohesion and a meaningful fusion of the cultural practices and beliefs representative of those groups warrants physical and social boundary cross-overs and double to triple ethnic identifications. Chaves and Zambrano (2006) highlight Carol Smith's work that illustrates three interconnected ways in which the identity making processes of mestizaje manifests: 1) reproduction of the offspring of black, white, and Indigenous pairings, 2) a developed personal identification with those who make up mestizo communities or with the national conceptualization of mestizo culture, and 3) an emergence of discourses by scholars and political leaders surrounding the social position of mestizo populations as they relate to other groups and facets of social identification. Wade (2009) complements Smith's proposition by arguing that the ways in which scholars and activists conceptualize manifestations of ethnic

group heterogeneity or homogeneity influence the circulation of discourses and self perceptions of everyday citizens not particularly invested or involved in these upper level national discussions. This process indicates the depth at which ideologies shape identity politics and correlations between socioeconomic status and self-identified ethnic group membership.

Multicultural Policies for Indigenous Colombians

Thus far, we've reviewed the immense power in spreading national discourses to promote international portrayals of ethnic distinction as a ladder to economic advancement. Discourses work to create imaginary communities that become ethnic realities over time. Chaves and Zambrano (2006) argue that before constitutional reforms were put into action to nationally recognize the contribution of ethnic communities to Colombia's political identity, the process of deindeginización or deindianization ran rampant in which Indigenous populations were stripped of their cultural practices and heritages by means of social demoralization in order to promote racial mixing as a pull towards white nationalism. Before the 1970s, blanqueamiento or whitening continued to drive the mating practices and ideologies relating to upward social mobility in Colombia similar to blanqueamento in Brazil. In this way, racial mixing was encouraged as a mechanism to achieve national unity by diminishing the presence of black and brown populations. However, the authors argue that a shift took place in the 1990s towards reindigenización or reindianization in which Indigenous populations began to proudly identify with their heritage and claim their cultural practices and lived spaces once again. The researchers' primary goal in claiming this argument was to acknowledge the significance of the impact of mestizaje on Indigenous Colombian populations as this group is often discussed as privileged in comparison to black populations according to many Latin American scholars. Likewise, it is important to address the impact of multicultural policies on this group as they

carry the ancestral blood of the country's first inhabitants. I discuss the role of such policies among both groups and the interaction between black and brown Colombian populations later.

The signing of the 1991 National Constitution granted an array of collective rights to poor and Indigenous populations in Colombia. During the Constitutional Assembly, multiculturalism was institutionalized in order to legally recognize the rights of ethnic minorities (Jaramillo, 2011). Bocarejo (2009) stated that the two primary components that the Court rulings used to govern multiculturalism were to focus on the "subjective or personal character" and the "geographical character" of ethnic groups. In other words, these new legislations were regulated by determining the authenticity of ethnic cultural practices and behaviors of marginalized groups. These practices include use of indigenous languages, dress illustrative of pre-colonial times, and a distinguished primitive worldview among other cultural characteristics (Chaves and Zambrano, 2006). Once this process was achieved, rights would be assigned for groups that depicted the appropriate set of cultural demarcations to occupy legally and physically apprenticed territories. These land arrangements are referred to as *resguardos,* or a form of an Indian reserve in which ethnic groups were legal proprietors of designated spaces of land. Bocarejo (2009) highlights the interesting irony in granting such land agreements to ethnic groups that only make up about 3.4 percent of the population according to census data, in addition to *resguardos* historically being regarded as colonial compositions. During the colonial period, these spatial arrangements were used to capitalize on the labor of Indigenous populations in order to further economic advancement, whereas these territories are currently viewed as a means of legitimizing ethnic sovereignty to likewise, contribute to economic developments for the nation-state to compete in the international market. Thus, one must question whether these territorial grants were legalized as a means of creating group cohesion and national unity or to

promote ethnic democracy as the country's representation of a progressive symbol. What is evident is that both during the colonial era and present day occurrences, Indigenous groups are subjugated and mobilized in accordance with political endeavors to work towards economic growth of the country.

Conceptualizations of territorial spaces and the groups who were mobilized to occupy allocations of land vary among scholars. Trouillot (2003) termed these spaces "savage slots" that represent an environmental fetishism on behalf of the nation-state to regard ethnic lands as legitimate natural territories that would adequately be cared for by their original ancestral owners. Furthermore, researchers argue against the simplistic ways in which *resguardos* were delineated, suggesting that the nation-state deposited financial transfers to these lands without accounting for any real means of distributive justice (Bocarejo, 2009, Jaramillo, 2011). Much of this land was previously designated as wastelands and of minimal economic value to the country. Other means of mobilizing indigenous land expansion were for Colombian military operatives to violently force groups conceived as peasants to displace. Bocarejo (2009) describes the manner in which the Colombian Court distinguished between the Indigenous and peasants in which ecology and essentialist theories of culture were used as the foundation for: (1) recognizing the ownership of lands for Indigenous groups as a fundamental human right, (2) regarding populations who illustrate the appropriate characteristics of Indianess as gatekeepers of the nature by mobilizing them in close proximity to rural environments, 3) designating cultural assimilation of non-Indigenous groups to adapt the characteristics of these ethnic groups strictly as a category assigned to groups who do not reside in Indigenous land arrangements, and 4) separating Indians who are conceived as having a cultural connection to the territories from peasants who did not exhibit primitive relationship to the land via divisive community

representations. In this way, multiculturalism was a form of legalizing the relationship between authentic ethnicity and spatial ownership.

These efforts perpetuate power-ridden systems of oppression that seek to separate the ethnic person from the non-ethnic person and the mixed person from the racially pure person (i.e. white) that so eloquently evolve with the ever-changing imaginaries of national agendas. Nonetheless, some researchers believe that reindigenización seeks to improve the socioeconomic standing of some Indigenous groups in a way that the process of blanqueamiento sought to destroy (Chaves and Zambrano, 2006). Reclaiming ancestral heritage and thus making claims to territorial land that prohibits non-Indigenous groups from monopolizing these spaces provides opportunities for upward social mobility via ownership and group organizing. More importantly, it encourages groups who share similar ethnic heritages and cultural practices to come together and remedy the social inequalities that have separated them from the majority Colombian population from the moment the land was violently stripped of their ancestors. While this is certainly an optimistic and valid perspective in the debate about positive contributions of multicultural policies on historically marginalized groups, one cannot ignore the strategic scheme of using ethnic identity as a commodity to hide the relationship between discourses on diversity and racist domination as these so-called proprietors of the country's natural spaces are dependent on state funding to live unbothered ceremonious lives in these territories.

Another key component of multiculturalism in Colombia is etnoeducación or ethnic education. Etnoeducación is a Colombian state reform jurisdiction that provides structured and formal education that recognizes ethnic minority populations (Vasco Uribe, 2004). Researchers posit that this initiative was put into legal action for multiple reasons including pressure from Indigenous organizations and human rights groups to be allotted a form of schooling that

represents their distinctive cultural practices and worldviews, on the one hand, and to contribute to the nation-states goal of recognizing ethnic diversity as a symbol of multiculturalism to propel a strong economy on the other. Similar to the legal reform of *resguardos*, ethnoeducación recognizes the value of ethnic difference as a task of neoliberal multiculturalism as the educational reform has evolved over time to represent the nation's changing imaginative identities during the last few decades. In the 1970s indigenous social and political organizations such as the *Consejo Regional Indígena del Cuaca* (CRIC) and the *Organización Nacional Indígena de Colombia* (ONIC) have argued for the implementation of Indigenous representation in curriculum building and schooling practices as a mechanism to recover much of the ancestral values that have been diluted by colonial rule and national capitalism (Botero, 2015). In 1978, Decree 1142 of the National Ministry of Education was the first to recognize educating Indigenous populations as a means of nationally representing and preserving their culture (Vasco Uribe, 2004). Indigenous organizations worked collaboratively with the state to design curriculums relevant to different Indigenous populations. It is important to acknowledge that although Indigenous leaders helped to structure these educational reform initiatives, the state had the final word in what material was disseminated in schools and how students would receive these revived types of schooling. On July 12, 2010, Decree 2500 was implemented, which allowed local governments to design, administer, and organize an educative system that represented a variety of Indigenous groups on their own through social organizations and community associations (Botero, 2015). This shift in educational reform is indicative of Indigenous populations going from being regarded as dangerous threats to ideologies of nationalism because of their perceived savage behaviors and primitive ways of thinking, to becoming valued lower class citizens that improve national development through distinctive

ethnic representation and symbolism of active diversity initiatives. Through this process, the state is able to shape the young minds of its educationally disciplined citizens with ideas regarding national unity and economic productivity while also portraying an international image of ethnic recognition and inclusion through a most effective means of disseminating knowledge in schools. I argue that the impact that ethnic educational reforms and territorial arrangements has on the academic and psychological internalization processes of emerging adult citizens should not be taken lightly. Such nation building projects convey specific messages about what it means to be a productive Colombian citizen and how one can effectively achieve both individual economic success and economic advancement for their nation that is quite distinctive depending on an individual's heritage and socialization. Next, I address neoliberal progressive movements of diversity and inclusion for the country's afrodescendant population, an initiative that some researchers refer to as black multiculturalism (Cárdenas, 2012).

Multicultural Policies for Afro-Colombians

The emergence of collective rights for black Colombians symbolized a shift from the colorblind ideology that represented the national identities of many Latin American countries before the 1990s. As mentioned in the previous section on ethno-territorial mobilization of Indigenous populations, the 1991 Constitution contributed a revised Colombian national perspective that regarded the nation-state as a pluri-ethnic society and thus provided mandates to protect the rights of the country's ethnic populations. Through Transitory Article 55 (AT55), the new constitution proclaimed adoption of Law 70 or the Law of Black Communities. Black groups or Afro-Colombians consist of African descent populations who originated from the nation's archipelago of San Andrés, the providence of Santa Catarina, and the Palenque population of San Basilio (Martínez Carazo, Lago de Vergara, & Buelvas Martínez, 2016).

Other researchers specifically refer to the legislation's conception of Afro-Colombians as *negros (blacks), palenqueros* (an ethnic group from the town of San Basilio de Palenque)*, and raizales* (a Protestant ethnic group of mixed Afro-Carribbean and British descent that make up the island of San Andrés) (Lago de Zota, Lago de Fernández, Lago de Vergara, 2012; Menese Copote, 2016). A further description of these groups will be discussed in chapter 3 that details the racial makeup of the country and present day conceptualizations of racial identity situated within the multicultural discourse of the nation-state.

The most prominent changes that the legislation proposed were land rights for black populations to occupy their own communities as well as the right to be included in community development projects, integration of Afro-Colombian history in school instruction, and that leaders of black communities would hold two seats within the House of Representatives (Paschel, 2010). The legislative changes of Law 70 as well as further mandates decreed in the 1990s and early 2000s were brought about by years of protestations on behalf of black political leaders, Afro-Colombian social movements, and human rights organizations similar to the fight for Indigenous rights. Some of these organizations include the *Proceso de Comunidades Negros en Colombia (PCN)* or the Process of Black Communities in Colombia, *Conferencia Nacional de Organizaciones Afrocolombianos* or the National Conference of Afro-Colombian Organizations, the National Association for Displaced Afro-Colombians (AFRODES), and the *Movimiento Nacional CIMARRON* or the National Movement of Cimarrón (Cárdenas, 2012; Martínez Carazo et al., 2016). The last group emphasized recognition of *la conciencia cimarrona*, a social movement that stands for the reversal of the ingrained belief that black and Indigenous populations are problematic groups that create conflict and social strife in the Colombian nation. Together these sociopolitical movements and organizations among other groups have contributed

to the advancement of Afro-Colombians and the public recognition of their historical contribution to the nation, as well as conceptualizations of what it means to be black in Colombia.

The timing at which such legal requirements were adopted and the ways in which black populations are discussed in a context that traditionally celebrated mestizaje and colorblindness should be thoroughly examined. Most evident is that these ethno-racial jurisdictions emphasize a national discourse of ethnic difference rather than a requisition for racial equality. Some researchers posit that multicultural politics for afrodescendent groups articulates a language of black victimization that follows the post-conflict era and displacement of the nation's poorest citizens (Cárdenas, 2012; Lago de Zota, Lago de Fernández, Lago de Vergara, 2012). It is important to acknowledge that while ethnic difference, autonomy, and victimization is prioritized in the language of multicultural policies for the acquisition of black land rights in Colombia, discourses of racial equality and inclusion are the focus of multicultural pursuits in Brazil such as affirmative action policies and the development of the Ministry for the Promotion of Racial Equality (Paschel, 2010). For blacks, ethno-racial legislature in Colombia resembled collective rights granted to Indigenous populations that emphasized the cultural values, practices, and belief systems distinctive from mainstream Colombian culture. A mere resemblance, however, does not suggest racial equality neither within ethnic minority groups nor between minority groups and the majority population. Indigenous groups have been granted acquisition to about 29.8% of Colombian territory whereas Afro-Colombians have been granted approximately 4.1% of land within the country (Paschel, 2010). As mentioned in the previous section, Indigenous groups constitute roughly 3.43% of the country's population, whereas Afro-Colombian groups make up about 10.62% of the national population (Martínez Carazo et al., 2016). What is the criterion

for determining why some ethnic groups are granted larger quantities of land than others? It is clearly not a decision based on sheer population figures. By acknowledging these differences, I do not seek to suggest that black populations deserve more rights than Indigenous groups nor that Indigenous groups have not been oppressed and victimized by the Colombian state, rather I extend the feat of Latin American scholars to address inconsistencies and ambivalence in the imaginary portrayal of ethnic inclusion and reparation of adversity in neoliberal multicultural political agendas that influence the identity making processes of the nation's inhabitants.

The landmark legislation of Law 70 was one implication on behalf of the nation-state to legitimize African descent Colombians as an ethnic group and link them to spatial geographies. Approximately 8.4 million acres of land have been granted to black communities in the Pacific region, compared with 77.3 million acres granted to Indigenous groups in the form of *resguardos* (Chaves and Zambrano, 2006). The decision spread the belief that black Colombians share distinctive cultural practices that constitute their ethnic otherness and demonstrate an attachment to territorial demarcations similar to Indigenous groups. The comparison between land allocation based on ethnic categorizations of Indigenous groups to that of black groups is made throughout this paper because Indigenous groups have been acknowledged by the nation in official recordings of individuals such as the Colombian census prior to its inclusion of blacks (Wade, 2009). These categorizations are further simplified by relating ethnic characteristics to specific areas of the country. More specifically, the divergence between the social and contextual understandings of racial geographies arises when we consider the characteristics of land disseminated to these two ethnic groups. After the legislation's passing, Afro-Colombians were primarily mobilized to the Pacific region, which coincidentally is considered one of the country's five major natural regions due to its prevalence of rivers, rainforests, and swamps

(Wade, 1995). This categorized black Colombians as an ethnic group associated with Pacific riverine and rural communities quite the opposite of the white urban elites predominantly occupying economically advanced cities such as Bogotá, the country's capital (Cárdenas, 2012). This also contrasts with the predominance of black Colombians in urban cities outside of rural areas and ignores the growing number of these groups in major cities such as Cartagena, Cali, Medillín, and Bogotá.

The ethnicization of blackness in Colombia expanded in more articles of the new constitution in the 1990s and early 2000s. In 1993, article 39 of law 70 declared that the state should recognize and guarantee the right to an educational agreement that represents the needs and ethnocultural aspirations of Afro-Colombian communities and that measures would be implemented to ensure that students at every schooling level would receive a curriculum that coincided with the mandate (Lago de Fernández, Lago de Vergara, 2012). In 1994, Law 115 know as the *Ley General de Educación* or the General Education Law was passed ensuring that a comprehensive curriculum would be instilled that included the national culture, ethnic diversity, and the fundamental cultural aspects of the nation that demonstrates respectful perspective towards the cultural identity of ethnic groups and represents the nation's identity and national unity. In 1995, la Comisión Pedagógica Afroamericana or the African American Pedagogical Commission was created in the Ministry of Education to confirm ethical procedures concerning the entities for territorial rights and curriculum development related to education for Afro-Colombian groups in Decree 2249. In 2001, Law 725 decreed the country's *Dia Nacional de la Afrocolombianidad* with the primary objective of acknowledging Colombia as a pluriethnic society and giving regard to the need for its black inhabitants to recover their collective memory and cultural inheritance (Cárdenas, 2012).

Etnoeducación or ethnic education is an important political endeavor of implementation of the General Education Law on behalf of the republic congress of Colombia to compete in the international market. The emergence of etnoeducación and afro-etnoeducación symbolized a prominent political strategy that supported the nation's goal of becoming the most educated country of Latin America (Menese Copote, 2016). The best means of conveying the country's unique pluriethnic and multilingual culture was to demonstrate a commitment to including curriculum that represented the diverse heritages and historical contributions of various ethnic groups to the country's national identity. The term etnoeducación was first used in 1982 by Mexican anthropologist, Guillermo Bonfil Batalla, to describe a social permanence immersed in cultural ownership that conveys the beliefs, interests, and aspirations of groups of people in order to exercise social mobilization via recognition of cultural resources that illustrate the values of ethnic groups and their relation to other groups within a hegemonic society of mutual respect (Marrugo, Agamez, & Guerrero, 2017). More simply put, Bonfil first used the term to refer to a culturally distinctive educational formulation for ethnic groups that emphasized a necessity to conserve their cultural practices and teachings of the principles that have been carried down from generation to generation. Colombian anthropologist Manuel Zapata Olivella defined ethnic education as an understanding of the Colombian and American context that emphasizes the cultural, social, and political emancipation of blacks to combat 500 years of oppression, devaluation, and marginalization (Martínez Carazo, 2016; Walsh, 2004). Colombian sociologist and education professor Luis Alberto Artunduaga expanded upon the term by suggesting its indication of a process of recovery, valorization, and appropriation of life values that represents the necessities and characteristics of the human condition as it relates to all cultural groups that make up a nation's population (Artunduaga, 1997; Martínez Carazo, 2016). While ethnic

education represents a plethora of conceptual understandings, the common theme between each of the aforementioned definitions is a commitment to the value of historical and cultural representation of ethnic minority groups in the instructional curriculum of educational institutions.

The Colombian Congressional legislation of ethnic education has exhibited numerous benefits as well as consequences for the groups of which it seeks to represent. Some of the benefits include autonomy on behalf of marginalized groups to design curriculum that represents their values and beliefs, implementation of formal coursework in higher education to train educators in curriculum development for ethnic education, and interference in traditional historical public school teachings that predominantly focus on the majority European descent contribution to the nation's fight for decolonization, independence, and establishment of the country's economic infrastructure while solely portraying Indigenous groups as savages and African descent groups as enslaved peoples. Execution of the General Education Law was the first time in the nation's history, that the Colombian Congress formally incorporated instruction of the history and cultural practices of its ethnic minority groups in schools. This political undertaking conveyed a dynamic transformation of Colombian national identity that integrated the voices of its marginalized groups in the construction and delegation of educational curriculum. Several of the nation's universities that have incorporated degree programs in ethnic education including the year of implementation include the Universidad del Cuaco (1996), Universidad de la Guajira (1996), Universidad Nacional Abierta y a Distancia (2000), Universidad de la Amazonía (1991), and the Universidad Pontificia Bolivariana Instituto Misionario de Antropología, IMA (2000) among others (Menese Copote, 2016). The nation state's mandate to actualize formal instruction of ethnic based curriculum development in higher

education displays an effort towards reinventing the social order of economic opportunity in the country. This sentiment is expressed in three of the purposes of the legalized formulation of Colombian ethnic education below.

> *1.2 Contribuir al desarrollo del país en el campo cultural, social, económico y político del país desde la perspectiva étnica* (To contribute an ethnic perspective to development of the country in the cultural, social, economic, and political fields).
>
> - *Fortalecer los sistemas y prácticas comunitarias de organización y control social y revertir procesos de aculturación* (To strengthen community systems and practices of social organizations, to gain social control, and to reverse acculturation processes).
>
> - *Desarrollar procesos formativos integrales que fortalezcan el ejercicio docente desde una visión autónoma y crítica de la interculturalidad, promoviendo el conocimiento y compresión de todas las culturas* (To develop integral training processes that strengthen the teaching profession from an autonomous and critical vision of interculturality, promoting knowledge and comprehension of all cultures) (Cabezas & Rivilla, 2013, p. 17).

Despite such progressive efforts to change the social order of the country, research indicates that the Law of Black Communities and the General Education Law have had quite the opposite effect. Income inequality increased in the 1990s, the decade in which the new constitution was signed. The amount of national income that the poorest 40 percent of the Colombian population earned decreased from 16 percent in 1991 to 13 percent in 1997, while earnings of the richest portion of the population increased from 32 percent to 39.5 percent, reaching 42.7 percent by the year 2000. (Chaves & Zambrano, 2006). Thus, while the country's poorest inhabitants, black and Indigenous groups respectively, had been granted territorially

rights that should have positioned them to improve their socioeconomic standing, poverty increased among marginalized groups immediately following the legislation. One of the impeding consequences of Law 70 that granted land rights to black communities in specific regions was that competition for territory reigned in the Pacific region during the 1990s. Recall that this is the region that exhibited the association of blackness with the geographical character of rural riverine landscapes as an effect of the law (Bocarejo, 2009). Restrepo and Escobar (2005) argued that due to new territorial pursuits between conservative paramilitary groups and the historic guerilla groups of the *Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias de Colombia (FARC)* or the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia and the *Ejército de Liberación Nacional (ELN)* or National Liberation Army, the Pacific region transfigured from the *refugio de paz* (refuge of peace) that was allegedly granted by the legislation to the *pesadilla de guerra* (nightmare of war).

The military groups and armed forces increased their war tactics to find profitable trading posts in previously peaceful regions for drug trafficking and illegal importation of guns (Cárdenas, 2012). Such occurrences contributed to regional violence that reshaped the country's safe and prosperous havens. Thousands of inhabitants of the newly organized black communities were violently forced to leave their homes and/or killed, including Afro-Colombian activists, in order to create spaces for military training facilities, drug trade centers, war trenches, and more (Cárdenas, 2012). This led social rights organizations that had previously rallied for ethnic territorial rights to shift their focus to preserving human life through political survival mechanisms. Organizations of *desplezados* or displaced peoples emerged as millions of Colombians moved into refugee camps and shelters in urban cities. The war contributed to a mass movement of black Colombians into previously perceived white urban territories and a

heightened conglomeration of blacks from varying territorial origins, and educational and economic levels into a conceived group of *Afro-Colombianos desplezados*. Cárdenas (2012) provides the example of the variance within this displaced group including labor workers from the rural Pacific region of Chocó, young academics and professionals from the capital of the Chocó department, miners from rural small towns in interior regions, and proclaimed labor activists; all of which had come to be regarded under the umbrella of displaced blacks once they reached the nation's capital. While its debatable whether or not the war could be foreseen by the nation's political leaders and legislators, its evident that not enough strategies were put into effect to prepare for future adversities and protect these lands once granted as peaceful territories for black communities.

The General Education Law has also brought about unforeseen challenges. Some of the negative components of the legislative mandate for ethnic education include perceived homogenization of ethnic groups with a diverse set of customs and practices, homogenization of varying racial groups as a unified multicultural national symbol, and inadequate monitoring of lasting implementation of ethnic based curriculum. Botero (2015) used the term differential homogenization to describe the process by which state functionaries and predominant non-Indigenous and non-black representatives who support the national agenda, organize systems of social and cultural spaces that treat ethnic minorities as culturally distinctive subjects. The issue with perceiving diverse groups as homogenous is that within group differences are lost and inequalities become hidden under the discourse that everyone in the contrived group exhibits similar characteristics. These characteristics are not simply used to describe groups of people as social beings with specific mannerisms and affinities but mainly to position them in society as subjects to be measured for the purposes of advancing a national agenda that speaks to the

benefits of human rights in ethnic recognition rather than equitable opportunity for socioeconomic mobility of marginalized groups.

This dissertation commences with the topic of multiculturalism in order to situate conversations regarding educational and economic mobility in Latin America within national discourses that frame how citizens of these nations perceive their humanity in relation to sociopolitical structures of opportunity that impact their livelihood and well being. Legislative mandates such as the Law 70 that grants land rights to black communities and territorial rights allotted to Indigenous groups in the form of resguardos communicate ideas to the nation state's citizens and international communities about how these groups are categorized within the national discourse of diversity as it relates to socioeconomic positioning. While on the surface conceding territory to marginalized groups and providing government initiatives to create educational instruction based on the cultural beliefs and values of these groups exemplifies an effort to acknowledge oppressed and displaced peoples in the national representation of the country, such efforts further distinguish these groups as upholding characteristics and ways of living that are different from the standard Eurocentric colonizer mentality that encompasses the social, economic, and political operations of the country.

As other researchers have argued, multicultural initiatives in the form of legislative authorizations for those who qualify as culturally distinctive generates artificial homogenous illusions both at the level of ethnic group formulation and among national representations of the country as a whole. Earlier, we witnessed the example of economically and socially diverse sets of African descent people from the Chocó region who were violently forced to leave their homelands due to drug and gun wars, and were consequentially lumped together under the categorization of displaced blacks once they relocated to the nation's predominantly European

descent capital. This unforeseen migration added an additional layer to the association of African descent groups in Colombia as those who solely occupy rural and riverine communities of the country. Likewise, those who have demonstrated the appropriate qualities of the native people who originally occupied the nation state are categorized as Indigenous under the land title legislations while those who do not meet these qualifications are further distinguished and often ostracized as undeserving peasants. While formal justification has not been proposed as to why multicultural policies authorize higher proportions of land to Indigenous groups than blacks even though black Colombians represent a larger proportion of the total population, it is evident that such political endeavors homogenize these groups into contrived ethnic dimensions that somehow simultaneously represent the unique diversity of a multicultural and multiethnic society but are categorized based on cultural characteristics that are deemed outside of the national standard. Furthermore, such policy decisions communicate perceptions of one metropolis of a homogenous multicultural unit of Colombian peoples to the international market for the economic benefits of those who already maintain the highest ranks of social order.

