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Nina June Lee

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**Redefining “Comprehensive” Sexual Education: A Pedagogy of Empowerment and Social
Justice for K-12 Sex Education**

Nina June Lee

Winston School of Education and Social Policy, Merrimack College

2022

MERRIMACK COLLEGE

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AUTHOR: Nina June Lee

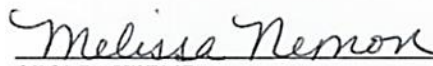
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Audrey Falk, Ed.D.
DIRECTOR, COMMUNITY
ENGAGEMENT


SIGNATURE

April 20, 2022
DATE

Melissa Nemon, Ph.D.
INSTRUCTOR, CAPSTONE
COURSE


SIGNATURE

April 20, 2022
DATE

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Abstract

In the United States currently, there are significant gaps in sex education. Youth in the United States today are identifying more diversely in the past and many are not receiving the comprehensive sex education they deserve, creating negative sexual and social outcomes. Through examining the legacy of religiosity, white supremacy, power, and privilege in the United States, one can pinpoint how historical legacies still influence the sex education youth receive today. In conversations with research and theory, a solution to this issue may lie in creating applicable tools that allow educators to better accommodate the needs of youth they are teaching. This study explores how social justice education, empowerment theory and reproductive justice can aid in the creation of a pedagogy of social justice and empowerment in K-12 education. By providing educators with a safe space to conversate, collaborate and reflect on current sex education practices, educators increased their confidence and competence in creating truly comprehensive sex education for their youth. Through providing professional development opportunities for educators, one can create more positive learning environments for their students, especially those with marginalized identities who often slip through the cracks.

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Redefining Comprehensive Sexual Education: A Pedagogy of Empowerment and Social Justice for K-12 Sex Education

According to the Guttmacher Institute (2021), 39 states have mandated some sort of sex education, with 28 of those states requiring an abstinence-centric model, only 11 states offering inclusive content regarding sexual orientation and only 9 states requiring culturally competent content. This means that most adolescents in the United States are without a holistic sex education, even when data points to the growing diversity of the current youth population. In a recent study from the University of California Santa Cruz, youth aged 14 to 18 are describing their gender and sexuality in diverse new ways, articulating a move from prescribed societal/cultural binaries (Soergel, 2021). The increase of diverse identifications is not only apparent with sexuality and gender, but also with race. The 2020 U.S. Census reported more diversity in people under the age of 25 than in years before (Frey, 2020). When looking at these findings a blaring issue is apparent: mandated sex education programs cannot keep up. With technological advances, the youth of today have access to an abundance of information. This leads them to consult with the internet to unpack complicated sex, gender, and identity-related issues on their own. It is clear, that to get ahead of possible damaging and unproductive sexual education, schools must be intentional in program curriculum to encourage the positive development of their youth. The action now is to show educators *how* they can empower their youth through utilizing a framework that allows them to be curious, challenge societal sexual norms and form their personal/social identities in a healthy way.

When answering *how* I am prioritizing three main tenets during the construction of my pedagogy, sex positivity, gender/sexuality inclusivity and cultural competency. The identification and centering of said tenets is based in the Reproductive Justice framework, which

according to the Reproductive Justice organization SisterSong is defined as the “the human right to maintain personal bodily autonomy, have children, not have children, and parent the children we have in safe and sustainable communities” (2021, para. 1). In the context of sex education, Reproductive Justice centers the ability of youth to take control of their bodies, through the acknowledgment of societal, cultural, and personal barriers to one’s personal autonomy. Contrary to state-level sex education programs that are often shame-riddled and socially out of touch, this project aims to construct a framework that integrates foundational social justice pedagogical concepts and empowerment theory. With a diverse population, having a social justice education that is founded on intersectionality, critical analysis of social identities, interactive learning, and positive self-reflection will be necessary (Hahn Tapper, 2013). To combat issues such as feelings of shame around sex or sexuality, suppression of identity, and racialized sexual stereotypes, students need to have a social justice foundation that combats negative elements of sex. But in tandem, the framing would integrate the “intrapersonal, interpersonal, and political” empowerment of students through community with each other, positive attitudes about sex, and their confidence in their competence (East, 2016). By making such theory palatable and applicable to educators, I hope that they can integrate given tools into their sexual health and wellness lessons.

Considering the context educators are in, engagement with stakeholders is important to consider when advocating for the implementation of comprehensive sex education programming. Knowing this, equipping teachers with the knowledge to inform parents of the benefits of sex education to other aspects of their children’s lives is another central component of the project. Social justice and empowerment theoretical framing addresses issues beyond the biological or physical components of sexual relationships. Sex education guides students to challenge the

societal/cultural constructs that permeate every aspect of our lives within the context of sex (Ashcraft 2008). This ability to analyze, challenge, and advocate can be carried over into other elements of their lives. This is evident when looking at the positive correlation between the introduction of sexuality education and increased academic success and civic engagement (Ashcraft 2008). The goal of educational institutions is to prepare students with a wide range of knowledge to be productive and successful. What I want educators to challenge with the aid of this framework; why are we not doing more to promote the social and personal success of youth?

In short, the youth of today need a sex education that can keep up. The creation of a framework that is tailored to their diverse needs employs educators to be more intentional with their sex education programming. Providing a resource, network, and community that allows them to pursue this work with confidence opens the door to the possibility of similar radical pedagogies across all disciplines. And as bell hooks stated best, it will hopefully bring education back to its original purpose to empower, liberate and transcend, which allows us to “be constantly learning [and] to be fully present in the now” (2003, p.43). My capstone project is an effort to enhance the competence and confidence of K-12 educators and administrators to effectively teach and advocate for comprehensive sex education in their schools. The particular focus of this project is to introduce a sex education model that mirrors the present state of our youth today, who have different social, political, and personal needs than generations of the past. Because we live in an open and inclusive present, the utilization of the current social tide to launch this project is critical. With that being said, for the purpose of this project, I will be defining “comprehensive sex education” as sex-positive, gender/sexuality inclusive, and culturally competent. To aid in the articulation of said definition, I will present a framework

using established social justice pedagogy to aid the facilitating of and advocacy for sex education programs.

Literature Review

The United States lacks sex education models centered on empowerment and social justice pedagogies. When trying to establish an alternative to the established models, one must understand the existing factors contributing to the current deprivation of relevant sex education curriculum. In the United States, 37 states with sex education mandates requiring curriculum to highlight abstinence, 26 of those states required to "stress" abstinence (Henry J. Kaiser Family Foundation, 2018). "Abstinence-based" programs can be described as curriculums "teaches that abstinence is the expected standard of behavior for teens," with little to no information about STIs or pregnancy prevention (Henry J. Kaiser Family Foundation, 2018, para 4). The United States has a long history of supporting such programs, even when proven not to work. After implementing abstinence-based programs in 1920, a survey was done inquiring about the sexual activity of young adults in hopes of seeing that programming was working (Wheeler, 2000). Much to the surprise of surveyors, the youth showed an increase in their engagement in various sexual activities, such as "fondling", oral sex, and completed sexual intercourse (Wheeler, 2000). Fast forward to 2017, and data shows that youth in "Abstinence-only-until-marriage" education programs have not decreased their sexual behavior but rather, youth have less competence in sex, family planning, and HIV-prevention knowledge (Columbia University, 2017). When considering the lack of positive outcomes of abstinence-framing in the past and the present, the continuous support of such programs must lie elsewhere.

Looking at the history of sex education in the United States, Christian ideology has had a profound influence on the personal and political perspectives of sex education. When bringing

the nation's track record of exclusion and oppression under the guise of religiosity into play, it becomes clear that the historical legacies of inequity and injustice are still covertly highlighted in present-day non-comprehensive programs. By reviewing current literature regarding the intersection of Christianity ideology and the maintenance of systematic oppression impact on early sex education, one can see the continuation of past sentiments in current political discourse (Nixon, 2013). Such implementation points to the maintenance of systematic inequities that provide power to privileged populations. With that in mind, there is a gap in relevant sex education that promotes empowerment and justice to achieve positive outcomes for the country's youth.

Christian Ideology's Effect on Early and Modern Sex Education Curriculum

Addressing the issues of lack of sex education in general in the United States requires acknowledging its past and evolution into what is mandated and supported today. The first construction of sex education was during the 19th century's "social purity movement" that taught young people "the importance of chastity outside of marriage" to avoid "physical and spiritual dangers of sexual sins" (Slominski, 2020, para 5). During this time, conversations like this were strictly had in the home, which widely varied based on socioeconomic status and location (Huber & Frimin, 2014). Formal education curriculum was heavily integrated with Christian ideology, in which a "secular" topic like sex education had no place in (Slominksi, 2020). It was not until the Progressive Era (1880-1920) when a variety of organizations took advantage of the shift in cultural norms and an uptick in social activism and reform. Most notably the American Social Hygiene Association, formed in 1914, was pivotal in the creation of the language regarding sex education that emphasized the alliance between medicine and morals (Slominski, 2020). The "social hygiene movement" was on the front lines of the sex education conversation, focusing on

advocating for "sex hygiene" courses that emphasized "moral rectitude" (Huber & Frimin, 2014). These courses were to start the discussion of sex, but only in the context of marriage. They were often emphasizing religious ideas of damnation for pre-marital sexual relations as the emphasis. Integration of abstinence-based sex education curriculum continued with explicitly religious themes until the 1940s and 1950s, when schools opted for a science-informed curriculum. School's implemented "family life education" that still warned youth about the real-life "dangers" physical and social consequences of sexual activity, often emphasizing the preservation of one's morals and character (Huber & Frimin, 2014). This was the start of sex education that centered fear and shame to encourage abstinence.

Further down the line in the 1980's, there was a doubling-down on abstinence only programming due to the change in political administrations and a global health crisis. In 1981, Human Immunodeficiency Virus or as commonly known as HIV was first discovered in the United States (AVERT, 2019). With this discovery came a change in the way people advocated for sex education and where we can see remnants of the current rift in sex education advocacy. Most notably was the switch by anti-sex education advocate from total elimination of sex education in school to advocating for abstinence only programs that would protect youth from a virus, which at the time meant one's eventual death (Huber & Firmin, 2014). This was supported by the Reagan administration in 1981, with the passing of the Adolescent Family Life Act (AFLA), which as Reagan stated would promote "chastity and self-discipline" among American teens (Dailard, 2016). In 1980, only six states had mandated sex education, but by 1989 17 states had mandated sex education with the majority of programming centering abstinence-only curriculum (Huber & Frimin, 2014). Although not explicit, the ideas and programming from the turn of the century and the progressive era guided modern-day sexuality education mandates.

