Exploring Cultural Identity and Engagement among Hispanic Youth: Implications for Food Justice and Food System Development

Rachelle A. Purnell

Thesis submitted to the faculty of the Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University
in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

Master of Science
In
Agricultural and Extension Education

James C. Anderson II, Committee Chair
Kim Niewolny
Maria Cana Jimenez

July 20, 2017
Blacksburg, VA

Keywords: Hispanic, youth, food heritage, youth development, food justice, identity

Exploring Relationships between Identity Expression and Engagement in the Local Food System among Hispanic and Latino Youth

Rachelle A. Purnell

ABSTRACT (Professional)

Creating healthy lifestyles and access to quality, nutritious food for marginalized groups, specifically Hispanics, is becoming an increasing topic of conversation. However, issues of access, availability, lack of initiatives in many areas which allow these individuals to become involved in the local food movement have plagued this population, especially the youth. In recent years, Georgetown, Delaware has become a major immigration hub, seeing large populations of Hispanics migrating to the area. Like many locations which see large numbers of individuals of a particular ethnic group not known to the area, the need for culturally relevant and responsive resources becomes imperative. Considering that youth are a vital part of society and are widely impacted by issues of food insecurity and unhealthy food choices, it is important to address their intentions to become actively engaged in their local food system and the role that their identity as Hispanic youth plays in that intention. To assess Hispanic youth's intentions to engage in their local food system and food heritage, the researcher selected a group of 11 Hispanic youth from Georgetown, Delaware, to participate in a Photovoice project, which called on them to take pictures of items salient to their identity, how they understood their local food system and perceived barriers. Following the two-week photo taking period, youth then participated in two focus group sessions, one to obtain information relevant to the research topic and the other, serving as a member check and to elicit further information. Findings of this study include the idea that cultural identity

serves as a major influential factor to youth engagement in the food movement and in food heritage. Cultural identity shapes the attitudes of Hispanic youth towards engaging. Further, attitudes toward food movement involvement and educating others positively impacts youth intentions to engage. Hispanic youth's attitudes toward protecting the authenticity of food and culture serve as an additional influential factor for engaging in the food movement and advocating for food justice. Social pressure from family and peers significantly impacts the food choices and cultural engagement of Hispanic youth. Food system knowledge and awareness contributes to youth attitudes towards the food movement and food & cultural heritage. Lack of knowledge can potentially impede engagement. Lastly, self-efficacy concerning the food movement acts as both a facilitator and inhibitor to youth engagement. However, cultural identity and familial support serve as factors which boost the confidence levels of Hispanic youth to engage in the food movement and food heritage.

ABSTRACT (Public)

Research points to trends in U.S. food systems leading to led to increased prevalence of processed foods and associated diet-related diseases among marginalized groups, such as Hispanic youth. Impacts of these unhealthy diets have sparked movements toward consumption of local foods. Since groups such as Hispanic youth face greater geographic, financial and cultural barriers to healthy food access, understanding their intentions to engage in their local food system and food heritage becomes important in order to secure and maintain access. In Georgetown, Delaware, the Hispanic population and Hispanic youth populations have increased tremendously since the 1990's. The need to ensure the food security and access, as well as cultural retention of the youth is vitally important, as the population begins to increase and give rise to new generations of Hispanic youth. In order to assess Hispanic youth's intentions to engage in their local food system and food heritage, the researcher selected a group of 11 Hispanic youth from Georgetown, Delaware. This group of youth participated in a Photovoice project, which called on them to take pictures of items salient to their identity, how they understood their local food system and perceived barriers. Following the two-week photo taking period, youth will then participate in two focus group sessions, one to obtain information relevant to the research topic and the other, serving as a member check and to elicit further information. The findings of this study indicate that cultural identity serves as a major influential factor to youth engagement in the food movement and in food heritage. Cultural identity shapes the attitudes of Hispanic youth towards engaging. Also, attitudes toward food movement involvement and educating others positively impacts youth intentions to engage. Hispanic youth's attitudes toward protecting the

authenticity of food and culture serve as an additional influential factor for engaging in the food movement and advocating for food justice. Social pressure from family and peers significantly impacts the food choices and cultural engagement of Hispanic youth. Food system knowledge and awareness contributes to youth attitudes towards the food movement and food & cultural heritage. Lack of knowledge can potentially impede engagement. Lastly, self-efficacy concerning the food movement acts as both a facilitator and inhibitor to youth engagement. However, cultural identity and familial support serve as factors which boost the confidence levels of Hispanic youth to engage in the food movement and food heritage. This research study will lend to conversations around food justice, working across cultural differences and youth & community development.

Acknowledgements

I want to first extend my sincere gratitude to my advisor, Dr. James C. Anderson II for diligently working to mold me as a researcher and working tirelessly to review any assignments I sent to him. Thank you for all you have done. It doesn't go unnoticed.

I'd like to thank my committee members Dr. Maria Carmen Cana Jimenez and Dr. Kim Niewolny for their intellect and their contributions to my committee. You both worked relentlessly to ensure my success throughout this process and for that I am most gracious.

I would like to extend a thank you the faculty and staff of the ALCE department for creating a learning environment which fostered continuous development and support. Special thanks to Debbie, who I could always count on for whatever I needed.

I also would like to thank Executive Director Bernice Edwards and the First State Community Action Agency staff, who made this project with La Casita possible and a huge success.

Thank you, Thank you, Thank you to all of my ALCE peers! Shannon, Crystal, Lane, Courtney, Chantel and Arogeanae, we have all leaned on each other throughout our graduate careers. Keep holding on, you are almost there! I also want to thank all of my other peers and lifelong friends I have met during my time in Blacksburg.

I want to also thank my mother and father, Gail and Ralph Purnell for their continued support in all my endeavors. Thank you for the critiques, the prayers and the well wishes.

Also, thank you to all of my siblings, aunts, uncles and cousins who encouraged me every step of the way. And a special thank you to my grandmother, Dolores Hyland, whose prayers and words of encouragement kept me grounded throughout this journey.

Thank you to my great support system of friends who provided every bit of supported I needed at all hours of the night. You all are the best!

And last, but certainly not least, I want to thank my Lord and Savior, for without Him none of this would be possible. Thank you for being that listening ear no matter when I called on you.

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Chapter One

Introduction

Background and Setting

In the world of food and agriculture, a significant amount of discourse focuses on local foods and local food systems (USDA, n.d.). Increased efforts on eating locally produced and fresh food items significantly affect populations and groups of people who lack access to such foods and who are unable to afford these foods. One group in particular which faces struggles with accessing locally produced and culturally appropriate fresh foods includes the Hispanic and Latino population (Food Research and Action Center, 2011).

According to the U.S. Census Bureau (2010), Hispanics comprise the largest minority population in the United States at roughly 16%, and are projected to continue to grow at an exponential rate. Roughly 63% of the Hispanic population in the U.S. comes from Mexico, 9.2% comes from Puerto Rico, and the remainder from countries such as: the Dominican Republic, Cuba, El Salvador, Guatemala and Peru to name a few (U.S. Census Bureau, 2010). With this population rapidly growing, understanding their culture, lifestyles and factors that influence their immigration to or migration within the United States becomes important.

In 2014, 22.4% of U.S. Hispanic households were food insecure—significantly higher than the national average (14%) (Rabbitt, Smith & Coleman-Jensen, 2016). Addressing issues of food security becomes increasingly important for areas which see unexpected increases in immigrant and minority family populations. Gaffney (2007) highlights that Latinos/as are moving to areas that have no historical presence of the population. Georgetown, Delaware, located in Sussex County is one of those areas that became a sudden and major immigration hub. Sussex County's Hispanic population has more than doubled since 2000, according to Tyson

(2015). The town of Georgetown has been transformed by what Marzec (2004) calls Latino immigration, as droves of Guatemalan poultry workers have entered the town. The larger influxes of the Hispanic population have numerous social, political and cultural implications. With increasing immigrant populations also comes a rise in the number of children. Thus, the need for increased social services, educational opportunities and food to name a few elevates. According to the U.S. Census Bureau (2010), Delaware's Hispanic population consists of 23,309 youth between the ages of 0 and 14 years old, making up the largest percentage of the overall Hispanic population at 31.6%. Further, 2010 data indicates that 21.7% of Delaware's Hispanic population lives below the poverty level. Overall, Sussex County, Delaware has the highest percentage of food insecure children in the state, at 19.6% (Matlib, Cohen, Potter, & Zhao, 2016). Georgetown has a total population of roughly 6,775 people with about 48% of the population identifying as Hispanic or Latino[1] (U.S. Census Bureau, 2015). The population largely consists of individuals of Guatemalan descent, making up 73% of the Hispanic population in Georgetown. Considering that Delaware's overall Hispanic population is much younger, with a median age of about 24 years old (U.S. Census Bureau, 2010), it is important to focus on engaging the younger population in the food movement and food heritage in order to promote food security, healthier lifestyles and cultural maintenance.

Background on La Casita

The youth participants of this study were all a part of the La Casita afterschool program. La Casita evolved into a community organization under the direction of the Georgetown Historical Society after its previous developers transitioned to other projects. La Casita was founded as an organization to aid new Georgetown residents, many of which were fleeing from Guatemala and entering Georgetown, Delaware working in the poultry plants and conducting

[1] For the remainder of this study, the term Hispanic will be used when referencing the population under study.

farm labor duties. On November, 5, 1999, the organization was then taken over by First State Community Action Agency (FSCAA) as the population began to increase and the historical society could no longer meet the rising demands of the population.

La Casita has further developed into a community based youth program under the direction of FSCAA. FSCAA provides a series of after-school and summer programs which provide low-income youth in Sussex County with a safe place to go while out of school. The La Casita program provides the Hispanic youth of the Indian River School District with enrichment programs and homework tutorial assistance for students of Non- English speaking families. The program functions at two sites in Georgetown to effectively accommodate the youth of the area. Retired teachers and assistants are employed as tutors in order to build students' knowledge around subjects such as math, English, science and history. Executive Director, Bernice Edwards shares a vision for the program to become more inclusive and branching out to collaborate more with others in the community (personal communications, August 8, 2017). Bernice further elaborates on the importance of cultural exchange with others for second generation Hispanic youth who are born here in the United States (personal communications, August 8, 2017). Additionally, she shared her vision for FSCAA and La Casita to continue expanding to provide youth and their families with the necessary tools to live prosperous, sustainable lives.

Hispanic & Latino Terminology

The use of panethnic terms such as Hispanic and Latino have sparked some debate and vary pending the context of their use. Discourse around the use of this terminology presents challenges to defining this diverse population. Norris (2007) considers that individuals can activate a different ethnic identity depending on the context. For example, individuals may express their Colombian origin in a more private setting while they could make use of a Hispanic

pan-ethnic identity in a socio-political context in order to achieve and struggle for certain political goals (Norris, 2007). Issues with using the terms Hispanic and Latino present various challenges, considering that Hispanic is occasionally described as a term representing individuals from Spain and Latino encompasses both inhabitants of Latin America, as well as inhabitants or those born in the United States. Cultural identity also further complicates the uses of these homogenizing terms, since the diversity among geographic location of the individuals who are lumped into the Hispanic group varies. Cultural identity refers to a person's identification with, or sense of belonging to, a particular group based on several cultural categories, including nationality, ethnicity, race, gender, and religion (Hsueh-Hua Chen, 2014). Hseuh-Hu Chen (2014) also highlights that the maintenance of cultural identity occurs through sharing collective knowledge such as traditions, heritage, language, aesthetics, norms and customs.

To further address the terms Hispanic and Latino, definitions of each are provided. The following represents the definition of Hispanic:

> **Hispanic adj** [L hispanicus, fr Hispania Iberian Peninsula, Spain] (ca. 1889): of, relating to, or being a person of Latin American descent living in the U.S.; especially: one of Cuban, Mexican, or Puerto Rican origin — **Hispanic n** (Merriam-Webster's Collegiate Dictionary 11th Edition Dictionary 2004)
> **Hispanic adjective** relating to Spain or to Spanish-speaking countries, especially those of Central and South America.
> Relating to Spanish-speaking people or their culture, especially in the US.
> **Noun** s Spanish-speaking person in, especially one of Latin American descent, living in the US. (Oxford Dictionary of English Second Edition 2003)

Latino is defined as:

> **Latino n**, pl -nos [AmerSp, probably short for latinoamericano Latin American] (1946) 1: a native of inhabitant of Latin America 2: a person of Latin-American origin living in the U.S. — **Latino** adj (Merriam-Webster's Collegiate Dictionary 11th Edition Dictionary 2004)
> **Latino** chiefly N. Amer. noun (fem. Latina) (pl. Latinos or Latinas) a Latin American inhabitant of the United States
> **adjective** relating to Latinos or Latinas.

Dr. Anthony Peguero discusses the use of the word Latino, adding that it is a term which incorporates also non-speaking Spanish countries like Brazil (personal communication, July, 6, 2017). The Oxford Dictionary of English (2003) incorporates a special use indicating that “in the US, Hispanic is the standard accepted term referring to Spanish-speaking people living in the US. Other, more specific, terms such as Latino and Chicano are also used when occasion demands.” Valdeon (2013) highlights that "…the term Hispanic remains deeply embedded within academic discourse, with Latino making a timid progress since it became common in the 1990s." Hispanic is the term conventionally used in academia and cultural institutions. However, Chiricos & Eschholz (2002) recognizes "…the use of either Hispanic or Latino or Latina as identifying terms is problematic, not least because it conflates many diverse people who may prefer to identify themselves by their countries of origin."

The use of this terminology largely depends on regional location within the United States, among political issues. Dr. Peguero posits “In the U.S., typically more and more on the east coast and northeast ... people tend to use the term Hispanic. More in the South, you'll start seeing Latino/Latina, then as you move towards the West you start seeing a whole range of things from Latino/Latina, Chicano, because of the Mexican influence. I mean politically and historically Hispanic has been much more utilized in Northeast corridor. In the Midwest is a whole range of different things.” (personal communication, July 6, 2017). It is acknowledged that the specific groups under the umbrella terms Hispanic and Latino have some share some similar and some different aspects of cultural identity. Though Latino and Hispanic are often times used interchangeably, the term Hispanic will be used when referring to the participants of this study. The use of the term Hispanic is not only the commonly accepted terminology used in the

Delmarva region, which is where Georgetown is located, it also allows the researcher maintain consistency throughout the study.

Statement of the Problem

Over the past few years, the number of Hispanic youth categorized as overweight and obese has increased, especially those born in the United States (Ogden et al., 2014). Many have assimilated to mainstream culture and diets, losing touch with their traditional identity and food heritage, essentially disengaging from local food systems and healthy eating options (Mainous, Diaz, & Geesey, 2008). Simultaneously, approximately one in four Hispanic children (24%) lives in a food-insecure household as compared to one in seven (14%) White, non-Hispanic children (Colemen-Jensen, Rabbot, Gregory, & Singh, 2016). Further, according to a mapping of the youth food movement, which was produced by Rooted in Community (n.d.), there are no youth food movements in Delaware, which indicates a potential lack of opportunities to become engaged in the local system. Bowens (2013) also presented a map showing a lack of farming and food justice initiatives owned and operated by people of color within the state. With that being said, in order to continue making positive progress towards food security and healthy lifestyles for community members, community organizations should strive to understand Hispanic youth's intentions to engage with their identity, food heritage, and local food systems.

