

Abstract

Intercultural Centers serve as vital resources within prominently white institutions (PWIs) by providing academic, social, and cultural support crucial for the success of historically marginalized communities in higher education. By broadening their mission to include majority communities, intercultural centers contribute to creating a culture of inclusivity and equity on college campuses. Intercultural centers in PWIs serve as symbols of institutional commitment to diversity and inclusion. They provide safe spaces for students to explore their identities, engage in intergroup dialogue, and participate in educational programming that promotes cross-cultural understanding. As higher education institutions strive to create more inclusive learning environments, intercultural centers play a vital role in supporting the diverse needs of students and fostering a sense of belonging for all members of the campus community.

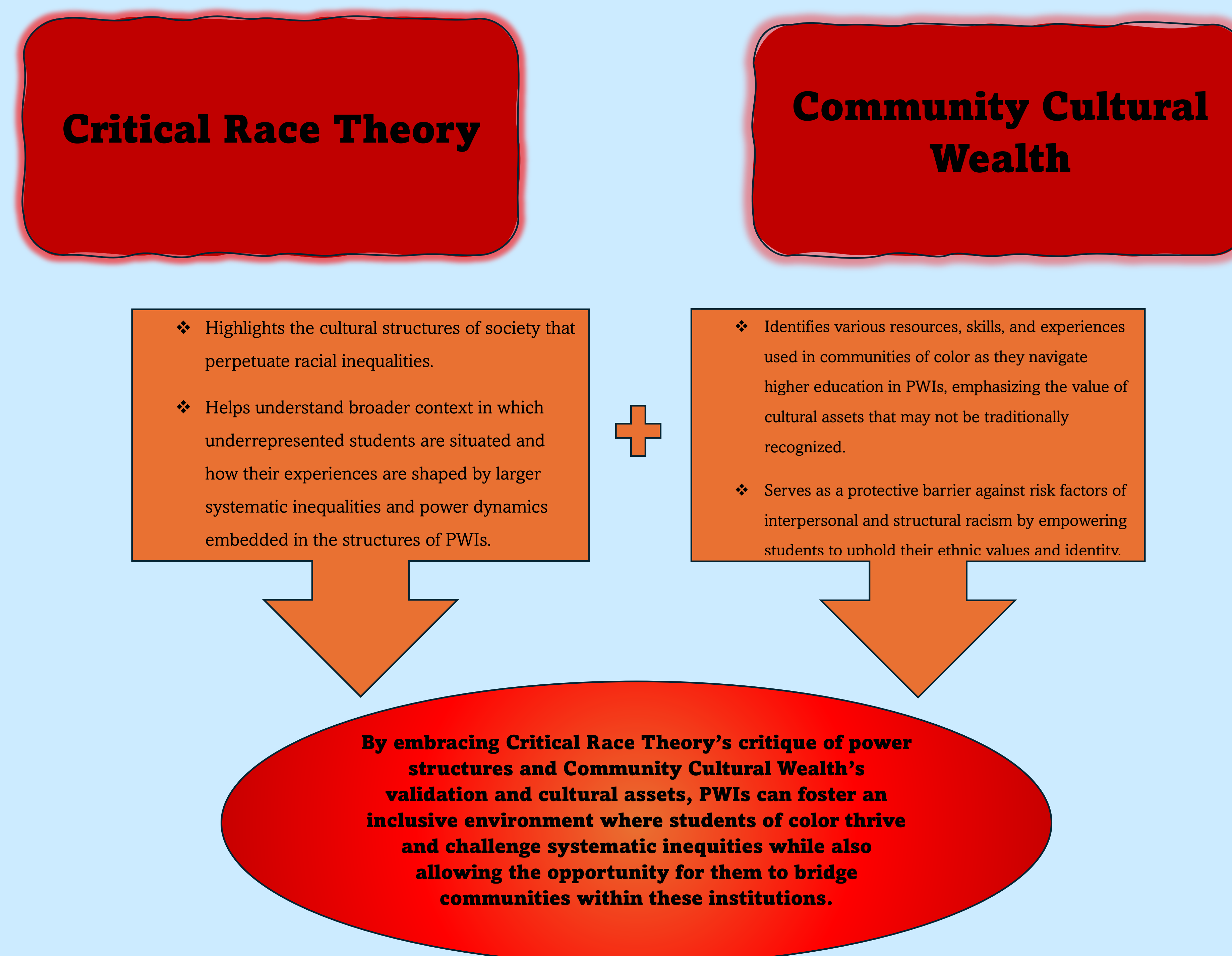
Methodology

This study employs a mixed-methods approach, incorporating qualitative and quantitative methods to comprehensively examine the relationship between intercultural centers and students' experiences in PWIs. Qualitative data was gathered through semi-structured interviews with students and faculty to explore their perceptions and experiences related to race, culture, and educational equity. Participant observation was conducted weekly in intercultural centers where I observed and interpreted interactions within students and staff in these settings, talking to key informants about how these interactions shaped their college experiences in PWIs. Quantitative data was gathered through surveys to assess the prevalence and impact that intercultural centers had on students' experiences in PWIs. The integration of qualitative and quantitative findings will provide a holistic understanding of the role of CRT and CCW in promoting racial equity and student success in PWIs.

Research Synthesis: Understanding Diversity and Equity in Higher Education

In the realm of higher education, the Critical Race Theory (CRT) serves as a guiding framework for the development and cultivation of Community Cultural Wealth (CCW), emphasizing the importance of challenging dominant discourses on race and racism in education (Acevedo & Solórzano, 2023). Through cultivation of CCW, students can navigate and strengthen their knowledge, providing protection against racial microaggressions, while maintaining their ethnic identity and persevering in higher education. Intercultural centers in universities typically enforce CCW, enabling nonwhite students to assert their agency on campus and foster communities of togetherness (Acevedo & Solórzano, 2023). Latinx students utilize societal spaces to