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SELF EVALUATION AND REFLECTION

This class has not only allowed me to explore identity in relation to educational access but has also allowed me to explore that in the context of my own skin. I was able to understand identity, access, and innovation in myself through the discussions we talked about, articles we read, and through my praxis placement. Experiences I have encountered younger in educational settings finally made sense to me. Before this class, I never really thought about the purpose behind why certain models, programs, restrictions, curriculums, polices, or acts exist in education. I never questioned why they were there, how they were formed and when they were incorporated. I never challenged if these things are actually impactful in a strong/ positive way to the student body, vice versa. I now understand why I was in ESL classes or why I participated in after school enrichment programs. These were all factors that may contribute to my success in education, but I have always believed that these factors are not as important compared to the teacher running it. I had a horrible experience in grade school when I was younger. My teacher was passive-aggressive with her words and had always violently treated me badly – both verbally and physically. I knew that the discipline I received from her was against all moral principles, but I did not understand why she resorted to such methods, such as instilling pain and fear as discipline. I have put a lot of things into context after these past few months of class. Instead of asking questions, I started to revise my thinking to give full value to my experiences. I went from “Why me?” to “Try me.” This class has helped strengthen my thoughts and views on the importance of teachers in identity and innovation in education.

Every article we read in class touches upon the improvement of an educational system for students through different innovations despite the content of race, religion, or culture. Whether it’d be using different learning models to offering enrichment programs or tutoring to help students, nothing can compare to the effects the facilitator has. Educators are natural resources who are able to spur change. The facilitator is more important than what he or she is facilitating. From my experiences, I performed better in classes where I had better communication and relationships with my teachers. It did not matter how s/he taught the class. It did not matter if specialized programs or resources are offered to improve student performances and skills. I felt like I mattered, that I was cared for, and that was all it took for me to turn my prior image of a “victim” of abuse to an image of innovation. While some schools lack these additional resources, teachers are natural resources in the classroom. If we all revise our thinking to give full value to our natural resources, then our educational system would gain a powerful tool for educational improvement and development, and personal growth.

Though I usually do not talk often in class, I am an active listener. It is always refreshing to hear to compare my thoughts to thoughts from others I hear in conversations. I enjoy how my thoughts change after listening to others and I find myself challenging what I once felt strongly about. It is also surprising to see how much we have in common as a class and how much we differ from each other as well. My favorite activity in class is when we get into small groups and talk. I think I am more comfortable talking in small groups because everyone gets a chance to talk compared to a bigger group. I always find myself wanting to talk and then someone else jumps in and before I know it, my ideas and thoughts are all covered, so I talk a lot more in small groups compared to big groups.

The readings for this class are something I will always refer to. Reading can get boring sometimes, but not the ones in this class. The readings allowed me to open my eyes to a world of deeper thinking. While some readings were difficult to grasp, I enjoyed reading about real world problems in identity and education and pretty much how they relate to word choice. From what I read, word choice had to do with a lot of issues we see today - from racial profiling to labeling. In fact, everything we read is interconnected. I find myself bringing major points we addressed and talked about in class to my friends and mentors because everything we read about policies to women in education still impacts us today. I also enjoyed writing papers in this class as well because it allowed me to be introspective and reflective about a lot of different topics which made me understand how identity, access and innovation came together.

I’d like to take everything I’ve experienced and seen in my praxis placement and what I in this class about identity, access and innovation to better myself and my community. I want to challenge ideas outside the classroom like I challenged other’s thoughts and ideas in the classroom about these topics. I hope to step out of my comfort zone and possibly turn my thoughts and words into actions one day.