Purpose Statement

The purpose of this phenomenological study was to use Photovoice, a participatory methodology, to explore how identity inspires food choices and engagement in the local food system from the perspectives of Hispanic youth between the ages of 8 – 14 years old in a rural/suburban community located in Georgetown, Delaware. More specifically, how do identity

expressions among Hispanic and Latino youth influence food choices and engagement in the local food system?

Research Objectives

Research questions guiding this study were:

1. What are the factors that shape the identities of Hispanic youth?
2. How do Hispanic youth express their identities?
3. How do Hispanic youth perceive their identity expressions are received by the environment?
4. How does the congruence or incongruence of identity expressions with the environment impact the relationships among food heritage, the local food system, and food sovereignty?

Definition of Terms

Acculturation- Adopting cultural traits or social patterns from another group (Berry, 1980)

Assimilation- An individual gives up his or her own cultural identity and becomes absorbed into the host culture (Berry, 1980)

Hispanic- A Spanish Speaking person living in the US, especially one of Latin American descent (Oxford Dictionary of English Second Edition 2003)

Latino- A Latin American inhabitant of the United States ; Individuals of Latin American origin born in the United States (Oxford Dictionary of English Second Edition 2003)

Food Justice- "Food Justice is communities exercising their right to grow, sell, and eat healthy food. Healthy food is fresh, nutritious, affordable, culturally-appropriate, and grown locally with care for the well-being of the land, workers, and animals. People practicing food justice leads to a strong local food system, self-reliant communities, and a healthy environment." (Just Food, n.d.)

Social identity- "The individual's knowledge that he belongs to certain social groups together with some emotional and value significance to him of this group membership" (Tajfel & Turner, 1986)

Food sovereignty- "The right of peoples to healthy and culturally appropriate food produced through ecologically sound and sustainable methods, and their right to define their own food and agriculture systems" (USDA ERS, 2009)

Food heritage- Honoring and celebrating diverse food cultures and traditions in a community (USDA, n.d.)

Limitations of the Project

This project is limited by the sampling procedures. Because of the use of a convenience sample, the participants are not representative of all Latino and Hispanic youth, limiting the variation of perspectives on life, food, nutrition, etc.

Additionally, the interviewer will be an African American female, which could influence how the informants answer the questions due to assumptions about her based on the lack of shared cultural background. Their responses could be impacted due to the perceived lack of understanding of the language.

Basic Assumptions

The following assumptions are being made about the sample:

1. Hispanic and Latino youth want to be involved in their local food system.
2. Social identity and traditions are important to Hispanic and Latino youth; therefore, in the absence of consequences and the availability of resources, they want to connect with their identity and engage in their food heritage.
3. Participants understand what is being asked of them and will be truthful in their responses.

Significance of the Research

Migrating to another country often leads to many immigrants assimilating to the ways of the majority culture (Berry, 1992). According to Perez-Escamilla (2009), acculturation to the mainstream diet will likely produce negative impacts to the health of Hispanics, especially those

originating from rural regions of their home countries. Immigrants to the United States tend to show lower risk for things such as smoking, being overweight, having hypertension and lower all-cause mortality (Singh & Siahpush, 2002). Conversely, as the time spent in the United States increases, health outcomes and behaviors tend to reflect those of their U.S. counterparts (Academy of Nutrition & Dietetics, 2013). Hispanic and Latino populations, many of which are low in socioeconomic status (SES), tend to experience disparities similar to those of African Americans, which include food insecurity, obesity, and chronic disease (Sims, 2014). Hispanics are 11% more likely to be overweight or obese compared to their White counterparts (DHHS, 2007). Moreover, Mexican boys ages 6-11 were more likely than any other race to be overweight (25.6% versus 16.9% of whites and 17.2% of African Americans) (DHHS, 2007).

Information produced from this study can be used to develop and implement community food projects such as community gardens that seek to provide locally produced and culturally appropriate foods for the underserved population under study. Through the development of such projects, youth will learn of the significant role that agriculture and food plays in their daily lives and will learn the ways in which they can become agents of change in their communities by taking control of their own food choices and becoming engaged with their local food system.

This study sought to further understand social barriers that exist, thus prohibiting members of minority groups from becoming involved in or understanding their local food systems and food choices. Much of the existing research covers barriers such as living in food deserts with minimal access to healthy food options, lack of resources, monetary tribulations to purchase local or healthy food, etc. However, there is little discussion found that covers the role one's identity and culture plays in his or her engagement or intentions to engage with the local food system. There is also little information addressing how perceptions of one's identity and

culture influence relationships with an individual's food heritage, local food system and food sovereignty. Studying this information through the perspectives of Hispanic youth would provide an often unheard position. Also, encouragement to become engaged early may lead to persistence in involvement with community food projects and agriculture in the future. This study also seeks to assist its participants with understanding how food connects them to their culture, creating a greater cultural appreciation and identity retention.

Further exploring Hispanics' cultural identity and autonomy provides insight to community leaders and educators on how to empower Hispanic community members' choices and increase food sovereignty within these communities. According to Israel et al. (1994), access to nutritious and affordable food in low-income and marginalized communities is not determined by the individuals residing within them, but by processes of production and distribution that reflect regional, national, and international corporate and governmental interests. Access to nutritious food, especially for marginalized and vulnerable populations, continues to be an important public health and social justice issue in the U.S. (Stringer, 2009). Therefore, acquiring a greater understanding of how the mainstream culture influences lifestyle adaptation, relative to health and food choices may also help health professionals and community developers better serve the needs of the Hispanic and Latino population. These communities must be consciously aware and knowledgeable of the process which impacts their food and overall welfare. West (2013) points out that proper education equips individuals' essential tools for survival and advancement. She further argues these seeds of intellectual curiosity will stimulate a person's desire to seek out a plurality of information sources to significantly increase the ability to protect one's health, well-being and means of livelihood (West, 2013).

By conducting this study, the researcher hopes to initiate dialogue among community development organizations, social service entities, policy makers, and community members to address concerns of food insecurity, the need culturally appropriate foods and services, as well as enriching and educational opportunities for individuals, especially youth to become involved in their local food systems. This study was designed to create experience and momentum for Hispanic youth to become advocates in the food justice movement. Additionally, this study serves as a conversation starter for the Georgetown community to express how they see change for the environment in which they live.

Chapter Two

Literature Review

This chapter synthesizes pertinent information found in the literature on the relationships between identity expression and engagement in the local food system among Hispanic and Latino youth. The chapter begins with discussing what the differences of the terms Latino, Hispanic and Latin American are and why the term Hispanic is being used for this study and its population. Then migration patterns and the influences the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) and the Central American Free Trade Agreement (CAFTA) have had on immigration are discussed. Next, acculturation and its impacts on food choices, food sovereignty and local food system engagement are discussed. Lastly, youth development and youth engagement are examined. This will conclude with a discussion on why it is crucial to involve youth, especially those in low income communities, in their local food system and increase awareness of food system positionality. As well as why it is important for second and third generation youth of immigrant parents to connect with their identity through local food system engagement in order to combat effects of acculturation and assimilation.

Acculturation Overview

Contact with a new and different culture tends to result in changes and adjustments to language use, cognitive style, personality, identity, attitudes, and stress among immigrants (Marin & Marin, 1991). Immigrants tend to assimilate to the mainstream lifestyles of their new country through adopting behaviors, values, and sense of identity similar to those of the mainstream culture. The term acculturation describes the changes within an individual as a response to their interaction with two or more cultures (Montez & Eschbach, 2008). Robert Park describes the process leading to cultural assimilation and acculturation as progressive and

irreversible (Padilla & Perez, 2003). Cultural changes of acculturation involve changes in group customs and in the political and economic life (Berry et al., 2006). Psychological changes include a different outlook on acculturation processes, cultural identities and social behaviors as related to the group in contact (Phinney, 2003).

The bidimensional acculturation model was first proposed by Berry (1974), employing a quadric-modal acculturation ideal (see Figure 1). Berry (1980) suggests that two independent dimensions exist in the process of acculturation of immigrants, mainly in the maintenance of heritage, culture and identity, as well as, identification with aspects of their societies of settlement. Four sectors exist to explain the ways in which individuals express how they seek to acculturate. These include assimilation, separation, marginalization and integration. Berry (1980) presents that assimilation occurs when there is little interest in cultural maintenance combined with a preference for interacting with the larger society. Separation occurs when cultural maintenance is sought while avoiding involvement with others in the larger settlement society. Marginalization exists when neither cultural maintenance nor interaction with others is sought. Lastly, integration exists when both cultural maintenance and involvement with the larger society are being sought.

Dimension 1: Is it considered to be of value to maintain cultural identity and characteristics?			
Dimension 2: Is it considered to be of value to maintain relationships with other groups?		**Yes**	**No**
	Yes	**INTEGRATION**	**ASSIMILATION**
	No	**SEPARATION**	**MARGINALIZATION**

Figure 1: Quadric-modal Acculturation Model

Bidimensional acculturation focuses on the one way process of acculturation that immigrants undergo, with an even narrower focus on the changes that occur to identity and life patterns (Ngo, 2008). According to researchers, acculturation is responsible for both positive and negative health outcomes among Hispanic adults and children in the United States (Lara, Gamboa, Kahramanian, Morales, & Hayes Bautista, 2005). Theorists of the bidimensional acculturation model seek to further understand the negotiation, creation, destruction and recreation process that identity undergoes as immigrants migrate to new areas. Understanding this process and culture can provide insight to healthcare professionals, community developers, etc. for how to better serve populations throughout their transitions.

Aronowitz (1984) highlights the gap in research being conducting with regard to acculturation and youth. This component is increasingly important to consider as many more families migrate to the U.S. and as those families then produce second generation children, those born in the U.S. to foreign born parents. The bidimensional acculturation model as referenced above, applies to youth as well, taking into consideration the degree to which an individual desires to maintain their cultural heritage and identity and the degree to which they seek involvement with the larger society (Berry et al., 2006). For children of the second generation, the power struggles of cultural maintenance and becoming involved in the larger society are a struggle. They often find themselves in a position to integrate as they attempt to maintain their cultural heritage and be a part of society as a whole (Berry et al., 2006).

Social Identity Theory

The social identity theory provides insight regarding the ways in which the acculturation and assimilation processes have impacted the retention of the cultural and self-identity of Hispanic and Latino individuals. Additionally, the role acculturation, assimilation and identity

play in eating habits and food choices will be examined. Social identity theory and self-categorization theory suggest that people often identify with a group and consequently define themselves in terms of a salient social category or a group (Tajfel & Turner, 1986; Tajfel 1972). In turn, this causes people to (1) highlight similarities between in-group members, and differences between in-group and out-group members and (2) favor the beliefs and behaviors of the in-group members above the out-group members (Tajfel & Turner, 1986). Therefore, the social identity theory predicts that people who identify strongly with a group, and subsequently develop a social identity through embedding their personal identity within that group, will tend to adopt the norms endorsed by group members since doing so validates the status of oneself as a group member (Turner, 1985).

For Hispanic immigrants, youth and adolescents included, the tendency to retain the out group identity or the identity from their home country is normal (Mejia, 2007). According to Chatzisarantis, Hagger, Wang, & Thogersen-Ntoumani (2009), group identification indicates the strength with which an individual identifies with a behaviorally relevant group. When individuals do not identify with a group or when the strength of identification is low, group processes become less compelling determinants of behavior, and intentions become more influential of future action (Terry & Hogg, 1996). Discussing social or ethnic identity becomes a crucial topic when addressing acculturation due to the fact that identity is referring to maintaining cultural characteristics of the home country and acculturation refers to the adoption of cultural characteristics of the host nation (Rodrigo Romo, 2012).

Hispanic & Latino Identity

There are numerous common misconceptions of the seemingly interchangeable terms Hispanic and Latino. Hispanic was a term first used by the U.S. government in the 1970's in an

attempt to count people from Mexico, Cuba and Central and South America (CNN, 2014). The term was developed in an attempt to provide a common denominator to a huge and significantly diverse population that is connected by the Spanish language and culture (U.S. Census Bureau, 2010). However, there is a consistent battle with how individuals in this population choose to identify. Some choose to classify themselves as Hispanic, while others may choose Latino/a, believing that Hispanic is an oppressive term assigned to them by the government.

According to Taylor, Lopez, Martinez, and Velasco (2012), 51% say they most often identify themselves by their family's country of origin, while 24% say they prefer a pan-ethnic label. Erikson (1968) theorized identity development as a central task of adolescence that ultimately results in a coherent and self-constructed dynamic organization of drives, abilities, beliefs, and personal history. Erikson (1950) and Schwartz, Montgomery, and Briones (2006) classify identity as the organization of self-understandings that define 'one's 'place in the world'. Taylor et al. (2014) states that about half (47%) of Hispanics/Latinos consider themselves to be very different from the typical American. And 21% say they use the term "American" most often to describe their identity. On these two measures, U.S.-born Hispanics express a stronger sense of affinity with other Americans and America than do immigrant Hispanics (Taylor et al., 2014). The way which new immigrants identify significantly impacts the way in which they assimilate and acculturate to their new country's culture.

Migration Patterns to the United States and Trade Agreements

The United States sees a vast number of immigrants from Central American countries, who migrate North following heightened social, political and structural issues in their native country. Prior to individuals from Central America and Mexico migrating to the U.S., came individuals from the Caribbean areas of the Dominican Republic, Puerto Rico and Cuba. It is

important to acknowledge this migration occurring post World War II, which initiated migration movements that followed. Migration doesn't always occur as a push factor such as issues of war or other political turmoil, sometimes it is a pull factor such as the discovery of better job opportunities (Muñiz-Solari, Li & Schleicher, 2010). Additionally, policies with the United States such as the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) and the Central American Free Trade Agreement (CAFTA) have been cited as further influencers of migration (Otero, 2011).