The story presented thus far illustrates the manner of which concepts are disseminated concerning national discourses of ethnic group memberships and categorizations among scholars, activists, and political leaders. While much of research on multiculturalism in Colombia has focused on the new constitution of 1991 and the General Education Law as neoliberal methods to create an illusive portrayal of a homogenous nation, it is equally important to acknowledge that this was not the first time that the nation state used education as a means to convey national ideologies of race relations to the country's citizens. Lasso (2006) indicated that the 1814 constitution of Mariquita in Colombia stated "no school should make any distinction between whites, *pardos* or any other class of people. It is talent and progress in learning that

shall distinguish youth in the Republic," (p. 18). This framing is quite distinctive from the modern proposal for ethnic education to serve as a legislative initiative to acknowledge ethnic minority populations as culturally divergent groups who have contributed to the nation in unique ways. Thus, even though the 1994 mandate calls for cultural distinctiveness and the 1814 mandate calls for racial concurrence, both mandates impart an ideology of a homogenous Colombian nation that is quite frankly made out of a racially heterogeneous and diverse population. This dissertation seeks to illustrate the impact that multicultural discourses of race that do not accurately reflect the socioeconomic positioning of ethnic populations have on the perceptions of economic opportunity among black and brown young people of these nations. I acknowledge that education is often used as a pillar on behalf of nation states to convey ambivalent national ideologies to its youngest citizens. Furthermore, I focus on educational outcomes and occupational goals as a means of measuring the future oriented behaviors of these youth as it relates to how they perceive themselves as productive contributing members of societies that portray a melting pot of opportunity for marginalized groups. Before delving into the associations of racial and ethnic group memberships with educational opportunity, it is first important to cover how race is conceptualized in both nations. The next chapter discusses the evolution of racial classifications that constitute politically oriented representations of ethnic group categories of present day Brazilian and Colombian national ideologies, including illustrations of racial stratification of socioeconomic groups.

Chapter 3: Racial Categorization and Skin Color Stratification in Brazil and Colombia

Race in Brazil

At this point of global conversations concerning social group memberships, it should be no secret that present day inequalities are linked to hundreds of years of oppression of black and brown people throughout the world. While emphasis in sociological and economic studies on race is often placed on the racially dichotomous black-white U.S. model, it is equally important to address the racial realities of countries with perceived racially fluid ideologies as they also contribute to international conceptualizations of the ways people should be conceived of based on their group memberships. Additionally, it is of equal significance to acknowledge the large percentages of African descent people in Latin America that date back to forced enslavement that occurred up until the nineteenth century. Fifteen times more African enslaved people were brought to what is now Latin America than to the U.S., with eleven times as many slaves arriving in Brazil alone (Telles, 2014). At this point of the paper, I turn towards developments of hierarchical human statuses that evolved during Latin American colonization in order to serve as a foundation for a discussion of race in contemporary Brazilian and Colombian societies.

The emergence of privilege associated with whiteness or white skin can be derived from the early slave trade initiated by Portuguese settlers to the new land that lay south of the equator. In an effort to expand trade routes, the Spanish and the Portuguese began to explore the Caribbean islands now termed “the West Indies”, and imported the first shipment of slaves from east Africa in the early 1500s (Russell-Cole, Wilson, & Hall, 2013). Other European colonizers originating from Britain, France, and the Netherlands imported African slaves into the newly “discovered” lands of Central and South America in order to increase profit through cheap labor. The Brazilian territory itself remained a Portuguese colony from 1500 to 1822 (Moraes Silva &

Paixão, 2014). Russell et al., (2013) proposed that the Europeans perceived themselves to be superior to the indigenous people who had originally occupied the new lands and deemed it their Christian duty to industrialize the territory of the "savage" natives. Thus, a social hierarchy was constructed between the affluent White Europeans and the indigenous peoples. Poor Whites were also recruited from European nations and hired as indentured servants to work on the plantations in order to increase productivity. These conditions along with both forced and consensual sexual relationships provided an opportunity for racial mixing. The offspring of these interracial relations, historically referred to as mulattoes, were often perceived as better than blacks because of their genetic relation to the White slave owners. Contrary to the black slaves, mulattoes were often able to live freely in addition to inheriting wealth from their white parent if there was no other successor. These mixed race individuals began to profit from a higher status in society that positioned them above blacks and darker skinned indigenous populations, while still being considered inferior to whites. Thus, white domination was promoted by privileging those who most closely emulated European customs and physical features in Central and South America. Today colorism has evolved in the Americas such that individuals of lighter skin shades occupy higher economic and social standing while individuals of darker skin tones are among the poorest members of society (Htun, 2004; Russell et al., 2013).

The occurrences of a societal structure based on skin color in Latin America are distinct from the racial stratification that developed in the United States. I will use the U.S. as an example simply as a means of juxtaposing conceptualizations of racial group membership of a familiar North American context to that of enslaved societies that are less familiar to many U.S. scholars. During the first importation of African slaves into North American colonies in the early 17th century, landowners created a social hierarchy between the white indentured servants

and the African slaves to prevent the two groups from revolting (Fegley, Spencer, Goss, Harpalani, & Charles, 2008). The white servants enjoyed their status and thus believed themselves to be superior to blacks despite economic similarities. Thus, social and economic privileges developed during this time based on the color of one's skin. Categorizing Africans or those with darker skin tones as less than human and inferior to those with European ancestry reconciled Christian concerns of the morality of slavery. During the 1600s laws were passed in Virginia ruling that any non-Christian, which were only Africans at the time, was subject to lifetime enslavement (Russell-Cole, Wilson, & Hall, 2013). Slavery was legalized in a way that made it acceptable for Africans to be inferior to both their white plantation owners and the white indentured servants working alongside them. Fegley et al. (2008) proposed that despite the inferiority complex, it was not uncommon for white slave owners to have romantic relationships with enslaved black women. Similar to the hierarchy that developed in South and Central America, the offspring of these unions received benefits that darker skinned enslaved people were not permitted such as working in the homes of the slave owners. However, U.S. government ordained laws prohibiting interracial marriage were enacted in order to uphold an ideology of white racial purity.

All attempts at preserving white racial purity in Brazil as well as other Latin American countries failed in comparison to the U.S. racial caste model. However, the absence of laws prohibiting interracial relations does not constitute an avoidance of racial hierarchies and inequalities in Brazil. In addition to Brazil having the largest population of African descent people in South America, there are other features that distinguish the nation state from both its Latin American counterparts and its northern U.S neighbor. First and foremost, it is important to reiterate that Brazil imported the largest shipment of enslaved African people compared to any

other territory of the region. Second, Brazil was the only nation of Latin America that did not organize an independence war to liberate the territory from the Portuguese reign (Morales Silva & Paixão, 2014). Furthermore, they were also the only nation to maintain political and economic unity after gaining independence from the Portuguese. Although a large amount of the nation's black and mulatto population had already been freed, Brazil was the last Latin American country to legally abolish slavery in 1888 (Skidmore, 1972). Finally, distinct from other nations of the region, data on the country's racial makeup have been collected since the nineteenth century, giving researchers the opportunity to document racial inequalities over the last century (Morales Silva & Paixão, 2014). Thus, the nation's large representation of African descent people, delayed liberation of its enslaved population, absence of independence wars, and counting of its black inhabitants in census data before its Latin American counterparts, distinguish the nation's race relations from its neighbors.

The emergence and evolution of racial hierarchies in Brazil are well documented and evidenced despite an absence of legal segregationist policies that represented race relations of the nation's northern neighbors. Particularly the conceptions of race mixing and legal regulations concerning the offspring of interracial pairings distinguish Brazil from the U.S. in their developments of denoting those with African ancestry as an inferior people. Accompanying the legalization of segregation in the U.S., the "one-drop" or hypodescent rule formulated legally defining blacks as individuals who had at least one-eighth, one-sixteenth, or one-thirty-secondth of African blood (Telles, 2004). This policy overshadowed the former acknowledgment of mixed race individuals represented by the U.S. census' inclusion of a mulatto racial category from 1850 to 1910 (Telles, 2004). Although segregation laws were abolished in the 1960s, these legal prohibitions effectively sustained a white racial purist model and shaped racialized

conceptions of whiteness and non-white groups that persist in contemporary North American society. Morales Silva and Paixão (2014) argued that in place of segregation laws, Brazilian elites implemented three primary methods of limiting the social mobility of its African descent constituents. The first of which is that formerly enslaved populations, most highly represented by descendants of African slaves, were legally required to provide formalized legal papers that demonstrated their status as property owners. Second, the 1890 Penal Code prohibited the organizing of African descent social movements as well as popular Afro-Brazilian cultural representations such as capoeira (a type of martial arts that combines dance with competitive fighting). Lastly, the large occurrences of subsidized immigration from European countries contributed to the aforementioned ideology of blanqueamento. Regional representations evolved during this time as well as a result of subsidization. Brazilian elites provided incentives such as grants to property ownership and employment in industrial positions in São Paulo, which had become the country's new city center for economic advancement, leading to a labor force of 85 percent immigrant employees by 1915 (Morales Silva & Paixão, 2014). European immigrants spread throughout other southern cities of the nation, while black and brown populations remained in the predominantly rural areas of Northern and Northeast regions. Therefore, the argument that race relations in Brazil did not compare to the punitive denigration of blacks in the U.S. is of substandard quality considering extensive evidence that suggests otherwise. Despite an absence of prohibitions that were termed segregation laws verbatim, blacks in Brazil were excluded from access to equitable or even a fourth of the social mobility allotted to their white counterparts via land restriction laws, laws that prohibited celebration of their cultural practices, and a provision of job increase that separated populations of African descent from populations of European descent economically and spatially.

Postcolonial racial hierarchies coupled with miscegenation efforts impact both national statistical representations and popular conceptualizations of race relations in contemporary Brazil. As I transition to discuss developments of racial understandings more concretely, it is critical to acknowledge the variation of racial terminologies in Brazil that are distinct from the U.S. as well as from other Latin American countries considering the influence of the Portuguese language versus Spanish. Due to the pervasive influence of the U.S. hypodesent principle in comparison to Brazilian racial mixing efforts that contributed to how the two nations categorized mulattoes on different accords, an individual who is perceived to be black in the States may be considered brown or even white in Brazil. Likewise, many Brazilians who identify as white are considered Hispanic or Latino rather than white American when they travel to the U.S. This discrepancy relates to a lack of uniformity in Brazilian racial classifications, variations in racial terminologies, and the large degree of interracial offspring. One critical component of Brazilian race relations is how Brazilians think of race altogether. The Portuguese word for color, *côr (or côr da pele* for skin color), is preferred amongst Brazilian populations when discussing racial groups because it encompasses the wide array of physical appearances (including skin tone, hair texture, and nose and lip shape) that represent the nation's inhabitants (Telles, 2004). Relying on physical appearance rather than ancestry to categorize groups of people contributes to ambiguity in Brazilian racial classifications for statistical representations.

While racial classifications in Brazil are not representative of dichotomous ancestry based categorizations, the nation's social and political systems implicate distinct conceptions of race along a black-white color continuum. Telles (2004) argued that the three prominent systems used to classify individuals into racial groups in Brazilian society are the census system, the popular system, and a revived classification system, which Telles refers to as the black-

movement system. Unlike other Latin American countries, the Brazilian nation-state has incorporated racial categories into census data collection earlier and more consistently than other nations of the region. To date, the Brazilian national censuses have consistently counted by race since 1980. The first Brazilian census in 1872 included racial counts, consisting of the following categories: *preto* (black), *pardo* (brown), and *branco* (white) (Morales Silva & Paixão, 2014). The following 1890 census included the same categories however, the 1900 census eliminated the race question, and the 1940 census did not include an option for *pardo* or brown classification. The 1950 census was the first of its kind as it included the option for citizens to self-identify rather than being categorized based on data collector's perceptions and it included one additional option, *amarelo* (Asian or yellow), in addition to reincorporating the brown category. An indigenous category, indígena, was not included in census data until 1991 (Telles, 2004). The pardo category is the most ambiguous of the census system as it encompasses a general mixed race population. Since the term translates as brown it can include anyone representing the various hues of light brown-medium brown skin tones, wavy to curly hair textures, and an array of facial features. Thus the term is not exclusive to mulattoes, the offspring of African and European ancestry, but also includes those of indigenous ancestry.

Telles' (2004) conceptualization of the popular system contributes an additional ambiguous racial category, moreno. Moreno is used throughout Spanish speaking and Portuguese speaking cultures including European nations and has three primary representations: 1) a white or light skinned person with brown hair and dark features, most often referred to as a brunette in the U.S., 2) a person of mixed race ancestry, or 3) a black person. Moreno literally translates to mean brown, similar to the pardo category. These conceptions vary by culture, nation, and region. While the category has never been used in official census data, its popularity

is represented in a 1995 national survey that counted by race. In this open-ended self identified format, moreno was the second highest selected category at 32 percent, behind 42 percent of Brazilians who identified as white, and followed by only 7 percent who selected pardo, 5 percent preto, and a mere 3 percent who selected negro. Negro and preto both translate as black, however the connotations are somewhat different. In a U.S. context, preto would translate as black whereas negro would translate as African American or African descent. Regardless of terminology there were far more than 8 percent black or African descent people in Brazil at the time of the unofficial national survey. What researchers typically find is that on average, Brazilians identify less with preto, negro, and pardo when given the opportunity to choose moreno as an option (Moraes Silva & Paixão, 2014). The term's ambiguity aligns with the national discourse of a Brazilian racial democracy that emphasizes the nation's tri-hybrid population make-up and molds ethnic and racial diversity into a unified Brazilian race. Additionally, the term does not hold the same negative stereotypes as those that black or indigenous categorizations carry given its absence from colonial discourse and modern official census use as well as a lack of cultural affiliations. Moreno solely relates to physical appearance, conveniently aligning with the preference of Brazilians to define themselves by skin color rather than ancestry, if either.

The final system that Telles (2004) uses to illustrate conceptions of race in Brazil uses categorizations most similar to the black-white dichotomous framing of the U.S. A fundamental difference however, is that this third system of classification does not include any other categories besides branco and negro. Telles refers to this system as the black-movement system because activists associated with the black movement rallied together to advocate for change of racial categories in census data collection in the 1990s in order to include the category negro,

which the group believed represented all Brazilian citizens of African ancestry (Morales Silva & Paixão, 2014). Keep in mind that negro was never used in the census, similar to moreno. The key difference is that the black movement asserted the use of the term negro specifically to fight against the racial ambiguity that they believed diminished the perceived presence of Brazil's large African descent population. Despite such efforts, the president of the Brazilian Institute of Geography and Statistics (IBGE), the leading government agency for collecting population data, proclaimed that the agency would continue the use of the traditional preto, pardo, and branco categories given the highly politicized term grouped together blacks and browns (Morales Silva & Paixão, 2014). Ultimately, racial classification in Brazil depends on which system an individual or agency is using and who is in the position of identification.

Salvador, Bahia, Brazil

Salvador is a prominent location to explore perceptions of upward mobility among advantaged and disadvantaged populations as it is situated in one of the poorest regions of the country. Not coincidentally, it is also home to the highest proportion of the country's Afrodescendants. Salvador was founded as the first capital of Brazil in 1549 by Portuguese colonialist Tomé de Souza (Perry, 2013). During the colonial period between 1500-1822, the city's location on the coast of the northeast region of the country made it a prime port of entry for the importation of African slaves. The city flourished as the country's economic center due to slave work on tobacco and sugar plantations, and later gold mining in the 1800s. It was the country's richest and most highly populated city during the colonial period. Salvador remained the capital of Brazil until 1763, when it was changed to Rio de Janeiro (Perry, 2012). However, Salvador is the present capital of the state of Bahia.

Although once the wealthiest city of Brazil, Salvador experienced a stark decline in economic growth and development after the capital was moved to Rio de Janeiro. Much of the country's economic and political activity shifted to the southeast region of the country during this time. The shift in focus of economic development to southern cities has led to an increased decline in public services such as water, housing, and transportation in northern cities, particularly in Bahia (Greenfield 1994 as cited in Perry, 2013). Certainly employment and educational opportunities have also suffered in response to the decline in economic growth. Additionally, the country's elite politicians' plan to whiten the population and attract white immigrants to southern cities in the late 1800s and early 1900s contributed to economic power in the south. Thus, it is not surprising that the majority of Brazil's black and brown population resided in the North and Northeast regions of the country, which also became the nation's poorest regions during this period (Telles, 2014).

Today, Salvador is referred to as the mecca of African diaspora due to its high concentration of Afrodescendants. The state's 77 percent black population and the cities 2.3 million black residents make Salvador the most populous black city second to Lagos, Nigeria (Instituto Brasileiro de Geografia e Estatística 2012; Perry 2013). This makes Salvador a prime location to promote the country's ideologies of racial democracy and multiculturalism. With the large population of individuals of African descent, Salvador has become a tourist attraction for Afrobrazilian culture. Perry (2013) argued that the objective of elite whites and those in political power to promote traditional Afrobrazilian attributes such as the religion of Candomblé, the martial art of Capoeira, the dance Samba, and cultural foods like feijoada and acarajé illuminates the presence of black pride in Brazil while it hides the immense presence of mass land eviction in black communities. State officials use the city's colonial past to attract tourists to the imagery

of blackness. In this way, Afrobrazilian cultural traditions are used to represent the country's national identity, often supporting the idea of a racial paradise.

An example of Salvador's re-Africanization is the transformation of the neighborhood of Pelourinho, translated in English as "whipping post" (Paschel, 2009). Pelourinho is known as the historic center of Salvador which was also the cite where slaves were publicly beaten during slavery. After the movement of government officials and administratives, along with the city's middle class population to more affluent coastal areas, Salvador's poorer populations moved into the city center. However, the inability of the poor populations to afford upkeep of these former mansions led to the center's degradation. The center's downtown location and the need for economic resources to care for the buildings created an ideal environment for prostitution (Kulick, 1998). In the 1960s, 57.6 percent of the neighborhood's women, primarily black, were prostitutes (Nobre 1995, as cited in Perry 2013). In the 1980s, the government declared a revitalization project to fund restoration of the city's center historic buildings. During this time a mass expulsion took place displacing the criminal and prostitute populations who were blamed for the center's deterioration. Today, Afrobrazilian cultural centers and groups in Pelourinho such as the Olodum band, receive mass funding from the government in order to promote a global black identity. However, the very populations who constitute this cultural identity are demoralized and expounded to the poorest neighborhoods of the city.

In many aspects, Salvador illustrates one of the most prideful black cities in the world while it simultaneously and often unknowingly, demoralizes its black communities. Black youth within these communities struggle to find their place as they envision challenges with racial discrimination in the labor market. Keisha-Khan Perry (2013) included the following quote from

the "Letter from the Black Youth of Salvador" in her ethnography of the city's Gamboa de Baixo neighborhood:

> The situation of black youth in the job market is extremely fragile. We don't have the right to a life without racial and sexual violence. In sum, we don't have the right to exercise our citizenship. For us, this citizenship means the right to frequent public spaces, like shopping malls, buses, parks, etc., without the imposition of police beatings. We do not accept the destruction of our image as a community. We, black youth, want the right to meet in public spaces without being apprehended by the police.

The excerpt represents not only a desire for upward mobility, but a mere cry to be treated as valuable human beings. These youth desire to navigate through society without the hassle of police brutality and racial discrimination just as many of their white counterparts are able to do. Above all else, they yearn for equal opportunity. Furthermore, they believe that it is their right as Brazilian citizens to do so.

Race in Colombia

Discovering racial identification in Colombia is a complicated feat for researchers, policymakers, and the country's citizens considering the array of racial and ethnic conceptualizations of ancestral heritage and physical appearance that have evolved over time. Although Colombia has come to be regarded as the mestizo nation, distinct ethnic and racial categorizations link its constituents to social status and economic opportunity. While some scholars argue that racial prejudices did not emerge in Colombian history until conceptualizations of the word race were formulated in the nineteenth century, others posit that colonial era caste systems that organized groups of people into hierarchies based on observed physical and cultural characteristics transcended into a bequest modern day occurrences of racism and oppression that currently persist in Colombian society (Leal, 2010; Urrea Giraldo, Viáforo López, & Viveros Vigoya, 2014). It is critical to review a brief history of colonization

and slavery in the nation in order to provide a foundation for which racial and ethnic relations have come to be understood from the country's liberation from Spain until now. Spanish conquerors invaded the territory that is now called Colombia in 1499. The Spanish crown named the new land New Granada (Urrea Giraldo, Viáforo López, Viveros Vigoya, 2014). In 1525, Spanish conqueror Rodrigo de Bastidas founded the first city, Santa Marta, on the northern coast of the land. Similar to Native Americans in the U.S., indigenous people were already occupying the land, cultivating crops for their livelihood. This population was made up of multiple tribes with a variety of different languages and cultural practices. Despite diversity in tribal affiliations, the Indigenous were believed to be living in peace by respecting the boundaries of which each group resided. Soon after groups of Spanish men began to populate in the so-called new world, the colonizers violently forced Indigenous groups from their land and recruited many of the tribal members to work for them in exchange for remaining on the territory. They were consequentially conceived as *la población indígena esclavizada* or the population of enslaved Indigenous people (Lago de Zota et al., 2012). This is one of the first instances that homogenized a diverse group of people and demonized their cultural practices as savagery for the economic benefits of European descent colonizers.

At the start of the 16th century, Spaniards began to import the first shipments of African slaves to the Colombian territory. The indigenous population had begun to decrease due to violent murder in response to resistance as well as foreign diseases brought over by the Spanish settlers. It was also challenging to effectively enslaved Indigenous groups as they occupied their own local communities and were much more familiar with the lay of the land then the colonizers (Wade, 1995). Thus, the Spanish followed their Portuguese neighbors and looked to Africa for human commerce to expand labor. As questions arise regarding the culprit of initiation of

African slavery in South America, recall that the Portuguese first invaded Africa during the 15th century and later signed agreement with Spain in 1494 (*el Tratado de Tordesillas Español y Portugal)* that granted all rights to the Portuguese to embark on the entire occidental coast of Africa (Cook, 2002). In accordance with the agreement, the Portuguese began the initial routes from the occidental regions of Africa to what is now, South America. The Portuguese and Spanish settlers regarded African slaves as a strong animal like species that could withstand the intense physical labor required to increase crop growth and that had a higher tolerance towards infectious diseases that were pervasive in tropical climate regions due to the hot weather of their native lands (Lago de Zota, 2012; Russell-Cole, Wilson, & Hall, 2013). However, unlike slave labor in Brazil and the U.S., enslaved peoples in the New Granada primarily worked on metal extraction, livestock production, and household assistance rather than exclusively to the agricultural work of maintaining cotton and sugar plantations (Urrea Giraldo, Viáforo López, Viveros Vigoya, 2014). Nonetheless, this was the start to stripping diverse groups of African peoples from their homelands, native languages, and families to mold them into a unified black Colombian group who wouldn't be regarded as such for centuries to come.

Cartagena de Indias or Cartagena was the first city in the Colombian territory to receive a shipment of African slaves. Since the early years of its establishment to the abolition of slavery, the city became a key player in the history of enslaved blacks in the new world due to its geographical location, the development of its commercial ports, and its runaway slave population (Lago de Zota, 2012; Lasso, 2006). Cartagena was the territory's primary deposit of slaves from the nearby territories of Peru between the 1580s and 1640s (Vidal, 2003). Indian slavery had been outlawed in Spanish America in 1542, providing an opportunity for a large influx of a new slave population (Wade, 1995). Scholars posit that the legitimacy of Indian slavery was

questioned because of their native roots, which led to an early abolition of slavery whereas African groups would be socially accepted as enslaved peoples for centuries to come given the well established enactment of African slaves in Europe and among African populations themselves (Russell-Wood, 1982; Telles, 2004). The majority of enslaved Africans who were brought to the new land were from Guinea, Congo, and Senegal. While they represented various ethnic groups, native languages, and religious beliefs, a large proportion of the slaves were from Yoruba tribes. Throughout New Granada, enslaved peoples known as *cimarrones* escaped to create *palenques* or social settlements where groups of people established living quarters and economic organizations hidden from colonial society (Urrea Giraldo, Viáforo López, Viveros Vigoya, 2014). The most well known runaway settlement today, recognized by UNESCO in 2005, is the town of San Basilio de Palenque outside of Cartagena (Lago de Zota, Lado de Fernández, Lago de Vergara, 2012). Enslaved people escaped from the realms of the city and tracked the distant land by braiding maps routes into their hair, of which they also carried seeds for crop building upon arrival. The group created a creole language from a mixture of the African bantu language and Spanish, known as *palenquero.* As a result of leadership from San Miguel Arcángel as well as Domingo Criollo, Pedro Mina, Benkos Biojó, and Nicolás de Santa Rosa, the settlement inhabitants reached a peace agreement with the Spanish in 1713 to occupy and maintain their own land (Lago de Zota, Lago de Fernández, Lago de Vergara, 2012). The emergence of this ethnic group has transcended into a strong sense of identity for *palenqueros* who continue to live in the territory and speak the creole language in Cartagena and throughout contemporary Colombia. As it played a critical role in the African diaspora, the province of Cartagena would be a key player in the nation's independence struggles and its production of prominent black activists and heroes for centuries to come.

In the nation's fight for independence during the Age of Revolution, Cartagena served as a pivotal landscape of Caribbean Colombia for groups of African descent to represent prominent political and military roles. African slavery was abolished in the province in the 1812 constitution of Cartagena (Lasso, 2006). Free blacks and mulattos became urban artisans and peasants in this region during the eighteenth century, whereas enslaved peoples in the Cauca Province and Pacific regions did not gain freedom until the mid-nineteenth century (Urrea Giraldo, Viáforo López, Viveros Vigoya, 2014). While the location was a key figure for achieving independence for contemporary Colombia, the territory was also part of a bigger political landscape. Cartagena was a member of the Viceroyalty of New Granada, which included what currently represents Colombia, Ecuador, Panama, and Venezuela towards the end of the colonial era, and then became a member of the new Republic of Colombia or "La Gran Colombia" during independence from 1821-1830 (Lasso, 2006). Black officers served in the patriot armies of each of these countries, with larger demographic representations in Colombia and Venezuela. Spanish political leaders in Colombia granted individuals of African descent corporate privileges in the military (Lasso, 2006). This caused strife between the Spanish elite and other groups who were progressing in upward social mobility such as white creoles or Latin American whites. White creoles despised the advancement of blacks as it further exacerbated their distance from peninsular Spaniards, however African descent groups contributed great forces to the military and began to advocate for their own economic privilege. Such advocacy was exemplified in the *Gracias al Sacar,* a legislative agendum that allowed black individuals to purchase white membership status in the town of Caracas (Lasso, 2006). White creoles strongly opposed this procedure by organizing a council to end the proceeding as it inappropriately conveyed equal status of wealthy pardos to wealthy whites. Peninsular Spaniards justified

distinctions between themselves and the white Latin Americans because of the occurrences of racial mixing among Creoles that limited their racial purity. Nonetheless, the voices of white creoles were heard in their efforts to diminish an elevated social status of blacks and thus perpetuate racial hierarchies based on ethnic heritage and physical characteristics closest to that of the Spanish colonizers.