conserve community cultural wealth, acknowledging the subjective nature of their thriving within selective historically white institutions (HWIs) (Alves, 2023, p. 172). Serving as symbols of institutional commitment to diversity, multicultural centers offer academic, social, and recreational support to students across diverse social identities (Malone, 2020, p. 84). Through cultural and diversity education programming, these centers aim to promote cross-cultural engagement and raise awareness of different cultures and identities (Malone, 2020, p. 84). Despite facing misconceptions about promoting separatism, multicultural centers play a critical role in acclimating first-year students to college life and fostering a sense of community among historically marginalized students. The emphasis on diversity in higher education often perpetuates systemic inequalities, which CRT proposes to challenge by revealing how they have historically been normalized within corporate structures (Wolfe & Patterson Dilworth, 2015). Embracing multicultural values and fostering an inclusive environment is not only ethically necessary but also crucial for the long-term success and sustainability of higher education institutions in an increasingly diverse world (Wolfe & Patterson Dilworth, 2015).

Intersectionality of CRT and CCW: A Blueprint for Equity in PWIs



Research Purpose

To provide an understanding of the impacts that intercultural centers have in prominent white universities (PWIs) for both historically marginalized students and the majority community. These ethnographic observations explore the intersectionality of theoretical frameworks within PWIs, focusing on their combined impact on the experiences and success of students of color. This study seeks to understand how intercultural centers can integrate the Critical Race Theory and Community Cultural Wealth to inform educational practices and policies within PWIs to promote equity, inclusion, and student well-being.

Conclusions

In conclusion, Critical Race Theory (CRT) challenges dominant ideologies and empowers marginalized groups, amplifying their lived experiences. By examining historical contexts, CRT sheds light on the material conditions affecting Latinx and African American students in predominantly white universities. This understanding supports the work of intercultural centers, creating inclusive spaces that foster community among diverse student populations. Multicultural centers, as vital resources, provide academic, cultural, and social support crucial for the success of historically marginalized communities. Expanding their mission to include majority communities promotes inclusivity and equity on college campuses.

References

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