The development of NAFTA occurred in January 1994 between the U.S., Mexico and Canada. McBride & Sergie (2008) highlight NAFTA's overall goal as an initiative to eliminate most tariffs on products traded among the three countries, with emphasis on the liberalization of trade in agriculture, textiles, and automobile manufacturing. Many expressed concerns regarding the impacts that trade liberalization in Mexican agriculture would have on labor market transitions in the country and unskilled worker emigration to the United States (Burfisher, Robinson & Theirfelder, 2001). Supporters, however, argued that cheaper imports from Mexico would be beneficial for U.S. consumers and producers and that Mexico's growing economy would mean the need for more U.S. exports to Mexico (Burfisher, Robinson & Theirfelder, 2001). NAFTA's implementation came with promises of increased economic success and First World privileges including competitive job creation to the developing Mexico (Scott & Ratner, 2005). Instead, it brought a decrease in livelihood, job loss and increased poverty across much of rural Mexico. Tariff reduction allowed for the United States to grant large subsidies to American farmers (Scott & Ratner, 2005). Ultimately, American farmers were afforded the ability to export agricultural goods at a lower price, thus undermining the Mexican farmers who had previously been reliant on exports to the United States (Scott & Ratner, 2005). NAFTA tariff reductions

also allowed for large American firms to dominate the market, leaving many Mexicans jobless. Labor sovereignty led to the loss of earning livable wages for many Mexicans (Otero, 2011). Furthermore, results of this agreement threatend food self-sufficiency in Mexico, resulting in many relying on grains from the United States. Though Mexico increased its production of fruits and vegetables for export to North America, the sector didn't generate enough employment to absorb peasants who went bankrupt (Otero, 2011). In turn, Mexico saw its' most visible loss as a result of the agreement. This loss consisted of large out-migration rates, with many displaced Mexican workers heading to the United States, usually unauthorized or undocumented, in search of work (Otero, 2011). The Central American Free Trade Agreement, otherwise known as CAFTA, similar to NAFTA is a trade agreement between the United States, Guatemala, The Dominican Republic, El Salvador, Honduras, Nicaragua and Costa Rica. According to Smolarek (2007), many Guatemalans, along with many other Latin American citizens, are immigrating to the United States to escape poverty, some of which has arrived after the implementation of CAFTA and to provide their families and themselves with better lives.

The conundrum of issues which swarmed Guatemala, Mexico and other Central and Latin American countries sparked a great deal of migration. Georgetown, DE appears to be one of the smaller settling areas compared to other locations in Texas, California, and Arizona to name a few (Marzec, 2004). Nonetheless, there is a large Hispanic presence influencing the area. In a report for the United States Department of Agriculture's Economic Research Services, Kandel & Cromartie (2004) increases in Hispanic populations in nonmetro counties has shocked many demographers and presented challenges to local officials and policymakers. Hispanic newcomers have formed communities in areas unfamiliar with seeing large droves of foreign born individuals (Kandel & Cromartie, 2004). With this population come a few cultural

traditions and practices however, socioeconomic plight and food insecurity issues also follow. According to the Center for Community Research & Service (2015), 23.8 % of the Hispanic population in Delaware is living in poverty. The Center for Community Research & Service (2015) also states that 17.3% of the impoverished population of Delaware includes those under the age of 18 years old. With increases in migration, come increases of children. Considering that 19.4% of youth in Delaware are food insecure, it is particularly important to concentrate on youth who are at a particular disadvantage from minority families, such as Hispanics who have recently migrated or experience difficulties in obtaining culturally sensitive services.

Hispanics in Delaware

Delaware's Hispanic population has grown considerably in recent decades as indicated by Census figures. In 1990, approximately 15,800 people identified as Hispanic in the census, which made up 2.3 percent of the state's people (U.S. Census Bureau, 1992). By 2010, 73,000 people living in Delaware identified as Hispanics (U.S. Census Bureau, 2010). A 1960's diversity index highlights that Sussex was actually more diverse than New Castle and Kent in Delaware (USA Today, 2014). However, much of the state gradually grew more diverse after the 1960s, with Sussex County becoming more homogeneous between 1970, and 1990 (USA Today, 2014). However, Sussex County, Delaware has seen significant changes, with diversity index numbers currently around 42, which means there is a 42% chance that any two people that meet will be from differing racial and ethnic backgrounds.

Arrays of different cultures have taken root throughout the state. Recent census statistics indicate that nine in 10 Latinos of Mexican and Puerto Rican descent live in more urbanized areas in Delaware such as Dover and Wilmington. The Guatemalan population has been observed making their homes in rural neighborhoods, with nearly 30 percent of that community

living outside of urban Census tracts, as cited by Fisher (2014). An interview with Jose Somalo (2014) as cited in an article, Hispanics in Delaware proud, but integrated by James Fisher indicates that "Georgetown stands by itself. Even though the largest Hispanic population in Delaware is Mexican, Georgetown in particular is Guatemalan." The demographic changes in Sussex are driven by immigration from Central American and South American countries where work is low-paying, compared with wages in the U.S. Immigrants to the southern regions of Delaware typically find agricultural work consisting of harvesting crops, slaughtering chickens and other farm labor positions (Fisher, 2014).

Current projections indicate that by 2060, Hispanics will surpass African-Americans as the largest minority group in Sussex County (USA Today, 2014). The estimates obtained by USA Today predict that in 2060, over 193,000 Hispanics will live in Delaware, making up 15 percent of its people. For the first time in Sussex County, the expected Hispanic population of 59,000 people will grow larger than the black population of 55,000. Currently, the USA Today diversity index (2014) finds Sussex County is the only place in the state where those odds are less than 50-50. However, by 2030, the odds of it will rise to about 50-50, and by 2060, Sussex's diversity index will be 62, according to the USA Today projections (2014). The population of Hispanics in Delaware will continue to rise with time and Sussex County, Georgetown specifically, will continue to see an increase in their population of Guatemalans. With the rise in population will come and increase in families with children and the need for increased resources such as food, community-based programming, jobs education and assistance programs.

Food System Structure

Studies have indicated a U.S. trend where the share of income designated to food budgets has been steadily declining. In 1930, one-fourth of family's disposable income was spent on

food. By 1950 this figure had dropped to 20% and in 2009 it had declined to 9.5% (USDA, ERS, 2010). The ever changing food system has implications for the overall health of individuals residing in the United States. Shifts to processed foods have had profound effects on American eating habits and the food system. Increasing numbers of people are consuming foods outside the home. Data from 2001 exhibits away-from-home meals and snacks are nearly half of total food consumption (47%), up from 40 percent in 1981. According to the USDA, we are consuming approximately 500 more calories per day than our American counterparts in the recent past. Overall, there has been a 25 % increase in the average daily caloric intake between 1970 and 2000: 9.5 %from grains (mainly refined grain products); 9.0 %from fats and oils: 4.7 % from added sugars, and 1.5 from fruits and vegetables (USDA, Economic Research Service [ERS], 2010). The average U.S. diet is too high in calories, fat, saturated fat, cholesterol (Frazao, 1996) Obesity, hypertension, high blood glucose, high low density lipoprotein levels, and other dietary risk factors are responsible for approximately 914,000 deaths every year (Huang et al., 2009). Unger et al. (2004) discusses a study of Mexican immigrants which showed drastic increases in weight and decline in nutrition over a very short period of time after arrival in the United States. According to Hinshaw's interview with Schenker (2005) immigrants tend to put together the worst of an American diet with the worst of Mexican food. In addition to deep-fat fried dishes, much of the native, rural diet in Mexico consists of freshly prepared fruits and vegetables and the healthy produce tends to be replaced by processed food here (Schenker 2005). Hinshaw (2005) explains that fast food consumption increased five times in the Mexican population within one generation of emigration to the U.S. With the increase in consumption many Hispanics now disdain traditional foods, viewing processed foods as modern and consequently desirable. This altered view of traditional foods highlights the importance of local

food movements which help to bring the attention of new immigrants and their families back to healthy and culturally relevant food items.

Food security is also factors of influence in the food system. Food security is defined by the USDA ERS (2009) as "the condition in which all household members have access to enough food at all times for an active and healthy life." Therefore, a food secure household should have readily available nutritionally adequate and safe foods. On the other hand, food insecurity exists when there "is limited or uncertain availability of nutritionally adequate and safe foods or limited or uncertain ability to acquire these foods in socially acceptable ways" (USDA, ERS, 2009a). According to USDA ERS (2009a) provided definitions, food secure households should not have to resort to emergency food sources in order to obtain food. However, the structure of the conventional U.S. food system presents challenges to providing individuals and households with a sense of food security. The current food system structure includes a chain of farmers, wholesalers, processors, distributors and retailers, in consecutive order, which move food items to consumers. Due to the complexity of this chain, there have been rises in commodity prices, shipping and manufacturing costs and a host of other expenses, creating issues of affordability, particularly for low-income families (U.S. Department of Commerce, 2008). Thus, the conventional U.S. food system has sparked many conversations and initiatives around a more localized food system and food justice for marginalized and low income families.

A major factor existing in the conversation of food systems and the local food movement is discourse around inequalities faced by low-income people of color. Natasha Bowen (2015) stated in an interview with Laura Rothman that the few times that people of color are represented, when we talk about food or agriculture, are agricultural workers, migrant workers, access to food, food insecurity. Bowen (2015) expands by stating communities of color are

shown lined up in the farmers market with their food stamps. Alkon & Agyeman (2011) indicate that the local food system and movement appear to be made for the people it was developed by and that typically includes white, middle-class individuals from similar backgrounds, who can afford to purchase the high priced organic, grass fed, all natural local products and who possess similar conclusions about what the food system should look like. Bowen (2015) adds that food is distributed unfairly as we see healthy food going to high income communities and not to communities of color. In order for all community members to reap the benefits of local food consumption it is crucial to incorporate all populations, especially those who are underserved which includes youth. The Food Bank of Delaware's (FBD) Hunger in America study produced by the Mabli et al. (2010) indicates that roughly 44 percent of households served by the FBD have children under 18, with six percent containing children between the ages of 1 and 5. Though no breakdown is provided for the races and ethnicities of this particular group of children, Nord (2009) highlights that Hispanic children in the U.S. largely live in very low food secure households. With underrepresented youth being so severely impacted by issues of food insecurity, engaging them in the food movement, especially initiatives allowing them to produce for themselves, is essential.

The Local Food System Policy and Planning for Sustainability Final Report produced by the University of Delaware's Center for Energy & Environmental Policy (2011) draws much attention to national food system programs and programs which exist in Delaware. National programs included Farm to School, Senior Farmers Markets, Buy Fresh Buy Local and Farm Market Nutrition Programs. A few initiatives specific to Delaware included DEfoodtrader.org (a virtual farmers market), Food Business Incubator Center and Local Food Processing Pilot Program. However, there is little attention given to initiatives that make the individual

community members local producers. Further, there is limited discussion of improving or implementing community gardens, and creating space for individuals of color to become both producers and consumers of local food, thus improving access & affordability. Lastly, there is no discussion of youth engagement as a part of the any initiatives of as being contributors to the food policy councils. One particular initiative CampFRESH provides youth with a broad foundation of healthy lifestyle choices, however, largely focuses on urban youth in Wilmington, Delaware. Much of the literature on food justice initiatives involving youth typically includes those low-income families of color residing in urban areas. However, there is a gap in the literature where youth from families of color in suburban and rural areas are understudied and underserved. Specific to the initiative in Wilmington, Delaware, attention is not given to marginalized youth of more rural counties, such as Sussex County regarding healthy lifestyle choices or providing the space for youth to actively engage in the food movement to deliver food justice. Many of these initiatives don't put the power of food justice or decision making in to the hands of marginalized groups such as youth or underrepresented populations. Feenstra (2002) suggests that community food systems projects offer youth genuine opportunities for leadership development. Including underrepresented youth and allowing their voices to be heard and them to become involved in the food systems creates a greater sense of community, food security and empowerment. Bowens (2013) as quoted by Diaz in Mapping Food Justice adds that people of color, particularly youth are missing from the food movement. Thus, understanding the intentions to become involved in the local food movement for youth in communities of color, particularly Hispanic youth considering that their rich food heritage is an area of study to increase youth engagement.

Food Sovereignty & Food Justice

Food is an expression of the self and a reflection on a person's upbringing in the cultural melting pot of America, and stands as a good way of bringing people together over a table, regardless of location or occasion (Saldana & Felix, 2011). Many foreign-born newcomers to the U.S. experience changes in food variety, accessibility and availability, finding themselves assimilating to the American eating habits (Dubowitz, Acevedo-Garcia, Salkeld, Lindsay, Subramanian, & Peterson, 2006). Adoption of the U.S. diet is usually associated with high intake of calories, fat and refined carbohydrates (Perez-Escamilla, 2009). Today, Americans are inundated with advertisements from fast food chains enticing them to eat at their various establishments. According to Meiselman and MacFie (1996), food choice has been recognized as a process that involves psychological, social, cultural, economic, and biological forces. These factors offer significant insight into the choices Hispanic immigrants make as they migrate to the U.S., often times being pulled in to the mainstream eating habits. This transition to a new diet often takes these populations of individuals away from their traditional meals and foods (Nyeleni, 2007). Freeman (2007) highlights that it is often low-income neighborhoods populated by Latinos and African American neighborhoods and impacted by institutional racisms that typically patronize fast food restaurants.

According to Glipo and Pascual Jr. (2005), "Food Sovereignty is the right of peoples, communities, and countries to define their own agricultural, labour, fishing, food and land policies, which are ecologically, socially, economically and culturally appropriate to their unique circumstances. It includes the true right to food and to produce food, which means that all people have the right to safe, nutritious and culturally appropriate food and to food producing resources and the ability to sustain themselves and their societies" (p. 1). The right to culturally appropriate

food may become an issue for Hispanic individuals who no longer live in their native country. Food sovereignty initiatives strive to place the power of food choice back into the hands of the people. Movements toward food sovereignty present the right to autonomous food systems, restructuring the streams of power that control and distribute resources (Carney, 2012). This includes connecting people with their local food systems generating awareness, ensuring food security and access, as well as building knowledge and skills around sustainable food production (Nyeleni, 2007). Food sovereignty movements have typically been tied to initiatives in the Global South which advocate heavily for small farmer and indigenous worker movements, linked neoliberal agricultural trade policies with increasing rates of hunger and poverty among food producers in developing nations (Wittman et al., 2010). However, initiatives of food justice more narrowly focus on dismantling the structural racisms and the corporate food regimes which fester in food systems. Bowen (2015) argues that cultivating and having sovereignty over food and where it comes from is a political act.

The discussion of critical influences such as race is vaguely mentioned in Delaware's 2011 report regarding the local food system. Race is a factor which largely influences who has access to fresh, healthy products and should be a focal point of discussion for the state's next steps. Additionally, youth voices should be a part of the planning and decision making processes surrounding food access and food justice for them and their families. Inclusion of underrepresented populations and youth were not an included part of the report's recommendations in terms of creating space to actively engage in the food movement and advocate for food justice. This exclusion, particularly of racial discussion relates to Guthman's (2008) discourse regarding whitened cultural practices in alternative food movements. Slocum (2011) adds how community food movements have been slow to address issues of white

privilege. The alternative movement has been animated by discourses that derive from whitened cultural histories, essentially modifying alternative food spaces (Guthman, 2008). Many in the movement seem oblivious to the racial character of these discourses – if anything they presume them to be universal – and so are ignorant of the way in which employment of these discourses might constitute another kind of exclusionary practice (Guthman, 2008) It is critical to not only understand, but acknowledge the position of race in transforming the food system. Those individuals who need to be at the center of these conversations tend to be overlooked or excluded and have no awareness that these conversations are even occurring. However, more needs to be done than simply inviting these individuals to the table (Guthman, 2008). The phrase “inviting people to the table” itself embodies whiteness, because there is no consideration for who is setting this table. Awareness that the table or space exists should first be made, so that the power is left to those marginalized voices to set their own table and create their own platform for change.