The emergence of early classifications of racial groups is conceptually intriguing considering African descent enslaved peoples and Indigenous free and enslaved peoples were not recognized as human beings arguably until the independence wars. Despite the passing of a series of laws to prohibit slavery such as the Free Womb Act of 1821 and the Abolition laws of 1851, racial oppression prevailed (Urrea Giraldo, Viáforo López, & Viveros Vigoya, 2014). While the presence of African descent participation in military services was greatly needed and advantageous for the republic of Colombia, there was much debate about whether or not these groups of people should be granted citizenry and how rights should be allotted to them. During this time period, social strife materialized between Indigenous and African descent groups involving land distribution. Blacks paired with liberal and radial political parties while Indigenous people joined conservative party and Catholic church affiliations, which led to the development of *reguardo* land rights for Indigenous groups granted by Law 89 of 1890 (Urrea Giraldo, Viáforo López, Viveros Vigoya, 2014). Several classifications of social group memberships and judicial regulations emanated regarding racial equality and national identity during the early to mid 1800s that coincided with such legal regulations conveying notions of equality. Recall that white creoles were considered individuals of European descent who were born on the new Colombian territory. Essentially these individuals were the offspring of the Spanish colonizers and were considered to be susceptible to racial mixing. Mulattos were the

offspring of black and white reproductive pairings. The native peoples were called *Indígena* or Indigenous. Lastly, *pardos* encompassed groups of free blacks and mulattos (Lasso, 2006). This group of *pardos* were the first among African descent populations and mixed race offspring to become wealthy on the new land. Regardless of their monetary gains, it would be a long uphill battle before this group would receive citizenship.

Following the culmination of the wars of independence in 1824 and development of the new constitutions that authorized legal racial rights to all groups of African descent peoples in Spanish America, nationalist ideologies materialized that regarded the racial discrimination and subordination that represented the discourse of their American neighbors in the northern hemisphere as counterintuitive to national patriotism (Lasso, 2006). Such declarations in the Southern continent foreshadowed succeeding ideologies of mestizaje. Although marriage was legally permitted between Indians and whites, with much opposition, in Spanish America in 1514, mestizaje wasn't popularized as a reconfiguration of Indigenous identity and nationalism until late 19th century/early 20th century (Chaves & Zambrano, 2006). Nonetheless, social group categorizations determined by proximity to pure white blood developed in the 18th century. Lago de Zota and colleagues (2012) illustrated the typographical systems of racial orientation and pairings used in Spanish America during this time period below:

Mestizaje Scheme
Spanish + Indigenous = Mestizo
Mestizo + Spanish = Castizo or quarter mestizo
Castizo + Spanish = Spanish or fifth mestizo
Spanish + Negro (black) = Mulatto
Spanish + Mulatto = Morisco or quarter mestizo
Spanish + Morisco = Albino or fifth mulatto
Spanish + Albino = Saltatrás or white
Saltatrás + Indian = Lobo
Lobo + Indian = Chino
Indian + Negro = Zambo

Negro + Mulatto = Zambo

This complex diagram of racial pairings determined the social and economic statuses of populations in Mexico, Peru, Venezuela, and Colombia. The clear depiction of a racial hierarchy illustrated socially constructed ways of grouping people according to their adjacency with the dominant political positions of the white Spanish colonizers. This is demonstrated in the fact that the offspring of someone with a quarter mestizo blood and someone of Spanish heritage would be considered Spanish or white, and the offspring of a fifth mulatto and a Spanish pairing was considered white. What we also see in this example is the hierarchy represented among minority groups. The offspring of a quarter mestizo blood (Spanish and Indigenous pairing) could be socially accepted as a white creole with less mixing then the offspring of a fifth mulatto (Spanish and African descent pairing). If we go further to consider the future national aim towards multiculturalism represented in the term, *la nación mestiza*, we recognize that the racial pairings of whites and Indigenous were emphasized to promote a progressive unified pluriethnic society whereas the racial pairings of blacks and whites (mulattos) have never been used to exercise the national agenda.

Racial hierarchies were propagated between oppressed groups as early as the colonial era in most Colombian cities and in Latin America at large. However, alliances did form between *pardos* and elite creoles in cities with majority free black populations such as Cartagena. In battles over control of local government between the Spanish and the creoles, *pardos* joined together with creoles to create a joint patriot group. Their 1810 electoral instructions included some of the aforementioned mestizaje categories as an effort to advocate for racial equality, proclaiming that "all parishioners, whites, Indians, *mestizos*, mulattos, *zambos*, and blacks, as long as they are household heads and earn a living from their own work are to be summoned for

elections; vagrants, criminals, those who are in servile salaried status, and slaves are excluded (Lasso, 2006, pg. 346). Due to the large presence of free blacks in Cartagena, both the white creoles and the Spaniards were aware of their importance in achieving social control. The white creoles accepted joint relations with free blacks as long as they were able to achieve an elevated status themselves that would eventually overthrow the reign of Spanish colonizers. This group of whites believed that they were the rightful owners of the new land as they were born on Colombian soil but also were descendants of the dominant European population. As a result, the Spanish American creole population attempted many tactics to defend their position in the *sociedad de castas* or society of castes, such as creating derogatory slurs to describe darker peoples during the late-eighteenth century (Uribe, NEED YEAR). Thus, since colonial times, political, economic, and intellectual superiority has been measured by degradations of mixed blood, more specifically those who displayed physical characteristics most closely to the white Spanish colonizers and were able to prove it by means of illustrating blood ties constituted the highest ranks of economic opportunity and social power in Colombia. Throughout this dissertation, I seek to link these correlations between economic opportunity and ethnic heritage to phenotype, as skin tone is one of the most viable means of judging one's relation to the dominant and idolized colonizer race. It is critical to refer back to the foundation of racial socialization during colonization in order to grasp an encompassing perspective of how groups of people that depict certain physical characteristics have maintained social power throughout the history of the Americas and continue to make up the wealthiest populations today. Sociologist and current president of the American Sociologist Association, Eduardo Bonilla-Silva, characterizes this structure of skin tone and socioeconomic positioning as a tri-racial hierarchical structure, which I elaborate on during the theoretical section of this paper in chapter 4. For now,

we will move beyond the dehumanizing perceptions of dark people brought to fruition during the colonial era to modern day conceptualizations of blackness in Colombia.

Conversations regarding who is black and what characteristics constitute this group as it relates to nationalist ideologies is a fairly recent endeavor in Colombia. While *negro* appeared in the 1918 census (displayed as 1. *Blanco*, 2. *Negro*, 3. *Indígena*, and 4. *Mezclado* or mixed), the category was removed from state census practices until the late twentieth century (Urrea Giraldo, 2011. Before the 1990s, blackness was minimally discussed to describe groups of people that represented a segment of the national population in political circles as well as colloquially. Obviously, a significant population of blacks have existed in the nation-state since colonial times however, *negro* was not a respectable way to describe a group of human beings who make up the nation's ethnic groups and actively contribute to the economic structure of the country until the last few decades. Instead the term was used to generally depict members of the lower class from the perspective of upper class elites or to offend someone by calling them an insult (Wade, 2009). Wade (1995) described the manner of which blacks had come to be regarded in political systems, "their acceptance, however is limited and individualistic, conditioned on (a) not constituting a demand for acceptance en masse of blacks as a category, that is, not constituting a perceived threat as far as nonblacks are concerned, and (b) adapting culturally, a process consolidated, more for their offspring than themselves, by embarking on a pathway of mestizaje. This does not mean that mulatto offspring will necessarily avoid discrimination, but depending on their appearance, they may be less affected by it, and if they again 'marry lighter, ' their offspring have an even greater chance of avoiding discrimination directed at blacks and mulattoes" (pg. 7). There are three key takeaways to Wade's interpretation of the role of the black Colombian, of which I will situate my own discernment within the argument of this paper.

The first of which is that it was not politically necessary to regard blacks as a meaningful racial category bound to a large group of contributing members of society before the 1991 constitution being that African descent peoples had historically been accepted into white mainstream society on individual merits rather than group efforts. The historical procedure that permitted wealthy *pardos* to buy their whiteness, referred to as *Gracias al Sacar*, demonstrated such a notion of acceptance of particular free blacks but certainly did not serve as extended approval to all members of African descent groups. As long as individuals of African descent were seemingly granted access to white privilege, it eliminated the potentiality for this population to pose a threat to the majority white population. Again, white Spanish American creoles opposed such policies and secured their eminent social power after the nation obtained independence, however tactics to avoid recognizing blacks as a unified racial group are not isolated historical occurrences. The second portion of Wade's conceptualization suggested that blacks were socially accepted, again based on individual merits, to the extent that they contributed to mestizaje by mating with someone of a more elevated racial group in the social hierarchy of power. This ideology of racial mixing was enticing for blacks as it provided a partial escape from oppression. With the leadership of the prestigious black lawyer and member of the liberal party, Diego Luis Córdoba, race-mixing and education became associated with a means for black Colombians to achieve social mobility by being granted citizenship during the Age of Revolution (Urrea Giraldo, Viáforo López, Viveros Vigoya, 2014). Lastly, Wade's elaboration on this claim contends that the offspring of these pairings are not seen as white themselves but are subjected to less discrimination because of exhibiting a physical appearance that more closely emulates that of the white elite and contributing to the national ideology of racial mixing. These limited confines of blackness in post independent Colombia contributed ambiguity in definitive categorizations and

an all out lack of regard in state practices for groups of African descent preceding late twentieth century legislations.

During the early-mid twentieth century, a plethora of ambiguous racial terminologies emerged as the rise of mestizaje was popularized. *Negros* were most commonly associated with dark people from the Pacific region by citizens who lived in other regions of the country. Such connotations were further disseminated in scholarly and literary work with references to descendants of African slaves that populated the Pacific coastal region as *la raza negra* (Wade, 2009). On the contrary, local people from this region most often referred to themselves as *libres* or free peoples (Wade, 2009). This is similar to references to free blacks during colonial times as *pardos* rather than blacks or African descendants. One ambiguous term that was used to describe brown people more generally is *moreno*. It is a reference to dark haired people with relative melanin in their skin used in Spanish and Portuguese speaking countries. Researchers have not substantiated when this term first came to fruition or how it originated however, one possible explanation is that it stems from the African descent Moors population, a nomadic ethnic group of people from Northern Africa that invaded Spain in 711 AD. It has become quite common amongst those who do not perceive themselves as fitting into dichotomous black or white racial categories nor desire to identify with a specific ethnic group, which will be illustrated among the adolescent sample of this dissertation. Wade (2009) argued that the use of ambivalent categorizations of groups of people based on physical characteristics rather than ethnic or socioeconomic standing further supported national ideologies of mixed nations both in Colombia and Brazil. The prevalent use of undefined racial classifications among lay people in conjunction with the invisibility of racial and ethnic references in official state practices perpetuated imaginary depictions of nations without a race.

Many ethnoracial movements emerged throughout the 1900s to challenge the lack of recognition of ethnic groups in state and political practices. A dynamic Indigenous movement that later contributed to land reform in the 1960s was led by Nasa Indian Manuel Quintín Lame in the Andean region of the nation from 1914-1918 (Urrea Giraldo, Viáforo López, & Viveros Vigoya, 2014). The fight for land rights among Indigenous populations spread to other parts of the country in later years. While many social organizations were separated by ethnic group membership, one of the first sought to unite Colombians of multiple ethnic backgrounds. During the 1940s, a movement known as Gaitanismo emerged that strived for inclusion of dark skinned people and Indigenous groups as national representatives of the country's economic advancement. Jorge Eliecer Gaitán was a liberal party leader who was a supporter of the Mexican model of mestizaje and organized a social movement of poor whites, mestizos, Indigenous, and African descent groups as well as the urban middle class (Urrea Giraldo, Viáforo López, & Viveros Vigoya, 2014). Although Gaitán was assassinated in 1948, his movement contributed to a legacy of race based social organizations that fought for inclusion and human rights of marginalized groups. About a decade following the assassination, educated Indigenous groups began to organize for inclusion of studies that represented their heritage in higher education. Through the Colombian Institute of Agrarian Reform (INCORA), the Universidad de los Andes, and the Universidad Nacional de Colombia, the first anthropology departments were developed to include social science study of Indigenous culture in the 1960s (Urrea Giraldo, Viáforo López, & Viveros Vigoya, 2014).

The Democratic Action Movement was the first black organization to combat the oppression and exclusion of African descent groups from state practices and was established in the Chocó region in the 1930s (Urrea Giraldo, Viáforo Lopéz, & Viveros Vigoya, 2014).

Academic scholars, students, and political leaders created many of the black social movements that emerged in years following this organization. One of which was the Black Club of Colombia, founded by a group of students from the Atlantic Coast and Cauca region ten years after the Democratic Action Movement (Urrea Giraldo, Viáforo López, & Viveros Vigoya, 2014). In 1976, a group of students formed a group called the Circle of Soweto studies that sought to bring attention to modern day occurrences of inhumane treatment against Colombians of African descent in order to promote rights for equal citizenship (Cárdenas, 2012). In 1982, this group expanded into a large social and political movement that became known as the *Movimiento Cimarrón* (The National Movement for the Human Rights of Black Communities in Colombia), mentioned in chapter 1 (Wade, 2009). Conceptions about blackness and the rights of African descent people were a strong focus of group members as they closely observed the 1960s civil rights movement in the U.S. (Cárdenas, 2012). Original members of the Soweto group closely followed the works of Malcolm X and Martin Luther King Jr. and believed that blackness was rooted in African culture that superseded biological conceptions of race determined by the caste systems of colonization (Wade, 2009). Organized efforts on behalf of prominent leaders of ethnoracial movements contributed to reclassifications of these groups in state practices of contemporary Colombia.

The size of marginalized populations in Colombia has been a difficult feat to determine considering the ever-changing qualifications and criteria used to categorize the nation's citizens. The national census of 1912, the first to include ethnic population distinctions since the eighteenth century, conceived a black population of 6.4 percent and an Indigenous population of 6.8 percent (Urrea Giraldo, Viáforo López, & Viveros Vigoya, 2014). These numbers changed to 6.0 percent for blacks and 2.7 percent for Indigenous groups in the 1918 census. Collectors of

population data based their evaluations on physical appearance. As mentioned earlier, information on black populations was not collected again until the 1993 census, however Indigenous group memberships were recognized in the following 1938 census. Unlike the basis for physical appearance used to determine the size of the Indigenous population in the 1912 and 1918 censuses, the 1938 data was obtained using language and residency requirements (predominantly in rural areas in far distances from the urban elite), reflecting a population of 1.15 percent (Urrea Giraldo, Viáforo López, & Viveros Vigoya, 2014). These numbers continued to change along with the criteria used to define group membership. The nation-state counted the Indigenous population as 1.4 percent in 1951, 0.7 percent in 1964 and 1.9 percent in 1973. While the criteria to qualify Indigenous representation remained constant in the 1950s and 60s, the dimensions changed to include individuals who originated from pre-Hispanic ethnic groups and who resided in areas of land that were authorized by government officials as ethnic territories in the 1973 census (Urrea Giraldo, Viáforo López, & Viveros Vigoya, 2014).

Terms and connotations to categorize Colombians of African descent drastically evolved on a national level post 1991 lawmaking. After seventy-five years of neglecting to recognize African descent groups in state practices, the 1993 census shifted to incorporate a count for the nation's black population. Similar to previous inconsistencies with tracking Indigenous groups, there were great variations in how the state captured its black residents. The initial category for black groups required Colombians to self-identify with a racial category based on their cultural understanding of what it means to be black in the nation. The question read, "Do you belong to an ethnic group, indigenous group, or black community? If so, which one?" (Paschel, 2013). The conflict with this conceptualization is that many of the country's inhabitants had come to understand individuals from *la comunidad negra* or the black community as those who belonged

to groups such as the Raizales of the island of San Andres or the palenqueros from San Basilio. Recall, that by this time period blackness was most strongly associated with those who lived in rural territories in the Pacific region as a result of Law 70 of 1993. Both associations with the nation's Afrodescendant population failed to include living in urban communities or in other regions of the country. The result rendered a mere 1.5 percent of those who self-identified as being members of the black community and 1.6 percent who proclaimed an association with Indigenous group membership (Wade, 2009). Paschel (2010) argued that the census categorization was emblematic of the tensions of conceptions of blackness between rural and urban social movements, ultimately lending to a political issue of the racial classification rather than a bureaucratic conflict. Due to pressures from prominent black organizations and scholars like Colombian sociologist Fernando Urrea Giraldo and French sociologist Olivier Barbary as well as the nation-state's commitment to illustrate ethno-racial statistics to the international market, the National Department of Statistics (*Departamento Administrativo Nacional de Estadística* or DANE), agreed to revise the ethnic question in order to obtain a more accurate representation of the nation's ethnic population (Paschel, 2013; Wade 2009). Question 33 of the 2005 census read:

> According to your culture, *pueblo* [tribe or community] or physical features, are you or are you recognized as being:
>
> 1. Indigenous? (To which *pueblo indígeno* do you belong?)
> 2. Rom?
> 3. a raizal? [recall that this term refers to someone from the Caribbean Colombian islands of Providencia and San Andrés]
> 4. a *palenquero* of San Basilio [originating from the runaway slave population who created their own social settlements outside of Cartagena]
> 5. black, mulatto, Afro-Colombian or Afro-descendant?
> 6. none of the above?

The new ethnic question of the 2005 census yielded the largest representation of African descent groups than any of the previous census data reports. In this census, 10.6 percent of the Colombian population identified as Afrodescendant, while 3.4 percent identified as Indigenous (Paschel, 2013). This census also illustrated a much larger gap between black and Indigenous groups than previous censuses depicted. While this question illustrated a more accurate portrayal of the country's black population than former state practices, other organizations captured even larger numbers of black inhabitants. The Colombian government and the United Nations had previously used data reflecting a black population of 26 percent that was collected by various black organizations in 1995 (Urrea Giraldo, 2011). In 2001, the research group *Centro de Investigaciones Socioeconomicas de la Universidad del Valle* (CIDSE) or the Center of Socioeconomic Investigations of the University del Valle collected data from various metropolitan areas throughout the nation that used self-recognition and photos to capture an approximate 20-22 percent national representation of black Colombians (Urrea Giraldo, Viáforo López, & Viveros Vigoya, 2014). Although most policymakers and scholars rely on the percentages illustrated in the 2005 census to make claims about the presence of blacks in Colombia, what the data reveals across the board is that variance in sampling methodology and debates among academics and activists concerning qualifications for ethnic group membership influence the ways in which individuals identify with a particular racial group.

Skin Color Stratification in Brazil and Colombia

As we reflect on evolving variances in conceptualizations of race and racial identity in Brazil and Colombia since colonization, it is critical to examine skin color differences as a complement to racial group analyses in order to effectively ascertain social inequalities in contemporary multicultural and multiethnic societies. The above sections provide a thorough

review of the fluctuations of racial identity both on a national and individual level over time. Within these variances, we witness the effects of census data classifications on how individuals perceive themselves and others within their pluriethnic societies. More importantly, the ways in which questions about race are presented have impacted discourses surrounding the representation of ethnic groups in each country as well as perceptions of these societies from international communities. In order to examine within group differences and address potential ambivalences and uncertainties in racial and ethnic group identification, scholars created the PERLA survey, mentioned in the introduction, to investigate ethnoracial and skin color differences in socioeconomic realities of citizens of Mexico, Peru, Brazil, and Colombia. PERLA data consisted of six surveys that were administered to nationally represented samples by leading statistical research institutions such as Instituto Análise in Brazil and Centro Nacional de Consultoría in Colombia over a five year period (Telles, 2014). For this section of the paper, I include their findings on social inequalities of the Brazilian and Colombian samples using variables that relate to the paper's argument, differences in educational and occupational status as well as discriminatory experiences. The rationale for incorporating such detailed findings from PERLA data is that this is the only comprehensive survey administered to a nationally representative Latin American sample that incorporates phenotypic features such as skin tone and hair texture as well as both self-identified and interviewer based racial classifications in their evaluations of each nation's socioeconomic layout. The most critical takeaway from the data was that skin color is a more consistent means of accurately measuring ethnoracial differences in social inequality then self-identified racial categorizations (Telles, 2014).

Many researchers use sociological and economic studies to measure access to social mobility within nations with large wealth gaps. Educational attainment and occupational status

are most frequently considered in evaluating the presence of upward economic advancement or lack thereof for national populations as a whole. When focusing on self-identified racial groups in Colombia, PERLA data revealed that the mulatto group had the highest levels of education at about twelve years of schooling, mestizo and white groups followed with about ten years of schooling, and blacks and indigenous groups had the lowest education with less than ten years for each group (Urrea Giraldo, Viáforo López, & Viveros Vigoya, 2014). For occupational status, those who identified as mestizo and mulatto represented the highest percentages of those having nonmanual skilled jobs, the mulatto group alone was the most likely to participate in nonmanual unskilled jobs, while blacks constituted the highest percentages of those with manual unskilled jobs and Indigenous had the highest representation for manual skilled labor. In the Brazilian sample, whites had the highest levels of education at an average of 7.9 years of schooling, followed by blacks with 6.9 years and browns with 6.8 years of education (Morales Silva & Paixão, 2014). For occupation, whites represented the highest percentages of those who held high status nonmanual occupations at about 33 percent compared with about 23 percent of browns and 20 percent of blacks in the Brazilian sample. It is surprising that the mulatto group had the highest educational attainment and occupational status levels considering their devalued social status in comparison to whites. However, these results support contemporary examples of Wade's (1995) reflection above that points out opportunities for upward social mobility among the offspring of black-white pairings as it contributes to the nation's mixed nation ideology. It is also surprising that blacks reported slightly higher levels of education than browns, but had lower levels of occupational status than browns. While the data illustrated differences in the ethnic samples that held the highest levels of education and occupational status between

countries, a staircase pattern is revealed by the data when focusing on the skin color variable for both samples.

The introduction of this paper illustrated PERLA data findings that lighter skinned toned respondents had the highest levels of educational attainment, followed by the medium skin toned respondents and subsequently the dark skinned respondents among both the Brazilian and Colombian samples. Similar findings were represented among the occupational data for skin tone variations of both samples. For the Colombian sample, light skinned respondents had the highest percentages of participation in nonmanual skilled and unskilled jobs at 15 percent and 27.7 percent respectively, while medium colored participants represented 10.8 percent of nonmanual skilled jobs and 21.1 percent of nonmanual unskilled jobs, followed by dark colored participants representing 9.8 percent of nonmanual skilled employment and 19.1 percent of nonmanual unskilled employment positions (Urrea Giraldo, Viáforo López, & Viveros Vigoya, 2014). Representations of occupational status by skin color groups were more consistent with that of racial categorizations for the Brazilian sample. Light skin toned respondents constituted the largest percentage of high-status nonmanual employment at 33.5 percent (compared to 33 percent of whites), followed by 22.3 percent of medium skin toned respondents (compared to 22.5 percent of browns), and 20 percent of dark skin toned respondents (same percentage as those who identified as black) (Morales Silva & Paixão, 2014). These findings illustrate that despite self-identified mulattos representing the highest levels of education and occupation of the Colombian sample, and blacks reporting slightly higher educational levels than browns of the Brazilian sample, the inclusion of a color palette yielded a linear trend in which high to low educational and occupational status correlated with skin tones from lightest to darkest.

Lastly, I include PERLA survey data on discrimination as it highlights perceptions of unfair treatment based on racial group membership and skin tone. For the Colombian sample, 35 percent of self-identified blacks reported color based discrimination compared with 20 percent of self-identified Indigenous respondent. Very few mulattos, mestizos, and whites reported being discriminated against based on skin color with about 15 percent, 10 percent, and 5 percent respectively (Urrea Giraldo, Viáforo López, & Viveros Vigoya, 2014). The skin color results yielded a linear relationship with dark colored respondents reporting the highest rates of color based discrimination at about 32 percent, versus about 10 percent of medium colored respondents and about 5 percent of light colored respondents. For the Brazilian sample, 36.9 percent of those who identified as black reported being discriminated against based on skin color, followed by 10 percent of browns and 7.7 percent of whites (Morales Silva & Paixão, 2014). These findings were consistent with the linear trend revealed when classification by the color palette was incorporated. Respondents who identified as dark colored had the highest frequencies of discriminatory experiences at 26.8 percent compared to 8.2 percent of those who selected the medium color and 6.6 percent of those who classified themselves as light colored. The data suggest that not only are groups of people reporting experiences of unfair treatment based on skin color in so-called racially democratic societies, but also that both those who identify as black and those who are among the darkest skinned of the populations experience discrimination at much higher rates than their white and brown counterparts with lighter skin tones. Studies such as the PERLA report exemplify why it is important to persist in implementing empirical research methods to address the hidden economic realities of imagined racial utopian societies.

Part II: Dynamics of Racial Identity and Emerging Young Adult Citizenry among Adolescence

Chapter 4: Understanding Underrepresentation in Education: Importance of a Youth Centered Focus

As Nelson Mandela eloquently stated, "the youth of today are the leaders of tomorrow". Leading researchers and community workers of today would strongly benefit from engulfing themselves within the experiences of adolescents as this group will be the next generation to take on societal growth and change. Mozambican humanitarian, Graça Machel proclaims "that preventing the conflicts of tomorrow means changing the mind-set of youth today". How young people experience current social and economic challenges can be a means of predicting how nations will uphold future changes and advancement. Educational inequality is a massive detriment affecting the lives of many present day children and adolescents that will soon become active adult citizens making decisions that impact each society and the global economy as a whole. Thus, the opinions and experiences of the world's youth are far more significant to the health of nations than adult leaders often give credence to. These subjective realities are even more poignant in developing countries with large socio economic gaps between the elite wealthy class and the poor working class such as Brazil and Colombia. This chapter illuminates the dire necessity to involve a youth experience when planning for the future of healthy economies and minimized social and political conflicts as these are the populations currently in the systems of education that so often perpetuate pervasive cycles of unequal structures of opportunity.