Considering the history and current state of sex education in the United States, one can see that Christian conceptions of morality and respectability have remained supported throughout history and presently. Since 1996, the United States has spent over \$2 billion dollars on the upkeep of abstinence-only education (Boyer, 2018). Several organizations specialize in an abstinence-based curriculum and are well-funded by the United States government. Many organizations have rebranded themselves as "sexual risk avoidance" programs that encourage youth to hold "higher standard[s] of behavior" (Boyer, 2018, para 3). These programs are supported by many conservative politicians, securing their survival through continuous funding. The Trump administration made several pushes to support more conservative campaigns, with abstinence-only programs successfully gaining a \$100 million dollar spending budget for abstinence-only programs in 2018 (Smith, 2018). The Trump administration also appointed pro-abstinence advocates to positions in the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (Smith, 2018). U.S. Senator Patty Murray declared how support and funding of abstinence-only programs would not result in "better policies and services for those served by these programs, including adolescents, women, low-income communities, and individuals with infectious diseases, including HIV/AIDS", making efforts to "prioritize ideology over the needs of the women, teenagers, and children the affected programs serve" (Burns, 2019, para 3). With Murray's point in mind, the active push for programming that continues the disenfranchisement of marginalized groups suggest that the religious is not the only foundation of current sex education programming.

White Supremacist Ideology's Effect on Early and Modern Sex Education

As stated previously, sex education in schools came about during the Progressive era, when social opinions changed because of branches of theoretical thought (Huber & Frimin,

2014). As the era made room for the integration of science, many positive and negative social movements came about. An influential social movement of the time that was integral in the creation of sex education was Eugenics. Eugenics was a social movement that aimed to prioritize the "selection of desired heritable characteristics to improve future generations" (Wilson, 2021, para. 3). Eugenics can be connected to the United States' systematic racial, gendered, and sexual societal views, the root of the many injustices that we witness today. Reproductive injustices like over policing of mothers of color, forced sterilization and non-comprehensive sex education point to the “inherent eugenics” in reproductive policy, medicine, and student wellness initiatives (Nixon, 201, p. 82). During this era, many of those on the front lines of sex education advocacy and curriculum supported the Eugenics movement and implemented much of the movement's themes and language in their advocacy. One of the most prominent figures during this time was Margaret Sanger, a birth control activist and founder of what we know now as Planned Parenthood, who was also at the front lines of sex education advocacy and the women's Eugenics movement (Huber & Frimin, 2014). At this time, Sanger and several other white women physicians incorporated many of Eugenics' core beliefs in their advocacy for sex education (Porreca, 2019). Notable texts by self-proclaimed feminist physician Lydia Allen DeVilbiss explained that information about accessible, legal, and inexpensive contraception should be available to the "poor, ignorant, insufficient, and the dullards" so they could not procreate freely and "taint the American race" (Porreca, 2019, para 5). Sentiments like DeVilbiss were not isolated. The Medical Women's National Associate (Mwana) had a "Race Betterment" Committee that released a report authored by physician Rachelle Yarros, which stated that to further the position of women in the United States, they needed a plan to control the birth rates of immigrants, people with disabilities and most central in the report those who were not white

(Porreca, 2019). Although a prominent opinion of those sex/reproductive rights advocacies, Eugenics was not seen as entirely socially acceptable at the time, therefore making sex education a covert way to push the oppressive themes (Huber & Frimin, 2014).

There is an extensive record of the modern-day teaching of oppressive values and stereotypes through sex education in American schools. Many schools that participate in abstinence-only programs reproduce similar messages upholding so-called widely held "values" through "indoctrination" of youth into "archaic roles" of gender, sexuality, and race (Hendricks & Howerton, 2011). The definition of values is at the discretion of those who make the curriculum, often opting for covering stereotypes based on white supremacy and patriarchy rather than scientifically based STI/Ds and pregnancy prevention information. A prime example would be the implementation of two separate sex education curriculums based on school location and school population. The Legal Momentum Report (2008) found that a sex education program had two separate curriculums, the "Midwest school version" and the "urban school version". They found that the "urban" version had most of the students in given scenarios as black or brown, often depicting black women as "sexually aggressive drug users" and black men "as bound for jail" (Hendricks & Howerton, 2011, p. 598). The "Midwest" version depicted over 90% of the students in given scenarios as white, who were "working to maintain their traditional values" (Hendricks & Howerton, 2011, p. 598). Here we can see the appearance of racially motivated stereotypes presented to American youth under the guise of sex education. The negative personification of identities does not stop at race with the Gay Lesbian and Straight Education Network (GLSEN) reporting that in sex education programming in Arizona LGBTQ+ identities are often presented as a "positive alternative lifestyle". (Hobaica & Kwon, 2017). This framing of the LGBTQ+ as “alternative” suggests that is not “normal” or “acceptable” in

comparison to the accepted societal norm of heterosexuality. In these examples, we can see the continuation of the covert implementation of eugenic-like themes that paint white and heterosexual as the desired standard, often leaving the diverse population of children left out of their education. Financial and social support of these programs are ongoing, but when considering why, one must consider the two critical elements of continuing oppression, the maintenance of power and privilege.

Role of Power and Privilege in Sex Education

As illustrated previously, non-comprehensive programs often promote negative and often distorted ideas of marginalized groups while actively promoting the desired standard of whiteness and heterosexuality. When considering the inclusion of such language, one must think about the role of oppression, particularly oppression being done through imposition and deprivation. Imposition is used to promote distorted "label[s], role experience[s], or set of living conditions" to cause harm to one's "physical or psychological well-being" by those in dominant groups (David & Derthick, 2017, p. 4). Deprivation is the withholding of the necessary "jobs, [...] education, healthcare of living conditions" to strip one of "love, respect, social support, or self-dignity" (David & Derthick, 2017, p. 5) In the case of non-comprehensive sex education programming, we can see the imposition through the negative messages about marginalized groups and deprivation through the total ignorance of said groups. The abstinence-based program often does not strive to educate but to maintain the power and privileges of those who support it. The United States is a patriarchal, white supremacist, and heterosexist culture that relies on the positioning of patriarchal heterosexuality as "natural" and anything other marginal identities "other" (Johnson, 2018). There must be the continuous reinforcement of superiority through the establishment of patriarchal heterosexuality as the norm through "unequal distribution of

rewards, opportunities, and resources" (Johnson, 2018, p. 365) and implementation of this "natural" norm through the imposition of such norms through socialization and education, which is evident in the constant themes of non-inclusive programs. Considering the long history of imposition and deprivation in sex education and the oppression of marginalized groups in the United States, patriarchal heterosexuality is far beyond being seen as the "norm", but as something that is assumed and highly valuable.

The maintenance of power and privilege by those in power, often cisgender, white, and heterosexual, relies on the "possessive investment in whiteness" that allows those of dominant groups to continue the "destructive consequences" of said investment (Lipsitz, 2018). Destructive consequences are the "cultural constructs", such as race and gender, that create economic, social, and overall advantages for those who identify as white (Lipsitz, 2018). In the context of sex education, we have seen the continuation of constructs such as race and gender through the indoctrination of "sex stereotypes" (Hendricks & Howerton, 2011). Sex stereotypes are themes like the patriarchal notion that women have the responsibility of "controlling male sexual behavior", the white supremacist notion that black people are inherent "sexually aggressive," or the heterosexist notion that the only "natural" way to have sex is through heterosexual vaginal intercourse (Hendricks & Howerton 2011). This notion of "compulsory heterosexuality," the assumption that people "choose heterosexual couple and marriage" because they "prefer" it, maintains subordinate societal positioning of marginalized groups while securing the continuation of physical, social, and mental violence from those in power (Rich, 1980). Assumption leaves those who fall out of assumed roles of white heterosexual patriarchy to be stigmatized and often view their identities as abnormal and "a cause for concern" (Carbado, 2018). When asking why non-comprehensive sex education programs still exist, one must

acknowledge the covert maintenance of privilege and power, which happens through the disempowerment of marginalized youth.

Adverse Effects of Non-Comprehensive Sex Education Programs

The common themes of white supremacist, patriarchal, and heterosexist themes in sex education led to adverse outcomes for the youth subjected to such programming. Regarding gender, studies have shown that cisgender youth feel pressured to perform "culturally dominate boundaries of hegemonic" masculinity and femininity (Mattiauda, 2011). Such boundaries often promote the need for boys to be "physically and verbally bold and intimidating" and for girls to be "passive and responsible," which interferes with their sexual decision-making (Mattiauda, 2011, p.111). When telling youth that people must have specific characteristics based on their gender, many internalize such beliefs, affecting the way they understand their "sexual autonomy," which can be defined as the understanding of sexual desire, consent, boundaries, and how to engage in sexual acts (Nurgtiz et al., 2021). Interference with the development of sexual autonomy can lead to not understanding one's boundaries, the boundaries of others, and sexual satisfaction (Nurgtiz et al., 2021). In conversation with early points about the maintenance of power and privilege, lack of sexual autonomy development and understanding may lead to the abuse of sex by dominant groups and the lack of competence when it comes to sexual exploitation and harm done to marginalized groups. This can be explicitly seen with young girls, who often feel they must "allow" male sexual behavior, even when unwanted due to the gendered emphasis on passivity (Hendricks & Howerton, 2011). When looking at the culture around sexual assault in the United States, non-comprehensive models fail to equip youth with a space to develop their sexual autonomy properly.

Regarding sexuality, heteronormative and non-inclusive conceptions of gender often deprive LGBTQ+ youth of proper sex education. Sex education programs that fail to acknowledge the specific needs of sexual and gender minority youth lead to feelings of depression and anxiety as many form their identity unguided and disempowered (Hobaica & Kwon, 2017). Data has also shown that when heterosexual youth are not presented with inclusive sex education about LGBTQ+ people, they are less likely to accept sexual minority studies in their school (Hobaica & Kwon, 2017). There is an effect on the mental wellness of LGBTQ+ youth and a potential effect of how their peers will positively view and physically interact with them in school. Omission of relevant sex education also pushes youth to engage in sexual activity without safe sex competence. Research has shown that LGBTQ+ youth in abstinence-based, non-comprehensive programs are more likely to participate in "risky sexual behaviors" (Elia & Eliason, 2010).

Some youth may also try to gain sexual competency through the internet, namely through the consumption of pornography. Youth, regardless of their sexuality, are seeking sex education through the consumption of pornography at higher rates (Nurgitz et al., 2020). However, the issue of developing one's sexual autonomy, gender, and sexual identity through pornography exposes youth to non-realistic sexual interactions, often because pornography is not educational. Much of popular pornography emphasizes "sexist and racist assumptions about sexuality," often depicting explicit acts of "dehumanization and violence along with unsafe sexual practices" (Nugitz et al., 2020, p. 265-266). Although the internet can provide community and affirming information to youth, it is articulated through provided outcomes that youth require comprehensive sex education based on empowerment and centered around the formation of just sexual autonomy for all youth.