The Food Empowerment Project (n.d.) highlights the inequity of the current food system in the United States, which has led to people of color in low-income communities having higher rates of obesity and diabetes. This type of environmental racism poses a severe threat to the health of future generations however, inequitable food distribution can be remedied if policy makers and communities work together (Food Empowerment Project nd). Food justice is a social movement which embodies the voices of the marginalized and unheard within communities. It is the application of social justice solutions to address inequality in the food system (Scorza, Henderson & Castillo, 2011). Food justice represents "a transformation of the current food system, including but not limited to eliminating disparities and inequities" (Gottlieb and Joshi 2010). In order to achieve the idea of food justice, the people who are most affected must be the

ones to inflict change. In order for transformations to take place, education and empowerment of the most important stakeholders must occur. Youth are the future of the food movement and youth of color are among the most affected by current food system practices. When the voices of the most affected are excluded, there is no real space for change to occur.

Hispanic Youth in the Food Movement and Youth Development

Literature surrounding the involvement of Hispanic youth in the food movement is minimal, which explains why there is a gap in research to understand their intentions to engage in the movement and the role their culture and identity play in this engagement. There is however immense research on youth development and the role of youth as agents of change in social justice initiatives which address community issues such as poverty, food access, environmental issues and many others. Several frameworks exist which highlight different practices of youth development in general, however here we focus on community youth development because of the nature of the specific community of color that is a part of this study.

Heck and Subramaniam (2009) describe youth development overall as something that "can be seen in three different ways: as the natural process through which youth grow into adults; as a set of principles underlying youth programs that encourage thriving among youth; or as a set of practices that foster the development of young people". Community youth development specifically is a strength-based approach to examining the role of support systems in youths' lives and how youth can help shape those support systems (Hung, 2004). Each of the three areas previously mentioned exists in community youth development, creating opportunities for young people to connect to others, develop skills, and utilize those skills and their voice to be advocates in their communities. Ginwright and James (2002) highlight that youth face challenges such as economic isolation, lack of political power, and are subjected to pervasive social stigma.

Many youth in response are seeking ways to demand their voices to be heard and are stepping up to be more involved in their communities.

Youth organizing for change is an act that has been occurring for years all around the world. One example involves a group of high school students in Northern Virginia. Students walked out of school chanting, " Sí , se puede ," ("Yes, we can") and carrying "Latino Power" as they protested a legislative decision that would make it a felony to be in the United States illegally and make it a crime to help illegal immigrants (Bahrampour & Glod, 2006). Another example includes Civil Rights era protesting in southern communities where young people violated segregation laws by entering white establishments and congregating in “whites only” spaces. Their defiance and demand for equality triggered a new direction in the civil rights movement and highlighted how young people are central to social change efforts (Ginwright & James, 2002). Inequality is often associated with identity, and as a result, identity is often the starting point for youth organizing (Ginwright & James, 2002). The Social Identity Theory supports the idea that identities are multifaceted ways that young people and adults identify themselves and is how they are seen by the larger society (Hogg, 2016). Ginwright & James (2002) also posits that identity is central to developing young people since power and privilege are often granted based on identity. However, the inequalities faced by groups is also the same factor that serves to bridge and bond social capital, bringing these networks of people to fight for social change.

The existence of community based programs significantly supports youth as they hone their sense of competence, construct identity and engage in mixed-age interactions (Hart et al., 1997). As youth participate by addressing and changing circumstances within their environment, they reap benefits by seeing that their actions have “re-actions” (Hung, 2004). Irby et al. (2001)

highlights that community youth development is built on the concept of "youth contributing to communities, communities supporting youth". Engaging youth through community youth development allows them to not only see value in their actions, but also in themselves, their family and their community. Community-based entities possess the ability to identify community needs and be inclusive of youth through collaboration and involving them in the processes of social change.

Theoretical Framework

Icek Ajzen's (1985) Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB) was the framework guiding this study. TPB posits that actions are controlled by intentions, and emphasizes that not all intentions are carried out; some are abandoned altogether while others are revised to fit changing circumstances (Ajzen, 1985). Behavior can be explained and predicted from a person's intentions to engage in the behavior. Ajzen's (1985) framework examines the ways in which goals and plans guide behavior, and the factors that induce people to change their intentions, or prevent successful execution of the behavior. TPB postulates that behavior is a function of: beliefs; knowledge; subjective norms; attitudes; perceived behavioral control, and intentions (Ajzen, 1985).

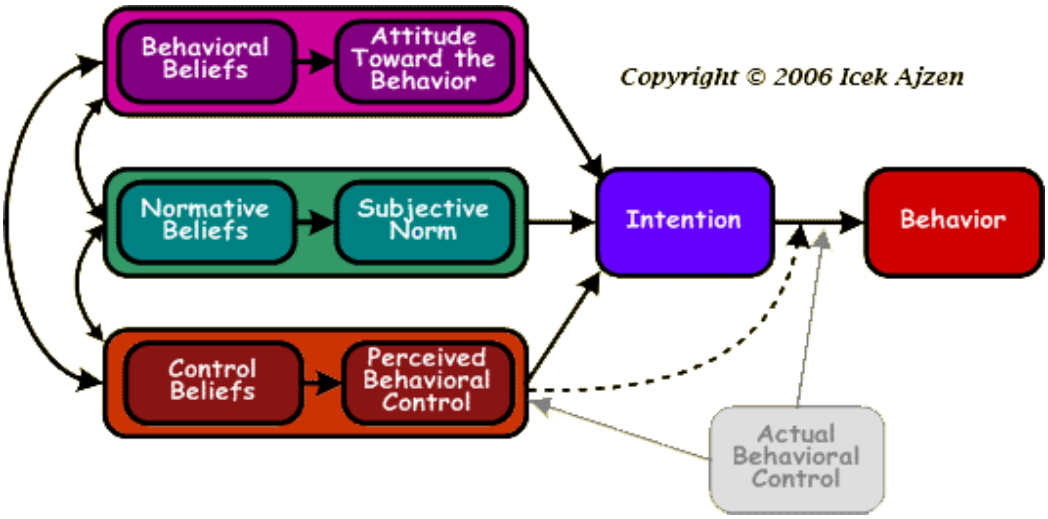

Figure 2. The Theory of Planned Behavior Model. Reproduced with permission.

The TPB model further explains the considerations which guide human behavior. Behavioral beliefs link the behavior of interest to expected outcomes (see Figure 2). This considers all likely consequences and additional attributes of the behavior (Ajzen, 2002). In response to behavioral beliefs is one's attitude toward the belief, which is characterized as the degree to which performance of the behavior is positively or negatively valued. Normative beliefs involve perceived behavioral expectations of important individuals which could include family, friends, others from identity group, etc. The response to normative beliefs is the perceived social pressure to engage or not engage in the behavior at hand. Control beliefs is the third consideration, which ponders perceived presence of factors that may facilitate or impede performance of a behavior. Perceived behavioral control arises from control beliefs, which is an individuals' perception of their ability to perform a given behavior. Attitude toward the behavior, subjective norm and perceived behavioral control operate together to form an individual's intention to engage in a behavior (Ajzen, 2002). Intentions are presumed to be an immediate antecedent of behavior; therefore, people are expected to carry out their behavior when the opportunity presents itself (Ajzen, 1985).

Three factors influencing a behavior include a favorable or unfavorable evaluation of the behavior, perceived social pressure to perform or not perform the behavior and self-efficacy in relation to the behavior (Ajzen, 1991). Essentially, when a person has a more favorable attitude and subjective norm regarding a particular behavior, combined with greater perceived behavioral control, that individual will have stronger intentions to partake in the designated behavior (Barnard-Brak, Burley, & Crooks, 2010). Youth who have favorable attitudes toward their identity, their food heritage and engaging in the local food system are more likely to have strong intentions compared to children who have unfavorable attitudes. Thus, children who see value in their identity and engaging in the local food system and food heritage are more likely to make plans to be active in the above compared to children who do not see value in those engagements.

Beliefs are linked to a person's attitude toward a behavior. Salient beliefs are central to a person's intentions and subsequent actions and knowledge is a critical element of beliefs, in that it refers to an individuals' comprehension of the behavior and (Ajzen, 1991).

Finally, the concept of self-efficacy is used as perceived behavioral control, which means the perception of the ease or difficulty of the particular behavior. It is linked to control beliefs, which refers to beliefs about the presence of factors that may facilitate or obstruct performance of the behavior. Bandura's (1982) definition of self-efficacy is portrayed as the judgement individuals place on their abilities to behave in a certain way in a certain situation. For the youth of this study, their self-efficacy is determined by their ability and confidence to take on an active role in the food movement by engaging in their local food system, making good food choices and displaying cultural and food heritage. Children who feel in control of their expressed identity are likely to report strong intentions to engage with their local food systems and food heritage compared to children with weaker perceptions of control (Martin et al., 2005). Self-efficacy and

the Theory of Planned Behavior intertwine to take the concept to the next level by considering the role of external resources such as the necessary support and the existence of opportunities to engage and successfully perform the behavior (Ajzen, 1991). Children who feel a sense control and confidence regarding their expressed identity and are likely to report strong intentions to engage with their local food systems and food heritage compared to children with weaker perceptions of control (Martin et al., 2005).

Studies have found that subjective norm and control were both significant predictors of intention (Martin et al., 2005). Subjective norms address societal pressures, to include the community and other environmental factors which could potentially inhibit intentions to engage in behaviors. For Hispanic and Latino youth, if their expressed identity does not align with the community in which they live, they are less likely to engage in their food heritage and aspects of their local food system. If society is pressuring these youths to assimilate to mainstream identity, their traditional identity becomes obsolete and mainstream diet becomes a part of their lifestyle, significantly decreasing intentions of consuming local, fresher and culturally relevant foods. Control becomes a major hindrance for youth engagement due to their parents. Motl et al. (2002) suggests that children may have difficulty translating their intentions into behavior as a result of external barriers, less control of their own behavior compared to adults, and limited self-regulation skills. Additionally, when there is a lack of resources or opportunities to perform a specific behavior, youth are unlikely to form strong intentions to perform the behavior.

If opportunities for youth to engage in their local food system and identity do not exist within the community, then they are less likely to do so. Understanding beliefs and the intentions they produce can provide insight on how to impact behavior change. Given enough actual control, individuals are expected to carry out their intentions when the opportunity presents

itself. TPB provides a framework and results to assist researchers and program coordinators in designing interventions and projects that will effectively address behaviors and altering those behaviors. Although limited, previous research efforts indicate that the TPB may have promise for increasing our understanding of Hispanic youth identity expression, engagement in local food systems, food heritage and related perceptions.

Chapter Three

Methodology

Introduction

Chapter Three discusses the approaches applied to exploring the problem statement of this study, which focuses on the lack of underrepresented youth, particularly Hispanic youth involvement in the local food movement. The purpose of this study is to obtain a better understanding of how Hispanic youth express their identities and the factors which shape those identities, to understand the role identity expressions play in the relationships between food heritage and the local food system, and to understand the role that confidence, environmental and social factors play in youth intentions to become engaged.

Research Approach

This study served as a phenomenological study, which describes the lived experiences of individuals about a concept (Creswell, 1998). Elements of participatory research and focus group interviews were incorporated to gather necessary data. The researcher included Moustakas' (1994) six phenomenological methods into the research process. Those six steps developed by Moustakas (1994) are: (1) describe the phenomenon under study; (2) assemble a list of significant statements; (3) take the gathered statements and group them into larger units called themes; (4) provide written descriptions of what the participants experienced with the phenomenon; (5) present written description of how the experience happened; and (6) provide a written synthesized description of the phenomenon incorporating steps 4 and 5.

This research study included elements of the participatory approach, utilizing photographs, journaling, field notes and focus groups in order to engage participants throughout the research study. Data associated with this participatory research was collected through the use

of Photovoice and Photo Elicitation methodologies. The incorporation of these methodologies resulted in the collection of personal beliefs and attitudes from each youth as well as photographs from each of the youth participants. The data received from both the photography and journaling was then be combined to help the youth share their cultural and food heritage, their understanding of food and where it comes from and their intentions to become involved in the food movement.

Though the researcher asked the participants to stay within the theme of "the local food system and the community", how youth chose to demonstrate and interpret that in their photographs was left to them. Cammarota and Fine (2008) have identified youth participatory action research (YPAR) as a method that "provides young people with opportunities to study social problems affecting their lives and then determine actions to rectify these problems (p. 2)." Through becoming involved in this type of research, youth learn about the injustices in their communities and can work to develop solutions to change those realities. Cahill, Rios-Moore, and Threatts (2008) further emphasize that YPAR promotes the inclusion of the voices of people that are generally underrepresented and unheard in research.

Photovoice

The methodology, utilizing photographs to form a narrative based on each participant's experiences and was developed to provide a "voice" to underserved communities using photographs (Wang et al., 1998). Photovoice made its first debut with researchers Wang and Burris (1994) under the original name Photo novella. Photovoice uses photography to explore community issues or concerns by blending images and words to express the needs, history, culture, problems and desires (Collier & Collier, 1986). Through using a qualitative method such as Photovoice, researchers and their audiences are able to visualize their participants' perceptions

about everyday realities (Close, 2007). Wang and Burris (1997) acknowledge that the Photovoice process provides participants the opportunity to visually share their experiences and personal knowledge that may be otherwise difficult to express through words.

Photovoice consists of three theoretical frameworks: *empowerment education*; *feminist theory*; and *documentary photography*. Empowerment education encourages individuals to become vocal about the happenings in their communities (Friere, 1970). The feminist theory tends to make advances toward changing processes to recognize and appreciate women's role as advocates, researchers and participants (Wang et al., 1996). Documentary photography is often times used to provide vulnerable and underserved populations (e.g., children, minorities, elderly, etc.) with a space and opportunity to tell their perceptions of the community and the world and to share their personal stories (Wang, 1994). Although a framework for Photovoice projects has been developed, the methodology is easily customizable to meet the needs of the target community and program participants (Catalani & Minkler, 2010; Wang, 1999). Therefore, Photovoice is uniquely suited for use in communities of Hispanic and Latino youth.

Literature on Photovoice methodology identified four processes that were universally present in Photovoice projects. These processes include partnership building and community participation, training, research and documentation, and photo-elicited discussion Catalani and Minkler (2010). The implementation of these guidelines and processes in the development of Photovoice projects will likely yield compelling information from and about the population under study. Through photo-elicited discussion, perhaps in the form of the focus group, participants can begin to generate ideas from one another to advocate for positive change and become a driving force for improving the well-being and quality of the community (Sims, 2014).