Affirmative Action: Racial Quotas

Latin America has been characterized as one of the most economically unequal regions of the world (World Bank, 2005). Brazil and Colombia demonstrate the lowest levels of

intergenerational educational mobility of the region (Viáforo López & Serna Alvarado, 2015). Likewise, Brazil has one of the largest wage gaps in the world with those within the top 10% of socioeconomic ranking occupying 46.9% of the nation's total income (World Bank, 2007). In order to fully understand the context of which Brazilian and Colombian adolescents perceive access to quality education and prestigious occupational careers, it is imperative to discuss the paradox of higher education within each country as well as race-targeted policies that have been established in order to support racial minorities. Free higher education in Brazil is quite competitive and is primarily taken advantage of by adolescents whose parents are in an economic position to find support for college preparation. Lower class students, who are typically black and brown, have historically been excluded from the opportunity to attend prestigious universities for a variety of reasons. One of which is that working class students typically attend poorly resourced primary and secondary schools that lack competitive training mechanisms to assist students in passing the process of college admission (Cicalo, 2012). In order to receive a spot in a particular program at the universities, students must receive a certain score on a college entrance exam, the Vestibular. Distinct from the college admission process in the United States, the Vestibular is the main entrance system for the admission selection process in Brazil. In other words, letters of recommendation, student's secondary school transcripts, and school or community involvement are not components of the college selection process. Thus, the students must perform exceptionally well on the exam in order to reserve a spot in a competitive program (i.e. law, medicine, engineering) at a prestigious university. Another factor that distinguishes higher education in Brazil from the U.S. is the public versus private univeristy system. In Brazil, public universities are the most prestigious institutions, whereas the private universities are often less competitive and provide fewer resources for obtaining high status employment positions

after college graduation. However, public universities are completely free while private universities across the nation require tuition costs. This makes public universities extremely difficult to enroll in considering their high prestige and free education. Those who are accepted into these universities most often represent limited demographic variability. Cicalo (2012) proposed that middle to upper class students who are typically white or light skinned and have attended excellent secondary schools, primarily occupy most higher education institutions in the free public sector.

A major issue concerning economic advancement of the Colombian government is inadequate access to higher education. Traditionally, individuals of lower socioeconomic groups have been excluded from access to higher educational institutions most often because of insufficient funds to supplement their education as well as lack of efficient preparation in primary and secondary schools to prepare for a competitive and demanding college education system. These factors contribute to educational inequality in many countries including the U.S. and Brazil. However, factors that specifically relate to the current educational crisis in Colombia include a shortage of spots in public universities in relation to the high demand and extreme competitiveness for enrollment in these institutions, and the inability to pay for high cost private universities (Gómez Campo & Celis Giraldo, 2009). Public universities in Colombia are among the most prestigious institutions similar to higher education in Brazil. An impeding concern for the Colombian government is the high increase of students interested in enrolling in higher education compared with the amount of spots available for students in the nation's public universities and the low matriculation rates of those who are accepted. From 2002 to 2008, the amount of students enrolling in Colombian universities increased by about 162,000 attendees; of which 61.2% attended public universities including 56.4% of this group who completed their

first year (Silva, Brandão, & Marins, 2009). There was an increase of 67,000 enrolled students between 2007 and 2008 alone, however only 46.4% and 44.6% completed their first year of each respective year (Silva, Brandão, & Marins, 2009). This data reveals that while Colombian students are enrolling in higher education at increasingly higher rates, the majority of these students attend the public universities and only about half of the enrolled students are successfully matriculating through their first years.

Research on educational attainment in Colombia and Brazil illustrates inequalities that persist beyond matriculation rates and are linked to the demographic characteristics of those who gain access to enrollment in higher education at large, whether it is to a free public university or a high cost private university. In a study evaluating the educational opportunities of Brazilians and Colombians between the ages of 15 and 29, Viáforo López and Serna Alvarado (2015) found that 91.9% of those who identified as black (negro) and 92.7% of those who identified as brown (pardo or moreno) reported having a high school degree or less as their highest level of education compared to 81.3% of those who identified as white (branco) in the Brazilian sample. The racial differences were even more profound when analyzing access to higher education indicating that 6.5% of blacks and 6.1% of browns reported having college degrees versus 16.8% of those who identified as white. Racial differences in educational attainment were even more stark for the Colombian sample. The data indicated that 82% of those who identified as black or African descent reported secondary education or less as their highest level of education compared to 63.1% of those who did not identify with African descent heritage. In higher education, 9.7% of Afro-Colombians reported having a college degree compared to 27.4% of non Afro-Colombians. In a study that measured educational attainment by race from the Pesquisa Nacional por Amostra Domicílio (PNAD), a nationally representative survey administered by the Brazilian census

bureau, Marteleto (2012) found that from 1982 to 2007, 49.2% and 77.8% of black adolescents transitioned to secondary school compared to 57.4% and 76.9% of pardos, and 67% and 89% of whites in each respective year. While hierarchical rates of secondary enrollment fluctuated between blacks and browns, likely due to changes in racial identification during this time period, it is evident that the large gaps between white and nonwhite students remained.

In the literature on race in Brazil, many scholars have collected statistical data to illustrate skin color disparities in infant mortality rates, education levels, income, and life expectancy (Francis & Tannuri-Pianto, 2011; Telles, 2004). Affirmative action can broadly be defined as an initiative to mitigate inequality in the Brazilian society by means of establishing redistributive programs that allocate goods and services to populations that have been discriminated against (Daflon, Junior, & Campos, 2013). These policies are aimed at benefiting groups of people who are underrepresented among political and social elites such as women, blacks, and people with disabilities. Despite the variety of social programs provided by affirmative action policies, quotas have become a major focal point of the policies, often encompassing affirmative action as a whole. Quotas can be described as spaces or slots that a university is required by state law to reserve for a certain group of people to gain college admission into designated programs. These spaces are also reserved for employment positions in the workforce.

Some scholars posit that the administration of past President Fernando Henrique Cardoso (served in office for two terms from 1995-2003) and the expansion of the black political movement (Movimento Negro) contributed to the adoption of affirmative action programs targeting racial inequalities in Brazil (Francis & Tannuri-Pianto, 2011). Cardoso's administration was the first to consider affirmative action as a policy and created the Interministerial Working

Group to Valorize the Black Population (Grupo de Trabalho Interministerial or GTI) in 1995 (Horwitz & Budwhar, 2015). During the launch of the GTI, the president advocated for policies that needed to be established in order to combat racial discrimination (Martins, Medeiros, & Nascimento, 2004). Other scholars attribute the development of affirmative action policies to the Afro-Brazilian social movement; specifically the black and non-government organizations (NGOs) engagement with cultural organizations, religious communities, political parties, and labor unions in the 1990s (Martins et al., 2004; Paschel & Sawyer, 2008).

The United Nations World Conference against Racism, Xenophobia, and Related Tolerance in Durban, held in Durban, South Africa in 2001, played an integral role in the implementation of affirmative action for blacks (Cicalo, 2012). A committee of Brazilian state officials and civic representatives constructed an official report that recommended that the government create quotas that expand the access of black students into prestigious public universities (Htun, 2004). After the officials presented the report at the conference, the government announced their approval of racial quotas for blacks in college admission. On December 20, 2001, President Fernando Henrique Cardoso along with the justice ministry announced the implementation of quotas for 20 percent of blacks, 20 percent for women, and 5 percent for people with disabilities in management and senior advising positions for the Constitutional Court and the Ministry of Justice (Htun, 2004). Likewise, State Laws n. 4.151 of 2003 and n. 5074 of 2007 enforced that 20 percent of quotas be reserved for students graduating from public high schools and 20 percent be reserved for "negro" students for university admission (Daflon, Junior, and Campos, 2013). Two state universities in Rio de Janeiro were the first to adopt racial quotas for college admission (Francis & Tannuri-Pianto, 2013). In 2004, the University of Brasilia (UnB) became the first federal university to implement the racial quota

policy. Daflon and colleagues (2013) reported that of the 70 public universities that participate in the quota system, 44% are state universities and 56% are federal universities. Additionally, 68% of today's federal universities have adopted the quota system, particularly racial quotas.

The increase in universities and occupations that have adopted racial quotas has led to strong opinions both supporting and opposing the system. Telles (2003) reported that in the state of Rio de Janeiro, 51 percent of the population agree that the government has an obligation to improve their living conditions, 55 percent supported quotas for black student admission into public universities, and 57 percent supported quotas for prestigious occupations. Support for quotas has mainly been found among more nonwhites than whites, more educated whites than poor whites, and among blacks of all income levels (Telles, 2003). Support for racial quotas has been received by President Cardoso along with other political officials such as the Minister of Justice José Gregori, the head federal prosecutor, and the president of the supreme constitutional court who reported in the *Correio Braziliense,* "the way to address an inequality is to use the weight of the law in favor of s/he who is treated unequally, (p.70)" (Htun, 2004). These leaders saw past the myth of the racial democracy and believed that it was necessary to promote equality for oppressed groups among political leaders. On the contrary, the Minister of Education, Paulo Renato Souza, has been noted as an adamant opponent of quotas believing that access into universities is not a race problem, rather the issue lies within a lack of adequate educational preparation at the primary and secondary school levels (Htun, 2004). Souza's opinion exemplifies the classism argument, suggesting that the low representation of "negros" in higher education is due to unequal distribution of resources prior to university admission. Other opponents believe that quotas represent reverse discrimination by presuming that blacks are incapable of obtaining admission into prestigious public universities without assistance.

Affirmative action policies and quota allocations have evolved quite differently in Colombia in comparison to the racial quota system of Brazil. Recall that the Colombian government has witnessed a massive increase in higher education enrollment over the last two decades without a significant increase in the amount of spots available in the nation's universities. Additionally, the most prevailing concern for individuals interested in higher education, particularly those of low socioeconomic backgrounds who have minimal access to adequate training for enrollment into prestigious universities, is financing their education. To improve access and funding for vulnerable populations, the Colombian government initiated the *Proyecto Accesso con Calidad a la Educación Superior* (ACCES) or the Project for Quality Access to Higher Education through the *Instituto Colombiano de Crédito Educativo y Estudios Técnicos en el Exterior* (ICETEX) or the Colombian Institute of Educational Credit and Technical Studies in the Exterior in 2002 (Gómez Campo & Celis Giraldo, 2009). ACCES is a subsidized student loan transfer program that gives loan credits to low-income students in an effort to promote social equality in higher education. Since public universities are free, the ACCES program provides an incentive for low-income students to attend less competitive private universities. The program requires a minimal monthly household income and targets students of socioeconomic levels 1-3. There are a total of six socioeconomic groups that are designated by number in Colombia with six representing the highest income group. From 2003 to 2008, 80.3% of the programs beneficiaries attended private universities compared to 19.7% enrolled at public universities (Gómez Campo & Celis Giraldo, 2009). Between the same time period, approximately 129,000 students were admitted to the program; of which 19.7% represented socioeconomic level 1, 56.6% representing level 2, and 23.5% from level 3. While the success of the program in expanding access to students who traditionally would be excluded

from higher education is evident in the numbers, it is important to address that the same group of low-income students accrue private debt that they also would not have otherwise. Researchers argue that the program does not actually support social equality rather it privates educational costs by placing a financial burden on the poorest students (Gómez Campo & Celis Giraldo, 2009; Heredia, Giraldo, & López, 2009). In 2006, ICETEX, the same institution that implemented the ACCES program, implemented an affirmative action policy in order to minimize the effects of discrimination and marginalization of students from socioeconomic groups 1 and 2 (Gómez Campo & Celis Giraldo, 2009). Universities used various methods to reserve spots on the basis of the new affirmative action policy such as special admission for groups who are marginalized because of their ethnic group and region of origin, entrance exams designed to include questions that individuals of a variety of ethnic and social class backgrounds would be familiar with, remedial programs to help students reach the academic levels of their more affluent peers particularly for public universities, and more (Heredia, Giraldo, & López, 2009). Unlike the quota system in Brazil, Colombian affirmative action implementation does not constitute a unified methodology across universities, nor are spots reserved specifically on the basis of racial and/or ethnic group membership.

Although quotas and student loan transfer programs are two among several affirmative action policies, they have become the face of the battle for equal access and equal opportunity in 21st century Brazilian and Colombian societies. Whether the low representation of blacks in higher education and elite occupations is due to racial discrimination or class discrimination, previously mentioned data illustrates strong correlations between race, poverty, and education. In both countries, black and brown students are the least likely group to attain a college degree as well as to attend the most prestigious universities of each nation-state. Furthermore, low-income

and black and brown youth are the groups most likely to burden the cost of private education. While contributing to much debate among scholars and policymakers, quotas have been implemented as a means of combating the stark differences between the rich and the poor, and those who identify as white versus those who identify as African descent. Nonetheless, the quota system is a topic that elicits strong emotions among many Brazilians and Colombians because it opposes each nation's concept of a pluriethnic racially democratic society and ultimately challenges the portrayal of a utopian society.

Chapter 5: Theoretical Frameworks Focusing on Adolescent Experiences

Theoretical Frameworks

The evolving and pronounced literature on economic disparity in Latin America has frequently addressed global skin color socialization and racial discourse, however it has not explored a considerable understanding of the complexity of self-identification and perceptions of upward mobility among adolescents. To date, developmental psychologists, most notably Jeffrey Arnett and Margaret Beale Spencer, have demonstrated the importance of integrating cognitive processes and maturational growth in the context of social environment and one's cultural being. In his theory on emerging adulthood, Arnett describes a distinct developmental period within the life course in which late teens and early adults experience an extended period of role exploration as they negotiate potential life directions within a cultural context (Arnett, 2000). He argues that the process of independent role exploration during the transition from adolescence to adulthood is culturally constructed. Thus, emerging adults make decisions about who they want to be in society based on normative cultural behaviors and the social conditions of their environment. This chapter builds upon Arnett and Spencer's work by extensively reviewing theoretical frameworks that address the importance of incorporating context and environment when assessing perceptions of opportunity and goal oriented behaviors of Latin American adolescents. The first half of the chapter situates adolescent development within a sociocultural context. The second half describes theoretical perspectives on the relationship of self to the environment.

Part I: Adolescent Identity Development

Epigenetic Model of Adolescent Development

Erikson's epigenetic model of adolescent development situates psychological development within a social context. Through an eight component framework, Erikson's model provides a foundation for conceptualizing the process of identity formation among social relationships and experiences of the adolescent developmental period (Muss, 1996, Ch. 4). These eight stages occurring within the human life cycle interact to inform the foundation of what Erikson termed the adolescent "crisis" period. These stages consist of (1) trust versus mistrust (infancy), (2) autonomy versus shame and doubt (18 months to 3 ½ years), (3) initiative versus guilt (3 ½ to 6 years), (4) industry versus inferiority (age 6 to preadolescence), (5) identity versus identity confusion (adolescence), (6) intimacy versus isolation (young adulthood), (7) generativity versus stagnation (middle adulthood), and (8) integrity versus despair (late adulthood) (Muss, 1996, ch.3). Erikson utilized this framework to examine the identity crises of historical figures such as Mahatma Gandhi and Thomas Jefferson occurring within a psychohistorical period. He contended that the individual identity crisis period and the contemporary crisis occurring within a historical period cannot be viewed in isolation from one another as they both interact to inform the identity of the individual (Erikson, 1968). For this purpose, stages four and five are described here as relevant developmental factors that contributed to adolescent national identity.

The fourth stage of Erikson's epigenetic model, industry versus inferiority, is critical to understanding. Erikson characterized this stage as the *apprenticeship of life,* in which children begin to take value in their accomplishments and seek the recognition of others in order to internalize a sense of competence. Adolescents who experience economic hardship often strive for academic success both as a way to elicit recognition from parents and teachers, as well as to establish their own sense of industry and independence (Fergus, 2009; Kao & Thompson, 2003).

According to Erikson's adolescent stage of Identity versus Identity Confusion, personal identity is not attributed to the individual by society, rather it is acquired through strengths and weaknesses that individual's assess within the social contexts of which they interact (Muss, 1996, ch.3). Individuals assess negative and positive aspects of their current economic, racial, and gender status in society and decide how they want to deal with them during adolescence. One mechanism of which many young people of oppressed groups attempt to resolve conflict is by identifying role models who most often share similar social identities and have overcome hardship to achieve their passions. This is the stage in which a search for identity occurs in order to establish a meaningful self-concept. Despite messages about the devalued status of blacks and indigenous populations, individuals can identify with heroes and heroines who have deviated from societal norms as a mechanism to find strengths in their own personal identity.

Adolescent Racial and Ethnic Identity

The extent to which black and brown adolescents see themselves in relation to their racial and ethnic groups is significant in defining who they are in their nation's societal hierarchy. It is stated that racial and ethnic attitudes are established as early as 10 years of age (McMahon & Watts, 2002). This suggests that adolescence is a critical time to investigate the effects of cultural socialization on identity development, particularly for those nearing the end of this developmental stage as the pressure to decide on one's future endeavors becomes more apparent. The process of questioning, "Who am I as an individual? Who am I as a young person? Who am I as a member of my ethnic group in a multicultural society?" is particularly salient to the developmental processes of black and brown Latin American adolescents. The interaction of racial and national identity development plays a significant role in the lives of these adolescents as national discourses of race and opportunity shapes much of what this group will readily have

access to. Research suggests that black adolescents experience a complex identity exploration process in negotiating gender roles and cultural group membership (Stevens, 1997). Not only are they faced with the normative developmental processes of their adolescent peers, they must also endure the adversities associated with their sociocultural environment such as racial discrimination, gender devaluation, and often economic hardship.

Research indicates that the process of achieving pride in one's ethnic group has important implications for self-esteem and school achievement in adolescent development (Tatum, 2004). An adolescent's ability to associate positive characteristics with their cultural group may likewise internalize a positive view of themselves as members of their ethnic group and as individuals in the larger society. The purpose of this paper is to recognize the importance of including ethnic identity as a factor in examining self-worth as a component of identity development and career choices of Brazilian and Colombian adolescents. In addition, this paper also emphasizes the similarities and differences that these two groups encounter based on their sociocultural environment and the economic infrastructures of their respective countries.

Ethnic Identity and Psychological Adjustment

Researchers in the social sciences often use the terms race and ethnicity interchangeably (Phinney & Ong, 2007; Sellers & Shelton, 2003). It is in the best interest of this dissertation however, to avoid conflating the two in order to unpack the dynamic relationships that exist between how others are perceived and individual self-perception as accurately as possible. Thus, I use the following definitions to decipher the terms in hopes of providing a basis to which adolescents in perceived racially democratic societies experience unique challenges in identifying with a particular racial group. Racial identity can be described as the effect of an individual's social and political experiences on their psychological well-being based on the

physical characteristics of their group membership; whereas ethnic identity focuses more on an individual's psychological connection with members of a shared cultural heritage including a particular worldview, language, and behavioral dynamic (McMahon & Watts, 2002). Two models of racial and ethnic identity development are proposed in this paper. Cross's model of Nigresence or black identity development includes five stages progressing from self-hatred to self-acceptance: (a) pre-encounter, (b) encounter, (c) immersion-emersion, (d) internalization, and (e) internalization-commitment (French, Seidman, Allen, & Aber, 2006). Individuals in the pre-encounter stage minimally desire to explore their race because they believe that race is not a significant factor of their lives and rarely give it much active thought (Cross, 1991). The encounter stage involves a significant racially charged experience that causes an individual to desire getting to know more about their racial group. This experience could be something as discrete as a microagression, defined as a brief verbal, behavioral, or environmental occurrence that communicates negative racial slurs or derogatory indignities, or an act of discrimination that lends to some form of an eye-opening moment (Cross, 1995; Sue, 2010). Following this encounter, a person begins to strongly identify with blackness by immersing themselves within the black culture and learning more about what it means to be a member of this group. Cross (1991) posits that it is possible for many individuals to settle at the immersion-emersion stage or return to previous stages in a cyclical process. However, those who move beyond immersion develop a sense of pride in their race and associate a high esteem with membership in the black race. Individuals in the final stage of Cross' model actively commit towards improving the social and economic positioning of their racial group in the larger society. Researchers have used this model to investigate the relationship between black identity development and psychological well-being. Carter and Helms (1988) and Munford (1994) found anxiety, depression, and

psychological distress to be associated with the pre-encounter and immersion stages, while the encounter stage correlated with low levels of anxiety and high levels of depression. On the contrary, research illustrates positive correlations between the internalization stage and psychological health such as active coping strategies and fewer beliefs supporting anger and aggression (McMahon & Watts, 2002). These findings indicate that a strong sense of racial identity can have a positive impact on the psychological functioning of oppressed racial groups.

It is believed that Cross's model of Nigresence focuses more on the black identity development of adults, while models of ethnic identity focus more heavily on the identity development of adolescents (French, Seidman, Allen, & Aber, 2006). Ethnic identity development is an ever-changing process of self-exploration, commitment, and accountability that is grounded in a sense of personhood within a particular cultural group and setting (Phinney & Ong, 2007). In order to accurately measure ethnic identity, researchers must first verify that participants perceive themselves to be members of a group who shares their ethnic heritage. The Multigroup Ethnic Identity Measure (MEIM) was developed as a means to study the degree to which individuals self-identify or self-label with group memberships among diverse samples (Phinney, 1992). MEIM identifies four major components of ethnic identity development: self-identification, sense of belonging, positive and negative attitudes concerning one's group membership, and involvement in the social and cultural aspects of one's ethnic group. Phinney's work was similar to Erik Erikson's theory of ego identity formation in that it involves an active process of self-exploration and experimentation which typically takes place during adolescence and impacts future decision making in sociopolitical orientation, religious views, and occupational commitments (Phinney, 1990). The process of reaching what one perceives to be an achieved ethnic identity status can be seen as a lifelong process involving constant

redefinition of how individuals view themselves in their social and cultural environment. This intense process of self-exploration coincides with Erikson's stage of identity vs. role confusion occurring during adolescence. Muss (1996) identified Erikson's identity versus identity (role) confusion as a process that involves the search for a meaningful self-concept "in which past, present, and future are brought together to form a unified whole," (51). This contends that one must confront multiple facets of their social identities to develop a healthy understanding of who they are and who they would like to be.

Given the significance of the impact of ethnic identity on psychological functioning and how adolescents come to understand who they are, it is helpful to examine its' relationship with self-esteem. Researchers have found a strong sense of ethnic identity to be positively related to self-esteem and self-confidence among African American adolescents (McMahon & Watts, 2002). Phinney and Ong (2007) indicated sense of belonging as the most important component of ethnic identity and further contended that associating positive feelings with one's group membership may lead to positive feelings about oneself as a group member. This is relevant to self-esteem in adolescence because confidence in one's worth is often dictated by family relationships and peer group memberships during this period of life. Helms (1990) found that perceived sense of belonging with one's ethnic group predicts self-esteem. The stronger the connection an individual experiences with other members of their ethnic group, the more confident they feel about their own value in society. In retrospect, Phinney & Ong's (2007) study suggested that sense of belonging to a group is believed to predict how comfortable an individual is with their own ethnicity. Pride in one's cultural heritage provides an internal psychological support to instill pride in one's self.

Although research has generally indicated a relationship between ethnic identity and psychological health, it is important to note that ethnic identity has not always been found to predict self-esteem (Phinney, 1990). This suggests that there may be other factors contributing to the relationship. In a study investigating the relationship between ethnic identity, conflict and cohesion within the family, and psychological adjustment of African American adolescents, researchers found that both family cohesion and positive self-identification with one's ethnic group were most salient in predicting minimal to low depressive symptoms (Street, Harris-Britt, & Walker-Barnes, 2009). Although ethnic identity was negatively related to depression and positively related to self-esteem, neither ethnic identity nor reports of family cohesion/conflict were consistently predictive of adolescent interpersonal functioning. Interestingly, these findings suggest that there are still other factors that should be addressed in examining the relationship between ethnic identity and self-worth. Beyond family cohesion or conflict, it is possible that content of conversations about race occurring within the home as well as support and understanding surrounding discriminatory experiences that is received from parents may have a significant impact on both the psychological adjustment and ethnic identity development of minority youth. Similarly, experiences of peer group affiliations, after school youth development programs, and positive representations of racial minority leaders that black and brown adolescents have within their communities suggests further implications for establishing both pride in one's ethnic group and pride in one's self.

Part II: Individual within Social Environment

Critical Race Theory

In order to better understand the phenomenological effects of colorism, it is necessary to explore three theories that illustrate individuals as products of social systems that assign value to

physical appearance and ethnic heritage. The first of which is the Critical Race Theory (CRT), defined as an interdisciplinary approach to assessing the persistence of racialized social systems within families, institutions, legal systems, and social organizations (Burton, et al., 2010). This paper uses CRT to highlight how racial perceptions and connotations operate at multiple levels of individual's social lives including the home, their workplace, spaces of leisure, and more. CRT is an additional perspective to recognize the relationship of colorism to the larger system which envelope experiences of racial discrimination amongst countries with populations of African descent, as this group experiences the highest rates of hunger and economic hardship throughout the world. Hunter (2007) described two levels of which racial discrimination operates. The first level constitutes discrimination based on systematic categories of race (i.e. black, white, asian, etc.) and the second is the degree to which discrimination is experienced based on skin tone. Despite its primary focus on racial categories, CRT can also be used to examine structural mechanisms of skin color discrimination more relevantly focused on phenotypic features. Solórzano (1997) illustrated the following five basic elements of critical race methodology: (1) the intercentricity of race and racism with other forms of subordination, (2) the challenge to dominant ideology, (3) the commitment to social justice, (4) the challenge of experiential knowledge, and (5) the interdisciplinary perspective. The intercentricity of race incorporates the intersectionality of racism and other sources of oppression such as gender and class discrimination; in this case, discrimination based on phenotype. This element illustrates layers of subordination that interact with one another to encompass the varied experiences of people of color. The second element challenges perspectives of white privilege, colorblindness, and objective research methodologies that often silence and distort the realities of marginalized populations. The third element, commitment to social justice, seeks to eliminate racism, sexism,

and poverty in addition to empowering oppressed groups within the education system. The fourth element recognizes the lived experiences of people of color as legitimate sources of strength in challenging racial, gender, and class subordination. Lastly, the final element emphasizes the importance of incorporating disciplines such as law, history, sociology, psychology, ethnic and women's studies as well as others, to construct theoretical frameworks that appropriately address the experiences of people of color. Establishing these five themes as a means of implementing critical race methodology permits research that challenges scholarship and societal systems of oppression, ultimately highlighting the experiences of marginalized populations as relevant and important in the 21st century.