Benefits of Alternative Sex Education Models and Educator Professional Development

As illustrated, current abstinence-centric sex education programs provide a tool for those in power to continually disempower the nation's most marginalized youth. By taking a more informed approach to sex education programming that centers on the positive development of youth holistically, youth can have more fulfilling and sustainable outcomes. A rights-based approach to comprehensive sex education that equips youth with the competence to "determine and enjoy their sexuality holistically" recognizes that "information alone is not enough" and young people require opportunities to "acquire essential life skills and develop positive attitudes and values" (Panchaud & Anderson, 2016, p. 1). The term "right-based comprehensive sex education" comes from the International Conference on Population and Development held by the United Nations in 2012, which determined that abstinence-only or abstinence-centered programs did not recognize the human right to "gender equality, sexual and reproductive rights" (Berglas et al., 2014, p. 64). Since then, several countries have rejected abstinence-based curriculums. The European Council has officially acknowledged that profound, sustainable change only happens if exclusionary practices are eliminated (Council of Europe, 2020).

The introduction of a rights-centric approach in educational institutions is integral to ensuring positive outcomes for youth. Research has shown that youth prefer conversations surrounding sex to happen at school rather than in the home since it allows them to freely express their identities, navigate the complexities of sexual relationships, and ask questions that may be uncomfortable with their guardians (Nurgitz et al. 2020). Nevertheless, most teachers are not equipped with the proper programming structure and content to provide inclusive sex education when looking at educator competency. Because of the lack of specific sex education mandates, teachers are often left to "interpret vague legislation guidelines," leaving many

teachings inaccurate and biased information (USC Department of Nursing, 2020). Although some educators identify themselves as being proficient in positive sex and gender ideals in their personal lives, it has been shown that many teachers have and desire professional development on how to teach sexual health courses (Fisher & Cummings, 2015). When teachers are presented with professional development opportunities to learn more about effective strategies, they are more confident and produce better outcomes for their students. It is critical to breaking away from previous models and the content of previous and current sex education models. Educators must be equipped with a toolkit that gives them a practical tool to combat sexual injustice, guiding all students to more positive sexual outcomes.

Current Project

This project, informed by said historical legacies of disempowerment and injustice, seeks to provide K-12 educators, administrators, and staff a holistic understanding of a rights-based approach to comprehensive education. Through this the centering of the social, emotional, and personal development of their youth, professionals will be better equipped to address the diverse needs of their youth in the own classroom, offices, and community. By equipping educators with this competency, educators will be able to confidently assume their roles and encourage the positive development of their youth presently, equipping them with the knowledge to have a healthy transition into adulthood.

Project Plan

This project aims to provide educators the space to learn about empowerment and social-justice-centric frameworks that can be applied when implementing sex education programs. Through such knowledge building, educators will be taught to prioritize sex positivity, inclusivity, and cultural competency, which centers on the complex social and personal needs of

the youth. With past and current curriculum is based on religiosity, politics, and social control, educators, can prioritize the safe space-making for the nation's most marginalized youth through sex-positive, culturally competent, and inclusive. The goal is to close sex education disparities that have historically allowed the United States' more marginalized youth to slip slipped through the cracks.

Situation Statement

As stated previously, the United States has a limited amount of mandated sex education programs that require the integration of inclusive content. In contrast, most United States youth have reported incredibly diverse social identities and wellness program needs. With that being said, current sex education models cannot keep up with the changing needs of today's youth, making the professional development of educators integral to preventing the widening of already apparent health and wellness programming gaps. By providing youth with well-rounded sexuality education, they can form their sexual autonomy positively and safely, and educators can promote feelings of comfortability and confidence not just in this realm but beyond. The purpose of this project is to provide educators, administrators, and youth development professionals the space to gain competency of empowerment and social-justice centric methods when implementing and advocating for sex education curriculum for their respective youth. Through such knowledge building, educators will be taught to prioritize sex positivity, inclusivity and cultural competency which centers the complex social and personal needs of the youth they are engaging. With past and current curriculum being based in religiosity, politics and social control, educators can prioritize the safe space-making for the nation's most marginalized youth, that have historically slipped through the crack of inadequate sex education methods.

Project Goals

Competency Building	<i>Participants will...</i> Gain a competency of the framework through lecture, viewings, group activity, discussion, and applied framework practice in the workshop.
Applied Learning	<i>Participants will...</i> Be in a community of practice by participating in lesson planning, activity doing, and discussion of framework tenets to make a safe learning community for all.
Provide Relevant and Applicable Resources	<i>Participants will have...</i> Access to resources curated to follow the framework for use in sex education lessons guides which can be applied in real-time with their youth.
Continuous Community Building	<i>Participants will have...</i> An ongoing community of educators that want to continually add to current resources and support one another in the quest for more inclusive sex education models.

Target Audience

The target audience for this workshop would be anyone interested in learning inclusive-learning strategies, which would include K-12 educators, administrators, youth development professionals, and higher education students.

Students, teachers, administrators, youth development professionals, and other interested parties would be considered the stakeholders for this project due to their ability to apply the workshop’s theme and share the teaching framework.

Crafting a Clear Message

Educators who choose to take part in this course are taking the first step to pursuing professional development that embraces social-justice tenets that encourage the youth's emotional, social, and personal development. Through the learning and then application of the

established framework, educators will enable students to see an empowering conception of self in their sexuality education. When it comes to sex education, which has always been seen as highly personal, youth can realize that building their sexual autonomy solidifies a more just future for themselves and for all, leading them to positive development in multiple areas of their lives.

Incentives for Engagement

Stakeholder: Educators

Incentive: Learning an applicable framework and tools to apply the framework in their classrooms.

Stakeholder: Administrators, Youth Development Professionals

Incentive: Learning an applicable framework that can be applied when advocating and creating sex education programming on an administrative level

Stakeholder: People in the community engagement, K-12 education, school counseling, etc.

Incentive: Having in-depth knowledge of an emerging framework to inform further work on empowerment and social justice centric pedagogies in their respective disciplines.

Outreach Methods

With the help of Amanda and the MINTS team, a flyer was distributed to MINTS members through various social media platforms. MINTS has a public Instagram, LinkedIn and Facebook page, along with a close Facebook group, which were all utilized to promote the workshop. I also created an invitation, which I circulated within my own personal network of educators, youth development practitioners and colleagues.

Responsibilities Chart

Name	Organization/Affiliation	Responsibility	Contact
Nina Lee	Candidate for M.Ed. in Community Engagement at Merrimack College, Community Engagement Fellow	Project and framework development, leading the workshop	leen@merrimack.edu 617-710-1221
Amanda Alcox	MINTS (Merrimack Institute for New Teacher Support) Coordinator.	Coordination of event time, place and attendants, workshop assistance.	alcoxa@merrimack.edu 603-801-3900
Elana Zabar	Candidate for M.Ed in Community Engagement at Merrimack College, Community Engagement Fellow	Workshop assistance, accessibility checker, peer reviewing	zabarr@merrimack.edu
Baili Boutte	Candidate for B.S in Mathematics at Spelman College.	Workshop assistance and peer reviewer.	baili.boutte@gmail.com
Ashley Clarke	B.S in Mathematics at Spelman College	Workshop assistance and peer reviewer.	aclarke2925@gmail.com
Jamella J. Leitch	Candidate of B.S. in Mathematics at Spelman College	Workshop assistance and peer reviewer.	j_leitch13@aol.com

Tools to Measure Progress

- 3 Jamboards
- Post Session Survey
- Updates in Padlet posted by participants.

Implementation Timeline

November 2021	<p>Connecting with Amanda to collaborate with MINTS for workshop participants.</p> <p>Finalizing MINTS workshop details form and submitting it to Amanda.</p>
December 2021	<p>Create an agenda for the workshop.</p> <p>Create a curriculum that highlights the basic tenets of the framework, sex positivity, inclusivity, and cultural competency.</p> <p>Create materials for framework-informed teaching materials–resource guides, curated activities templates– for participants to apply during the workshop and in their classrooms.</p> <p>Create the pre and post survey for workshop participants.</p>
January 2022	<p>Confirm participant numbers, accessibility needs and final workshop date with MINTS.</p> <p>Finalize workshop structure and digital packet modality.</p> <p>Finalize agenda.</p> <p>Create presentation.</p> <p>Create Padlet for the ongoing educator professional learning community.</p>
February 2022	<p>Finalize presentation.</p> <p>Run workshop with small group to understand timing, workshop flow and technology.</p> <p>Conduct workshop in February.</p> <p>Collect workshop and pre-post survey data for analyzation.</p>
March 2022	<p>Update professional learning community Padlet.</p> <p>Follow-up with participants on Padlet community,</p> <p>Collect Padlet data for analyzation.</p> <p>Synthesize final data.</p>
April 2022	<p>4/6: Full capstone draft due</p> <p>4/27: Submit final capstone paper for publication</p>

Logical Framework

<p>Learning Goal</p>	<p>Create a space where K-12 educators, administrators and youth development practitioners can learn positive pedagogies to teach comprehensive sex education in their schools.</p>	
<p>Long Term Outcomes</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Aid in the professional development of educators, administrators, youth development professionals so that they can utilize and advocate for inclusive sex education models in their respective institutions and beyond. - Fill the gap in current sex education models that isolate the social identities of marginalized students by providing them with holistic sexuality education that promotes the development of their sexual autonomy in productive and positive ways. 	
<p>Short Term Outcomes</p>		
<p><u>Increase knowledge/awareness of...</u> The lack of comprehensive sex education that is inclusive, sex positive and mirrors their stages of physical, social, and personal development.</p>	<p><u>Increase access to resources for.....</u> curriculum, lesson plans, discussion guides and activities to help create positive sex education programs at their school.</p>	<p><u>Increase network, skills, and attitudes about.....</u> Advocating for more robust sex education programs in their own schools/school districts.</p>
<p><u>Comparing and Contrasting</u> participants experience with sex education (personal and as educators) to acknowledge the flaws in current sex education curriculum. <u>Defining</u> the meaning of a pedagogy of social justice and how incorporating themes like social identity, intersectionality and empowerment can create a more positive sex education experience for their youth (Hahn-Tapper 2013, 411). <u>Highlighting</u> research and case studies that provide tangible examples of what a positive sex education model looks like. <u>Discussing</u> what a “dream sex ed” would look like for their youth.</p>	<p><u>Discussing and sketching</u> what a positive sex education pedagogy looks like by planning a lesson on various sex education topics. <u>Create</u> a resource folder/binder with examples of said resources to give participants tangible tools to</p>	<p><u>Build</u> a community for them to have continued access to me and to each other to support them on their journey. <u>Facilitate</u> their engagement with community organizations, sex educators, community wellness practitioners who they can go to for more specific trainings on areas of interest.</p>

Implementation Notes

When implementing a workshop of this nature, it is important that the participants are limited and vetted, to promote the safest learning environment for all participants.