Photo Elicitation

Photo elicitation methodology is grounded on the principle of inserting photographs into research interviews, focus groups, etc. to guide the direction of the discussion (Harper, 2002). According to Harper (2002) the parts of the brain which operate to process visual information are significantly older than those parts which process verbal information. Thus, utilizing images elicits deeper elements of human cognizance than words. First uses of photo elicitation were researcher and photographer John Collier (1957) of Cornell University. Colliers' project sought to examine mental health in changing communities in the Maritime Provinces of Canada, which he and team discovered was challenging to study through simply using simple surveys and in-depth interviews (Collier, 1957). Thus, they implemented photographs into their interview process to gain insight regarding the environmental basis of psychological stress. Collier (1957) stated "The pictures elicited longer and more comprehensive interviews but at the same time helped subjects overcome the fatigue and repetition of conventional interview" (p. 858). Photos used in the photo elicitation process can come from an array of sources. These photos could be scientific (depicting objects, people and artifacts), images that were a part of collective or institutional pasts (depicting past events or institutional experiences), or photos which show intimate dimensions of social aspects (i.e. family, social groups, etc.) (Harper, 2002).

Focus Groups

The researcher conducted three semi-structured focus groups with participants involved in the study. Focus group interviews were incorporated because they bring together individuals who come from similar social and cultural backgrounds or who have similar experiences (Liamputtong, 2011). Prior to focus group participation, consent from parents and assent from youth participants was obtained and each individual was informed of the information to be

covered as a part of the focus group processes. Each focus group took place at the La Casita Afterschool Program facility in Georgetown, Delaware and lasted anywhere from 45 minutes to 1 hour. Though questions and guidelines existed for the focus groups, a flexible environment was created to allow participants to discuss various aspects of their lived experiences, knowledge, beliefs and intentions relevant to the study's theme. This flexibility created more of a conversational environment for participants. The researcher utilized a parental permission form (Appendix B), a child's assent form (Appendix C) and interview questions (Appendix H & I).

Population and Sample

Participants for this study included youth from the La Casita Afterschool Program in Georgetown, Delaware. Criteria for participation included being of Hispanic and/or Latino descent and for the youth to be between the ages of 8 and 13 years old. Eleven students were selected to be a part of this study. The small sample size reflects purposive sampling (Bernard, 2002), which is a common method of recruiting participants based on specific criteria, like that outlined above. Statistical analysis indicated that nine of the 11 (81.8%) of the participants were females and two of 11 (18.2%) were males. The largest percentage of students were in 6th grade (63.6%), followed by 18.2% in 5th grade and 9.1% in 7th and 8th grade simultaneously. Participants ranged from the ages of 8 to 14 years old, with 72.7% registering between 12 and 13 years old, 18.2% between the ages of 10 and 11 and 9.1% in the 14 and over category. All participants identified their ethnicity as Hispanic and 72.7% identified the language spoken in their home as both Spanish and English. The remaining 27.3% indicated the primary language for their household is Spanish only. Lastly, participants and their parents provided information regarding average annual household income. Results show that 63.6% of the individuals surveyed identified their annual household income to be less than $24,999, 27.3% indicated an

annual household income between $25,000 and $34,999 and 9.1% reported an annual household income between $50,000 and $74,999.

Data Collection

The data collection process occurred in three phases for this study. The beginning stage consisted of the initial meeting, followed by the photo taking period and lastly the final meeting stage which included photo dissemination and focus groups.

Initial Meeting.

The investigator coordinated with after school program leaders to distribute recruitment information for youth and their parents. A recruitment announcement flyer (Appendix B) was sent home with the youth strongly encouraging them and their parents to attend an initial meeting, if interested. The initial meeting included an overview of the study and orientation to the project with parents and the youth participants. In the initial meeting, participants and their parents received detailed information about study procedures, along with parental permission and assent forms. The initial meeting also informed all individuals of when permission forms should be returned to the researcher (prior to a second meeting, within one week of distribution). Also, they received a brief demographic survey (Appendix D) to complete and return with their permission forms, only if their child was participating in the study.

Phase Two- Photo-Taking Period.

Phase two consisted of a second meeting which featured a training session for participants who had returned their permission forms. During the training component, the researcher shared the basics of the Photovoice methodology and how to operate the digital cameras that were provided to each student who was participating. The researcher also informed participants of project processes, do's and don'ts of photo taking, photo taking etiquette and

additional necessary information pertaining to the project. This information was provided in the form of a guideline sheet in an additional packet. The information packets provided to participants also included photo release forms for subjects they may have taken photos of who were easily identifiable. These forms explained the project and information regarding how the photos would be used in focus group and interview discussion, as well as in published works if permission is provided. All documents were reviewed with Virginia Tech's Institutional Review Board.

Youth participated by taking pictures of items and/or individuals within a private setting pertaining to the questions outlined by the study and to items mentioned in their project information packets. Due to the important nature of the stories which accompanied these photos, participants were encouraged to record their thoughts and additional observations in a journal at the time they take their photos. The journaling and photo taking periods occurred over a two-week time span. Guiding questions for journaling and photo taking were included in the project steps form. Upon completion of the two-week time period, the researcher returned to collect cameras and journals from participants. The photos were sorted through by participants, so that they have final say in which photographs are used and which ones are not to be used. From the final photos, the researcher identified a few to be used in photo elicitation during the focus group based on a) photos containing items that appeared frequently (four or more times) and b) photos containing items that did not appear frequently (appearing one to two times). The selected photos will then be used phase three, the final meetings phase to generate discussion in the first focus group.

Phase Three- Final Meetings.

Focus groups were conducted in accordance with the focus group guidelines (Appendix H & I), lasted no longer than 60 minutes and were each audio recorded. The first focus group was conducted with the incorporation of photo elicitation practices, the second focus group was conducted to obtain additional information outlined by the second focus group guidelines sheet and the third focus group served as a member check for accuracy.

Data Analysis

The data analysis processes began when each participant's journal and photographs were collected at the conclusion of the photo taking time period. Analysis of the photographs began with students using their voices to express which of their photos they wanted to be used and which ones they did not. Photos which best represented aspects of the Hispanic culture and identity, food choices and the local food system were selected in a participatory process involving the researcher and the participants (Wang & Burris, 1997). From this point, the researcher then selected a few photos from the final pool to be used in the first focus group as a part of the photo elicitation process. Photos were chosen based on based on a) photos containing items that appeared frequently (four or more times) and b) photos containing items that did not appear frequently (appearing one to two times). The researcher then moved forward to conduct the focus groups. Each focus group discussion was audio recorded. The audio from each focus group was then transcribed by the researcher, none of which were in Spanish. Member checks to ensure accuracy of transcribed responses from the first two focus groups (Creswell & Miller, 2000) were conducted during the third focus group. Memoing occurred throughout each of the focus group discussions with participants. Audio from each focus group was transcribed. The researcher then conducted coding processes for the transcribed data and journal to code for common themes related to the phenomenon that was examined. Journal reflections were also

assessed for the participants understanding and awareness (Janesick, 1998) surrounding concepts related to their identity and its' relationship with their engagement in their food systems and food choices. Coding in qualitative research is a method used to extract meaning from words or short phrases regarding a certain phenomenon or event (Saldana, 2009) In the first cycle of initial coding, the researcher coded the transcribed data based on categories which helped the researcher become more attuned to participants language, perceptions and worldviews (Saldana, 2009). Information gathered through initial coding guided the researcher through the second cycle of coding, called focused coding (Charmaz, 2006). Focused coding allowed the researcher to also conduct thematic analysis based upon patterns which may have existed in the data regarding identity, confidence and other salient points. In turn, the researcher was able to develop themes based on the research literature, research questions and the Theory of Planned Behavior framework.

Chapter Four

Findings

The purpose of this study was to attain a better understanding of how Hispanic youth express their identities and the factors which shape that identity, to understand the role identity expressions play in the relationships between food heritage and the local food system, and to understand the role of confidence, environmental and social factors play in youth intentions to become engaged. Pseudonyms were used to conceal the identity of the participants.

Research Objective One

Research objective one sought to describe factors that shape the identities of Hispanic youth. The importance of cultural and food heritage was common throughout participant photos, journal entries and focus group responses. Participants reported food as the most influential factor which shapes who they are. In addition to food, family and cultural traditions also work to mold their identity as Hispanic youth. Denise shared her feelings on the importance of culture, stating "It's been in our culture for a long time from generation to generation…I mean to show people that this is our culture, this is what we do and this is why it's important and show people that they can offend our own culture 'cause they don't know what we're about and it's important to learn."

Participants also shared some of the important holidays and celebrations that are either observed in their households or that family members often discuss that they used to celebrate. Ethan mentioned a Guatemalan celebration which he called "The First Seed", mentioning "I don't know you just plant. Something like that. I don't know, my uncle told us about it but I forgot." Denise and Jessica discussed "Tres Magos" with Jessica elaborating, "…you separate the three kings." Jessica added, "And we have a hot cocoa…and we get this like long piece of

bread.”, with Denise filling in by stating “It's like a game, we got to find like this little miniature doll.” Holidays such as Christmas and Thanksgiving were also discussed by all participants. When asked what types of food they typically had at these celebrations and which foods were their favorites, all participants began naming items such as tamales, chuchitos, mole, carne asada and burritos to name a few.

Lisa provided the following photo and journal entry for common cultural foods consumed:

> “I don’t know the name but what am gonna call it [sic] soup it has cow meat, water and rice but it taste really good but everyone knows how to make soup but you need to put cow meat but mostly haspinc [Hispanics] eat a lot of soup.” -Ethan

Figure 3: Soup with cow meat by Ethan

Figure 4: Mole with chicken and rice by Lisa

Another common celebration mentioned by several participants was quinceañeras. Lisa shared, “My mom wants to celebrate my fifteenth. I don't want to.” Julianna added, “Me too. I don’t like dresses.” When asked to further elaborate, Julianna responded, “…the thing I don't like about it is we waste too much money, and my mom doesn't earn money that much. And plus, I don't like it. It's too much people. And I know mom has lots of friends…” When asked if there was anything done at La Casita to celebrate cultural traditions, most participants stated that there wasn’t anything special done. Lisa stated “We don't get to do nothing, just work.” When asked what would make things more fun, Lisa stated, “…learn how to cook in that kitchen. Why do they even have it? We don't even use it.” However, all participants agreed that family and cultural celebrations were important and agreed that in order to keep these being celebrated they would beg their parents every year to do them.

Several other images and journal entries showed various important pieces to culture. Veronica included the following:

"This cup is a cup that they use in Guatemala where my parents were born. They use it to drink coffe [coffee] or water. You have to make them by hand with clay and they aren't like the cups we use here."

Figure 5: A Guatemalan cup by Veronica

Danielle shared the following image and journal entry:

" A mantel [manta] is where you put your tortias [tortillas]. My mom uses it to keep the tortias [tortillas] nice and warm. I like it because it's soft and colorful.

Figure 6: Manta by Danielle

Figure 7: Traditional clothing by Jackie

Research Objective Two

Research objective two sought to describe how Hispanic youth express their identities. Participants reported that their identity is a large part of the community in which they live and their home life. Connecting the intersections of identity, culture, food systems and health, Denise added "Our culture sometimes will teach us how to survive in the winter or lost in the woods and it would say what kind of plants you could eat or not to eat. Or what kinds you could use for medicines ... to heal your injuries." Partaking in the consumption of traditional meals is a major part of how youth explained that they express who they are, in addition to being in the kitchen preparing meals with their mothers. Jessica shared, "I mostly learned about my culture." as she reflected on a meal she prepared with her mother. As depicted above, the youth of this study enjoy traditional meals such as mole, which was a number one favorite among this group. Journal entries tended to include mentions of the role various food items played in their identity.

For instance, Danielle shared the following entry regarding Tamals, which are consumed as a part of her Guatemalan identity:

> " Tamal is a food they make with mascca [maseca], mole and chicken. They eat it for parties or holidays. Now people still make it, it's yummy and good I love it."

The importance of sharing meals with family was also a commonality throughout several journal responses. In particular, Jane reflected by mentioning "Today we ate empanadas with my family." She proceeded by discussing what they were made of and how many everyone ate and that they were a cultural favorite. Youth also show that their identity consists largely of more North American cuisine, which provides some insight to acculturation. Youth discuss their enjoyment of other foods such as McDonald's and Burger King when asked to name their favorite places to eat. Julianna also elaborated on her boredom with some traditional meals, stating "…my mom always makes beans with eggs and I don't like it no more." Danielle followed up with "Whenever my mom cooks it, I eat nothing." This signifies that elements of integration are occurring, as youth appear to be meshing components of each culture together, particularly as they are introduced to new things which begin to shape their intrinsic identity and how they portray they are.

A few participants insinuated that the presence of a place like a community garden would not only generate involvement in their local food system, but it would also improve their ability to act on who they describe themselves as. When asked about their vision for what their involvement in the local food system looked like, Denise shared "Our garden might have some of the plants or food that our culture have ...". This statement addressed that if a community garden space were available for the Hispanic youth of this community, they would grow things that represent their culture. Jessica added, "It's important to learn about your culture, where you

came from and what you should know." to highlight the value placed on local food system engagement and identity.

Youth are often required by their parents, usually their mothers to be in the kitchen learning the processes of preparing traditional meals, even the boys. Additionally, the identity of Hispanic youth is expressed through cultural traditions celebrated by their families. Social pressures from family, friends, peers, and other closely related individuals influence individual's intentions to engage or not to engage in various behaviors. Participants were asked various questions regarding their food choices, cultural practices, engaging in the food movement and were also asked about the array of individuals who might have influence over these factors. Participants were asked to think about the following individuals: Parents, Grandparents, Older Siblings, Aunts and Uncles, Teachers and Priests as they hold significant meaning in the lives of Hispanic youth. Participants were tasked with thinking about how these individuals would feel about youth becoming a part of the food movement, making decisions about food, and even growing your own food. Several of the participants indicated that they felt these individuals would be "Kind of supportive" and Julianna used the term "Happy" to describe how those individuals might feel. When asked to further elaborate, Ethan stated "your parents might help you because they're your parents." Jessica added "I think your parents would support you because they want the best for you and they want you to learn everything as much as you can, the good things, not the bad things." Denise stated "Your grandparents will support because they have been doing these things for a while and they will support our culture and us doing the thinking for ourself." Several participants also indicated that it was their parents and grandparents who exude the most influence over their food choices. Danielle offered a differing perspective, particular to fast food consumption, as she recounted taking a family trip where they

had to consume a lot of fast food, including Taco Bell. Participant 8 stated "…we had to go eat a lot of fast food. I was imagining all the calories that I had to eat!" She continued, "Yeah, I always tell her (Lisa), "See how many calories you have." 'Cause it might be a problem in the future and nobody wants to get sick." Julianna added, "Yeah, she tell [sic] me every time. She checks every single bite." Lisa chimed in, "She follows every single time. She does everything the same."

Jessica began discussing teacher involvement by stating "I think they would help because they are our teachers and they teach us the things that we need to learn and so I think they would understand to help us." Danielle added, "They'll give you advice", and Julianna followed up with "They're thinking about your future. And the teacher will thinking about the future."