Ecological Systems Theory

Bronfenbrenner's Ecological Systems theory is one of two frameworks illustrated in this paper to conceptualize contextual variability in human development. Bronfenbrenner's five constructs of ecological systems illustrate human development in the context of the environment giving attention to microsystem, mesosystem, exosystem, and macrosystem interactions within a chronological level of the ecosystem (shown in Figure 1). Bronfenbrenner (2005) proposed that as human beings, we create cultural patterns permitting the psychological functioning of individuals to vary across cultures over the life span. In this way, culture specific competencies are created by those occupying power or social capital by which socially constructed themes are used as a basis of placing societal members in a hierarchical system. The chronosystem model involves the dimension of time, which illustrates environmental factors such as family composition and social class as variable structures rather than constant structures. The chronosystem accounts for change whether it is in the external environment (i.e. birth of a new family member, starting a new job) or internally (i.e. puberty, illness) that incite developmental

change. Such life transitions are critical to the developmental processes occurring within the other four ecological systems.

The person from ecological perspective indicates individuals as active agents in conceptualizing environmental stimuli, thus contributing to their developmental and psychological growth. The microsystem is described as an environmental construct consisting of patterns and roles of an individual's immediate face-to-face interactions that impact developmental growth across time and also includes psychological characteristics and systems of belief of others present in this setting. The next level, the mesosystem, encompasses microsystem relationships by connecting processes taking place between various settings in which the person interacts. The exosystem is characterized as an ecological context in which an environment that an individual does not play a direct role in, impacts their role in one or more immediate environments. For example, an adolescent's experience with their parents at home may be influenced by their parents' experiences in the workplace. The final level, the macrosystem, includes a compilation of the patterns of the micro, meso, and exosystems describing the cultural context of an individual, which includes social interchange, socioeconomic status, race and ethnicity, structures of the government, and developmentally instigative belief systems of the society at large. Developmental instigative belief systems encompass personal qualities that provide an active adaptation to the structure of an environment. In addition to cultures and subcultures, the macrosystem includes neighborhood structures, family type (i.e. two parent/single parent homes), and systems of education. These ecological systems illustrate the interaction between developmental processes of individuals, their societal environment, and the personal attributes of others within the individual's immediate environment.

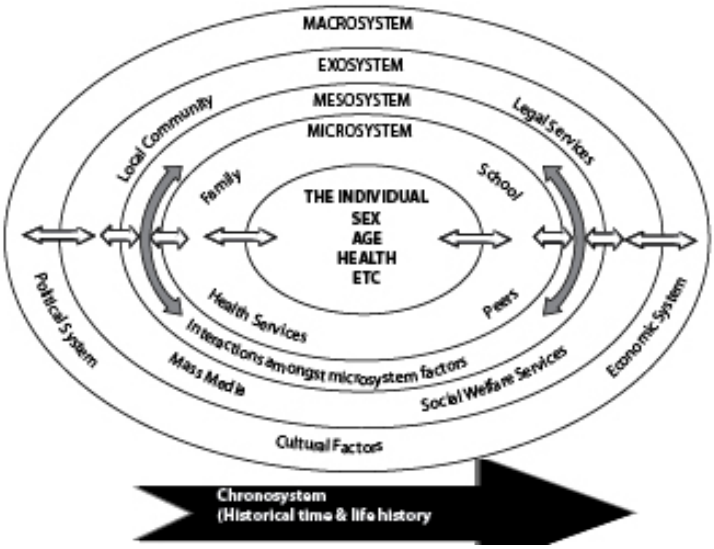

Figure 1. The Ecological Systems Model (Bronfenbrenner, 2005).

Researchers have used Bronfenbrenner's Ecological Systems theory to assess the lived experiences of youth of color, including Brazilian populations. José Eduardo Ferreira Santos (2005) conducted an ethnographic study exploring the lives of four male adolescents (ages 15, 16, 17, and 18) residing in a favela (project/shantytown) located in Salvador, Brazil. Santos used Bronfenbrenner's model to evaluate the risks and protective factors each of the adolescents experienced within a social context ridden with poverty, crime, police raids, and deprived access to adequate housing and health resources. Santos found that each of the boys had conflicts in school, worked outside of the home at an early age to supplement family income, had lived with family members other than their parents at some point in their lives, and reported experiencing many accounts of violence in their neighborhoods. Three of the four boys reported experiences of police brutality at home and had family members who had been imprisoned, while two of the boys had been arrested themselves. Despite precarious living situations, each of the boys reported their mothers as a positive role model in their lives as well as adult mentors from the non-profit youth organization in which they were recruited from, Projeto Social or Social

Project. The current project uses a human vulnerability perspective which evaluates and analyzes a parallel risk vs. protective factors framework (i.e., PVEST). Its inclusion contributes a broader humanistic approach to exploring the experiences of marginalized youth, a population whose voices are often misunderstood or misinterpreted due to a lack of appropriate and relevant framing of complex social issues.

Phenomenological Variant of Ecological Systems Theory (PVEST)

It is essential to provide a theoretical rationale for potential consequences of the colorism phenomenon as well as protective factors that individuals acquire despite hardship in order to better conceptualize systems of contextual culture paradigms that influence human vulnerability. The Phenomenological Variant of Ecological Systems Theory (PVEST) provides an opportunity to explore internalized perceptions, risk contributors such as negative stereotypes, and potential coping strategies that protect people of color from the impeding cognitive and affective effects of skin color discrimination. PVEST is significant to the study of colorism because it recognizes how individuals construct meaning of different aspects of themselves based on their experiences within a larger social system (Spencer, Dupree, & Hartmann, 1997). The framework consists of a five-component identity focused cultural ecological model that links bidirectional meaning making processes throughout the life span.

As illustrated in the theory's first publication (Spencer, 1995), the core factors consist of (1) risk contributors, (2) stress engagement, (3) reactive coping methods, (4) stable coping responses: emergent identities, and (5) life stage outcomes: coping products. The first component, *risk contributors* details potential social contextual factors that may predispose vulnerable populations to experience adverse outcomes (Spencer, Fegley, and Harpalani, 2003). Self-appraisal processes are influenced by stereotypes and biases including factors such as racial

prejudices, low socioeconomic status, gender socialization, etc. Vulnerability level includes these potential risk factors as well as protective coping factors that may offset risks, such as family support. For people of color, phenotypic features such as skin color are risk factors in societies that demonstrate biases towards white or light skin. Other factors may include poor working and living conditions as well as gender and race expectations imposed by a larger socio-historical system of racial discrimination (Fegley, et. al, 2008).

The second component, *stress engagement,* represents the origin and evolution of risks amongst vulnerable populations. For Afro-Brazilian families, negative community attitudes towards the dark skin of a newborn child may serve as a risk to mothers and their offspring. Although the country is marketed as a racial democracy, many poor Afro-Brazilian mothers aim to have lighter skinned babies, as an effort to ensure acceptance, opportunity and social mobility for their children (Hordge-Freeman, 2013). In her study evaluating how messages about racial features are conveyed and interpreted in phenotypically diverse Afro-Brazilian families in Salvador, Freeman found significant implications for complex racial socialization in parent-child and sibling relationships within Afro-Brazilian families. Community members frequently spoke poorly of women who gave birth to black or dark skinned babies while members celebrated women who gave birth to lighter skinned babies. Some fathers neglected and/or abandoned their darker skinned children while some mothers became physically violent towards their lighter skinned daughters because of jealousy and self-hatred of their own physical attributes. While the darker skinned children were most often treated with shame, Freeman described families who openly discussed racial stereotypes and actively dismissed them as those most resistant to the racial hierarchies that community members attempted to impede on others. Preferential treatment of light skinned babies in the community influenced the ways in which children of varying skin

complexions were treated within the family unit as well as the self-perceptions that children adopt on an individual basis. It is likely for tension to grow between family members when a lighter skinned child is celebrated while a darker skinned child is perceived as less attractive.

Researchers have found similar complex examples of racial socialization in other Latin American descent populations. Lee (2006) found that Colombian, Ecuadorian, and Peruvian (CEP) American parents preferred that both their male and female children marry light skinned individuals because dark skin was equated to shame and poverty. CEP mothers of the study expressed a sense of glorification of white people because of their perceived life of privilege. These studies illustrate that physical features such as pigmentation are risk factors likely to induce stress and cause dissonance for individuals of color due to stereotypes that are perceived and potentially internalized, particularly when it involves individual's first encounters with racial socialization, the home environment. PVEST allows for an integrated method of analysis that highlights an individual's process of understanding community and societal expectations, including those that the individual may have adopted themselves (Spencer, et al., 1997). Self-other appraisals are particularly salient to this level of the PVEST model as identity formation is shaped by one's perception of stressful situations. In other words, what an individual believes others think about him or her matters to their psychosocial, behavioral, and biological development.

When individuals encounter situations that challenge their identity, they have a choice between engaging in productive responses or destructive behavior. The third component of the PVEST model, *reactive coping methods,* consists of maladaptive solutions to stressful encounters or adaptive solutions (Spencer et al., 2007). These coping methods are constructed in order to protect the ego from dissonance producing stimuli (Fegley et al., 2008). Young men

of color, particularly those residing in low socioeconomic communities, may communicate a certain social stature or physical posture that is adaptive in neighborhood settings but maladaptive in environments in which they are stereotyped as violent and aggressive. Elijah Anderson's analysis of street codes within inner city communities indicated, "the difference between the descent and the street oriented youth is often that the descent youth makes a conscious decision to appear tough and manly; in another setting he can be polite and deferential. The street-oriented youth has made the concept of manhood a part of his very identity; he has difficulty manipulating it," (92). This illustrates that the social and contextual environment of black and brown adolescent males living in poor neighborhoods impacts their ability to decipher between engaging in behaviors that are adaptive in one setting such as demanding respect from community members, while maladaptive in other settings. This exemplifies the experiences in which people of color are challenged to engage in reactive coping methods because of the social significance of skin color and the connotations carried with certain racial features.

As different strategies are employed, individuals of color are making self-appraisals within societal contexts. The fourth component, *emergent identities,* illustrates how individuals infer meaning of themselves in relation to perceptions from multiple contextual experiences of their lives including that of family, work, school, and their neighborhood (Fegley at al., 2008). An individual's identity, particularly for people of color, is defined by one's cultural and ethnic identity, peer and self-appraisal, and understanding of gender role socialization (Spencer, Fegley, & Harpalani, 2003). These mechanisms are integrated to form stable coping responses linked with reactive coping methods that lead to either adverse or productive outcomes. The final component of PVEST, *life stage outcomes,* encompasses the coping products defined from the four previous systems. Self appraisal processes initially occur in response to color biases,

protective factors such as family support are incorporated in order to buffer risk factors, maladaptive or adaptive coping strategies develop in response to stressful encounters, and finally behavioral outcomes persist in relation to an individual's ability to negotiate between stable psychosocial coping processes and reactive coping responses.

In response to the experiences of skin color discrimination, healthy outcomes may include high self-esteem, positive racial identity, strong interpersonal relationships, and good physical and psychological health. Adverse outcomes may include withdrawal, low self-esteem, poor health, and dissatisfaction with phenotypic features leading to the use of harmful products such as skin bleaching creams. In relation to health outcomes, Clark and colleagues (1999) indicated that African American women who responded to unfair treatment based on skin color discrimination with passive coping strategies such as keeping quiet, were more likely to self-report hypertension than black women who responded with more adaptive coping responses. This study illustrates the impact that stress engagement can have on the health of individuals vulnerable to maladaptive coping processes. It is important to remember that PVEST is a recursive model in which risk factors and identity formation processes are continuously negotiated in the midst of new stress engaging experiences occurring within a larger social, political, and contextual environment. This phenomenological perspective provides an excellent opportunity to improve understanding of how individuals of color learn to define themselves in the midst of societal constructs designed to degrade the color of their skin.

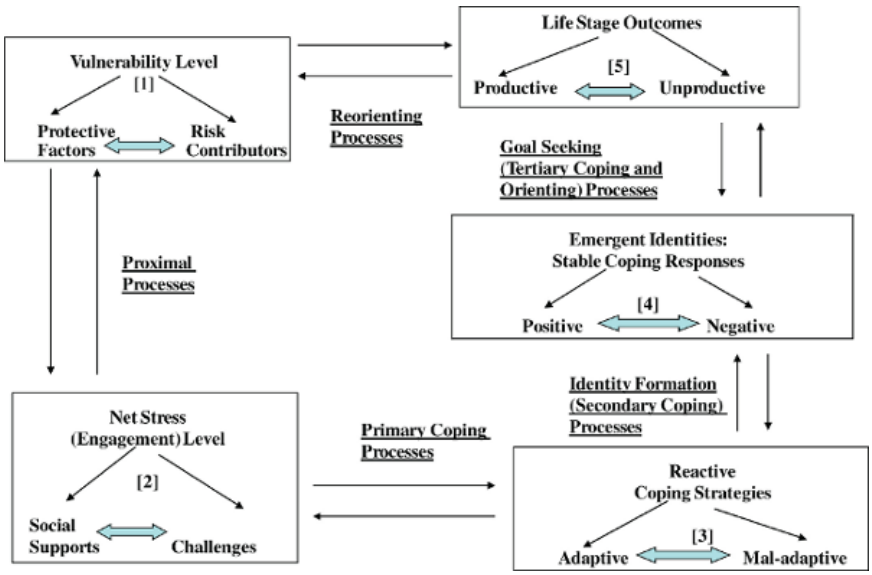

Figure 2. The Phenomenological Variant of Ecological Systems Model (Spencer, 2005)

Theory and Literature Synthesis

The articles presented in this review have illustrated how messages about racial socialization and skin color impact developmental processes of vulnerable populations. Phenotypic features have been utilized to define an individual's social status, level of education, likelihood of being perceived as attractive by members of a shared community and groups outside of that community, and ultimately who a person is in relation to those within the dominant culture. Historically, skin color was socialized to create a hierarchy in which those that invaded the property of indigenous lands could be protected from retaliation by associating power with a physical trait that only they possessed (Russell-Cole, Wilson, & Hall, 2013). Although this system of oppression was originally designed to separate the white oppressor from the subordinate people of color, the inferior status associated with dark skin has seeped into the minds of people of color, dividing already marginalized populations. While some benefit from the adopted division of skin tones, others remain at the bottom of the hierarchical structure not only in the larger society but also within their own racial and ethnic groups. Bonilla-Silva

(2002) refers to this hierarchy as a tri-racial system in the U.S. in which whites occupy the top tier, "honorary whites" (light skinned multiracials, Latinos, Middle Eastern, and Asian Americans) occupy the middle tier, and the "collective Black" (dark skinned Latinos, blacks, Native Americans and Asian Americans) occupies the bottom tier. Although Bonilla-Silva did not include light skinned African descent groups in his description of "honorary whites", I propose that these individuals occupy an elevated social status within communities of African descent in Latin America. As this system emerges, the author believes that although not occupying the same social dominance as that of whites, the honorary whites will either attempt to classify themselves as white or implement other mechanisms that separate them from the inferior status of the collective black. This tri-racial system is evident within the colorism phenomenon, thus creating perceptual processes that encourage skin color stratification amongst racially oppressed groups.

The three theories proposed in this review help to understand how individual perceptions of skin color stratification are shaped by interacting ecological systems of white privilege and social domination. In implementing Bronfenbrenner's ecological systems theory, we are able to conceptualize the influence of societal value systems and government ordained laws on the developmental processes of individuals and those in their immediate environment. I propose a reductionist approach in which skin color discrimination is established at the macrolevel of ecological systems and influences individual experiences within the exo-, meso-, and microsystems. The macrosystem encompasses the societal belief that darker skin is inferior to that of lighter skin and individuals with this physical trait should thus be oppressed and discriminated against. This value system is illustrated by the history of slavery in North and South America and current economic and social positions of individuals with darker skin tones in

various cultural contexts. Thus, the macrosystem is where racism, sexism, classism, and colorism are made possible.

The societal belief systems that characterize a set of values within a cultural group constitute experiences within mass media, social organizations, and the neighborhood that represent the exosystem. The high prevalence of light skinned Brazilian and Colombian actresses represented in films and television series/soap operas illustrates values indicative of those of the dominant Indian culture. It is important to note that by dominant, I do not refer to the majority, rather those that maintain political and social power within particular cultural groups. The societal belief of light skin as beautiful in both countries is portrayed in films that are viewed around the world. This is not only indicative of cultural beliefs but also the type of image of which those that hold power on a national scale Brazil and Colombia would like for outsiders to perceive them. The association of light skin with beauty and social capital was represented within the Afro-Brazilian sample of Hordge-Freeman's study. Glorification of light skinned babies and condemnation of black babies by Afro-Brazilian parents and community members illustrates value systems operating at the exosystem level that are influenced by the macrosystem. It is likely that these women hope to have light skinned babies in order to ensure positive economic and social opportunities as a means of coping with longstanding adverse psychological and health outcomes due to the history of enslaved Africans in Brazil.

Experiences of skin color discrimination that occur within school and work environments represent the mesosystem level. As mentioned in chapter 3, it is likely that the division of mulatto slaves from Black slaves contributed to the birth of colorism. The light skinned individuals who were allowed to work in the home also benefited from learning to read and write which was forbidden amongst black slaves working outdoors. From their exosystem

experiences, the mixed race slaves were likely to associate light skin with opportunity and dark skin with brutality, thus acquiring skills to maintain their somewhat elevated position in society. I believe that these historical occurrences have transcended into 21st century events shaping tension amongst light and dark skinned individuals within the home, community, and workplace.

The microsystem of Bronfenbrenner's ecological systems model incorporates the role of skin color in interpersonal relationships including those amongst immediate family members, peers, and dating partners. The preferences for lighter skin in dating relationships illustrated in previous studies encompasses a cultural value established at the macrosystem level that influences dating experiences within an individual's immediate environment. Likewise, the pressure that Colombian, Ecuadorian, and Peruvian Americans experience from their parents to date lighter skinned Latinos influences the ways in which light skinned Latinos interact with dark skinned Latinos and vice versa. Tension can also arise within families made up of various skin shades. As represented in the example of the Afro-Brazilian communities, siblings are likely to notice that one sibling receives more or less attention from parents and community members because of differences in skin tone. Once again, belief systems operating at the macrosystem level impact the interpersonal relationships more closely related to the individual. An aspect of the ecological systems theory that is present in all of these domains is the chronosystem. Birth of a new sibling that is lighter or darker, for example, could alter the socio economic statuses and interpersonal relationships of a family unit. Thus, the chronosystem is utilized to incorporate these changes that occur over time in order to illustrate altering properties that affect the developmental processes of individuals across the lifespan.

While PVEST and the Ecological Systems theory are utilized to better conceptualize the individual experiences of skin color stratification based on societal systems of discrimination,

CRT allows researchers, educators, and policy makers to challenge systems of oppression. I propose that the five basic elements of CRT introduced earlier by Solórzano (1997) can be used as a mechanism to deconstruct societal perceptions of the value of skin color within racial/ethnic groups. The intercentricity of colorism with other forms of oppression allows researchers and policy makers to investigate the origin and effects of within group skin color biases in relation to sexism and classism. Although skin color differences are illustrated across gender, it is evident in the literature that colorism affects men and women differently. The association of beauty with social capital indicates a linkage between skin tone and gender construction of attraction, specifically for women. In exploring the potentiality of a gendered colorism, Hill (2002) found the association with skin tone and physical attractiveness to be significantly lower for men than for women, indicating a strong preference for light skinned women. On the contrary, prior studies reviewed in this paper illustrated the low income and educational levels of dark skinned men and the high rates of police brutality amongst dark skinned Afro-Brazilians. These themes illustrate a relationship between gender construction and skin tone discrimination as women are judged based on their physical attractiveness and men are optimized in relation to their masculinity and economic status.

Challenging non scientifically based dominant ideologies provides an opportunity for racial and ethnic groups to explore foundations of skin color discrimination in relation to idealization of the dominant cultural group. This theme causes individuals within a particular racial group to examine their perceptions of skin color in reference to a system created by those with historical power. The following quote obtained from Russell-Cole and colleagues (2013, p.235) presents an example of challenging dominant ideologies:

With bright eyes peering out under deliciously curled lashes, cheekbones and jawbones contoured as if chiseled from sharp stone, full noses, and sumptuously lush lips, black women are unquestionably beautiful. A tribute is due to the woman whose skin tone ranges from alabaster to mahogany to smooth onyx, who can flawlessly carry any makeup look – from gold-dusted lids to fuchsia blush to ripe purple and pink glosses. These pages pay homage to the versatile woman whose hair can oscillate from a tightly coiled and coifed Afro, to sleep layers, to a slicked-back pixie cut in a matter of minutes. To the divine woman whose enviably full lips, strong white teeth, and delightful smile have been known to electrify the hearts of many. To the siren whose smooth, velvety skin blocks the sun yet remains supple and unblemished with the passage of time. Variable and diverse, black beauty escapes simple classification. But no matter the incarnation – whether the color of molasses, café au lait, bronze, tan or tinged like desert sand – black beauties radiate with poise and multidimensional splendor.

Vogue Italia, May 2011

This quote not only challenges skin color preferences within white European dominant culture, but it also addresses social notions of beauty within African descent communities. It highlights the diversity of skin tones of black women, suggesting a unique beauty that should be perceived across skin tones. This quote also exemplifies the commitment to social justice by empowering young black readers of Vogue magazine to be confident in their skin.

The final two components of critical race methodology encompass the importance of incorporating the lived experiences of people of color into interdisciplinary work. The 2013 television premiere of the documentary *Dark Girls* illustrates an example of recognizing the value of narrative and biography to represent the valid experiences of marginalized groups. The documentary depicted shared experiences of skin color biases expressed primarily by dark skinned African American women. It also included detailed historical accounts, the role of skin color biases in relation to developmental processes, as well as potentially psychologically damaging effects of within group color discrimination. Similar to the approach of CRT, this documentary demonstrated the experiential knowledge of people of color as a strength in analyzing historical occurrences that established dominant ideology and as a means of teaching viewers about a relevant issue concerning the psychological well-being of people of color today.

It also highlighted the benefit of approaching the colorism phenomenon from multiple disciplinary perspectives. Historians, lawyers, psychologists, sociologists and so forth can collaborate to deconstruct longstanding invalid ideologies of white privilege through such perspectives that conceptualize valued social capital of various cultures and racial groups.

Part III: Adolescent Achievement within Imaginary Utopian Democracies

Chapter 6: The Present Study: Adolescent Achievement in Brazilian and Colombian Structures of Opportunity

Preliminary Research

The present study builds upon my thesis research conducted amongst adolescents aged 14-17 in Salvador, Brazil over a 10 week period in 2014. The phenomenon that my Master's thesis investigated was the role that colorism played in shaping the educational and career expectations of Brazilian adolescents. I conducted a mixed methods analysis to assess both educational aspirations and expectations. I used 68 surveys and 11 semi-structured interviews to discern (1) the relationship between skin color identification and occupational aspirations and (2) the relationship between skin color and perceived access to upward mobility. I used the interviews to explain how participants perceived structural barriers and why they perceive themselves to be at an advantage or disadvantage in access to educational and career opportunity. While skin color did not predict occupational aspirations, darker skin color categories significantly predicted perceived disadvantage in competitive labor outcomes. Hence, participants illustrated awareness of societal barriers that prohibit or support them in achieving their goals irrespective of aspirations. These findings were consistent with research conducted with minority youth in the U.S., which suggests that adolescents' aspirations are consistent across racial groups (Kao & Thompson, 2003). However, the interviews of my thesis illustrated that all of the youth were aware of structural barriers that persist based on their physical features and socioeconomic status, regardless of the lightness or darkness of their skin. It is out of this awareness among Brazilian adolescents, of the correlation between phenotype and socioeconomic status that the current project evolves.

Method

The purpose of this *late adolescent-early adulthood focused* dissertation is to examine relationships among skin tone, perceived discrimination, racial and national identity, and postsecondary plans during a period in which individuals are actively negotiating the role of their cultural context in determining their identities and future goals. The project uses a mixed methods approach with quantified survey questions and qualitative interview questions.

Participants.

Data was collected from five high schools in the city of Salvador of the Bahia state of Brazil, and five high schools in the city of Cartagena of the Bolívar state of Colombia with varying ethnic/racial compositions, yielding a total of ten schools. The ten schools included two private schools (one from the Brazilian sample and one from the Colombian sample) and eight public schools. Two of the public schools were located in suburban areas (one from the Brazilian sample and one from the Colombian sample), while the remaining schools were located in urban neighborhoods throughout each city. For each respective sample, two of the schools were located in low-income neighborhoods, two schools were located in middle class neighborhoods, and one school per sample was located in a high-income neighborhood. This sampling method was implemented in order to include a diverse sample of students from a range of socioeconomic backgrounds. Focusing on private schools would limit the sample to middle to upper class students who may not experience high levels of discrimination based on the academic and career resources that their schools provide. On the contrary, excluding private schools eliminates the perspectives of those receiving the most competitive instruction and high academic resources that often perpetuate cycles of intergenerational economic inequality. Data collection occurred over an eight-month period between February and June 2016 in Salvador and

March and July 2017 in Cartagena, when students were beginning their final year of secondary school. However, relationships have been established with university mentors and participating schools since 2014 in Salvador and 2015 in Cartagena.