Methodology

This section of the paper outlines the methodology used in this project. The facilitator partnered with the Merrimack Institute for New Teacher Support (MINTS) and utilized Zoom to hold the workshop online. The workshop used Zoom's multiple features and Google Jamboards for three activities during the workshop. At the end of the workshop, the facilitator asked participants to complete a short post-workshop evaluation online to measure their understanding of workshop content and ability to apply workshop concepts to their work. All data from the workshop were collected and analyzed using a mixed-method, iterative approach. The section contains implementation notes and descriptions of each activity and the survey.

Participants

This project partnered with the Merrimack Institute for New Teacher Support (MINTS) to engage with new and experienced teachers. MINTS, located at Merrimack College, provides educators with a learning community to receive teaching and career support, resources, and professional development opportunities. Currently, MINTS engages with over 1000 educators ranging from undergraduate and graduate education students to seasoned educators. Educators come from a wide range of schools across the United States, but historically, most participants are from Massachusetts. MINTS marketed the event to their vast network of educators.

Materials

The presenter used the following materials to organize and facilitate the virtual, participatory workshop to present strategies for providing holistic sex education for K-12 institutional settings.

Zoom is an online chat, video, and telephone service that allows users to engage with each other as they were in person. Zoom enables workshop facilitators to engage with participants in multiple ways, with additional add-ons and screen-sharing capabilities. The breakout room, chat box, and screen share features were explicitly utilized in this workshop.

Google Jamboard is an online interactive whiteboard that allows educators and participants to collaborate in real-time. For each activity, Jamboard is being used to encourage easy collaboration amongst groups while also allowing the workshop facilitator to monitor and track the participants' work. In the Jamboard, participants can post "sticky" notes and work collectively using tools to map and draw out ideas together.

A post-workshop survey was created in Google Forms. Google Forms allows for survey creation through features such as scaled questions, open-ended response boxes, and multiple-response questions. All responses load into a Google Workbook, which allows for analysis.

Padlet is education software that allows for in-depth, real-time collaboration. Padlet enables people to have discussions, upload files, and share videos in an organized, easy-to-use format. At the end of the workshop, participants were directed to the already set up Padlet, with additional resources, access to the facilitator's capstone thesis, and contact information for further learning. Participants were also given the Padlet information in a follow-up "thank you" e-mail.

Procedure

This section of the project outlines specific information regarding marketing, workshop agenda, observation tools, and post-session survey utilized during the presentation.

The workshop was marketed by Amanda Alcox, the MINTS Coordinator. Alcox created flyers to advertise to the MINTS community via their monthly e-mail list, LinkedIn, Instagram, and Facebook. The facilitator also created a flyer which was shared with her personal network.

The facilitator briefly introduced herself, her personal and professional background. She also introduced the workshop helpers and their roles. The facilitator also made sure to outline community guidelines for respectful and inclusive learning, highlight the importance of maintaining a safe learning space for all.

As an icebreaker, participants were asked to view YouTube channel CUT's video "When Did You Learn About Sex?: 100 Teens". Participants were then broken up into rooms randomly. Verbally and using "sticky" notes on the Jamboard, participants were asked three questions: 1) What was a funny response; 2) Did you relate to the teens?; and 3) Did you find yourself surprised by any of their responses? The participants were in their breakout rooms for five minutes, then pulled back to the main room to briefly share their reactions.

The facilitator provided an overview of the meaning of the word "pedagogy," data regarding gaps in sex education in the United States and introduced participants to the pedagogy and the application framework. The facilitator outlined statistics that articulated the lack of inclusive sex education programming in the United States. With those statistics in mind, the facilitator discussed the effects of such gaps on Youth. The core tenets of the pedagogy were then presented, followed by the introduction of the applicable framework ahead of the participants learning through the activity.

In the first activity, *Identifying Identities*, participants were asked to identify systematic and community issues that may impact sex education in the presented cases. The groups took this information and used it for the second activity. For this activity, participants were broken back up into their same breakout rooms, in which they worked off the same Jamboard used during the Ice Breaker. Groups were presented with one of two case studies. Each case study gave participants community information, student population data, and current sex education programming highlights. On the Jamboard, participants were asked: 1) Do you notice any gaps/issues in their current programming? (Is it heteronormative, does it emphasize social constructs, etc.); and 2) Based on the provided community and student statistics, how may identity need to influence future programming?

The facilitator then explained the other components of the applicable framework by going over concrete examples for student involvement, representing identities, and collaborative work and reflection. The facilitator emphasized how the pedagogy is a practice that must be actively applied to make a radical change in the classroom. Through the practice of the pedagogy, educators will learn to avoid the adverse effects highlighted previously and promote a classroom of social justice and empowerment.

With material from the first activity, participants were asked to engage in the second activity, *Representing Identities*, to make a basic plan of action for a lesson around consent, which will consider the specific needs of the particular community. This activity was intended to exhibit how the framework is easy to apply to real-world scenarios and aid student programming problem-solving. For this activity, participants were broken back up into their same breakout rooms, where they will continue to plan a lesson for their assigned communities. On the provided Jamboard link, participants were asked: 1) What are your 3 "tenets" for this community that will

guide programming planning?; 2) What are ways you plan on getting student input for programming structure and content?; and 3) How will you make sure to represent students' personal and social identities in programming? Participants engaged in a debrief discussion when they returned to the main room.

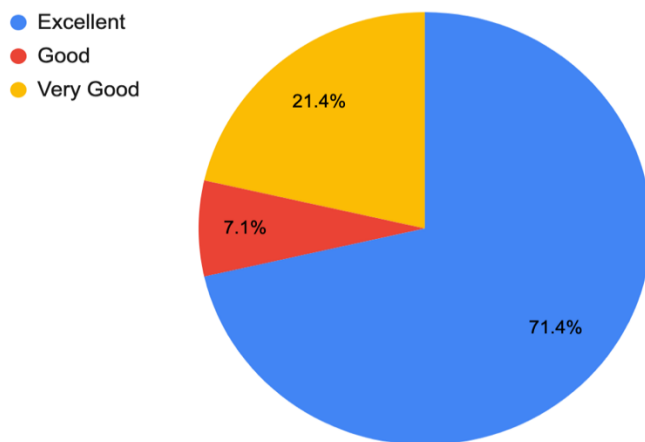
The facilitator then guided participants to curate Padlet by providing the link and sharing how to navigate the Padlet via screen sharing and their resources. The facilitator outlined the additional resources, the section to have dialogue beyond the workshop, and ways to contact the facilitator. The facilitator then asked each participant to complete the brief post-session survey, which the participants were given five minutes to complete. Then the facilitator stayed on to answer a question submitted to the chat and answered any additional questions presented. The facilitator stayed on the Zoom call to answer any questions and address comments about the workshop.

A post-session survey was distributed to collect demographic information such as education, social and personal identities and to evaluate participants' understanding of significant concepts of the framework. Survey questions were broken into two parts. The first part consisted of 12 questions inquiring about their perception of the workshop overall, facilitation, and material quality. This section of the survey evaluated participants' understanding of the presented material and their confidence in applying the framework with their students beyond the workshop. The second part had five questions about specific demographic information about their teaching careers and social identification. The second section of the survey collected information about the grade levels and communities in which the pedagogy may be applied.

Results

This study collected data utilizing observation notes from interactive activities and a post-session survey. Of the 14 survey participants, 10 rated the workshop positively on a scale of 1 to 5, with 71.4% of participants rating the workshop a 5 (excellent). Respondents also rated the workshop presenter and materials positively on the same scale, with 85% of participants (n=12) rating the facilitator a 5 (excellent) and 71.4% of participants (n=10) rating workshop materials a 5 (excellent). Additionally, participants identified the elements of the workshop they liked best and could be improved within the rest of the survey, such as being in a community with other educators, understanding the purpose of presented activities, and their ability to apply workshop content to their teaching.

Figure 1: How Would You Rate the Workshop Overall (n=14)



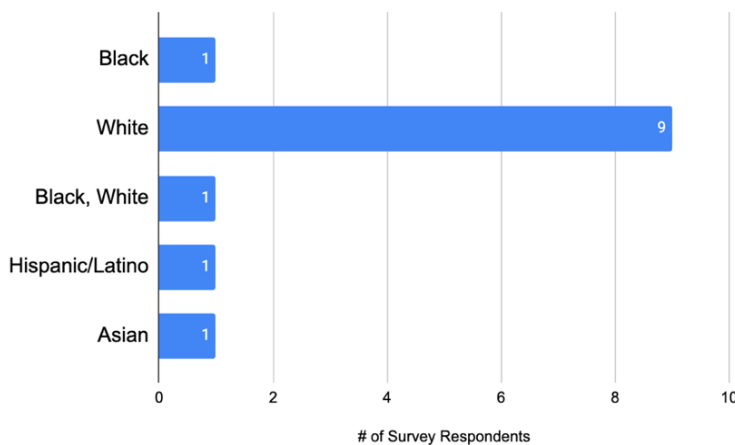
Workshop Demographics

This study was presented virtually to 20 participants who taught in K-12 and Higher Education. The majority of respondent, 35.7% (n=5), work with High School students. The remaining 64.3% (n=9), work with a combination of Elementary, Middle, High School, Higher Education, Special Education, and Adult Learners. Of the 14 surveyed participants, about 42.9% of participants (n=6) have been working with you for one to five years, 35.7% of the participants

(n=5) have been teaching for six to 10 years, 14.3% of participants (n=2) have been teaching for 11 to 20 years and the remaining 7.1% participants (n=1) have been teaching for more than 20 years.

Participants were asked about their social identities as well, of which 76.9% of participants (n=9) identified as White, with the remaining participants identifying as a combination of races, Black, Asian, or Hispanic/Latino. Most of the survey respondents identify as Cisgender Women at 71.4% (n=10). Regarding sexual orientation, responses were more diverse, with 38.5% of respondents (n=5) identifying as Heterosexual, 38.5% identifying as Bisexual (n=5), 15.4% identifying as Pansexual (n=2), and 7.7% identifying as Gay/Lesbian (n=5).

Figure 2: Race/Ethnicity of Workshop Participants (n=13)



Activity Observations

This study also analyzed the responses and experiences of people within the workshop activities to analyze their understanding of workshop content and the ability to apply the present framework to real-world scenarios. Analyzation was done by compiling the themes from the participants' responses in the Jamboard and observation logs done by workshop helpers.

The first activity was an Icebreaker. Where participants viewed a video that talked about youth perception of what "sex" is and the level of sex education that they have received. Some of the key themes from this activity included finding the video amusing, participants' ability to relate to youth and their feelings of shock.