Focus group discussion also called on participants to think about the individuals within their households and their community who help them to understand where their food comes from and aspects of their culture. All participants agreed that their parents are the ones who mostly help them to understand these concepts. Denise elaborated by mentioning their parents work experience in the chicken plants stating, "My parents and sometimes he gets chicken and he would get the chicken from his work. Veronica added "That's what my dad used to do before, now he works in landscape. Sometimes he like brings plants like that they'd like let him bring." Discussion also allowed participants to reflect of who does majority of the cooking in the household and experiences they have had cooking alongside their parent. All of the participants indicated that their mother does the cooking when it comes to preparing meals. Ethan added "My dad burns, he burns everything. Last time we came from church he made chicken and it was all burned."

Veronica expressed “My dad knows how to cook, yes, but he doesn't like everybody to see. One time, one time we were opening the door to go outside and the kitchen is like right in front of the door and we opened it and he said to close it.” Carl added “My dad had a restaurant. I was only one years [sic] old.”

The participants further elaborated on their desire to learn their family’s traditional recipes, with all indicating yes they wanted to learn and shared their reflections of helping to prepare various meals. Ethan expresses pressures to engage in cooking activities, stating “My mom told me to be in the kitchen… so we could learn how to cook with them.” Veronica follows up with “Basically, because we watch them, well, I watch her. And sometimes we have to do it with them.” However, several participants indicated that they do not help with all the meals, elaborating by saying “Because we might make a mistake.”

Julianna shared “I have sometimes helped my mom do tamales.” Denise and Danielle excitedly expressed “I make tortillas!” With several other participants simultaneously adding “I know how to do tortillas.” Veronica shares “Our parents can just grab it and then they don't get burned. They touch the pan like to see if it's hot already or something like that.” When discussing grabbing the tortillas from the pan, Danielle expressed “It burns. It burns.”

Figure 8: Tortillas for dinner by Denise.

Lisa expressed “I can’t do tortillas yet.”, while others shared tactics which make tortilla prepping easier for them. Julianna stated “sometimes use a spatula to scoop it…” with Danielle adding “My brother uses a spatula.” Ethan added “I just get a spoon.”, with Jessica sharing “Maybe a cup of water…to cool your finger.” Lisa challenged “That's embarrassing. You're supposed to do your hands like your mother do [sic].” Danielle added “They did it in Guatemala. Even when they were smaller…they need to learn it when they were small.”

Figure 9: Tortilla press by Danielle

Figure 10: Prepping greens for dinner by Jane.

Participants were asked about foods that were required to be eaten in the household and certain foods that were not allowed to be consumed in the household. Regarding the first portion of the questions, all participants indicated that vegetables were a required part of their daily meals at home. When asked what some of the specific vegetables consumed were, several participants indicated spinach, corn and broccoli as some of the top vegetables. Other participants indicated several cultural foods that were required and often eaten which included beans and tortillas. Veronica shared a photo of a meal consumed from time to time in her household involving chicken and vegetables and included the following journal entry:

> " Chicken & Vegetables: We don't usually eat this food very often, but when we don't we don't want to eat really un-healthy but still ok we add vegetables." Veronica

Figure 11: Chicken & Vegetables by Veronica

Carl also added a photo of a dish he enjoys consuming with vegetables added. Carl provided the following description:

"On Wednesday, I ate noodles with spinage [spinach]. I like romin [ramen] noodles sence [since] I was a little kid. The first time I tried this cook was about 3 months ago when my grandmom cousin cooked it for us. I told my mom to make it because it is so delciouse [delicious].

Figure 12: Ramen noodles by Carl

Figure 13: A photograph of dinner by Jessica

Regarding the latter questions, almost all participants also indicated that junk food was not allowed to be consumed in their household. Danielle mentioned candy as one of the top junk foods that are not allowed. Lisa followed up stating, “My dad said I can't eat candy no more [sic] now. My brother eats too much candy, and because of his fault I can't even eat candy anymore.” Danielle added “It's too much cavities.” When asked why their parents would not allow them to consume junk foods at home, Danielle stated “They don't want you to get sick or have any problem with your blood…Or like too much sugar.” Jessica added “Yeah, no diabetes.”

The one exception included the spicy snack Takis, as shown in Figure 4, which several participants mentioned they loved and few stated they didn’t particularly care for. Danielle stated “I don't like it that much. I've been eating it too much, now I got bored.” Jessica added, “It is spicy but when you get used to the spice, you don't feel the spicy anymore.” Ethan stated “It's not spicy enough.”, with several participants agreeing. Ethan added “We do a challenge were we get the Taki and we add like, we add like, lemon, we add more spice, spice sauce and we try to do the challenge… we just add lemon and spice sauce and all that, pepper sometimes.”

Figure 14: Takis by Julianna

Research Objective Three

Research objective three sought to describe how Hispanic youth perceive their identity expressions are received by the environment. Participants expressed feelings of their identity as youth being challenged, considering they often feel their voices would go unheard if the moment arose to be an advocate for an important issue. Participants also reported feelings of the appropriation and misrepresentation of their traditional and cultural meals.

Participants were asked about their attitudes and feelings regarding restaurants such as Taco Bell, Chipotle, Moe's and even McDonald's creating foods with accents of the Hispanic culture associated with them. Ethan mentioned "Stealing". to indicate feeling as though these restaurants were taking away aspects of their culture. Jane used the term "Competition" to indicate feeling as though these restaurants create a sense of competition for true Hispanic restaurants. Katherine began, "I really don't want to be rude…I feel really mean saying this stuff, but when people came from England and stuff like that in the 16, 1700s or whenever they came and took Indians' land. That's kind of what I feel, like the United States is, like they just take or make something of a different culture into the American culture, which doesn't feel right to me." Katherine added, "Maybe the person who made a new meal or something could not make the name seem so Hispanic when a Caucasian dude is the narrator on the commercial. Like when they're adding guacamole to everything, like I'm not the only one here, but you don't add guacamole to everything. You can add it to somethings but not everything." Danielle followed up with, "Like in a burger. That's gross." Denise added "I think restaurants try to show that they're kind of with us Hispanics. To show that they are proud to have us here." A few participants hinted at feelings of being angry or mad at the way their culture was often misappropriated and how other seemed to take the credit for aspects of their culture.

When asked what they would do to protect the authenticity of their culture from the above types of restaurants which seemingly remove the authenticity of the Hispanic culture, replacing it with a fast food version, Jessica responded with “Keep secret your recipe's [sic]… so other restaurants won't take them and they won't mock you as well.” Katherine added, “You could also do... what Hardee's does. They have a little paper on where they have the salt and pepper and all that, you can get a little pencil and it says what you like and what you don't like about the restaurant or what you ate, like kind of a little opinion based survey..” Katherine continued saying, “I would, if I had a bigger confidence level, speak up and say like, "I'm sorry honey but no, that is in my culture and that is what my culture uses to celebrate this occasion."”

Participants were asked to rate their level of confidence in performing various activities to include protecting the true authenticity of their cultural & food heritage and becoming integral parts of the food movement and their local system through producing their own food. Ratings were on a scale of 1 to 10 with 1 being not very confident at all and 10 being very confident in abilities. Each of the confidence ratings questions were conducted in two separate focus group sessions. The questions regarding being engaged in the food movement and food system as well as confidence in knowledge and understanding of culture were discussed in focus group two. The question regarding confidence in protecting cultural authenticity and food heritage was discussed in focus group three. Veronica was not present for focus group 2 and Carl was not present for focus groups 2 and 3 to provide a confidence rating. Tables 1 and 2 depict the confidence ratings as reported by the participants:

Table 1

Confidence ratings for being involvement in the food movement

Participant	**Confidence Rating (Scale 1-10)**
Jane	6
Denise	7
Jessica	10
Ethan	2
Katherine	7.5-8.5
Danielle	10
Julianna	5
Lisa	6
Jackie	5

Table 2

Confidence ratings for cultural knowledge and awareness

Participant	**Confidence Rating (Scale 1-10)**
Jane	8
Denise	9
Jessica	8
Ethan	10
Katherine	7.5-8
Danielle	10
Julianna	9
Lisa	9
Jackie	10

Table 3

Confidence ratings for protecting cultural authenticity

Participant	**Confidence Rating (Scale 1-10)**
Jane	6
Denise	8
Jessica	6.5
Veronica	6.5
Ethan	.5
Katherine	7.5-8
Danielle	6
Julianna	5
Lisa	5
Jackie	6

Participants were also asked to provide a bit of reasoning for their confidence ratings if they had a specific one they wanted to share. To explain some of the confidence ratings, particularly the more mid-range to lower scores, participants shared various reasoning. Jessica expressed “I don't really know that much about my culture. I know the food and what we do on the special days. I don't really know what else they do.” Ethan shared “'Cause I ruin everything, destroy everything.” When discussing his confidence in becoming a part of the food movement and local food system through growing his own food. Julianna added, “I don't really know much about planting.” when explaining her confidence rating.

Other rating explanations offered insight into how the youth felt about their overall confidence in being youth within the community and becoming advocates for integration of cultural authenticity and the local food system. Insight was also provided on how the youth felt

about other individuals who were not closely linked to them and how they… When asked if they felt their voices would be heard if they expressed interest in being involved in an initiative which promoted cultural authenticity and the food movement, Danielle indicated “I think no because I think that we're just kids…and we don't have that much power just to say some words and they won't listen to us and they won't really care what we say... They don't appreciate what we say. They won't think we're mature enough to say it and that's why they prefer adults. We're just one voice and they always…if there was like a group of us or a lot of people with us then I think they will understand better but I think to them, we're just one kid…” “I agree with you because, you know because they think like "what do kids know about things that adults do" like what do they know.” was Jessica’s follow up response.

Katherine stated, “…no one would really care about what you would say, especially if you're younger, like us…like not just the Hispanic culture but the Chinese, the Japanese culture, German culture ... every other country in the world. Their cultures. They don't necessarily care what the youth is saying about it, but what the adults are saying because the adults have more experience or more knowledge of what their culture has for celebrations or dinners or anything like that.” Further elaborating on the point regarding protecting cultural authenticity, Katherine stated “Another little part of me just wants to yell at everyone because it's kind of offending you in a way because… it's mocking your culture, what you do and what you know best as an everyday object or something you eat.” Veronica expanded on her confidence level of her voice being heard by stating “Because I'm young and I'm like one girl out of a million people.” Ethan communicated reasoning for his ratings mentioning, “Cause we're just little kids and people think we don't know that much like they do, like they don't care about us, cause we're just little

kids that know nothing." Lisa followed up with saying "… they think that we can't say much stuff since we're learning and adults know much better than kids."

However, when asked if they felt like having a space that would allow them to connect with their culture and food heritage, their local food system and become a part of the food movement would boost their confidence in being able to have a voice and be youth advocates, all participants indicated yes they felt that would be beneficial. A few shared visions for what their local food system engagement would look like mentioning La Casita teachers (Jessica) and parents (Denise) as key individuals being involved and influential. Several participants agreed that many of the activities would consist of digging, planting, watering and cutting weeds. A few participants agreed with Denise who stated, "Our garden might have some of the plants or food that our culture have [sic] ..." Jackie added, "You could be creative and make your own recipes and make your own food with the food you grow." with several participants agreeing and Julianna following up by stating, "Yeah. I love that."

Research Objective Four

Research objective four sought to describe how the congruence or incongruence of identity expressions with the environment impact the relationships among food heritage, the local food system, and food sovereignty. Congruence of identity expressions with the environment creates space for youth to become engaged and contribute to the positive attitudes they develop regarding the local food system and food heritage and their understanding of these concepts. Incongruence of identity expressions with the environment can lead to varied attitudes toward and lack of knowledge regarding the local food system. The incongruence can also produce varied perceptions of food heritage, as youth think highly of their traditional foods, however, grow tired of consuming the same meals and seek foods of the North American culture.

To gain an understanding of participants' knowledge of local food and the local food system, the researcher asked participants to provide a definition in their own words as an open ended question on the demographic survey. Responses to this question varied, with the most common theme describing local food as cultural food. The following comments illustrate this theme:

> "Comida Latina" (Latina food)
> "Tacos, tortas, burritos"
> "Local food for us is Mexican/Guatemalan food."
> "Local food is food that you might basically eat by your religion and for example espanic food! Tamales!"
> "Food you eat regularly"

Other responses included:

> "Food Lion"
> "What they sell in stores and restaurants"
> "Chicken, Pizza, Rice, Fruit, Meat"
> "The local food is pizza, hamburger, Chinese food and more"
> "I'd say some fast food places like Burger King, Mcdonald's, etc. but some restaurants that are local food that I like are La Tonaltecha, J.D. Schuckers, El Charro and a few more other restaurants."

Participants were also asked to discuss elements of a good and healthy food system as a part of the focus group discussion. Characteristics mentioned included vegetables (Jessica), vitamins (Ethan), protein (Carl), dairy (JAne) and the MyPlate (Veronica). When asked if they follow the MyPlate guidelines, several participants indicated no they did not or that they did not follow the guidelines very often. When asked why they thought it was important to have a good and healthy local food system, participants offered various answers. Ethan " 'cuz [sic] you might get sick easy.", Veronica stated " To stay active…you won't have problems with your body." And Jessica added "To stay healthy."

Participants were also asked to elaborate on whether or not they felt local food was better than food produced through the conventional food system. Several participants indicated that

they in fact felt local food consumption was the better option. Jessica mentioned “I say locally grown is better because the food that travels might…”, with Denise finishing Jessica’s statement saying “Expire.” Jessica added “Yea something might happen to it while it’s travelling…and the food and the ingredients won’t get to the store and we won’t have it.” Ethan stated “I think local food is better ‘cuz it’s fresher.” Denise added an additional perspective regarding local food being more costly, stating “If the food comes from another country it will be a much cheaper than the food here.” Aside from this perspective, Denise did mention that local food production was more beneficial for individuals, adding “The farmers, the people, the people that works for the farmers…” as beneficiaries. A few participants also expressed information regarding grocery stores within the area where their parents did most of their shopping. Participant 4 stated “… we have to go to different stores…sometimes we go to Walmart, and sometimes we go to Gigante.” Ethan added, “Our mostly store we go [sic] is El Mercado. Veronica added, “That's the closest to our house, yes.” In a brief journal entry, Veronica shared the following about El Mercado: “”El mercade” [Mercado] is a Latino/Hispanic food store. It lets us buy food that reminds us of our culture. The store is basically a “Walmart” near us that still welcomes everyone.”

Figure 15: El Mercado by Veronica

Katherine shared photos from a Walmart shopping excursion of ingredients used to make burritos:

Figure 16: Walmart shopping trip by Katherine

Figure 6: Walmart shopping trip by Participant 7

Figure 17: Walmart shopping trip by Katherine

Participants' understanding of why certain fruits and or vegetables weren't a part of their local food system was also gauged. They were also asked about some of the fruits and vegetables that their parents discuss not being able to find here. Denise and Jessica mentioned red bananas as a fruit often discussed by their parents that is not found within the Georgetown area. Katherine mentioned lemons, mangos and star fruit like the ones her grandmother grows in Puerto Rico. When asked why they thought these items from their parents' native countries may not be available for purchase here, Ethan stated "They're rare." Denise mentioned "Trade barriers" and also, "Maybe it costs too much.", following up with a brief anecdote stating "My mom told me the where she lived…she used to see these bananas that were red and she would see them in the market-- in the markets and she said it didn't cost too much something like five cents or .25 cents." Veronica added "Or maybe because there's not a lot of people who would be interested in buying it."