The current study includes two samples with a total of 737 high school seniors. The Brazilian sample consists of 323 participants with 63.2% females (N = 204) and 36.8% male (N = 119). The Brazilian participants range in age from 15 to 22 (M = 17.69, SD = 1.30). The original Brazil sample includes a total of 338 participants, however 9 students were excluded due to age outliers (significantly older than the majority of the sample) and 6 students did not submit completed surveys. The Colombian sample consists of 414 high school seniors. A total of 428 participants were originally recruited for the study, however 14 students did not submit completed surveys. Of those who participated, 40.99% were female (N = 169) and 59.1% were male (N = 244). The Colombian participants ranged in age from 14-20 (M = 16.36, SD = 0.93). These data indicate that the Brazilian sample had a higher percentage of female participants than male participants while the Colombian sample had a higher percentage of males than females. Additionally, the Brazilian sample was older than the Colombian sample. The majority of the Brazilian sample were ages 17 (34.3%) and 18 (25.2%), whereas the majority of the Colombian sample were ages 16 (53.1%) and 17 (22.9%). Of the two samples, 30 Brazilian students (all from public schools) and 11 Colombian students (9 public school students and 2 private school students) participated in individual interviews. A group of 9 Brazilian private school students participated in a group interview. A two month long Colombian public school system strike constituted the variation in completed interviews between the two samples, as the majority of interviews were conducted at the sampled schools.

Procedure.

In collaboration with professors at the University of Cartagena and the Federal University of Bahia and their respective graduate students, ten secondary schools were identified of varying racial/ethnic and socioeconomic compositions. The research team selected schools using professional networks to obtain a sample representative of each city's adolescent population. I met with principals at each of the ten schools to submit study proposals and request participation from their third year (senior) students. School counselors and coordinators assisted me with entering classrooms and presenting the research proposal to third year students at the schools. After receiving permission from school personnel, I administered child assent forms and parental consent forms to students under the age of 18. I administered adult consent forms to students over age 18. Students were informed that their participation was completely voluntary and anonymous and would not affect their academic performance in any way. Additionally, I included two participation options on the form, one that offered consent to the survey and another that offered consent to participate in an audio recorded interview. They were given a total of five maximum school days to submit the signed consent forms. After receiving consent forms, I administered 54 item surveys in Spanish and Portuguese (see Appendices A-C) to all students who agreed to participate and fit the study criteria (full time students enrolled in their final year at one of the ten schools). Surveys took approximately 30-45 minutes to complete and were administered in classrooms with an instructor present. I followed up with the students about one to two weeks after survey administration to conduct the interviews. Teachers provided a list of their lowest and highest performing students. I randomly selected students from the list, choosing a few students with average academic performance, in order to include a diverse set of achievement levels. For the Brazilian sample, all of the interviews were conducted in classrooms of the participating schools during students' lunch breaks or after school hours with the door

propped open to ensure the participant's safety. For the Colombian sample, approximately half of the interviews were held in classrooms and the other half were conducted in restaurants and shopping malls due to school strikes. The interviews consisted of a 23-item semi-structured format (see Appendix D) and lasted approximately 25-40 minutes. All students were given key chains and buttons approved by the school staff, after participating in the study.

Measures.

Independent variables include skin tone (3 levels ranging from light skin, medium skin, to dark skin), gender (2 levels), perceived discrimination (3 levels ranging from zero to low frequency, medium frequency, to high frequency), socioeconomic status (6 levels consisting of socioeconomic groups designated by each country's government), national identity (2 levels ranging from low pride in Brazilian/Colombian citizenship to a high sense of pride), and racial identity (2 levels ranging from low to high pride in one's ethnic/racial group membership). It is important to mention that while well-validated U.S. based measures were used to compile survey questions, I consulted with two Brazilian university professors and two Colombian university professors to ensure that the questions were culturally relevant to the cultural conceptualizations and values of each sample. Any questions that did not coincide with experiences of Latin American adolescents or had very different connotations when translated into Spanish and Portuguese were appropriately modified. The result was a compilation of items taken from questionnaires described below into one composite measure, categorized by each variable (see Appendix A).

Race.

The questionnaire assessed racial group category along two dimensions. The first dimension requested an open-ended response to the question, “what is your race or skin color” for the Brazilian sample, and "what is your ethnic group or skin color" for the Colombian sample. This question was asked in the very beginning of the survey along with other demographic variables such as age and gender. The second dimension included the same questions for each respective sample with multiple-choice responses and was listed towards the end of survey in the cultural identity section. Brazilian participants were asked to select one response from the following categories: preto (black), negro (African descent), pardo (mixed-race), and branco (white/European descent). These racial group categories were adapted from color identifications listed in the national census bureau of the Instituto Brasiliero de Geografia e Estatística (Brazilian Institute of Geography and Statistics – IBGE) cited by Dos Santos and Anya (2006) and included the negro category due to its rise in popular discourse as an inclusive term for all people of African descent (Telles, 2004). Colombian participants were asked to select one response from the following categories: palenquero (black from the Palenque reserve), negro (black), mulato (mixed black-white heritage), mestizo (mixed Indigenous-white heritage), indígena (indigenous), moreno (ambiguous term for non-whites), and blanco (white). These categories were incorporated in response to feedback from Colombian professors whom provided guidance for the project.

Skin Tone.

For the present study, skin tone was measured by self-reported identification from the Visual Inventory for Skin Tone Assessment (VISTA). The VISTA, derived from the Skin Color Opinions and Perceptions Evaluation (SCOPE; Spencer 2005; Fegley, Spencer, Goss et al., 2008), consists of a 15-inch commercially produced color bar that includes ten colors arranged

across the bar from lightest to darkest; labeled by letters A through J. The present study grouped participants into three skin color groups. Group 1 was categorized as white-light skinned participants and consisted of letters A-C. Group 2 was categorized as medium skinned participants and consisted of letters D-G. Lastly, group 2 consisted of participants who selected letters H-J and classified as those with dark skin. In the original study, participants were asked a set of two questions that are consecutive in order, 1) "Choose the color that you think best represents the color of your skin and write the corresponding letter below," and 2) "Choose the color that best represents the color that you would prefer your skin to be and write the corresponding letter". The present study only includes question one as the purpose of the study is to incorporate self identified skin tone rather than desired skin tone, distinct from the preliminary study. Additionally, researchers who have conducted empirical studies using skin tone measures argue for the benefits of researcher identification in combination with self identification as it demonstrates key differences between self-perceived skin color and the skin color perceived by others (Monk, 2015; Telles, 2014). However, I did not consider this to be a feasible methodology for the present study given my limitations as a non Latin American independent researcher. To explore potential variability within the three aforementioned skin tone groups (light, medium, and dark), I created a second variable labeled Skin Tone B that included the following five categories: light fair skin (letters A & B), medium fair skin (letters (C &D), light brown skin (letters E & F), medium brown skin (letters G & H), and dark brown skin (letters I & J).

Perceived Discrimination.

Perceived discrimination is measured as the frequency and type of discriminatory experiences as it relates to occurrences within school and neighborhood settings. The Daily Life

Experience subscale of the Racism and Life Experiences Scale (Harrell, 2000) was used to assess perceived discrimination of all participants. While the original measure included 17 discriminatory experiences, this study includes 11 experiences that are culturally relevant to Latin American populations. Participants select from a 5-point likert scale how often each event occurred and how much it bothered them. Examples of discriminatory events include: (1) being ignored, overlooked or not given service (in a restaurant, store, etc.); (2) being treated rudely or disrespectfully; and (3) being accused of something or treated suspiciously. Additionally, the Black Male Experiences Questionnaire (Cunningham and Spencer, 1996) was used to assess experiences of discrimination specifically for the male participants. The original measure consists of 35 items with likert-type responses, however the present study uses 5 culturally relevant items. Examples of question items include: (1) when you are hanging out (like in the park, on the beach, on a street corner, etc.), how often do police/security guards stop to ask what you are doing; and (2) how often do people you don't know think you are doing something wrong (like selling drugs, preparing to rob someone, preparing to steal something, etc.)? Higher scores indicate more experiences of perceived discrimination.

Racial and National Identity.

Identity is divided into two categories of adolescent role engagement: racial identity and national identity. National identity is measured using the National Attachment Scale (Huddy & Khatib, 2007). This study uses questions from the following four subscales: national identity (importance of nationality to participant), symbolic patriotism (importance of symbols that reflect support for one's country), constructive patriotism (beliefs about collective efforts to support one's country), and national pride (support for the economic, political, technological, and artistic contributions of one's country). The present study includes one modified item from the

national identity subscale ("how important is being Brazilian/Colombian to you?"), two modified items from the symbolic patriotism subscale ("how do feel when you see the Brazilian/Colombian flag," and "how do you feel when you hear the Brazilian/Colombian national anthem?"), one item from the constructive patriotism subscale ("how important do you believe it is that Brazilians/Colombians work hard to move this country in a positive direction?), and six items from the national pride subscale (see Appendix A). Responses are scored on a 4-point likert scale. Racial identity is assessed using the Multidimensional Inventory of Black Identity - Teen (MIBI-t; Scottham, Sellers, & Nguyên, 2005). This study uses items from the centrality, private regard, and humanism subscales. The centrality subscale measures the extent to which individuals conceive of racial group membership as a major component of their self-concept. Private regard refers to how positively or negatively an individual feels about being a member of a particular racial group as well as how they feel about the group overall. The Humanism subscale is included in the present study given each nation's emphasis on racially democratic societies and is defined as a belief that all people have similarities regardless of racial group membership. Respondents responded to a 5-point likert-type scale. Item examples of the racial identity variable include: 1) Do you feel close to other people of your race; 2) Are you happy to be (black, for example); and 3) Do you think being an individual is more important than identifying with a race?

Dependent Variables.

The dependent variables include postsecondary goals, academic performance, and perceptions of opportunity. The present study uses methodology from the Fergus (2009) study (see Appendix D) referred to in the introduction, in which interviews were conducted with Latino high school students to assess how participants' academic orientation and perceptions of

opportunity related to their racial/ethnic group memberships in addition to the racial/ethnic groups that others perceived them to be a part of. I used the measures listed below to investigate how academic performance, postsecondary goals, and perceptions of opportunity vary by skin color and socioeconomic status among Brazilian and Colombian adolescents.

Postsecondary goals.

Postsecondary goals is divided into three categories (1) students who plan to attend college, (2) students who plan to enroll in a vocational training program, and (3) students who plan to obtain a job directly after high school.

Academic Performance.

Academic performance is measured by self-reported student grade point average in two major courses of study: Mathematics and Portuguese/Spanish. Grades are based on a 10-point scale, with a 10.0 being the highest possible grade (similar to 4.0/A letter grade in the U.S.).

Perceived access to Career Opportunity.

Perceived career access was measured using two open-ended questions from the Fergus (2009) study included in the survey. The following items were included: "Do you believe that you are at a disadvantage or have less access to educational and/or career opportunities in comparison to other Brazilian/Colombian adolescents? If so, why?" and "Do you believe that you are at an advantage or have more access to educational and/or career opportunities in comparison to other Brazilian/Colombian adolescents? If so, why?" Responses are coded into four groups: (1) participants who responded "yes" to advantage and "no" to disadvantage, (2) participants who responded "no" to advantage and "yes" to disadvantage, (3) participants who responded "yes" to advantage and "yes" to disadvantage, and (4) participants who responded "no" to both variables.

Results

Survey Data.

All quantitative analyses were conducted using IBM SPSS Statistics version 24. I have organized statistical analyses of the survey data by first including participant descriptives and school demographics using three independent variables (SES, race, and skin tone) followed by correlations and predictive relationships between the independent variables (IVs) and dependent variables (DVs). I analyze the data using crosstabulations and Chi-square analyses to assess the strength of relationships between the variables and to identify whether or not variables of interest are independent of one another.

SES, Race and Skin Tone Frequencies.

Socioeconomic Status (SES) was categorized using government ordained social class listings for each respective country. The Brazilian government divides SES into class categories A-E, with Class A having the highest income and Class E representing lowest income groups above poverty (Marteleto, 2012). Individuals who hold household incomes under the poverty line are categorized into a below poverty group. Participants self-identified their SES groups for the present study. From the Brazilian sample, 0.6% selected Class A, 9.7% selected Class B, 14.3% selected Class C, 35.8% selected Class D, 29.3% selected Class E and 10.3% reported coming from households below poverty. The Colombian government divides SES into numbered groups referred to as *estratos* or levels, with *estrato seis* or level 6 representing the highest income group and level 1 representing the lowest income group (Urrea Giraldo, Viáforo López, & Viveros Vigoya, 2014). There is no separate category for those who hold household incomes below the poverty line, rather these individuals are grouped into level 1. Note that the Colombian SES classification system is ranked from low to high while the Brazilian SES

classification system is ranked from high to low. I report SES data from the Colombian sample in order from highest income groups to lowest income groups in order to remain consistent with reporting from the Brazilian sample. Among the Colombian participants, 0.3% selected level 6, 7.9% selected level 4, 48.2% selected level 3, 26.7% selected level 2, and 17% selected level 1. None of the participants selected level 5.

Recall that race was analyzed using two separate methods including one open ended and one multiple-choice question per sample. The first of which, the open ended question, included the following responses for the Brazilian sample: preto, negro, moreno, pardo, amarelo, and branco. The following responses were included from the Colombian sample: palenquero, afrocolombiano/afrodescendiente (Afro-Colombian/African descent), negro, mulato, mestizo, indígena, moreno, and blanco. The majority of both samples selected mixed race categories (pardo and mestizo). Of the Brazilian sample, 37.7% identified as pardo, closely followed by 34.6% who identified as negro versus 38.5% of Colombian participants who identified as mestizo and 22% who identified as Afro-Colombian (see Tables 1 and 2). Selection of racial/ethnic group was consistent for the mestizo and blanco groups of the Colombian sample from the open ended to multiple choice race question, however more students identified as palenquero (from 0.7% to 2.2%), negro (6.2% to 9.6%), and moreno (11.4% to 29.4%) in the second question than the first. This is likely due to the exclusion of Afro-Colombian in the multiple-choice responses. Another rationale is that questions about discrimination and opportunity primed the participants to change their responses since the multiple choice question is listed in one of the last sections of the survey. Among the Brazilian sample, selection of racial/ethnic groups were consistent for preto and branco groups between open ended and multiple choice questions however there was a slight increase in the negro and pardo categories

from 34.6% to 38.1% and 37.7% to 44.7% respectively. This is likely due to the exclusion of moreno and amarelo categories in the multiple choice section as well as potential priming effects.

Table 1 Open Ended Race/Ethnicity Responses: Brazilian Sample

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	preto	16	5.0	5.0	5.0
	negro	111	34.4	34.6	39.6
	moreno	23	7.1	7.2	46.7
	pardo	121	37.5	37.7	84.4
	amarelo	6	1.9	1.9	86.3
	branco	44	13.6	13.7	100.0
	Total	321	99.4	100.0	
Missing	999	2	.6		
Total		323	100.0		

Table 2 Open Ended Race/Ethnicity Responses: Colombian Sample

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	palenquero	2	.5	.7	.7
	afrocolombian/afrodescendent	60	14.5	22.0	22.7
	negro	17	4.1	6.2	28.9
	mulato	7	1.7	2.6	31.5

	mestizo	105	25.3	38.5	70.0
	indigena	8	1.9	2.9	72.9
	moreno	31	7.5	11.4	84.2
	blanco	43	10.4	15.8	100.0
	Total	273	65.8	100.0	
Missing	999	142	34.2		
Total		415	100.0		

Table 2 Open Ended Race/Ethnicity Responses: Colombian Sample (Cont.)

Skin tone results were consistent with racial/ethnic group identification. The majority of both samples selected medium skin tones from the Skin Tone A and light brown skin from Skin Tone B variables. Higher frequencies of Brazilian students selected darker skin tones than Colombian students between both skin tone variables. For the Brazilian sample 14.4% selected light skin, 46.3% selected medium skin, and 39.4% selected dark skin for Skin Tone A variable. Among the Colombian sample 14.8% selected light skin, 61.7% selected medium skin, and 23.5% selected dark skin tones. For the Skin Tone B variable larger proportions of the Brazilian sample selected the two darkest color categories (25.3%) than Colombian participants (9.9%).

School Demographics by SES, Race, and Skin Tone.

To protect the school identities, I classify the schools into numbered categories in order of socioeconomic class of the neighborhoods of which each school was located. Recall that each sample includes one private school and four public schools, totaling ten schools. For the Brazilian sample, the private school was located in an upper class neighborhood, public school 1 was located in a middle-upper class neighborhood, public school 2 was located in a middle class neighborhood, public school 3 was in a working-middle class neighborhood, and public school 4

was in a working class suburban neighborhood (equivalent to a slum or very poor area). Similarly, the Colombian sample included the following school categories: the private school located in an upper class neighborhood, public school 1 located in a middle class neighborhood, public school 2 in a middle class neighborhood, public school 3 in a working-middle class neighborhood, and public school 4 in a working class suburban neighborhood (equivalent to a slum or very poor area). Public school 2 from both the Brazilian and Colombian samples included an internship program for the high school seniors that all of the other schools did not include. Tables 3 and 4 illustrate the participant SES distribution among the schools of each sample. As expected, the majority of the private school students selected social classes A and B at 6.9% and 55.2% respectively, while the majority of public school 4 students selected social classes D and E at 39.1% equally per class for the Brazilian sample. Private school students were the only participants to report being members of social class A and were the only group that did not have any representation in classes D, E, and the below poverty group. Public schools 3 and 4 included the only groups of participants who did not select social classes A and B. Crosstabulations yielded similar frequencies for the Colombian sample. The majority of private school students selected middle to high income SES levels 3 and 4 at 77.5% and 17.1% respectively, while the majority of public school 4 students selected lower income SES levels 1 and 2 at 50% and 39.6% respectively. None of the private school students selected the lowest SES group, level 1. However a small percentage of public school 3 students from the Colombian sample selected the highest SES group, level 6, distinct from public school 3 of the Brazilian sample.

Table 3 School * SES Crosstabulation: Brazilian Sample

% within School

		SES						
		Class A	Class B	Class C	Class D	Class E	below poverty	Total
School	Private school	6.9%	55.2%	37.9%				100.0%
	Public school 1		6.5%	15.1%	41.9%	24.7%	11.8%	100.0%
	Public school 2		8.4%	15.9%	40.2%	28.0%	7.5%	100.0%
	Public school 3			4.3%	32.6%	50.0%	13.0%	100.0%
	Public school 4			4.3%	39.1%	39.1%	17.4%	100.0%
Total		0.6%	9.7%	14.3%	35.8%	29.3%	10.3%	100.0%

Table 4 School * SES Crosstabulation: Colombian Sample

% within School

		SES					
		SES Level 1	SES Level 2	SES Level 3	SES Level 4	SES Level 6	Total
School	Private school		5.4%	77.5%	17.1%		100.0%
	Public school 1	10.4%	33.3%	43.8%	12.5%		100.0%
	Public school 2	21.6%	39.2%	39.2%			100.0%
	Public school 3	25.5%	36.4%	34.5%	1.8%	1.8%	100.0%
	Private school 4	50.0%	39.6%	8.3%	2.1%		100.0%

Total	17.0%	26.7%	48.2%	7.9%	0.3%	100.0%

Table 4 School * SES Crosstabulation: Colombian Sample (Cont.)

The largest group of participants from the Colombian sample were students of the private school, whereas the private school from the Brazilian sample had the smallest portion of the sample. Other than the private school frequency differences, the remaining schools in each sample match in approximate percentage representation with similar SES schools from the other sample (for example, the two poorest schools (public schools 4) had similar percentages of students with 14.6% of the Brazilian sample and 12% of the Colombian samples. The remaining schools represented the following percentages among Brazilian participants: the private school (9%), public school 1 (29.1%), public school 2 (33.1%), and public school 3 (14.2%). The Colombian sample included 31.8% of participants who attended the private school, 13% who attended public school 1, 25.8% who attended public school 2, and 17.3% who attended public school 3.

The next description of percentage ratios includes a distribution of racial groups among the ten schools. Data is included from the multiple choice or closed response race question. As expected higher percentages of participants who identified as black or African descent attended schools in poor to working class neighborhoods compared to students attending schools in more affluent neighborhoods (see table 5). Likewise, none of the students attending the private school of the Brazilian sample identified as preto, while only 10.3% identified as negro. The majority of Brazilian students attending schools in middle-income neighborhoods identified as pardo, with 46.8% at public school 1 and 48.6% from public school 2. The majority of the students attending the two lowest resourced schools identified as negro, with 46.7% at public school 3 and 44.7% at public school 4. There was an equal distribution of students identifying as white and pardo at the

private school (44.8%). For the Colombian sample, over half of the private school participants identified as mestizo (51.5%), whereas over half of public school 4 participants identified as moreno (58%). The highest proportions of participants who identified as negro attended public school 2 (13.1%) and public school 4 (10%).

Table 5 School * Race/Ethnicity Crosstabulation: Brazilian Sample

% within School

		Race				
		preto	negro	pardo	branco	Total
School	Private school		10.3%	44.8%	44.8%	100.0%
	Public school 1	4.3%	36.2%	46.8%	12.8%	100.0%
	Private school 2	2.9%	41.0%	48.6%	7.6%	100.0%
	Public school 3	4.4%	46.7%	44.4%	4.4%	100.0%
	Public school 4	8.5%	44.7%	31.9%	14.9%	100.0%
Total		4.1%	38.1%	44.7%	13.1%	100.0%

The final description of percentage ratios includes the distribution of skin tone groups among the ten schools. Data is included from the Skin Tone A variable depicting three color categories ranging from light to dark skin. Interestingly, the highest percentage of students who selected dark skin attended the school located in a middle class neighborhood with the internship program (48.6%) compared with the following highest proportions at 46.8% from public school 4 and 41.9% from public school 3 for the Brazilian sample. The majority of students attending the public school in the middle-upper class neighborhood (public school 1) selected medium skin tone (48.9%). There was equal distribution between light skin and medium skin for the private

school student sample (48.3%), consistent with selections of branco and pardo for race. Lastly, only 3.4% of the private school sample selected dark skin, however none of the private school participants selected dark brown skin of the fifth category from the Skin Tone B variable. Among the Colombian sample, over half of the participants of each school selected medium skin tone (see Table 6). The highest proportion of students who selected dark skin attended public school 4 (33.3%), while the highest proportion of students who selected the light skin category attended the private school (21.7%).

Table 6 School * Skin_tone A Crosstabulation: Colombian Sample

% within School

		Skin_tone A			
		light skin	medium skin	dark skin	Total
School	Private school	21.7%	65.1%	13.2%	100.0%
	Public school 1	14.8%	61.1%	24.1%	100.0%
	Public school 2	14.8%	61.1%	24.1%	100.0%
	Public school 3	13.0%	58.0%	29.0%	100.0%
	Private school 4	12.5%	54.2%	33.3%	100.0%
Total		14.8%	61.7%	23.5%	100.0%

SES, Race, and Skin Tone Associations.

Socioeconomic status, race/ethnic group, and skin tone variables were analyzed using Chi-square tests. A 4 x 6 (race x SES) x^2 was used to analyze these data. SES and race were significantly related, $x^2(15, N = 315) = 41.61$, $p < 0.05$, with 13% of variability in common. Of the lowest SES group above poverty, 46.2% of those who identified as preto (black) selected

class E, 35.5% of those who identified as negro (African descent) selected class E, 25.4% of those who identified as pardo (brown) selected class E, and 19% of whites chose class E. Those representing the highest income levels were less likely to be of African descent. A 3 x 6 (skin tone x SES) x^2 was used to analyze the following data set. SES and skin tone were significantly related, $x^2(15, N = 318) = 43.82$, $p < 0.05$, with 14% variability in common. Of the participants constituting the lowest SES group above poverty, 13% of those with light skin represented class E, 29.9% of those with medium skin represented class E, and 35.2% of those with dark skin represented class E. Participants representing the highest social classes were more likely to select lighter skin tone categories. The results did not indicate a significant relationship between SES and either of the race variables for the Colombian sample however, a significant relationship was found between SES and skin tone. A 3 x 6 (skin tone x SES) x^2 was used to analyze these data. SES and skin tone were significantly related, $x^2(15, N = 318) = 43.82$, $p < 0.05$, with 14% variability in common. Of the participants constituting the lowest SES group above poverty, 13% of those with light skin represented class E, 29.9% of those with medium skin represented class E, and 35.2% of those with dark skin represented class E. Participants from low-income SES groups (levels 1 and 2) were more likely to be of darker skin tones. Recall that SES for the Brazilian sample is categorized in ascending order from classes A to D, whereas SES for the Colombian sample is categorized in descending order with level 6 being the highest income group and level 1 representing the lowest income group. Skin tone is categorized in order from lightest to darkest for both samples. This explains the positive relationship between SES and skin tone for the Brazilian sample as well as the negative relationship between SES and skin tone for the Colombian sample.

Achievement Associations with Race, Skin Tone, and SES

Among the Brazilian sample, a 4 x 6 (race x Portuguese GPA) x^2 was used to analyze these data. Race and grade point average in Portuguese were significantly related, $x^2(1, N = 318) = 27.82$, $p < 0.05$. White participants were more likely to have higher academic performance in Portuguese than brown and black participants. A 3 x 6 (skin tone x Portuguese GPA) x^2 was used to analyze the next set of data. Skin tone and GPA in Portuguese were significantly related, $x^2(1, N = 318) = 21.05$, $p < 0.05$. For the 8.0-8.9 GPA range (A- to B^+), 19.6% of light skinned participants reported GPAs within this bracket compared to 16.3% of medium skin toned participants and 9.6% of dark skin toned participants. A 6 x 6 (SES x Portuguese GPA) x^2 was used to analyze the final data set within this category for the Brazilian sample. SES and GPA in Portuguese were significantly related, $x^2(1, N = 319) = 46.74$, $p < 0.05$, with 15% of variability in common. For the 8.0-8.9 GPA range (A- to B^+), 22.6% of class B and 24.4% of class C reported scores within this bracket versus 16.5% of class D participants and 5.4% of class E participants. Among the Colombian sample, a 5 x 4 (SES x Spanish GPA) x^2 was used to analyze these data. SES and GPA in Spanish were significantly related, $x^2(1, N = 376) = 31.87$, $p < 0.05$. Forty two percent of those who reported the highest GPA (superior) in Spanish were from SES level 3 compared to 26.3% from levels 1 and 2 respectively. A 5 x 4 (SES x Math GPA) x^2 was used to analyze these data. SES and GPA in Math were significantly related for the Colombian sample, $x^2(1, N = 379) = 27.41$, $p < 0.05$. Forty six percent of those who reported the highest GPA (superior) in Math were from SES level 3 compared to 32% from SES level 2 and 14% from SES level 1.