In Activity A, participants were given one case scenario in which they had to respond to prompts. Two groups had scenario 1, William's Public High School, and two groups had scenario 2, St. Mildred's Catholic Middle School. Each group was given two questions to answer together and asked to record their responses. Some of the key themes for scenario 1 include heteronormativity, a need for a community-informed facilitator and the need for inclusion of student voice. Some of the key themes for scenario 2 included heteronormativity, value-based content, and the need for gender/sexuality inclusive content. Observers of each group noted common themes in their observations regarding participants' understanding of how to do the activity, their ability to collaborate effectively, and their knowledge about how the activity related to the presented lecture themes. Some of the key observations included the participants ability to navigate the given Jamboard, ability to collaborate and apply concepts from lecture affectively.

Figure 5: Activity A - Scenario 1 Themes

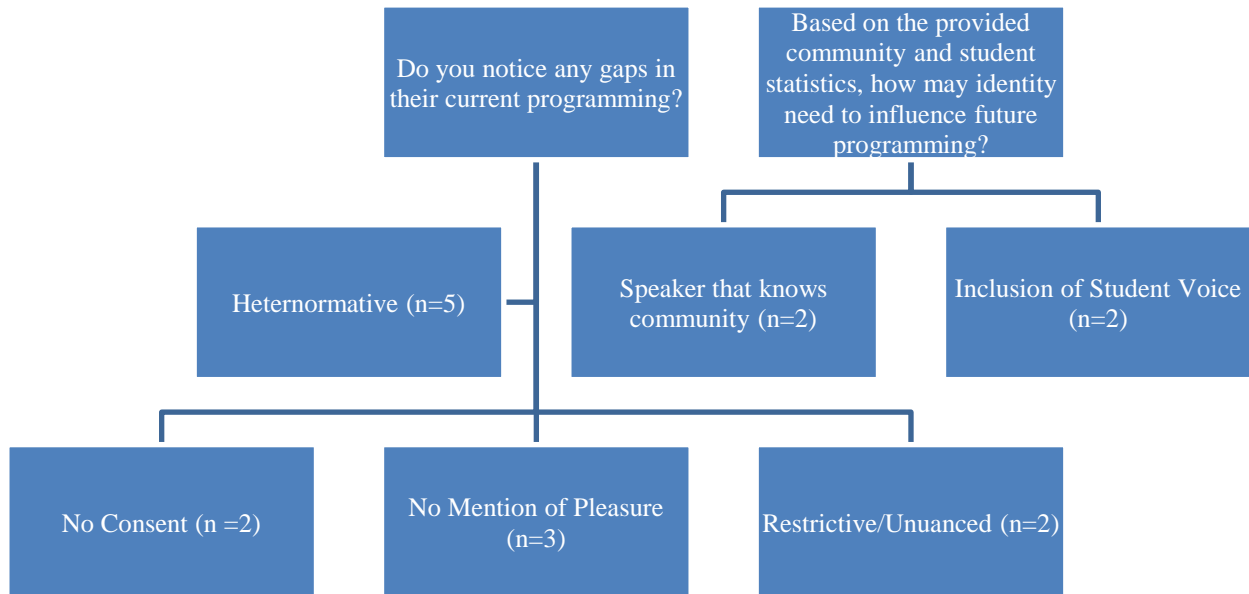
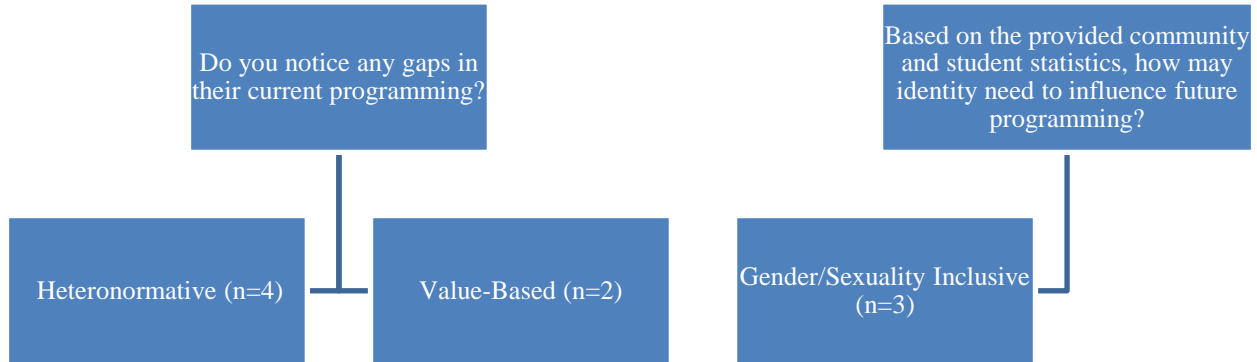


Figure 6: Activity A – Scenario 2 Themes



Like Activity A, participants used a Jamboard to work together on the assigned scenario for Activity B. For those focused on scenario 1, some of the key themes were the need to destigmatize sex, inclusion of healthy relationships and incorporation of media and student participation. Meanwhile, for those working on scenario 2, some of the key themes included the need for shame-free content, more gender, sexuality, race and culturally representative content

and the incorporation of student participation. Observers were asked to evaluate the groups with the same observation rubric, and they noted common themes such as ease of Jam board navigation, ability to collaborate and participant reference to lecture content and their own classrooms.

Figure 7: Activity B - Scenario 1 Themes

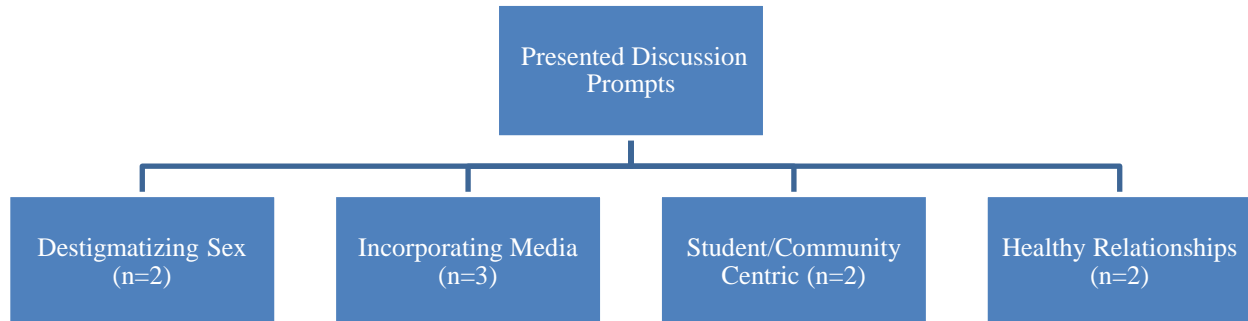
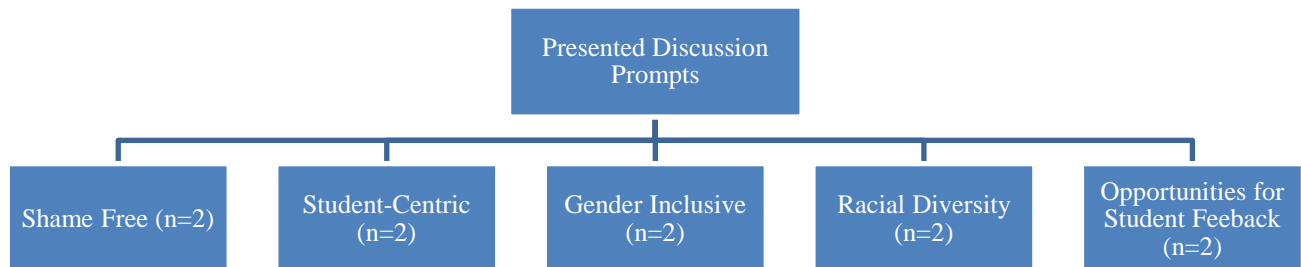


Figure 8: Activity B - Scenario 2 Themes



Post-Session Survey

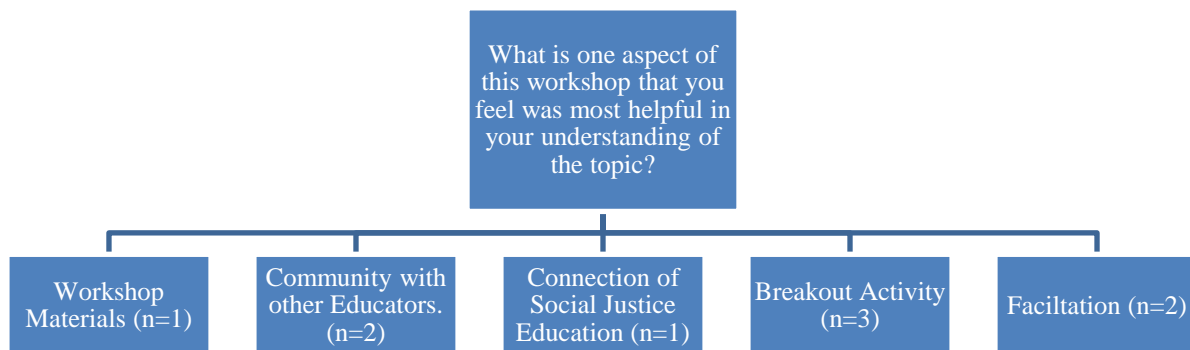
In the post-session survey, participants were asked about their attitudes around sex education, understanding of the presented pedagogy, and if they felt it was feasible to apply the framework in their work with youth. Participants were asked to record their opinions about sex education in K-12 before and after the workshop. Before the workshop, 38.5% of survey respondents (n=5) had a "Negative "opinion on sex education, while 30.8% (n=4) had a "Positive" opinion on sex education. After the workshop, the number of positive opinions

increased, with 53.8% (n=7) of survey respondents rating their opinion of sex education as "Very Positive".

Participants were then asked specifically about the accessibility of the presented framework, the in-classroom strategies presented in the workshop, confidence in the facilitation of sex education topics, and if the one-time workshop was enough to understand and apply the given framework. Most participants found the presented framework easy to understand, with 64.3% of respondents (n=9) "Strongly Agreeing" and 28.6% "Agreeing" (n=4). Additionally, 35.7% (n=5) "Strongly Agreed" and 42.9% (n=6) "Agreed" that the workshop gave them tools that they could apply in their classroom, with 57.1% (n=8) "Strongly Agreeing" and 35.7% (n=5) "Agreeing" that the presented tools in the workshop will aid in the creation of a positive learning experience in their classroom. About 42.9% of respondents (n=6) "Strongly Agreed" and 42.9% (n=6) "Agreed" that the workshop aided in making them feel more confident in approaching sensitive and complex topics with students.