One of the most influential factors in assessing intentions to engage is the attitude towards the designated behavior. Attitudes can be both positive and/or negative views of performing a specific behavior. Attitudes towards the local food system, food heritage and food sovereignty were largely shaped by knowledge and awareness about elements associated with a behavior, as well as parents and other prominent family figures and other previous personal experiences by participants. A majority of the participants possessed positive views of the local food system, their food heritage and food sovereignty. These positive attitudes alluded to desires to protect authenticity, educate others and become involved in the food system.

When asked, several students simultaneously indicated yes, they wish there were a program or initiative within the community that allowed them to understand healthy eating and how to grow your own food and where food comes from. Participant 4 reflected on a past

enjoyable experience stating “I was in kid chef. It's where you like um cook healthy meals like tiny meals.” When asked what things they would like to learn how to grow responses varied to include watermelon (Veronica and Ethan), cherries (Ethan), corn (Denise) and avocado (Veronica). Participants were also asked why they felt it was important to become involved in the food movement, learn about and express cultural & food heritage and learn to grow your own food. Denise expressed “‘Cause then when you get older, you can grow your food and start your business…” Danielle stated “'Cause you can teach other kids.”, and Denise added “Probably kids like who don't know our culture and don't know what it is. And why it’s so important to us. And why do we call it our culture. Or you could teach your own kids when you grow up.”

Inquiries were also made about gardens that participants families may have at home. Five participants raised their hands to indicate that their families had very small home gardens mostly containing medicinal plant. Veronica stated “Oh, yes, we have this plant that's good when you're sick.” She expanded by saying “… you take in you like put them on water and you boil it and then you drink it. Or if your nose is stuffed, there's another plant um and my mom mixes it with something then you just felt like your nose under it.” Only two of the participants indicated that they were able to identify some of the plants in the garden by what it looks like and what their mother uses it for. However, they struggled to recall or remember the names of the plant. All five participants who mentioned having family gardens at home indicated that they helped minimally with garden activities, which largely included just watering the plants.

Chapter Five

Conclusions, Discussion, and Recommendations

The purpose of this study was to obtain a better understanding of the relationships between identity expressions and local food system engagement among Hispanic youth. Assessing and understanding youth intentions to endgame will aid and inform processes of involving youth in community development, positive youth development, food heritage and healthy food choices. This study sought to address gaps in the literature through answering the following research questions related to Hispanic youth identity and intentions to become involved in the local food system:

1. What are the factors that shape the identities of Hispanic youth?
2. How do Hispanic and Latino youth express their identities?
3. How do Hispanic and Latino youth perceive their identity expressions are received by the environment?
4. How does the congruence or incongruence of identity expressions with the environment impact the relationships among food heritage, the local food system, and food sovereignty?

Summary of the Study

This study included a total of 11 Hispanic youth from First State Community Action Agency's La Casita Program in Georgetown, Delaware. Two participants were not present for the second focus group and one participant was not present for the third focus group session. The researcher contacted agency and program leadership to identify several Hispanic youths to take part in the photovoice study. The researcher collected data through photographs, participant journals and focus group interviews. This was a phenomenological study, meaning that the

participants focus the meaning of a particular aspect of experience, and through dialogue and reflection the meaning and importance of the experience is reviewed (Rossman & Rallis, 1998). The researcher asked participants questions surrounding their Hispanic identity, knowledge of the local food system, food choices and confidence. Participants each received a journal, a camera and guidelines to follow when thinking about what to photograph and what to write as the description. After cameras and journals were collected, the researcher conducted three semi-structured focus groups with participants, utilizing some of the photos participants had taken. The photographs and journal entries aided the researcher in identifying thematic areas to answer the research questions, with the focus group questions providing further clarification of the research question answers. The responses are reflective of the 11 participants of this study and are not generalizable to the entire Hispanic population.

Discussion

The following themes were derived from coding processes and were developed in relation to the literature. Cultural Identity refers to components which make up the Hispanic youth identity and the importance of these components to engagement. Attitudes Toward Protecting the Authenticity of Food and Culture refers to participants perceptions about cultural identity and food heritage and protecting these facets of identity from appropriation. Attitudes Towards Food System Involvement and Educating Others refers to perceptions of the food system, the importance of their involvement and the importance of educating others about crucial information regarding food and food justice. Social Pressure about Food Choices and Cultural Engagement discusses the demands that society, family and peers place on individuals to become actively involved in food heritage, cultural identity and food justice. Local Food System Knowledge and Awareness refers to the understanding individuals' have regarding the food

systems operations, local food and the role of the food movement. Lastly, Self-Efficacy Concerning the Food Movement refers to an individual's level of confidence in being able to successfully become an integral part of the food movement. The about themes are discussed more in depth below.

Theme 1: Cultural Identity

Cultural identity, including the importance of food heritage and traditional celebrations was an overall common theme within this study. Cultural identity encompasses the importance of cultural identity and the role it plays in influencing youth intentions. As shown, participants shared photographs everything from foods to traditional clothing related to their culture. Participants also showed the crucial part that food plays in shaping their identity as Hispanic youth. It is apparent that aspects of culture are closely linked with participant's thoughts of the local food system. The relationship between identity and engagement are strong and must feature some components of what is important to participants in order for them to become involved. Food and its preparation is a highly regarded component of cultural identity. Participants indicated the importance and social pressures from their mothers for them to be in the kitchen engaging in their food heritage. Marie Elise Christie states, "kitchenspace appears to provide a refuge for culture, allowing the reproduction and reinvention of "lo nuestro" (what is ours) or core elements of collective identity" (2008, pg. 259). Access to fresh food and cultural identity are close companions in regard to the Hispanic population.

Factors such as acculturation and assimilation can in some cases take away from cultural identity and the value it holds for generations of Hispanic youth. The youth of this study possess strong desires to actively remain a part of their Hispanic culture and also fit in pieces of the United States culture, which is their country of birth. When assessing Hispanic youth's intentions

of engaging in their local food system and food heritage, how they view the world and their culture emerges. Cultural capital provides a particular manner for seeing the world, defining what has value, and determining what things are possible to change (Flora & Flora, 2008). Cultural capital is crucial for Hispanic youth, as they value and define cultural identity through their passion for protecting its authenticity.

Theme 2: Attitudes Toward Protecting the Authenticity of Food and Culture

Many participants discussed the importance of protecting the authenticity of food and culture. Attitudes toward protecting the authenticity of food and culture refers to how participants feel their food and culture are being represented and how they feel about ensuring that it is represented properly. Many indicated negative feelings toward entities which try to portray themselves as serving authentic Hispanic food. These feelings and views correlate with historical oppressions and cultural appropriations which have occurred to various cultures. Cultural appropriation stems from years of imperialism, capitalism, oppression, and assimilation. Dr. Anthony Peguero (personal communications) highlights "I think it's the way that's heightened or emphasized in terms of appropriation, because Mexicans are not treated well in this country, let alone the idea and the political and the aura of how Mexico as a country, the people that represent that are not necessarily celebrated, but burritos are, right? "…using Chipotle as an example, misrepresentation and the appropriation of Mexican culture, Mexican food." Further, he elaborates on the idea of how the cultural traditions are typically celebrated by others, however they often demean and dismiss the people behind the culture. The youth of this study are very aware of the cultural appropriation that is occurring particularly to their food heritage and indicated a desire and need to protect the authenticity surrounding food. According to Graham & Hudley (2005), several historical and cultural forces to include cultural stereotypes

and discrimination, the perceptions of others, and a desire to protect their group identity have motivational significance for people of color. These factors motivate individuals, particularly the Hispanic youth of this study to want to portray and protect the authenticity of who they are. However, the self-efficacy and confidence to do so tends to lack, especially for those marginalized populations of youth who don't have access to the platforms needed to provide them with the sense of empowerment necessary to inflict change (Kwan, 2013).

Theme 3: Attitudes Towards Food System Involvement and Educating Others

Ajzen (1991) highlights that attitudes can positively or negatively impact a person's behavior. When an individual possesses a positive attitude towards a particular behavior, the more likely they are to want to become involved with that behavior. Attitudes toward food system involvement and educating others address how important youth feel it is for them to be involved in the food system and how important they feel it is to educate others about the food system and its' connection to their culture. Participants of this study possessed positive attitudes toward both protecting the authenticity of food and culture, educating others, as well as becoming involved in the food system. Knowledge is an additional factor in addition to attitude which contributes to a person's intentions to engage in a behavior (Ajzen, 1985). When youth are properly trained and educated about the local food system and their culture, they are able to develop positive attitudes regarding these concepts, and thus act as agents of change through positive youth development (Zeldin et al., 2000). Youth food activism calls on young people to learn how to grown food and become engaged in addressing things such as local food production and food access (Kwan, 2013). Additionally, youth food activism engages youth in food policy, allowing them to become key decision makers, thus improving their attitudes and knowledge regarding concepts of the food movement. In turn, youth, particularly those of marginalized

backgrounds such as Hispanics, become better citizens for the future and more aware advocates for policies which may impact them and their communities. Since participants expressed more positive attitudes toward the local food system and educating others about the relationship between their culture and local food, community leaders should begin to think about ways to collaborate with youth in an effort to encourage them to make changes within their community.

Theme 4: Social Pressure about Food Choices and Cultural Engagement

Social pressures about food choices and cultural engagement refers to how youth perceive important individuals feel about the decisions they make and what they engage in. This also includes encouragement these individuals provide to engage or not engage in certain activities. Ajzen (1985) indicates that individuals of importance to a person will significantly impact the choices they make to engage in certain behaviors. Pressures from family members, particularly parents, have worked to encourage youth to consume traditional meals and some vegetables, at least while in the house. A belief which seemed to exist in a few journal entries and participant responses was that if some type of vegetables were added to any meal, no matter how it was prepared, it made the meal healthier. This shows some correlation to Schnecker's (2005) interview, which stated that "In addition to deep-fat fried dishes, much of the native, rural diet in Mexico consists of freshly prepared fruits and vegetables." Further, Evans et al. (2011) discovered that low-income, Spanish-speaking Latina mothers assessed many factors when purchasing food, such as the food's perceived healthfulness or convenience. These two factors heavily influence the pressures that parents of Hispanic youth place on their children in terms of trying to incorporate healthy foods in the household to encourage youth to engage in healthy food choices. Social pressures from peers in addition to parents can act as an additional factor to influence one's intentions to engage in behaviors associated with healthy food consumption and

local food system engagement. These pressures indicate that young people may be under a stronger influence of their peers, and therefore may modify their behavior accordingly (Ham, Jeger & Ivković, 2015). Therefore, if community organizations create spaces for youth to gain knowledge about the local food system and healthy food choices which will allow Hispanic youth to interact with peers, they are likely to want to become active members of the food movement. Further, opportunities for youth to engage in their food system and culture with other highly regarded individuals such as parents will enhance their intentions to become involved.

Some of the youth also mentioned being bored of some of their traditional food such as beans and eggs, a popular lunch and dinner meal, native to Guatemala. This boredom of meals also relates to why participants hinted at an interest in an initiative which allowed them to learn to cook with foods they grow and learn to new recipes. The social pressures to engage in the consumption of the same traditional meals regularly seems to collide with Berry's (1980) idea of integration, as participants desire to incorporate facets of food from both worlds into their diets. This indicates a need for the development of initiatives which combine facets of the local food system with healthy eating and nutritional education, as it will provide benefits to both youth and their families.

Though parents try to incorporate fruit and vegetable items into meals for youth, many of them still indicated a more favorable of foods from more North American restaurants. This lends to discussion surrounding acculturation and assimilation, which highlights that more acculturated Hispanic children consume fewer fruits and vegetables than children from any other racial and ethnic background (Dave et al., 2009). Alaimo, Packnett, Miles, & Kruger (2008) however, highlight the ways in which community garden and local food system involvement work to increase fruit and vegetable consumption.

Theme 5: Local Food System Knowledge and Awareness

Local food system knowledge and awareness refers to the participants' level of understanding of the local food system and their awareness of factors which may influence the availability or access to local foods. Participants expressed varying definitions of what local food meant to them, largely describing it as the foods they consume as part of their culture. This aligns with Fischler (1988), who highlights that food is central to our sense of identity. Almost an equal part of participant's identified local food as more so fast food places or other restaurants and foods not particularly related to their culture, with minimal mention of fruits and vegetables. This highlights the lack of understanding and knowledge around the local food system and food movement. Therefore, it is important for community educators and organizers to provide youth with opportunities to become active members of their local food system through taking part in agricultural initiatives which facilitate knowledge generation. Bergen (2013) mentions that local food systems can serve as great educational venues by providing information regarding land use, nutritional lessons, food cultivation and the greater food system.

This involvement will also create space for youth to engage with their families to learn more about the connections between agriculture, the land and their Hispanic culture. Cattel et al.

(2008) posits that community spaces could increase social bonds and create social bridges. Flora & Flora (2008) describe bonding social capital as close ties that build community cohesion among homogenous individuals and groups. Whereas, bridging social capital refers to the linkages an individual has with people and groups in the community where interactions are limited or with individuals and organizations outside of the locality (Flora & Flora, 2008). The development of policies and initiatives which allow Hispanic youth to become engaged would build social and cultural capital, as well as ensure access to culturally appropriate, healthy, local food.

Theme 6: Self-Efficacy Concerning the Food Movement

Self-efficacy concerning the food movement refers to participants' confidence in their ability to actually become food movement advocates. Participants were asked to provide a rating for their level of confidence in becoming a part of the food movement, which assessed their ability to use their voice as youth to advocate for social justice issues surrounding food and food sovereignty. Perceived self-efficacy refers to an individual's beliefs about their ability to perform a certain behavior (Bandura, 1977). Further, perceived self-efficacy assesses these abilities through confidence and perceived ease or difficulty of performing a certain behavior. Ratings for the questions varied, as some participants did not feel very confident in their abilities to be food advocates because they either a) were not very knowledgeable about the topic or b) they felt that their voice as youth would not be heard by those who hold the power.

Participants were also asked to rate their level of confidence around cultural knowledge and awareness. For this question, confidence was fairly high, being ranked at a 7 or higher. Participants felt secure in their knowledge of their culture and what it meant to them. The pride of being a Hispanic youth exuded in the responses of participants to various questions and

through the photographs they shared. This provides evidence that identity and confidence plays a key role in the intentions of youth to engage in their local food system, the food movement and food heritage.