Associations of School Type, Race, and Skin Tone with Discriminatory Experiences and Perceptions of Opportunity.

Chi-square analyses were conducted to assess the relationships between a) race and perceptions of opportunity, b) skin tone and perceptions of opportunity, c) school type and perceptions of opportunity, and d) race and skin tone with discriminatory experiences. For the Brazilian sample, perceptions of opportunity varied by school type rather then by race or skin tone. A 2 x 2 (school type x perceived disadvantage) x^2 was used to analyze these data. School type and perceived disadvantage were significantly related, $x^2(1, N = 306) = 8.8$, $p < 0.05$. Almost half of the students who attended public schools perceived themselves to be at a disadvantage in achieving their academic goals in comparison with their peers at 44.7%, while only 20% of those who attended the private school perceived themselves to be at a disadvantage. Those who attended private schools were significantly more likely to believe they are at an advantage in obtaining desired career and educational opportunities, while those attending public schools were significantly more likely to believe they are at a disadvantage. Counter to hypotheses, pardos were the highest proportion of students to perceive themselves to be at a disadvantage (44%). However, negros were the highest proportion of students to negate being at an advantage (74.5%). A 2 x 2 (school type x perceived advantage) x^2 was used to analyze the following data set. School type and perceived advantage were significantly related, $x^2(1, N = 293) = 35.33$, $p < 0.05$, with 12% variability in common. The majority of private school students perceived themselves to be at an advantage in achieving their educational and career goals at 73.2%, while only 26.2% of those who attended public schools perceived themselves to be at an advantage. No variation was found for perceptions of opportunity by race, skin tone, or school type among the Colombian participants.

Chi-square analyses for the racial discrimination variable yielded quite different results. The frequency of perceived discriminatory experiences based on race was significantly related to

the multiple choice race variable among the Brazilian sample. A 4 x 4 (race x racial discrimination) x^2 was used to analyze these data. Race and frequency of perceived discrimination were significantly related for the Brazilian sample, $x^2(1, N = 317) = 49.49$, $p < 0.05$, with 16% variability in common. Twenty five percent of those who identified as preto and 22.1% of those who identified as negro reported experiencing discrimination once a week or more compared to 9.9% of pardos and 0% of brancos. Likewise, the frequency of perceived discriminatory experiences based on race was significantly related to skin tone, $x^2(1, N = 317) = 39.88$, $p < 0.05$, with 13% variability in common. Twenty four percent of participants with dark skin reported experiencing discrimination once a week or more compared with 8.8% of those with medium skin and 2.2% of those with light skin (see Figure 1). Thus, both skin tone and race were significantly related to perceived discrimination among Brazilian participants. For the Colombian sample, skin tone and frequency of perceived racial discrimination were significantly related, $x^2(1, N = 392) = 22.23$, $p < 0.05$. Six percent of dark skin respondents indicated that they frequently experienced discrimination compared with 0.8% of medium skinned respondents and 0% of light skinned respondents (see Figure 2). Thus, skin tone alone significantly related to discrimination based on race among Colombian participants.

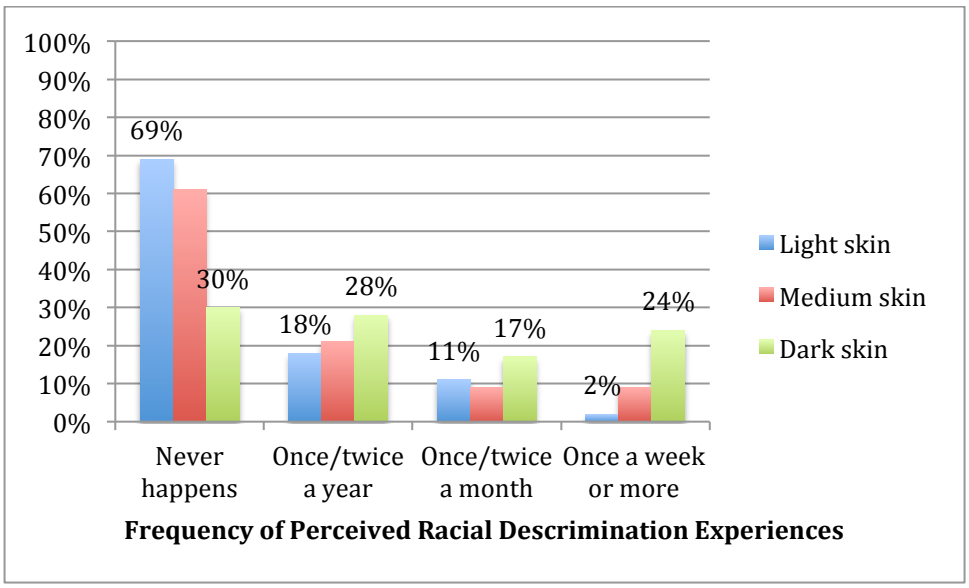

Figure 3. Racial Discrimination by Skin Color: Brazilian Sample

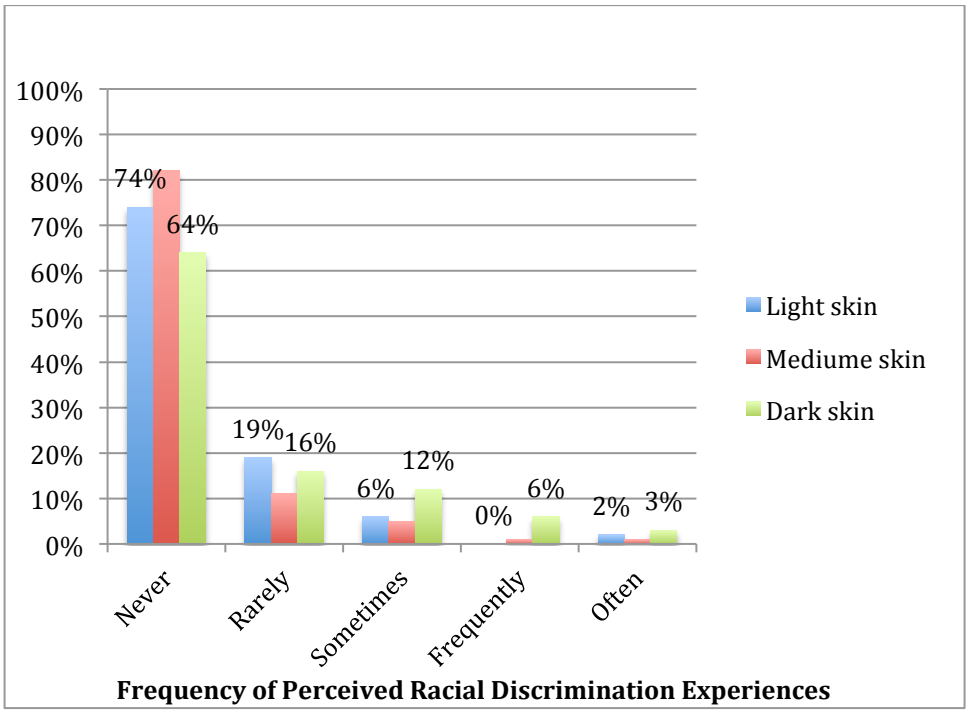

Figure 4. Racial Discrimination by Skin Color: Colombian Sample

Racial and National Identity by Race and Skin Tone Associations.

This section reports results of relationships between a) race and racial pride, b) skin tone and racial pride, and c) race and three national identity variables. For the Brazilian sample, a 4 x

5 (race x racial pride) x^2 was used to analyze these data. Race and racial pride were significantly related, $x^2(N = 319) = 85.7$, $p < 0.05$, with 27% of variability in common. The African descent participants identified with the strongest category of racial pride (answered "yes, a lot") at 69.2% of pretos and 79.3% of negros compared with 45.5% of pardos and 14.3% of brancos (see table 7). None of the preto and negro participants reported that they didn't have much pride or no pride at all in their racial group compared to 2.8% of pardos and 7.1% of brancos who negated being prideful of their race. A 3 x 5 (skin tone x racial pride) x^2 was used to analyze the next set of variable associations. Skin tone and high to low levels of racial pride were significantly related, $x^2(1, N = 318) = 64.38$, $p < 0.05$, with 20% of variability in common. Seventy six percent of dark skinned participants selected the highest level of racial pride compared to 47.6% of medium skin toned participants and 21.7% of those with light skin. Those of darker skin tones were more likely to be prideful of their race than those of lighter skin tones. Among the national identity variables, there were no significant relationships found between race and pride in being Brazilian. However, two other national identity variables were significantly related to race yielding a) a positive association between race and pride in Brazilian democracy $x^2(1, N = 318) = 28.79$, $p < 0.05$, and b) a negative relationship between race and pride in Brazilian history $x^2(1, N = 318) = 19.22$, $p < 0.05$. Thus, students of European descent were more likely to be prideful in Brazilian democracy than students of African and Indigenous descent while black and brown participants were more likely to be prideful in Brazilian history than white participants.

Table 7 Race * Racial Pride Crosstabulation: Brazilian Sample

% within Race

	Racial Pride					Total

		yes, a lot	yes	more or less/somewhat	not much	no	
Race	preto	69.2%	30.8%				100.0%
	negro	79.3%	19.8%	0.8%			100.0%
	pardo	45.5%	42.0%	6.3%	3.5%	2.8%	100.0%
	branco	14.3%	45.2%	23.8%	9.5%	7.1%	100.0%
Total		55.2%	33.5%	6.3%	2.8%	2.2%	100.0%

Table 7 Race * Racial Pride Crosstabulation: Brazilian Sample (Cont.)

The results illustrating relationships between race/ethnic group and the identity variables for the Colombian participants were different from that of the Brazilian participants. There were no significant relationships found between race and racial pride for the Colombian sample. However, negros were the group most likely to identify as having a lot of pride in their racial group (71.8%) and over half of the indigenous participants reported having a lot of racial pride (57%). Blancos reported the lowest rates of racial pride (28.6%) similar to brancos of the Brazilian sample. There were no significant relationships found between race and pride in being Colombian. However results indicated significant relationships between race and two other national identity variables yielding: a) a significant relationship between race and pride in Colombian history, x^2 (1, N = 406) = 148.65, $p < 0.05$, with 36% variability in common, and b) a significant relationship between race and pride in Colombian technology, x^2(1, N = 402) = 58.71, $p < 0.05$, with 15% of variability in common. Thus, the Colombian participants of African and Indigenous descent were least likely to be prideful in Colombian democracy, however they were more likely to be prideful in Colombian technology then their peers of European descent.

Interviews.

The interviews serve as supplemental perspectives that provide an expansion of the youth's voices and experiences beyond the quantitative data. A thematic analysis was conducted in order to organize the information given across the 41 interviews into conceptual categories. The conversations were organized into the following nine recurring themes: postsecondary plans, parents' perceptions of postsecondary plans, role models, school resources and support, perceptions of success, racial identity, perceptions of advantage/disadvantage, discrimination, and political opinions. These themes are situated within Bronfenbrenner's Ecological Systems Theory and Spencer's Phenomenological Variant of Ecological Systems Theory (PVEST) in order to conceptualize the role of human vulnerability and the social context on the respondents' perspectives. Additionally, the interviews are translated from Portuguese and Spanish. When interviewees mentioned racial categories, *negro* was translated as black, *branco* was translated as white. Other racial categories were not translated as direct translations are not consistent with U.S. racial categories. Pseudonyms are used to protect the identities of the partipants. I discuss three of the most frequent themes below.

Racial Identity.

As mentioned in the background section, Freyre's romanticized portrayal of Brazil as a racial democracy and Colombia's concept of *la nación mestizo* during the 1900s encompassed a cultural emphasis on *mestiçagem* or miscegenation that persists in contemporary discourses of race relations within both countries. This culture of mestiçagem represents macrosystem values that contribute to how child and adolescent racial identity is formed and crystalized during adulthood. In implementing Bronfenbrenner's ecological systems theory, we are able to conceptualize the influence of societal value systems, particularly from those in political positions of power, on the developmental processes of individuals and those in their immediate

environment. I propose a reductionist approach in which skin color discrimination is established at the macrolevel of ecological systems and influences individual experiences within the exo-, meso-, and microsystems. These social systems have both positive and negative influences depending on the sources of support that youth experience and how they negotiate internal psychological experiences with external social encounters, which we will witness in the participants' accounts below. Generally, I found race to be a more salient component of identity processing in Brazil than in Colombia. Representations of African descent ancestry carried more meaning and associations of racial pride among Brazilian participants of various ethnic backgrounds. Three Brazilian participants who identified as black stated:

> "I am black and its really important to me to know my roots. I know where I come from and I'm not ashamed of my color. I think if I had an option to change it, I wouldn't. I'm happy this way," (17 year old Brazilian female).
>
> "I am black and proud of it. I was born this way and I'm really proud of my race because of everything that we've fought for. Brazil was the last country to end slavery. In theory, we've ended slavery but many of us still work hard for food and shelter because we don't have any other option," (18 year old Brazilian male).
>
> "I'm black. I came to this conclusion while I was researching the history of Brazil up until the freedom of slavery. I saw that I have the same skin color as the slaves did and I thought that was interesting. Since then, I've identified as black, even though my ancestors were slaves," (16 year old Brazilian female).

These participants illustrate a keen awareness of their racial group and heritage that contradicts national discourses of racial homogeneity. They attribute pride in not only knowing their heritage and connection with African descent enslaved people but also pride in knowing how

much blacks have struggled and continue to survive despite oppressive conditions. This awareness of resiliency appears to contribute to pride in their racial group membership and personal identity rather than hindering it. Brazilian participants who did not identify as black expressed similar awareness of black pride and adversity. An 18-year-old medium brown skinned Brazilian female who identified as pardo stated,

> "I hate my skin color, parda (brown). I wish I were negra (black) like my father. I want to have a black child. I'm going to adopt a black kid [she laughs]. I really value blackness because you start life like you're in a war and then end in victory. Whites have it so much easier. I think race hierarchies don't make any sense. Its ignorant, a lack of respect and culture".

While the participant did not identify as black herself, despite having a black parent, she attributed a similar sense of pride in overcoming racial strife and adversity to that of the participants who identified as black, so much so that she desired to have a black child in order to more closely identify with racial resilience. Other non-black Brazilian participants expressed similar awareness of differences between blacks and non-blacks. A 16 year old, light brown skinned Brazilian male suggested,

> "I am white but I think black people have more challenges and that some whites feel superior to them. I think we're all equal and that skin color doesn't matter. I think prejudice is ignorant and egotistical. You don't even know a person and refuse them an opportunity just because of their color. I really don't understand this because we're all the same".

There are three key elements of the young male's statement that provide a similar perspective on racial identity from a participant with different ancestry than the former interviewees. The first

of which is that he immediately juxtaposes his racial group from that of blacks while simultaneously addressing the challenges that individuals of African descent experience because of their racial group. Second, the participant acknowledges a superiority complex that is displayed amongst some members of his racial group that he expresses disdain and a lack of understanding towards. Lastly, he communicates a humanistic ideology by suggesting that all humans are the same. While the majority of black participants of the Brazilian sample did not relegate to such a humanistic frame of thinking, many Colombian participants of varying heritages either used multicultural framing or expressed uncertainty when discussing their racial identities. A 16 year old medium-dark brown skinned Colombian female stated,

> "I don't know. I'm Colombian, morena. My skin color is morena. (I ask what does morena mean because we don't have that concept in the U.S.). What's your color? (I tell her that I'm *negra*). Well, I'm black then (We laugh and I tell her that I wanted to know her opinion. I ask how she feels). The truth is that we don't talk about who is black and who is white because we're all the same. Of course, there are blacks and whites but I don't pay attention to this because then people start to criticize and stereotype others. I don't want to have anything to do with that so I just say that we're all the same".

The female participant externalizes her racial experience by discussing racial discourses in Colombia as a whole. She believes that race is not a salient topic of conversation in her country. Despite awareness of racial difference, she chooses not to pay attention to racial group memberships as it provides support for categorizing people into groups that carry negative connotations. An important observation is that the participant states that she says people are all the same rather than suggesting that is what she believes. Other Colombian participants express

similar dissonance with racial salience in defining one's social identity. A 16-year-old medium brown skinned Colombian male who identified as mulatto stated,

> "Well if I had to choose, I'd say I'm mulatto but I don't really think of myself this way on a daily basis. I'm normal. I don't think mulatto has a lot of meaning here, mainly black and white. Wait, ok so my race is important to me but I think when we view people in terms of their race we judge them and value them based on how they look".

Similar to the experience of the previous Colombian female, the Colombian male suggests that he hasn't put forth much effort in thinking about his racial group membership prior to the interview. He attributes the lack of racial exploration to how race is conceived of in Colombia. From his perspective, being of mixed race ancestry doesn't carry a lot of meaning as black and white ancestry are the primary focus in conceptualizations of race in Colombia. Both Colombian participants prefer not to identify with a particularly racial group because of a belief that acknowledging racial difference contributes to discrimination and oppression. While the preference to negate racial difference was consistent across the majority of the interviews with the Colombian sample, two participants expressed a strong sense of community amongst Indigenous and African descent groups, respectively. A 17-year-old light brown skinned Colombian female expressed,

> "I'm mestizo. I have various races. I have black heritage. I can't say I'm white because we're all black. Truthfully, we're all black. So yea, this is my ethnic group. Mestizo because of my physical appearance, my color. If you look at me, I don't necessarily look black because I don't have darker skin. Mestizo is a very strong identity here. People who are truthfully black are palenques. Its um, what do you call, the ethnicity, the palenque race. It's a race. The races here are guayu, indigena, palenquero. Ugh, I've

forgotten some. Mestizos. Obviously blacks and whites. Guayu is an indigenous community. There are so many Indigenous communities but that's one of the most common ones".

This student is one of the few participants who express a strong sense of identity in being mixed race. She is also the only Colombian participant to suggest that all Colombians have African descent ancestry. While she doesn't necessarily attribute pride to one ethnic group over another, she is certain of her ancestry as well as the different ethnic groups that make up a majority of the Colombian population. She took it upon herself to instruct me on Colombian ethnic groups, which suggests that these categories are indeed present in discourses among certain groups of people, if even a small portion of the population. Lastly, the participant attributes authentic blackness to the Palenque race, which was common among other Colombian interviewees. Many darker skinned Colombian students distinguished themselves from Palenques by stating that they either did not have the same physical appearance or did not carry the same cultural representations of African descent ancestry as those coming from the Palenque settlement. These respondents often resorted to identifying with the ambiguous brown category moreno. One participant who identified as black without referencing Palenques described his racial identity process as follows,

"When I was really young, before I knew anything about race, I didn't like my color. I'm not super dark but I still didn't like it. Here in Cartagena, there are a lot of people with my skin color but I can get really dark because it’s so sunny here and super hot. So I didn't like when I got a tan. It took me awhile to accept my color. More recently, I've had a lot of opportunity to appreciate my color. There's a political party that my parents are a part of. They used to have a program its called, ah I'm forgetting, but something to

do with Afro-Colombians, and they used to donate money for books and school supplies. It's also where I first learned mechanical techniques. So they give the community a lot of resources. I've met a lot of great black people who showed me positive examples of my race in this program. These days, I love my color. If someone calls me black on the street, I'm happy about it. I'm not intimidated about being black. I even put black in front of my name on Facebook. I'm a part of two Facebook groups for black people. After President Obama was elected, the first black president of the U.S., it really validated my color. I'd never seen anything like it and never imagined it. It affected a lot of people in Colombia this way because we talk a lot about it. We don't see a lot of racism here in Colombia the way that you all do in the U.S. but my color still isn't valued much here" (17 year old Colombian male).

The participant's account provides a strong contribution to the paper as it highlights multiple layers of identity processing. His description of coming to understand his racial group exemplifies each stage Cross's model of black identity development. The participant's first account of understanding his race represents the pre-encounter stage in which he negating associating with his skin color because he did not see positive value in having a darker skinned physical appearance. His experience with the political organization that his parents joined represents the encounter stage as he was placed in an environment of strong advocates for the advancement of African descent people and pride in dark skin. His experience exemplifies the immersion-emersion stage when he begins to join social media groups that illustrate positive representations of black people and associates pride with being referred to as black in public settings. He then commits to the internalization process by including black as a part of his social media username, displaying his racial pride for a larger audience. Another significant

component of the participant's account is the presence of positive representations of his racial group illustrated in the description about his parents, other members of the political party, and former U.S. President Barack Obama. He struggled with his skin color prior to meeting people who looked like him that were doing positive things for his community. Having these influences in combination with witnessing the first black man elected into U.S. presidency, despite not being a North American citizen himself, helped the male participant to develop a positive self-concept concerning his racial group. Such positive representations illustrate the important role that his social environment played in contributing to development of a concrete racial identity.

Barriers to College Access (PVEST-Risk Factors).

In considering the adversity that the former participant's positive role models helped him to overcome, I shift to delving into participants' perspective on access to upward mobility more thoroughly. The PVEST framework posits that while all humans experience vulnerability, some individuals are better positioned to achieve economic success regardless of personal risks whereas others perceive an insurmountable display of challenges in reaching their desired goals. Access to higher education was a common obstacle of which all of the interviewees addressed from both samples, whether regarded as personal challenges or societal observations. The three most common barriers to college access were discriminatory practices, insufficient funds, & college entrance exams. In reference to discrimination, a 17-year-old Brazilian male stated,

> "Prejudice still exists in Brazil, racism really. The majority of those who are killed are black people. I see it as a victory when a black person becomes successful because we grow up feeling inferior and have so many barriers against us. Honestly, I don't see this changing in the near future".

The discriminatory practices that the participant alludes to include psychological processing and the criminal justice system. From his perspective, the frequency of black murders and the perpetual internalized belief that blacks maintain an inferior status in racialized social hierarchies work collaboratively as risk factors of which African descent Brazilians must overcome in order to achieve upward social mobility. Similar to the last Colombian male participant, the Brazilian student finds validation in witnessing the success of others who share his physical appearance. He grounds his optimistic perspective in an awareness that supersedes the ability for his entire racial group to achieve this sort of advancement, not by any fault of their own rather as a response to such social and psychological systems of oppression working against them. Likewise, a 17-year-old Brazilian female stated, "racial prejudice is still really big in Brazil. Specifically among police officers when it comes to men. It's not as big of a deal with women, but men have it hard". This participant brings gender to the forefront as she discusses differences in discriminatory practices between the young men and women of her community. She perceives police brutality as a risk factor that prohibits many black and brown Brazilian men from overcoming economic oppression. Furthermore, another Brazilian participant addresses racial inequalities at the secondary school level that creates difficulty in access to college education. A 17-year-old Brazilian male expressed,

> "Private [secondary] schools have many more whites. Since the beginning of colonization, whites had more wealth, which they've built upon over time and now the majority of private schools are filled with whites. Statistics show this. I don't know if it's because blacks were slaves before. I don't know exactly why but I know it's a fact.

Similar to the participants who identified as black in the racial identity section, the current participant connects historical accounts of systems of oppression that emerged during his nation's

colonization with present day educational inequalities that are linked to race. He attributes barriers to education occurring within Bronfrenbrenner's concept of microsystem affairs to systemic inequalities stemming from the historical occurrences of the chronosystem as well as nationally representative oppressive legislations representing the macrolevel. Recall that the microsystem represents experiences within an individual's immediate environment including school and workplace interactions, the macrosystem encompasses larger systemic factors such as economic and political practices occurring at a national level, and the chronosystem involves historical references as well as major life events that all impact individuals make sense of the information they receive from their environments. Ultimately, the participant situates individuals within larger systems of structural opportunity that his nation has constructed over time to privilege the educational attainment of those of European descent over the educational trajectories of non-whites.

While police brutality and discriminatory practices more generally were primarily discussed among Brazilian participants, economic resources were a common challenge in gaining access to higher education across the two samples. A 16 year old Colombian female stated,

> "Lack of economic resources is the main challenge that people in my community have when it comes to trying to go to college. Many of us look for someone who's willing to give us money to study. We call this person a *palanca*. They help you to have better opportunities".

While the participant discusses money as an immediate concern for higher education opportunities, she also addresses sources of support that are available within her community. She is adamant in suggesting that youth must take initiative in searching for these mechanisms of

support in order to achieve their goals. Her account represents a balance in the vulnerability phase of PVEST that occurs in the event that financial support is achieved for college funding despite lack of sufficient household income. Few participants mentioned scholarships or sources of support given at the university level despite implementations of affirmative action policies in both countries since the early 2000s. An additional impeding difficulty in gaining access to college attendance is obtaining the resources to prepare for and fund the college entrance exams. A 16-year-old Colombian male expressed,

> "There are so many people who don't go to college just because of the exams, even when they're intelligent and knowledgeable. I think the greatest challenge is, well first, the money to pay for the exam. And second, the exam. You have to make a lot of sacrifices to get a good score and deserve getting in".

This participant perceives an unbalanced amount of obstacles in relation to college attendance, specifically relating to the means to take the exam and to designate an adequate amount of time and resources to prepare for high performance. Recall that public universities in Brazil and Colombia exude high competitiveness as they are free and categorized as the most prestigious higher education institutions of both nations. Students must perform exceptionally well on the college entrance exam of their desired subject matter in order to receive a spot within each area of study. The following account is from a 17 year old Brazilian male,

> "I think the ENEM (entrance exam) is unfair because in order to get into the Medicine program, you have to study everything. I think it's an unfair system. The Vestibular (entrance exam) is a little fairer. Depending on the course, like Medicine, that's very expensive, you would have to study really hard to get into a federal university. The thing is, the majority of students who go to these universities have the money to pay for the

> resources to prepare. I think it's so unfair to take the place of someone else who doesn't have money".

This participant acknowledges social class differences that perpetuate cycles of educational inequality due to the cost of entrance exam preparation and the competitiveness of specific areas of study. He expresses the harsh reality that not only is it difficult for low income students to attend any federal univerity, but to pass the exam for a highly sought after program of interest is nearly impossible. Other participants share similar sentiments regarding inequalities in access to exam preparation. An 18 year old Brazilian male reported,

> "We've been out of school for three months because of school strikes. A person who is going to take the ENEM, a public course, falls so far behind during this time without studying. Meanwhile, strikes don't change anything with private [secondary] schools. So they'll continue to study and prepare in class while those of us who attend public [secondary] schools lose time.