The previously stated ratings were validated in the qualitative responses through the common themes mentioned in the survey responses. When asked what workshop elements were helpful, participants were specific about breakout activities, facilitation, and community other educators as solid themes that aided their learning experience.

Figure 9: Workshop Elements that Were Most Helpful (n=10)



At the end of the survey portion inquiring about the workshop materials and concepts, participants were asked about their confidence in discussing sex education topics before and after the workshop. Before attending the workshop, participants had varying confidence levels in discussing sexual health with students. With 35.7% of respondents (n=5) would say they were “Completely” or “Very” confident. When it came to the other confidence levels, 42.8% of respondents (n=6) said they are “Moderately” or “Slightly” confident and 21.4% of respondents (n=2) said they were “Not at all Confident”. After the workshop, confidence levels were less scattered, with 53.8% of respondents (n=7) saying they feel "Very Confident" about discussing sexual health with students, 50% (n=7) saying they feel "Very Confident" with discussing sexual health with marginalized youth and no participants noting they were “Not at all Confident”. When asked if they would share what was learned in the workshop with their colleagues, 71.4% of respondents (n=10) said they are "Very Likely" to share the information learned.

Figure 10: Confidence in Supporting Students’ Sex Education Before the Workshop

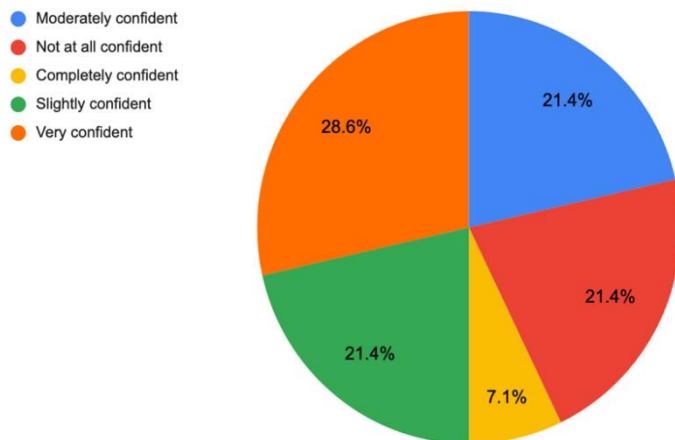


Figure 11: Confidence in Supporting Students’ Sex Education After the Workshop

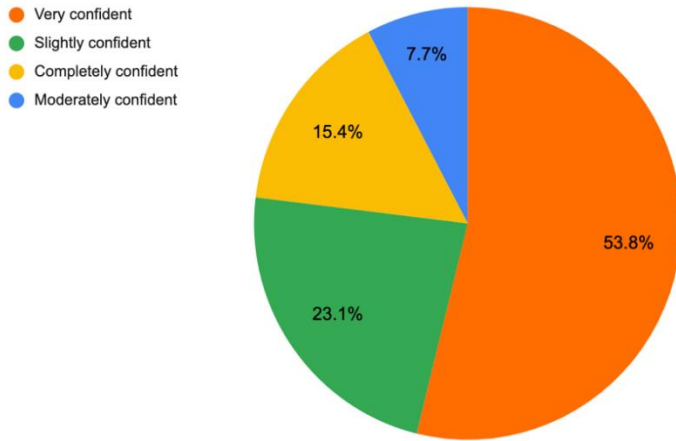
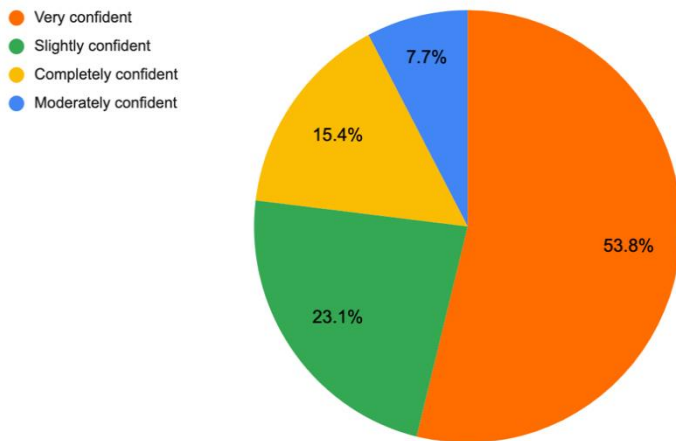


Figure 12: Confidence in Supporting Students with Marginalized Identities Sex Education After the Workshop



In terms of improvement, the reoccurring theme in survey responses was a request for more workshops to get through the materials. Although 50% of survey respondents (n=7) "Agreed" that one workshop was enough, 28.6% of respondents "Disagreed" (n=4). This response was further validated in the qualitative responses. Participants were asked to name what could be improved and participants noted a non-active breakout room and more workshops.

Discussion

During the post-session evaluation, educators were asked about their opinions of sex education in a K-12 setting. Over 30% of participants negatively viewed sex education in a K-12 environment before participating in the workshop. These negative attitudes were scattered across participants with varying years of teaching experience. The negative perception of sex education could come from the educator's not wanting to deal with the "hassle" or "difficulty" of implementing sex education programming that an applicable framework like the one whit project presents would aim to alleviate. With that being said, when asked about their opinion about sex education after the workshop, there was a 38.4% increase in "Very Positive" attitudes about sex education after participating in the workshop. This change in mentality suggests that when educators are presented with the adverse effects of non-comprehensive education or the complete lack of sex education in youth lives and how the inclusion of holistic sex education can positively impact their lives, their opinions can change.

Participants had varying confidence levels when it came to talking about sex education with their students. Less than 10% of teachers feel "Completely Confident" to discuss sensitive and complex sex and sexual health topics, with 21.4% of educators feeling "Not at all Confident." This is consistent with the trend of educators feeling ill-prepared to talk to the student about their sexual health and wellness simply because there is a lack of professional development opportunities that provide them with the holistic approaches that they need and clear examples of how these approaches can be implemented in their classroom (USC Department of Nursing, 2020). After the workshop, over 50% of participants felt "Very Confident," and over 10% of educators felt "Completely Confident." High school educators were among the participants who had the most significant increase in confidence, with 75% of the

high school educators evaluated in the post-session workshop having a boost of confidence after attending the workshop. When asked specifically about confidence and competence with marginalized students, again there was an increase in confidence levels compared to before the workshop with no responses expressing "No confidence at all." White educators, in particular, showed an increase in confidence in this regard, with 55% of White educators expressing they were "Very Confident" with discussing sex and sexual health with students with marginalized identities than before the workshop. This represented increase in confidence of educators is in line with the hypothesis that when educators are presented with professional development opportunities, they can feel they are better equipped to deliver positive sex education to their students, particularly those with marginalized identities.

The goal was to have educators actively apply the applicable framework within the provided case studies within the activities. In activity A, most responses referred to points made in the lecture about non-comprehensive programming in the group with scenario 1 versus the group with scenario 2. Participants working on scenario 1 seemed to be able to identify the gaps more effectively in the current sex education programming presented than those with scenario 2, suggesting that scenario one may have been more effective in getting participants to apply the information they had just learned. Based on observations between the two groups and the demographics of survey participants, scenario 1 encouraged collaboration and was most relatable to many educators who taught in high school, making it the more effective of the two when it came to the first activity. Consistent with Social Justice Education theory, education that allows for collaboration and the ability to see oneself in their work can produce better educational outcomes, such as the practical application of taught concepts (Hahn Tapper, 2013).

The modality and structure of this workshop provided educators with applicable tools for discussing and practicing comprehensive sex education. Through the curation of a safe, close spaces to discuss the complex issues that present themselves because of non-comprehensive programming, participants were able to build the competency to start recognizing and thinking about the current gaps in sex education. When reflecting on participants activity participation and expressed satisfaction with the workshop modality and structure, it seems that this workshop allowed for personal connection to workshop material and the ability to collaborate with others which allowed participants to affectively apply the given framework. Further, when looking at educators of certain demographics – high school educators and white educators in particular – there was an expressed appreciation and increase of confidence when presented with the right information, practical tools, and thoughtful approach to education. In closing, the pedagogy, applicable framework and workshop facilitations aids in closing the gap in sex education, which hopefully in turn will aid in creating more positive experience of marginalized youth through providing them with confident and competent educators, invested in their positive development.

Limitations of Study

The main limitation of this project was the amount of time of the workshop. Although two hours was enough for one session, most feedback regarding the improvement of the workshop was to add more workshops or make it a series. Because this work involves developing an understanding of current gaps in sex education and the components of non-inclusive sex education, and how educators can fill such gaps, it was expressed that it was a lot of information to process in just one session.

The online modality also proved to be a limitation as well. Unstable internet connection of some participants prohibited some participants in participating fully in activities because of

internet issues. The online format also presented an issue for workshop observers, who also had internet connectivity issues, preventing them from taking the most in-depth notes. If attempted again in the future, having an in-person workshop can guarantee that all participants and observers will be able to participate fully without interruption.

Implications for Future Studies

Although the presented research supports the hypothesis that providing teachers with professional development experiences can aid in the creation of positive educational experiences for students, further research should be done to expand on how educators can be supported while implementing changes in their classrooms and existing sex education programming. One respondent asked about doing a deeper dive into schools' bureaucracy that prevents social justice and empowerment theory-informed education from happening. Further research could explore the meaning of this type of training and its application to school administration, particularly those who approve or disapprove of the framework's strategies and examples of implementation. The support of educators while implementing the framework is a crucial part of sustaining comprehensive sex education that seeks to aid in the personal, social, and sexual development of youth today.

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Appendix A

Redefining Comprehensive: Agenda

March 10th, 4:30-6:30pm

<p>4:30- 4:47pm</p>	<p><u>Introductions (7mins)</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Giving time to Amanda from MINTS to welcome her participants to the workshop. - Introducing myself, my helpers, going over accessibility accommodations available, question and answer box, going over set community guidelines. <p><u>Ice Breaker: Let’s Hear from the Youth?</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Watch: When Did You Learn About Sex?: 100 Teens by Cut (5 min) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o After viewing Participants will be broken out into break out rooms, where they will introduce themselves to each other and give their impression on the video: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ What was your first impression of the video? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What was a funny response? • Did you relate to the teens? • Did you find yourself surprised by any of their responses? ▪ Participants will be asked to record their brief response via Jamboard 	<p><u>Materials List</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - SlideDeck - YouTube Video - Jamboard
<p>4:47- 5:10pm</p>	<p><u>Topic 1: Overview of the framework principles (lecture)</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Here is where I will be introducing the framework, it’s connection to my history and connection to theory. - Define and explain the 3 main tenets and how theory/frameworks and research support the inclusion of these tenets in sex education programming/curriculum: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Sex positivity o Gender/Sexuality Inclusivity o Cultural Competency - Introduce a the “core components” to programming (Based on Tapper and Adam’s SJE frameworks) *Still workshopping this part*: 	<p><u>Materials List</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Slides - Framework graphics

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ “Freirean Notion of Social Justice” (Tapper) ○ Identifying Identities/Intersectionality (Adams/Tapper) ○ Set Community Norms (Adams) ○ Collaborative Work and Reflection (Adams) ○ Real World Connections - Emphasizing these two tenets to prepare for the next activity <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Background on Freire and notion of SJ ○ Expanding on Identifying Identities - Participants should have a solid idea of what exactly my framework is about and what research/frameworks/theory supports it. 	
<p>5:10- 5:30pm</p>	<p><u>Activity 1: Identifying Identities (whole 30 mins)</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Each group will be assigned a community, and be given the Social Identity Wheel of 1 person in this community <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Participants will discuss and identify identities and intersections that would impact sex education programming in these communities. ○ Participants will then identify the possible barriers of each person when receiving sex education. ○ Participants will then have to note these barriers on a Jamboard, which will be used in creating a lesson for this community. - Participants will be actively practicing one of the first steps of the framework: identifying identities. Because much of the framework is based in cultural competency and gender/sexuality inclusivity, the goal is for participants to understand <i>how</i> they can apply the framework 	<p>Materials List</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Slides - Framework Graphics - Jamboard
<p>5:35- 5:55pm</p>	<p><u>Topic 2: The Framework Continued: What would a lesson look like?</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Reminding everyone of the core components of the framework and emphasizing the last three <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Set Community Norms (Adams) 	<p>Materials List</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Slide deck - Visuals

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Collaborative Work and Reflection (Adams) ○ Real World Connections - I plan on creating a lesson and going through it with the participants. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Answering the question: What would this look like in real-time, in your classroom? - Here is where I really want educators to see how this is an applicable and accessible framework that could be applied in their classrooms. Often, with workshops, there is that feeling of “I learned this but what next”, and I <i>don't</i> want them to have this feeling. I want them to take resource, examples, and experiences in the workshop with them. - I want to model exactly what I want them to do in the next activity with their group. 	
<p>5:55- 6:15pm</p>	<p><u>Activity 2: Curating a Lesson Step 2 → Creating a Lesson for your Population</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Here is where participants will be put back into their same breakout rooms, where they will create a lesson for the community/students they were presented in the first activity. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Each group will plan a short lesson on Consent or a sex education topic of their choice. ○ Using the template provided on the Jamboard, groups will come up with a way to teach this subject to their community. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The template will be sectioned off to make it easy to navigate. ○ This is where participants will be asked to apply the last core components presented before the activity. ○ Here is where I want participants to see how it is possible to apply this framework to communities, particularly marginalized ones. This is where we want to connect the identity work, we did in the first activity to how it can influence best classroom practices and lesson creation. 	<p><u>Materials List</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Slides - Jamboard

6:15-	<u>Wrap-up and final thoughts on workshop</u>	<u>Materials List</u>
6:30pm	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Here is where I will be looking at the question that participants will put in the chatbox. - Then I will be asking participants to complete the evaluation survey - Then I will be presenting my website as an additional resource available to them and present the Padlet I will be setting up for an ongoing community for folks after the workshop ends to share resources, successes, and frustrations. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <u>Slides</u> - <u>Padlet</u>

ADDITIONAL COMMENTS / NOTES:

I plan on staying on until 7 if there are any questions, concerns, or critiques! also just a good time to debrief with my helpers and Amanda!)

Appendix B

Redefining "Comprehensive"

A Pedagogy of Empowerment and Social Justice for K-12 Sex Education



with Nina J. Lee, Candidate for M.Ed in Community Engagement



Welcome!

My name is Nina J. Lee

- Graduated from Spelman College '21 with a B.A. in Comparative Women's Studies.
- Peer to Peer Educator and Advocate with youth-led organization Unite for Reproductive and Gender Equity (URGE).
- Currently finishing my Masters of Education in Community Engagement and focusing on the intersection of Advocacy, Organizing and Youth Programming.
- Currently a Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Fellow at Gann Academy.
- A believer in supporting youth power!



The Team!



Baili Boutte
(she/her/hers)



Amanda Alcox
(she/her/hers)



Ashley Clarke
(she/her/hers)



Jamella J. Leitch
(she/her/hers)



Elana Zabar
(she/her/hers)



If you have questions throughout the workshop put them in the chat or DM them to Baili or Nina!

Community Guidelines

What are Community Guidelines?

Community Guidelines are an effort to create the safest learning community possible.

Guidelines aim to:

- Ensures that this space is safe physically, and mentally.
- Keeps conversations open and honest.
- Promotes accountability (for you AND me)
- Ensures that we are all getting the most out of this experience.

Would anyone like to add any community guidelines?

Leave Respectability Politics at the Door

Inclusive Language Only

Assume Best Intentions, But Own Impact

Take Space and Make Space

Use "I" Statements

VEGAS

Take a Moment if You Need a Moment

Let's jump right in and hear from youth.....



In Your Breakout Room....

Get to know your group by discussing the following in your breakout room:

What was your first impression of the video?

What was a funny response?

Did you relate to the teens?

Did you find yourself surprised by any of their responses?

Record your response via JamBoard!

(link in the chat!)

What do I mean when I say “pedagogy of empowerment and social justice?”

First... what's a pedagogy?

◆ Oxford would say.....

"the method and practice of teaching, especially as an academic subject or theoretical concept"

◆ Merriam-Webster would say.....

"the art, science or profession of teaching"

For my research, both definitions are taken into great consideration. This pedagogy is based heavily on **academia and theory**, but also centers the **practitioners, the profession, the art of teaching**.

What do I mean when I say “pedagogy of empowerment and social justice?” (cont.)

The gaps in U.S. sex education that influenced the development of this pedagogy

◆ In my research I found....

As of 2021, there are 39 states with sex education curriculum mandates* .

- 28 of those states requires an abstinence-centric model
- 11 of those states offer inclusive content regarding sexual orientation
- 9 of those states require the sex education to be culturally competent

When we look at data about youth today, we can see that mandated programming does not reflect them. With **youth ages 14-18 describing their sexual and gender identities in a more diverse way**** and **people under age 25 identifying more racially diversally than years past*****, I was curious what the content of such mandated programming was.

*Guttmacher Institute (2021), **Soergal (2021), *** Frey (2020)

What do I mean when I say “pedagogy of empowerment and social justice?” (conti.)

The gaps in U.S. sex education that influenced the development of this pedagogy

◆ In my research I found....

As of 2021, there are 39 states with sex education curriculum mandates* .

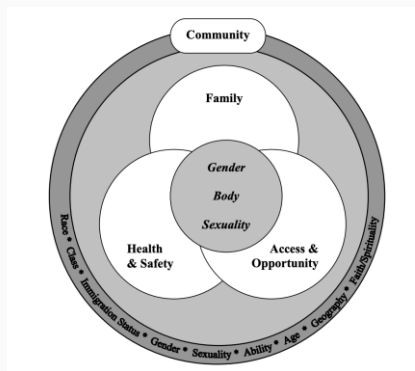
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*Guttmacher Institute (2021), **Soergal (2021), *** Frey (2020)

What do I mean when I say “pedagogy of empowerment and social justice?” (conti.)

So what's the alternative?



From the EMERL Reproductive Justice Lens Toolkit.

Reproductive Justice

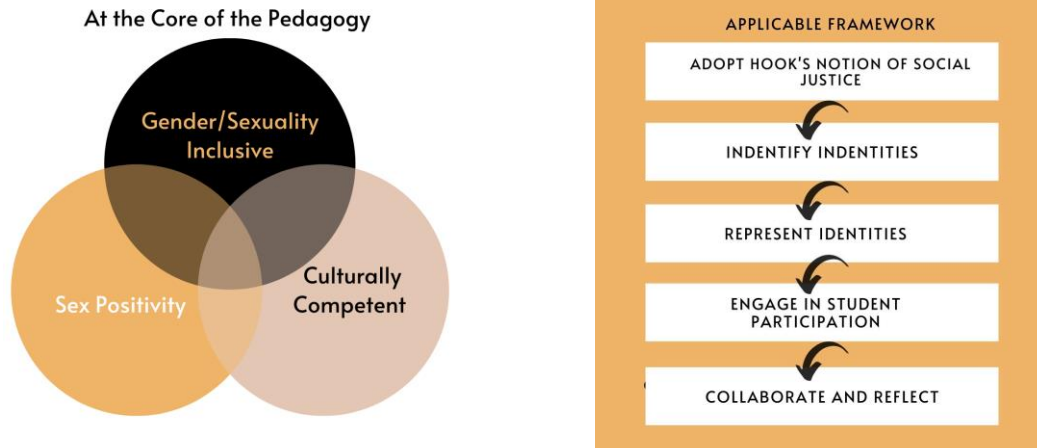
“the human right to *maintain personal bodily autonomy*, have children, not have children, and parent the children we have in *safe and sustainable communities*”



the integration of the "*intrapersonal, interpersonal and political*" in an effort to avoid negative attitudes surrounding sex and self.

Pedagogy Tenets and Framework.

What is this pedagogy at its core and how can I apply it?



Starting to Apply the Framework

What does this framework look like in action? : hooks' notion of Social Justice

bell hooks in her text "Pedagogy of Hope" notes a social justice education is one that teaches to *"value learning as an end itself and not as a means to reach another end, class mobility, power, status"* (49).

"Hence it [is] possible to learn liberating ideas in a context that was established to socialize us to accept domination, to accept one's place within race, sex, hierarchy (2)."

Activity Time!

Let's Learn By Practicing - Adopting Hooks Notion of Social Justice and Identifying Identities

You and your group are sex educators being called to a community to identify gaps in sex education to influence curriculum.

In the Jamboard with your group, identify:

Do you notice any gaps/issues in their current programming? (Is it heteronormative, does it emphasize social constructs, etc.)

Based on the provided community and student statistics, how may identity need to influence future programming?

Please go to the provided jamboard link in the chat!

Continuing to Applying the Framework

What does this framework look like in action?: Represent Identities

Why?

- Makes topics seem relevant and applicable to their lives.
- Helps account for and potentially alleviate cultural barriers to conversations around sex.
- Can educators consider the dynamics among participants that may influence engagement.
- Allows educators to be intentional about the real-world examples they include.

Examples of this:

- Inclusion of positive media representation of marginalized identities.
 - *This can come from the student themselves. (What are they watching? What are they listening to? What are they reading?)*
- Creating opportunities for students to safely share their identity/culture.
- Identity-specific sex education information and statistics.

Have you ever incorporated your student's identities into your work? If yes, how did it go? If no, why not?!

Continuing to Applying the Framework

What does this framework look like in action? : Student Participation

Why?