The common belief among many of the interviewees' perspectives on higher education is that that those attending public secondary schools are set up for failure as they encounter boundful obstacles to reach the level of academic preparation received by private secondary school students. They address systemic institutional inequities that are often beyond their realm of control. Thus, a perceived imbalance in vulnerability unfolds aligning with societal barriers put into place to privilege those who have the economic means to attend private secondary schools, pay for college entrance exams, and enroll in courses available both at their schools and via private tutoring services to gain access to institutions of higher education.

Role Models: Importance of Family Support (PVEST-Protective Factors).

As we consider the societal adversity of which vulnerable populations encounter, it is beneficial to highlight the experiences of resiliency that allow participants to overcome barriers to educational and occupational goals. A plethora of responses were given when participants were asked about the presence of individuals in their lives who they admired or that contributed to their resiliency in some manner, however the most common response was the support of family members. Twenty five of the forty one students who participated in the interviews identified one or both parents and/or a grandparent as their role models. A 17 year old Brazilian male suggested,

> "I'm the only child. Both of my parents are my role models because my dad could've had a better life but when my mom got pregnant, well he had a scholarship to study engineering and he was really focused on it. But he left the program and started driving a bus, then he sold cars to provide for my family. And my mom, she always helps me with my studies. She actually just started college to study nutrition".

This participant illustrated great admiration and respect for the educational and occupational sacrifices that his father made in order to provide resources and care for his family. Likewise, he thought highly of his mother's decision to pursue her degree as an adult. His account communicates strong family cohesiveness and parental involvement in child affairs. Resiliency studies demonstrate that encouragement of family members and frequent communication between parents and children play a significant role in the high achievement of low income and black and brown youth (Spencer, 1995; Street, Harris-Britt, & Walker-Barnes, 2009). Thus adolescents receiving such supports are more equipped to develop positive self-concepts

concerning their educational pursuits and access to opportunity regardless of their economic standing. A 17-year-old Colombian female shared a similar perspective about her mother,

> "My mom. 100% my mom. Everyday she shows me that I'm capable, that even though we don't have much money, we have each other and we all work hard. You have to fight, fight, fight, and fight more until things change for the better. I've learned so much from her, especially that being strong isn't easy. We all have to make sacrifices".

The female Colombian participant expands upon the importance of family support in overcoming educational and economic hurdles by expressing accolades about her mother's perspective on meeting practical needs and attaining goals as well as the emotional and psychological encouragement that her mother provides. She references the risk of coming from a low-income background in order to provide a foundation for the environment in which she lives. She then uses this foundation to demonstrate that neither her nor her family have allowed their economic means to hinder their happiness and determination to improve their livelihood. The life lessons that the participant's mother have grounded her upbringing in regarding the effort that she needs to put forth to achieve her goals has contributed to a positive sense of self despite economic hardship. This support among her family relationships as well as the encouragment depicted from many of the Brazilian and Colombian participants demonstrates the importance of having effective protective factors in place to offset risk contributors that are so often out of the immediate control of vulnerable youth populations.

Chapter 7: Conclusions and Implications

Conclusion

This dissertation examined the role that social, political, and economic institutions play in contributing to the identity processing and educational decision making of black and brown Latin American emerging adult youth. I have particularly focused on countries that have employed national discourses of racial democracies under the umbrella of multicultural agendas for the purposes of better positioning each nation in the international economic market. The dissertation illustrates that democratic utopian structures of opportunity are far from the economic realities that many black, brown, and low-income Brazilian and Colombians experience. The implementation of national ideologies that construe false unity in racial and economic relations perpetuate systems of structural inequality and hinder the ability for vulnerable populations to overcome adverse circumstances that are often beyond the realms of immediate control. The nature of the comparative work highlighted key theoretical insights concerning variances between the national discourses of the two countries and how these youth discussed ethnic difference and economic opportunity in their immediate day-to-day interactions. This was exemplified in the association of strong racial pride among black Brazilians in comparison to their mixed race and primarily European descent peers; an association that was not evident among the Colombian sample. By conducting a mixed methods analysis in two urban cities with disproportionate rates of African and Indigenous descent and darker-skinned citizens living in poverty, I have compiled a study that provides a better understanding of how adolescents interpret the social structures of their environments as they transition into adulthood. I focus on adolescents because bringing emerging adult perspectives to the forefront of scholarly discussions provides incite into future directions of citizenship and nation building among the

next generation of adults. While the project was informed by various identity theories focusing on adolescent development such as Erikson's Epigenetic Model, Phinney's ethnic identity model and others, I situate the data within the PVEST framework, Bronfenbrenner's Ecological Systems theory, and the Critical Race Theory in order to conceptualize the findings under the perspective of systems framing. The three systems theories assist in framing the students' experiences within social environments that communicate specific concepts about navigating group memberships and access to opportunity that participants in turn use to develop their own occupational identities.

Findings provide important insights of how participants navigated aspects of identity processing and access to economic resources in contributing to their academic performance and perceived access to educational mobility. As expected, those of lower socioeconomic status groups were predominantly representative of African and Indigenous descent groups and darker skinned participants among both samples. Consistent with data from the PERLA study (Telles, 2014), stronger associations were found between SES and skin tone indicating that skin tone was a stronger measure to assess economic status among the participants than self-identified racial identity. Likewise, those of darker skin tones within the Brazilian sample were more likely to report obtaining a job after high school rather than seeking college attendance, despite a significant relationship not being identified between race and postsecondary plans. The significant skin tone relationships uncover potential discrepancies occurring within the racial identification measure such that some individuals of darker skin tones identified with mixed race categories and individuals of medium skin tones were likely to have identified with white or African descent categories. This is further exemplified in the Chi-square analyses illustrating strong relational results of experiences of racial discrimination by skin tone variations for the

Colombian sample alone, whereas both race and skin tone were found to be significantly related to discrimination for the Brazilian sample. Both the survey and interview data illustrated race as a more salient component of identity exploration for the Brazilian adolescents in comparison with the Colombian adolescents. Additionally, many of the Brazilian youth took the initiative to research historical experiences of members of their racial group, more specifically people from their nation-state who displayed similar physical appearances during colonization, in order to conceptualize their own racial identification. Such exploration of racial and ethnic significance in identity processing and understanding social and economic oppression defies national discourses of nationally unified ethnoracial experiences. In other words, these youth have not allowed themselves to be innocent bystanders in understanding their representation in larger systems of oppression.

The illumination of such insights on divergent representations of ethnic pride and resiliency would not have been addressed by solely studying one of the two countries. Furthermore, these findings should be situated within historical representations of ethnic difference that have occurred at distinctive frequencies and time periods between the two nations. One potential cause of the difference in racial exploration as a facet of identity processing between the two samples is the more recent inclusion of African descent groups in the Colombian census emerging in the late 1900s versus consistent inclusion of these categories in the Brazilian census since the mid 1900s. Another relevant explanation is the rise and attention of affirmative action policies and racial quotas for blacks in Brazil compared with affirmative action methods in Colombia being centered on low-income deficits rather than racial/ethnic group differences. The experiences shared in the interview data illustrated great pride in distinguished ethnic group memberships across accounts of the Brazilian participants whereas

the Colombian participants generally struggled to conceive of their personal racial identities separate from homogenous multicultural framing of humanism and equal capabilities. These critical theoretical insights on the impact of national policies and discursive ideologies on the identity development of emerging citizens should be further explored in empirical studies to bring more attention to obstructed ideals of socioeconomic mobility.

Findings and studies reviewed in this paper illustrated that ethnic identity development and psychological adjustment were based more on internal processes of cultural socialization and family support rather than household income or socioeconomic status. Carter and Helms' (1988) study findings that socioeconomic status was not predictive of racial identity attitudes supports the results of the present study. The researchers proposed that racial identity development was more of a reflection of internal functioning and personal development in relation to one's social experiences rather than the external conditions of one's social class as an over encompassing determinant of whether or not individuals are able to develop a positive self-concept (Carter & Helms, 1988). It is important to note that although this paper illustrated ethnic identity and self-concept processing synonymously, research shows that it is possible to have a positive sense of self while attributing negative feelings to one's ethnic or racial group identity, which may have been a salient perspective for many of the Colombian youth (Phinney, 1990). Likewise, the presence of positive role models as well as encouragement and involvement from parents and grandparents was found to be more effective in determining postsecondary plans and access to opportunity then racial and national identity processing across the two samples. It is evident that supportive relationships with family members, peers, and community members help facilitate the ethnic identity development, psychological adjustment, and attainment of long-term goals of black and brown adolescents.

The assessment of self-identified skin color was one of the present study's most effective means of evaluating self-perceptions in the presence of conflicting national discourses. Spencer et al. (2012) provide a scientific rationale for this finding as the researchers illustrate domains of human development that demonstrate the effects of Colorism across interacting cognitive, psychosocial, and biological processes. Cognitive functioning includes individual inference making processes about one's own skin color in relation to others. The psychosocial or affective component of the domains of human development includes how one feels about their skin color, potentially impacting their self-esteem and self-appraisal processes. Lastly, the biological domain incorporates the mechanisms in which individuals make sense of their physical appearance by assessing strengths and weaknesses of their environmental interactions that are attributed to how they look. Biological processes can also include heightened levels of stress as well as other health outcomes that occur in response to various forms of discrimination interacting within a societal context. Examining the interaction of skin color biases within these overlapping domains of human development is helpful in understanding how societal constructs present potential negative outcomes affecting the psychological well-being and physical health of people of color. Despite the apparent significance of highlighting negative consequences, it is equally important to address mechanisms in which vulnerable populations can combat detrimental risks with positive coping strategies such as the importance of family support that was mentioned among many of the participants.

Reconstructing the ways in which individuals conceive attributes about themselves that are typically devalued by societal members provides an opportunity to develop positive coping strategies. A review utilizing the critical race theory to challenge conventional modes of interpreting cultural capital suggests that communities of color should not only be viewed in light

of environmental disadvantages, but should also be characterized by the large array of cultural capital, which distinguishes these communities from traditional white middle class structures (Yosso, 2005). The six forms of capital that the author used to enlighten cultural wealth were: (1) aspirational capital – resiliency in maintaining hopes and dreams despite challenging life situations, (2) linguistic capital – the ability to speak more than one language or communicate in more than one language style, (3) familial capital – emphasizing the importance of staying connected to kinship relationships as a means of support and educational capital, (4) social capital – the ability to create and utilize community and social networks, (5) navigational capital – the ability to operate in both racially hostile environments and racially homogenous environments, and (6) resistant capital – resisting societal messages and social phenomena by maintaining cultural wealth. Achieving high levels of academic and occupational success despite negative stereotypes, creating loving and accepting home environments, having peer and familial conversations about societal messages concerning skin color, and resisting messages devaluing blackness by teaching youth of color to value their minds and bodies all contribute to the transformation of oppressive structures. Future research, policy, and clinical practice within schools are avenues in which transformative resistant capital should be implemented.

Implications for Research, School Intervention, and Policy

"Racial socialization is not a private process, but rather involves an extended network of actors that legitimate dominant racial structures," (Hordge-Freeman, 2013, p.1518). Researchers have indicated the need for further investigations on the role of Colorism within families of color as a means of better understanding individual inference making processes (Burton et al., 2010). As indicated by Bronfenbrenner's model, processes occurring within the family unit of the microsystem are particularly important in constructing positive identity development because of

consistent daily interactions within the individual's immediate environment. Due to the growing diversity of phenotypic features amongst all minority groups particularly in North and South America, it is likely that racial and color socialization vary within the family depending on the skin tone of the children, siblings, and parents. Hordge-Freeman's (2013) study on Afro-Brazilian families illustrated the prevalence of abandonment and physical violence of children with both African descent features and lighter skinned characteristics because of jealousy, disapproval, and shame. Such differential and unfair treatment within the family unit can lead to internalization processes that challenge relationship quality and the ability to develop a positive sense of self. Thus, examining experiences surrounding skin color biases within the home in research literature and educational settings can help to better conceptualize effects of Colorism as well as potential coping strategies. Further research should also be conducted, examining the role of skin color stratification within friendship and dating relationships on the psychological processes of light, medium, and dark skin toned individuals. As these are other intimate settings of which an individual interacts, it is likely that inference-making process regarding skin color association are influenced by peer and romantic relationships. Lighter skinned preferences for women can impact how women of color construct meaning of themselves as adolescent identity is often shaped by roles within dating relationships.

For policy interventions within community organizations and academic institutions, it is beneficial to incorporate conversations about skin color discrepancies in youth development programs to encourage positive racial and cultural identity. This particular period of identity formation shapes how individuals perceive themselves within a societal context over the lifespan. Addressing potential skin color biases within an academic or community setting can empower individuals that may be struggling with societal devaluation of their particular skin

tone as well as create cohesion among marginalized groups. Solórzano, Ceja, And Yosso (2000) illustrated the benefits of establishing social "counter-spaces" on university campuses in which students challenge negative assumptions about people of color and build positive constructions of skin color, racial identity, and ethnic identity. Likewise, topics of intragroup skin color stratification should be incorporated into multicultural competence training programs particularly at government and academic institutions to ensure that professors and administrators are competent in serving the needs of diverse groups of people that may exhibit intragroup challenges. These suggestions should be incorporated in light of the sociological effects of Colorism and the power of influence within dominant cultures of the Western world. The longer these systems go unchallenged in everyday interactions, the longer they will persist and give birth to reflective hierarchies constructing one's value on the lightness or darkness of their skin tone.

Furthermore, the project has implications for improving the lives of marginalized young people in both U.S. and non-U.S. contexts. Given current debates about international movements such as youth recruitment for the Islamic State of Iraq or U.S. national movements such as those who have organized for Black Lives Matter concerning racial profiling and policing and who are currently advocating for reformed gun control legislations to combat the increase of school shootings, this project contributes a developmental perspective of how adolescents who have experienced discrimination and adversity make decisions not only in relation to their future goals, but also on a day-to-day basis. Youth organizing and recruitment in these movements illustrates an intriguing interest that adolescents and young adults have in contributing to radical protests both within and outside of their countries. However, we have limited knowledge of why certain youth are more inclined to risk being arrested, or in some

cases risk their own lives, to commit to political and racial movements. One suggestion is that marginalized youth who often experience isolation and discrimination within their own countries and who don't perceive active efforts of change on the behalf of adult leaders desire to be recognized as productive adult citizens as they make the transition into adulthood. This desire is likely to also interchangeably contribute to conflicts with authority figures that perpetuate processes of unfair treatment based on racial or religious minority status and physical appearance for some youth more than others. Scholars indicate that police brutality has been positively correlated with ethnic minority status in the U.S. and abroad. Smith and Holmes (2003) illustrated that percent black and percent Hispanic predicted police brutality complaints in a Southwestern U.S. city. Additionally, a study investigating the relationship between skin color and police brutality in Brazil indicated that black men were far more likely to experience physical assault from authority in the criminal justice system than both their white and brown Brazilian counterparts (Mitchell & Wood, 1998). These few studies only grace the surface of extensive research being conducted on the effects of police brutality on the psychological processing and access to educational and occupational opportunities among black and brown populations. While much of literature on police brutality focuses on adult ethnic minority experiences, less research is available on how adolescents experience discrimination from police within their neighborhood and school environments. However, the adolescents of this study discussed unfair treatment of black and brown male youth in the criminal justice system as a contributing factor to barriers to college enrollment for this particular population. Overall, the participants' keen awareness of self adaptation in the prevalence of oppressive systems of inequality exemplified profound resiliency in advocating for their beliefs and taking initiative to achieve their goals. Ultimately, I have great hope that the findings covered in the present study

increase humanistic knowledge on how youth are experiencing opportunity in the presence of self in 21st century multiethnic societies for researchers, policymakers, and educators.

Limitations and Future Directions

This dissertation is limited in that it solely incorporates bivariate associations, which does not permit the benefit of inferring causal relationships. The nature of the proposed research questions focused on a) whether or not inadequate economic resources related to academic performance, and perceived access to educational and occupational goals, and b) the strength of the relationships between race and skin tone with achievement and discriminatory experiences. However, the project did not set out to investigate whether or not limited resources and discrimination based on physical appearance predicted and/or produced poor academic outcomes and differences in postsecondary plans. To make stronger inferences about the impact of Colorism and impeding socioeconomic wage gaps on the academic decision making of Brazilian and Colombian youth, future investigations should include an experimental or longitudinal research design that permits the evaluation of causal relationships.

An additional missed opportunity is that the dissertation does not include a detailed account of the influence of religion on education, specifically the influence of the Catholic Church on the pervasiveness of educational inequality among Latin American populations. Latin American scholars have indicated an extensive history of the role that the Catholic Church has played in the foundation of the institution of education in Brazil and Colombia as well as conceptualizations of what education means within family structures for both countries (Moraes Silva & Paixão, 2014; Urrea Giraldo, Viáforo López, & Viveros Vigoya, 2014). Thus, evangelical practices as well as practice of other Latin American based religions provide further incite into identity processing and perceptions of access to opportunity for marginalized

populations. Additionally, the study measures only included self-identified reports of demographic variables such as SES and skin tone. Likewise, phenotype was exclusively conceptualized as skin tone variation rather than including other physical features such as hair texture, and nose and lip shape; which have traditionally been forms of distinguishing ethnic heritage. Telles (2014) emphasized the important contribution of incorporating both self-identification and identification on the behalf of trained researchers to accurately assess the dynamics of perceived physical appearance in racially fluid social contexts. Future research assessing effects of Colorism on a plethora of other domains would benefit from utilizing self-reported and observer reported measures of phenotype.

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Appendix A

Brazilian and Colombian Adolescent Achievement and Identity Survey
**Questions are translated to Spanish and Portuguese*

Demographics

1. What is your sex? Please circle one option.

a) Male
b) Female

2. How old are you?

_____

3. What is your race?

_____

4. What is your mother's highest level of education?

_____

5. What is your mother's occupation/job?

_____

6. Please briefly describe what your mother does for her job.

_____

7. What is your father's highest level of education?

_____

8. What is your father's occupation/job?

_____

9. Please briefly describe what your father does for his job?

_____

10. What neighborhood do you live in?

_____

11. Who do you live with? Please circle one option.

a) Your mother
b) Your father
c) Both parents
d) Your grandparents

e) If other (please list)_____

Educational and Career Objectives

12. What is your average grade in Portuguese/Spanish? Please circle one.

a) 9.0 - 10.0
b) 8.0 - 8.9
c) 7.0 - 7.9
d) 6.0 - 6.9
e) 5.0 - 5.9
f) 4.0 - 4.9
g) Lower than 4.0

13. What is your average grade in Math? Please circle one.

a) 9.0 - 10.0
b) 8.0 - 8.9
c) 7.0 - 7.9
d) 6.0 - 6.9
e) 5.0 - 5.9
f) 4.0 - 4.9
g) Lower than 4.0

14. What are your plans after high school graduation? Please circle one.

a) Attend college

b) Find a job

c) Enroll in a trade school

15. Please respond only if you plan to attend college after graduation. Will you attend a private or public university?

a) Private

b) Public

16. Please respond only if you plan to attend college after graduation. What field do you want to major in? Please circle one.

a) Engineering

b) Mathematics

c) Law
d) Medicine

e) Psychology

f) Pedagogy

g) Business/Economics/Marketing

17. Are you currently enrolled in a test preparation course for college entrance exams?

a) Yes

b) No

18. Do you believe you are at a disadvantage or have less access to educational and/or career opportunities in comparison to other Brazilian/Colombian adolescents? If yes, why?

19. Do you believe you are at an advantage or have more access to educational and/or career opportunities in comparison to other Brazilian/Colombian adolescents? If yes, why?

Fair and Unfair Experiences - *Daily Life Experience subscale of the Racism and Life Experience Scale (Harrell, 2000; Sellers & Shelton, 2003)*

I would like to ask you a few questions about some experiences in your life. After you read each question, please write whether the following events have: (0) never happened; (1) rarely happen; (2) sometimes happen; (3) happen often; or (4) happen very often

0 = Never 1 = Rarely 2 = Sometimes 3 = Often 4 = Very often

20. Being ignored, overlooked or not given service (in a restaurant, store, etc.) _____
- If this has happened, did the event bother you? Yes or No

21. Being treated rudely or disrespectfully. _____
- If this has happened, did the event bother you? Yes or No

22. Being accused of something that you didn't do or treated suspiciously. _____
- If this has happened, did the event bother you? Yes or No

23. Others reacting to you as if they were afraid or intimidated. _____

- If this has happened, did the event bother you? Yes or No

24. Being observed or followed while in public places. _____
- If this has happened, did the event bother you? Yes or No

25. Being treated as if you were "stupid", being "talked down to". _____
- If this has happened, did the event bother you? Yes or No

26. Having your ideas ignored. _____
- If this has happened, did the event bother you? Yes or No

27. Being insulted, called a name or harassed because of your race? ____
- If this has happened, did the event bother you? Yes or No

28. Others expecting your work to be inferior (not as good as others). ____
- If this has happened, did the event bother you? Yes or No

29. Being laughed at, made fun of, or taunted because of your skin color. ____
- If this has happened, did the event bother you? Yes or No

30. Being disciplined unfairly because of your race? ____
- If this has happened, did the event bother you? Yes or No

Please only respond to the following questions if you are a male. If you are female, skip to question #34.

- *Black Male Experience Scale (Cunningham and Spencer, 1996).*

31. When you are hanging out (like in a park, playground, street corner, etc.) how often do police/security guards stop to ask what you are doing? Please circle one.

a) Never b) Sometimes c) Often

32. How often do people you don't know think you are doing something wrong (like selling drugs, preparing to rob somebody, preparing to steal something, etc.)? Please circle one.

a) Never b) Sometimes c) Often

33. How often do teachers think you are doing something wrong?

a) Never b) Sometimes c) Often

34. How often are you harassed by police (physically and/or abusive language)?

a) Never b) Sometimes c) Often

35. Have you been rejected from a job due to your appearance?

a) Never b) Sometimes c) Often

National Identity - *National Attachment Scale (Huddy and Khatib, 2007).*

36. How important is being Brazilian/Colombian to you? Please circle one option.

a) very important b) important c) not very important d) not important at all

37. How do you feel when you see the Brazilian/Colombian flag?

a) positive/very good b) neutral c) negative/bad

38. How do you feel when you hear the Brazilian/Colombian national anthem?

a) positive/very good b) neutral c) negative/bad

39. How important do you believe it is that Brazilians/Colombians work hard to move this country in a positive direction?

a) very important b) important c) not very important d) not important at all

40. Are you proud of the way democracy works here?

a) yes, very proud b) yes c) not really d) not proud at all

41. Are you proud of economic achievements here?

a) yes, very proud b) yes c) not really d) not proud at all

42. Are you proud of your country's science and technology achievements?

a) yes, very proud b) yes c) not really d) not proud at all

43. Are you proud of your country's history?

a) yes, very proud b) yes c) not really d) not proud at all

44. Are you proud of your country's fair and equal treatment of all groups in society?

a) yes, very proud b) yes c) not really d) not proud at all

45. Are you proud of your country's achievements in arts and literature?

a) yes, very proud b) yes c) not really d) not proud at all

Cultural Identity - *Multidimensional Inventory of Black Identity -Teen (MIBI-t; Scottham, Sellers, & Nguyên, 2005).*

46. What is your race? Please only circle one item.

a) Negro (black/African descent)

b) Pardo/Mulato (mixed with African descent)

c) Amarelo/Mestizo (mixed with Indigenous descent)

d) Branco/Blanco (white/Portuguese or Spanish descent)

47. Do you feel close to other people of your race? Please circle one.

a) yes, very close b) yes c) somewhat d) not very close e) not at all

48. Do you have a strong sense of belonging with other people of your race?

a) yes, very close b) yes c) somewhat d) not very close e) not at all

49. If you were to describe yourself to someone, would your race be one of the first things that you used to describe yourself?

a) yes, absolutely b) yes c) maybe d) its unlikely e) no, not at all

50. Are you happy to be _____ (black, for example)?

a) very happy b) happy c) somewhat happy d) not very happy e) not happy at all

51. Are you proud to be _____ (white, for example)?

a) very proud b) proud c) somewhat proud d) not very proud e) not proud at all

52. Do you feel good about the culture of your race?

a) very good b) good c) somewhat good d) not very good e) not good at all

53. Do you think that being an individual is more important than identifying with a race?

a) strongly agree b) agree c) neutral d) disagree e) strongly disagree

54. Do you think that people should think of themselves as individuals, not as blacks or whites.

a) strongly agree b) agree c) neutral d) disagree e) strongly disagree

A B C D E F G H I J

55. Choose the color that you think best represents the color of your skin and write the corresponding letter below. Please circle one letter.

Congratulations! You're done. Thank you for your participation.

Appendix B

Interview Questions

Adapted from:

Fergus, E. (2009). Understanding Latino students' schooling experiences: The relevance of skin color among Mexican and Puerto Rican high school students. *The Teachers College Record, 111(2),* 339-375.

1. What do you want to be when you get older? Why?
2. How important is school to your life right now?
3. How important is work to your life right now?
4. Do you have a job? If so, what do you do?
5. Do you participate in any school or community activities? If so, what are they?
6. What are your parent's attitudes toward school?
7. What are your parent's attitudes toward work?
8. Do you have siblings? If so, are you the youngest, middle, or oldest child?
9. Who is someone in your life that you consider to be a mentor/role model?
10. Do you think that everyone has the same opportunity to get good grades?
11. What does it mean to become successful in society?
12. What does it take to become successful?
13. Have you ever considered dropping out of school?
14. Why have you decided to finish high school?
15. Do you think that race, class, or gender brings advantages or disadvantages for people who are applying to enroll in universities?
16. How do you identify yourself in terms of race or skin color?
17. How important is this identity to you?
18. Do your friends identify you in the same way?
19. What is your opinion about college entrance exams?
20. What are some challenges people in your community have with going to college?
21. What are some challenges people in your community have with finding a job?
22. What do you think about racial quotas in Brazil? ***For Brazilian participants only.*