- Encourages student buy-in and investment with student-centric programming.
- Moves away from providing information in a single direction (teacher to student) and moves towards students' education each other and even you!

Examples of this could be:

- Forming a Student Advisory Committee.
 - *Inquire about community culture, school culture, and peer attitudes and needs.*
- Training students to be peer educators and lead school programming.
- Ask students to sketch their "dream sex education" and include their wants when you can.
- Asking for student feedback and instructor evaluation after a lesson.
- Working with students to make community guidelines.

Does anyone have any ideas or success stories of incorporating student participation?

Continuing to Applying the Framework

What does this framework look like in action? : Collaborate and Reflect

Why?

- Allows students to see that many of their thoughts, feelings, and experiences are similar to their peers.
- Encourages students to see multiple perspectives and life experiences. (Your narrative is not the *only* narrative)
- Prompts students to think beyond the classroom.

Examples:

- Creating opportunities to learn from and teach each other.
- Allowing students to talk amongst themselves after a lesson, **without facilitator intervention or monitoring.**
- Asking students to journal their thoughts after an experience.

Activity Time! (Part 2)

Let's Learn By Practicing

You and your group of sex educators are now planning a workshop based on your evaluation of your schools. The schools would like you to focus on a particular sex education topic. You are all being asked to focus on *consent and healthy relationships* or a sex education topic of your choice.

Please go to the provided jamboard link in the chat!

In the Jamboard with your group, identify:

What are your 3 "tenets" for this particular community that will guide programming planning?

What are ways you plan on getting student input for programming structure and content?

How will you make sure to represent students' personal and social identities in programming?

Continuing to Applying the Framework

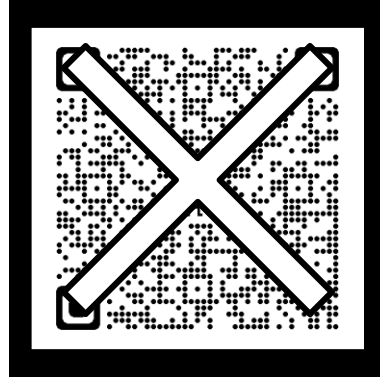
How did it go?

Can 1 representative from each group share: a *success*, a *challenge*, and a *lesson learned*?

Post-Session Survey

As a graduate fellow at Merrimack college, I am conducting this workshop for my Capstone project. Please take a moment to fill out these questions to help me in the research portion of my project. All answers will be confidential and analyzed in aggregate, no identifying information will be shared. I appreciate you taking the time to support my learning by helping me gain insights on my workshop!

A link is also in the chat!



Scan Here!

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Wrapping Up!

Community Padlet

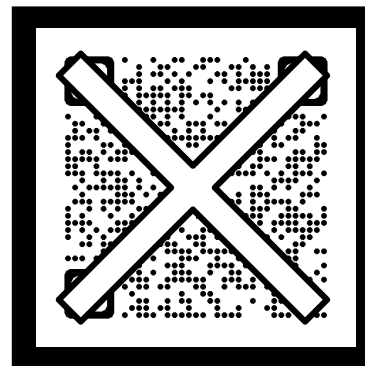
For this workshop, I have created a community Padlet! This Padlet has:

- *Additional Resources:*
 - *Social Justice Education Texts*
 - *Age-Appropriate Sex Education Resources*
- *Community Sharing Tab*
- *Current Sex Education News*

Q & A!

Now I'll take the time to answer any questions put in the Q&A/chat box or ask right now!

A link is also in the chat!



Scan Here!

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*Thank
you*

I'm here for you!
leen@merrimack.edu

Appendix C

Activity Jamboards

Icebreaker: What did you think of the video??!?

What was a funny response?
Did you relate to the teens?
Did you find yourself surprised by any of their responses?

Scenario 1 Pt 1

You have been called to William's Public Highschool. School officials are trying to make more inclusive sex education for their seniors.

Community: William's is a busy urban area. The community is inhabited mainly by immigrants, many from the Caribbean and Hispanic countries.

Student Population: 90% BIPOC students. Out of the 90% BIPOC students, 75% are first-generation with Caribbean and Hispanic ancestry. 40% of students openly identify as LGBTQ+

Current Programming: Historically, Williams has brought in a speaker for one-time programming for all seniors. The content of this speaker consists of:
- "'No' means 'No'": When a woman says no, men should listen.
- "Wrap it up or Pack it up": Men should always wear a condom to prevent spreading STDs and pregnancy.

Do you notice any gaps/issues in their current programming?

Based on the provided community and student statistics, how may identity need to influence future programming?

<p>Scenario 2 Pt 1</p>	<p>Do you notice any gaps/issues in their current programming?</p>
<p>You have been called to Saint Mildred's Catholic Middle School. Administration is trying to make more inclusive programming for 8th graders.</p> <p>Community: Saint Mildred's is located in a suburban neighborhood. The community is primarily White, with a small BIPOC population. Although not racially diverse, many youths come from "non-traditional" families (single-parent households, separated parents, having a guardian that is not their biological parent).</p> <p>Students: 80% of the students identify as White. With 20% identifying as BIPOC. Saint Mary's does not collect information on sexual or gender identity.</p> <p>Current Programming: Historically, Saint Mildred's has split the grade by gender for three days of programming. Here are the contents of the programming:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- "Good values": Every good young person waits until marriage before engaging in any sexual activity, or it will be a sin.- "Pray it away": When you have "bad thoughts" of masturbation, engaging in pre-marital sex or feelings for someone of the same sex, you must pray them away and seek guidance from your parents, teachers, or priest.	<p>Based on the provided community and student statistics, how may identity need to influence future programming?</p>

<p>Activity 2</p>	<p>How will you make sure to represent students' personal and social identities in programming?</p>
<p>What are 3 "tenets" to center when planning programming for this community?</p>	
<p>What are ways you plan on getting student input for programming structure and content?</p>	

Appendix D

Redefining Comprehensive: A Pedagogy of Empowerment and Social Justice for K-12 Sex Education

As a graduate fellow at Merrimack College, I am conducting this workshop for my capstone project. Please take a moment to fill out these questions to help me in the research portion of my project. All answers will be confidential and analyzed in aggregate, no identifying information will be shared. I appreciate you taking the time to support my learning by helping me gain insights on my workshop.

* Required

1. How would you rate the overall quality of this workshop?

Mark only one oval.

	1	2	3	4	5	
Poor	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Excellent

2. How would you rate the overall quality of the workshop facilitator (Nina Lee)? *

Mark only one oval.

	1	2	3	4	5	
Poor	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Excellent

3. How would you rate the overall quality of the workshop materials? (Slides, Graphics, Activity, Resources, etc.)

Mark only one oval.

	1	2	3	4	5	
Poor	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Excellent

4. Before this workshop how would you rate your opinion on sex education in a K-12 setting?

Mark only one oval.

- Very Negative
- Negative
- Postive
- Very Positive

5. After this workshop how would rate your opinion on sex education in a K-12 setting?

Mark only one oval.

- Very Negative
- Negative
- Postive
- Very Positive

6. Please answer the following statements accordingly.

Mark only one oval per row.

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
I feel that the presented framework was easy to understand	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I feel that the workshop gave me tools that I can apply to my classroom/work.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Learning this framework will aid in the creation of a positive learning experience for my students in my classroom.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Learning this framework makes me confident discussing sensitive and complex topics with my students.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
One workshop was enough to understand and use this framework.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

7. How likely are you to share the information you learned today with your colleagues?

Mark only one oval.

- Very Likely
 Somewhat likely
 Somewhat unlikely
 Very Unlikely

8. Before attending this workshop, how confident do you feel supporting students who approach you to discuss sensitive and complex topics about sex and sexual health?

Mark only one oval.

- Not at all confident
 Slightly confident
 Moderately confident
 Very confident
 Completely confident

9. After attending this workshop, how confident do you feel supporting students who approach you to discuss sensitive and complex topics about sex and sexual health?

Mark only one oval.

- Not at all confident
 Slightly confident
 Moderately confident
 Very confident
 Completely confident

- 10. After attending this workshop, do you feel confident in support sensitive and complex topics about sex and sexual health for student with marginalized identities? (BIPOC youth, Queer youth, etc.)

Mark only one oval.

- Not at all confident
- Slightly confident
- Moderately confident
- Very confident
- Completely confident

- 11. What is one aspect of this workshop that you feel was most helpful in your understanding of the topic?

- 12. How could this workshop be improved?

Redefining Comprehensive: A Pedagogy of Empowerment and Social Justice for K-12 Sex Education

Now I'd like to know a bit more about you...

13. How long have you been teaching/working with students?

Mark only one oval.

- Less than a year
- 1-5 years
- 6-10 years
- 11-20 years
- More than 20 years

14. What grade level do you teach/work with? Or what grade level do you hope to teach/work with in the future? (Choose all that apply to you)

Check all that apply.

- Pre-K
- Elementary
- Middle
- High School
- K-12
- Higher Education

Other: _____

15. Which of the following categories best describe the way you identify? (Choose all that apply to you)

Check all that apply.

- Black
- Hispanic/Latino
- Asian
- Native American
- Middle Eastern/North African
- Pacific Islander
- White

Other: _____

16. Which of the following categories best describe the current way you identify?

Mark only one oval.

- Cisgender female/woman
- Cisgender male/man
- Gender queer, gender non-binary or gender fluid
- Transgender female/woman
- Transgender male/man
- Other: _____

17. Which of the following categories best describe the current way you identify?

Mark only one oval.

- Asexual
- Bisexual
- Gay/Lesbian
- Heterosexual/Straight
- Pansexual
- Queer
- Other: _____

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Appendix E

Observation Log

Please use this log while in Activity A and B to record participant behavior. This is an attempt to get an idea of how the workshop participants are

- Understanding the material
- Working together in a positive way
- Actively referring to content which was lectures about previously

Please read each section carefully when filling it out to ensure that your log is the most accurate it can be! Thanks for helping me out and let me know if you have any questions.

Activity A		
Observation Criteria	Yes, No or Maybe	<i>Briefly explain your answer</i>
Participants are clear about what they need to be doing during the activity.		
Participants are referring to themes mentioned in the lecture to complete the activity.		
Participants seems to be collaborating/engaged with the activity.		

<p>Participants seem to understand how the activity relates to the overall goal of the workshop.</p>		
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<p align="center">Activity B</p>		
<p>Observation Criteria</p>	<p>Yes, No or Maybe</p>	<p><i>Briefly explain your answer</i></p>
<p>Participants are clear about what they need to be doing during the activity.</p>		
<p>Participants are referring to themes mentioned in the lecture to complete the activity.</p>		
<p>Participants seems to be collaborating/engaged with the activity.</p>		

<p>Participants seem to understand how the activity relates to the overall goal of the workshop.</p>		
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