Low confidence ratings sparked around the question of "What say do kids have in matters pertaining to cultural authenticity, food choices and advocating for an initiative that allows them to combine culture and the local food system to make a difference?" This mindset seemed to exist with all youth participants who were present for this discussion, as they expressed feelings of not being heard by adults and not having the power necessary to make changes within the community. Hart et al. (1997) highlights the need for community-based programming that is sensitive to the developmental needs of young people. Kwan (2013) points out that youth begin developing an understanding of the world on a macro level well before adolescence. Youth need to be engaged in order to enhance their real world understanding. Kwan (2013) also states that youth who are actively engaged in advocacy and activism demonstrate better developmental, educational, psychosocial, sociopolitical, and health outcomes. Additionally, youth need to feel included in the community as they continue to develop and shape their identity as both youth and Hispanics. Further, according to Checkoway and Richards-Schuster (2001), processes of community youth development reveals that "through authentic youth participation, youth development can be a vehicle for social justice". Giving youth the opportunity to make decisions, as well as providing them with equal opportunities is essential to personal and community-level change (Sutton et al., 2006).

This research study was based on the theory of planned behavior theoretical framework. This framework allowed the researcher to assess the intentions of Hispanic youth to engage in their local food system and food heritage, as well as understand the relationship between identity

and food system engagement. As a result, six themes were identified based on responses of participants which aid in the development of intentions to engage in a behavior (see Figure 17).

The behavioral beliefs include the identity and attitudes themes. Behavioral belief refers to the positive and or negative views and individual has regarding local food system and food heritage engagement. Cultural identity works to shape the intentions of Hispanic youth because one's identity serves as their motivation and molds the beliefs and attitudes of youth. Attitudes, both toward protecting the authenticity of food and culture and toward food system involvement and engaging others contributes largely to youth intentions, as the positive attitude indicates that youth are aware of the benefits of engaging in the behavior. Normative beliefs consist of social pressure to engage as well as knowledge and awareness of the local food system. Social pressures, both from family and peers serve as additional encouraging factors to push youth toward engaging in the specified behavior. Parents and peers are two the most highly regarded individuals according to the Hispanic youth of this study. Their opinions matter most to youth and have significant impact of youth engaging in their local food system and food heritage. Teachers, grandparents and siblings were discussed as other individuals who have some influence. Knowledge regarding the local food system aids in forming the positive attitudes of youth toward a behavior. Knowledge and awareness shape attitudes. Control beliefs consists of one's self efficacy or confidence in engagement. Additionally, control beliefs refer to knowledge and awareness and social pressures because the lack of knowledge or pressures that aren't congruent with youth's beliefs can impede engagement. Self-efficacy regarding the food movement highlights the confidence of participants in being able to become active members of the food movement, as well as advocates for food and culture. The confidence of Hispanic youth to believe they can actually carry out the behavior is a major influential factor in their intentions

to actually engage. When youth feel less confident in this ability, they are less likely to engage. However, youth of this study identified their cultural identity in addition to factors such as the support of their parents as major factors which would boost their level of confidence.

Connecting Themes to the Theory of Planned Behavior

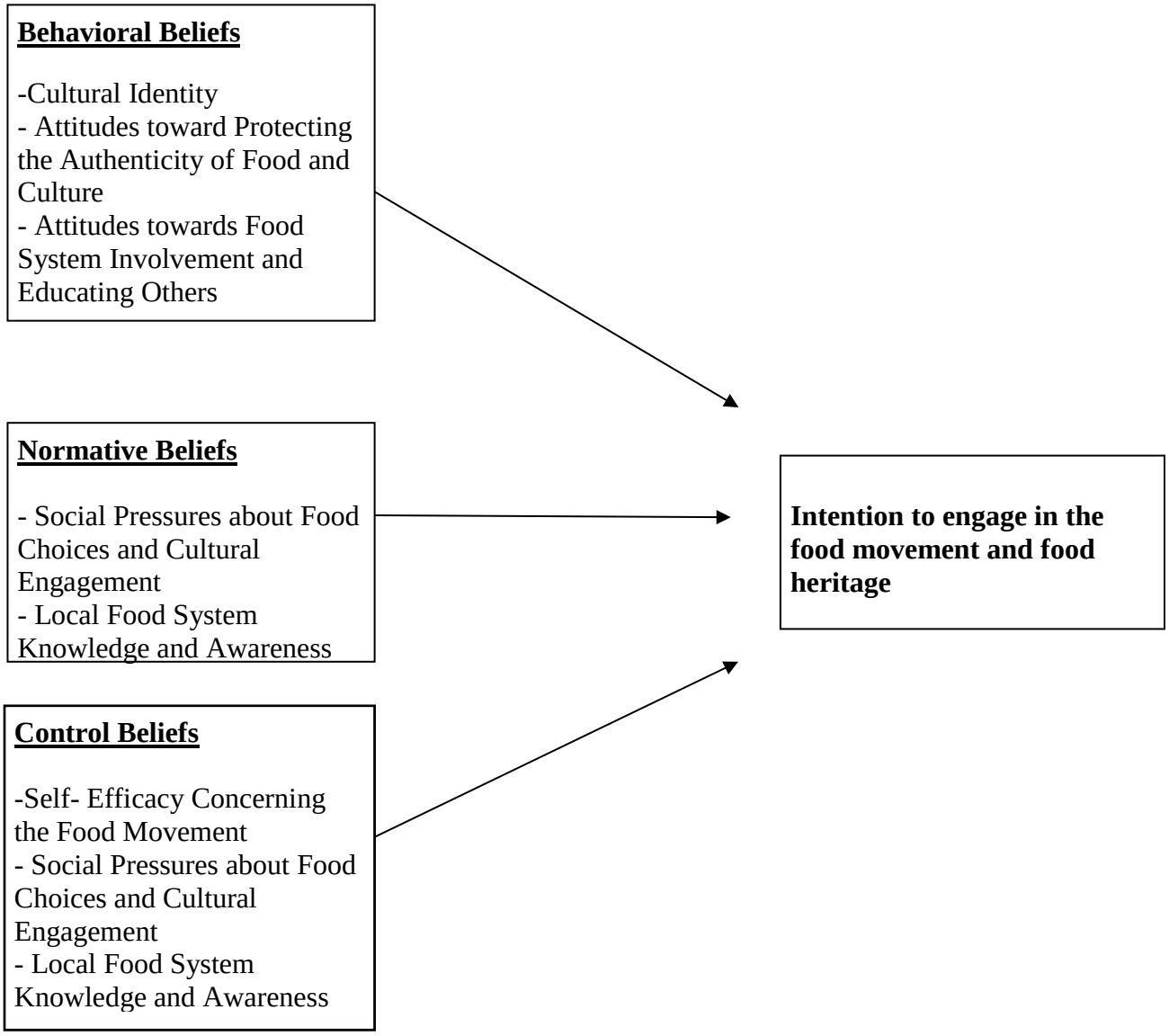

Figure 18: Theory of Planned Behavior based on study results

The findings of this case study are not generalizable to the entire U.S. population of Latino and Hispanic youth. However, they can inform future work in the area of youth

engagement in the food movement, particularly as it relates to youth of color. To this end, the following recommendations for research and praxis should be considered.

Recommendations for Future Research

As a result of this study, several recommendations for future research are offered. Involving the parents and youth together in a Photovoice project to facilitate increased involvement from youth and uncover additional social pressures. Also, replicate this study is recommended. Conducting this study with additional participants will allow further assessment of the intentions of this population of youth in Georgetown, Delaware to engage in the food movement and food heritage. Lastly, incorporating additional principles of Community Based Participatory Research will allow youth to have a more hands-on experience in designing the research and processes used. In turn, this would likely allow youth to provide more articulate responses and feedback as it fosters a greater learning by doing experience.

Recommendations for Practice

The recommendations for practice include developing youth food initiatives in Delaware and Georgetown which allow Hispanic youth to become engaged. Creating food policy councils to empower youth and allow their voices to be heard in decisions which impact their livelihoods is necessary. These initiatives will allow youth to develop knowledge and skills which are essential to their growth. Additionally, the creation of a Youth Advisory Board will allow youth to define what its' like to live in their community as second generation Hispanic youth, as well as set the table by voicing what is important to them in their community. Further, it is recommended that spaces be created for citizens of color to engage in both their local food system and culture. Providing space for citizens to become integral parts of the local food system and food movement through producing and consuming culturally relevant foods which they may have

difficulty finding, as well as provide a sense of food security. Lastly, culturally responsive services should be provided for Hispanic youth and their families to facilitate the acculturation and assimilation processes and to increase awareness regarding fresh, healthy and culturally appropriate foods.

Conclusion

This study explored the relationships between identity expressions and local food system engagement among a group of Hispanic youth located in Georgetown, Delaware. This study implemented the theory of planned behavior (Ajzen, 1991) as its theoretical framework. As part of this study, the researcher sought to gain an understanding of the factors which shape the identities of Hispanic youth, how youth express their identity, how Hispanic youth perceive their identity is received by the environment and how the congruence or incongruence of those identity expressions influence relationship among food heritage and the local food system.

This study indicates the importance of food to the Hispanic identity, as many participants considered local food to be the food of their culture or Hispanic food. Further, this study depicted that youth are engaged in maintaining and expressing aspects of their cultural identity through participating in traditional meal preparation at home. Youth presented positive attitudes towards identity and becoming involved in the food movement and local food system. Further, the important individuals such as parents and peers encourage these youths to make healthy food choices, as well as remain actively engaged in cultural identity. Lastly, youth feel moderately confident in their abilities to become actively involved in the food movement. However, the development of an initiative which calls on youth to become engaged will further facilitate their intentions and confidence to be engaged. Collectively, these factors work to build Hispanic youth's intentions to engage in the local food system and food heritage. As mentioned by Ajzen

(2002), individuals are expected to engage in a behavior as long as they are presented with the opportunity to. With the development of a culturally sensitive service in the rural town of Georgetown, Delaware which allows youth to exercise their intentions to combine their Hispanic identity with the local food system, Georgetown will see improved access to fresher, healthier items for this population and will create spaces for youth development through agriculture.

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Appendix

Appendix A

VirginiaTech

Office of Research Compliance
Institutional Review Board
North End Center, Suite 4120, Virginia Tech
300 Turner Street NW
Blacksburg, Virginia 24061
540/231-4606 Fax 540/231-0959
email irb@vt.edu
website http://www.irb.vt.edu

MEMORANDUM

DATE: May 17, 2017

TO: James C Anderson II, Rachelle Ashley Purnell

FROM: Virginia Tech Institutional Review Board (FWA00000572, expires January 29, 2021)

PROTOCOL TITLE: Exploring Relationships Between Identity Expression and Engagement in the Local Food System Among Hispanic and Latino Youth

IRB NUMBER: 16-1116

Effective May 17, 2017, the Virginia Tech Institution Review Board (IRB) Chair, David M Moore, approved the Amendment request for the above-mentioned research protocol.

This approval provides permission to begin the human subject activities outlined in the IRB-approved protocol and supporting documents.

Plans to deviate from the approved protocol and/or supporting documents must be submitted to the IRB as an amendment request and approved by the IRB prior to the implementation of any changes, regardless of how minor, except where necessary to eliminate apparent immediate hazards to the subjects. Report within 5 business days to the IRB any injuries or other unanticipated or adverse events involving risks or harms to human research subjects or others.

All investigators (listed above) are required to comply with the researcher requirements outlined at:

http://www.irb.vt.edu/pages/responsibilities.htm

(Please review responsibilities before the commencement of your research.)

PROTOCOL INFORMATION:

Approved As:	**Expedited, under 45 CFR 46.110 category(ies) 6,7**
Protocol Approval Date:	**January 17, 2017**
Protocol Expiration Date:	**January 16, 2018**
Continuing Review Due Date*:	**January 2, 2018**

*Date a Continuing Review application is due to the IRB office if human subject activities covered under this protocol, including data analysis, are to continue beyond the Protocol Expiration Date.

FEDERALLY FUNDED RESEARCH REQUIREMENTS:

Per federal regulations, 45 CFR 46.103(f), the IRB is required to compare all federally funded grant proposals/work statements to the IRB protocol(s) which cover the human research activities included in the proposal / work statement before funds are released. Note that this requirement does not apply to Exempt and Interim IRB protocols, or grants for which VT is not the primary awardee.

The table on the following page indicates whether grant proposals are related to this IRB protocol, and which of the listed proposals, if any, have been compared to this IRB protocol, if required.

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An equal opportunity, affirmative action institution

Appendix B

Recruitment Announcement

Dear Parents/Guardians and minors,

The Agricultural, Leadership and Community Education Department at Virginia Tech is seeking youth who identify as Hispanic and/or Latino and are between the ages of 8 and 13 who are willing to participate in a Photovoice project and focus group. Photovoice is a method which combines creative expression through photo taking and sharing a story behind the photos taken. The goal of this project is to understand the role youth's expressed social and cultural identity plays in how youth interact with their food system and make food choices. The research study will be part of a master's thesis and the study results will be published.

As a part of participation, your child will be asked to take photos about items related to the study questions that seek to gain information regarding your identity and the significance and understanding of food. A camera will be provided for your child to take photos of people and things which best represent the outlined criteria which will be provided to them. Your child will be asked to complete short journal entries about each photo they take over the two-week period. Your child will also be asked to take part in a 60-minute semi-structured focus group and allow us to follow-up to confirm your answers. Your child may also be asked to participate in a brief one on one interview of no more than 30 minutes to gain additional information pertaining to their photos. Responses will be audio recorded and kept strictly confidential and their identity will not be associated in any way with the information collected from you in the publication or presentation of the study results. Photos take will NOT be confidential and may be used in academic publications. Your child's feedback has the potential to make a direct impact on developing initiatives to engage youth to become actively involved in their food systems and their identity.

If you decide to allow your child to participate, a meeting will be held on **January 20th**, where you will be able to obtain additional information and ask clarifying questions. At this meeting, you will also receive a parental permission form to sign, acknowledging that you are allowing your child to participate in this study. Please contact one of the research team members, listed below, if there are any questions about this project. If you have questions about the conduct of the study, or your rights as a participant, you may contact the VT IRB Chair, Dr. David M. Moore at moored@vt.edu or (540) 231-4991. Thank you in advance for your time and feedback!

Sincere Thanks,

Dr. James C. Anderson, Program Director jcanders@vt.edu / 540-231-2608
Rachelle Purnell, Graduate Assistant rachp92@vt.edu / 302-632-5083

Appendix C

Parental Permission Form

Student's Name_____Grade: ___

Dear Parent:

Researchers Rachelle Purnell and James C. Anderson II at Virginia Tech's Department of Agricultural, Leadership & Community Education are asking permission for your child to be in a research study on identity and food.

The study hopes to learn how Hispanic culture influences food choices and engagement in the local food system.

Your child is being asked to participate in this study because they are a part of the La Casita afterschool program. With your permission, s/he will participate in a two week photo taking project. A digital camera/camcorder will be loaned to your child and must be returned after the photo taking period. Your child will be asked to take some pictures about things that they feel make them Hispanic/Latino, food they like, foods they consume in their household, where their food comes from, etc. They will be allowed to take photos of people (such as family members or others) who represent things they want to express. If they take photos of people, they must have that person sign a media release form (provided in the information packet) if that person's face is clearly visible. In addition to taking photos, your child may also be asked to take notes in a journal for each photo they take.

After photo taking is done, your child will participate in 60 minute focus group with the other participants about the photos taken. Your child will also be asked to be a part of a 20-30 minute individual interview. Responses to the questions in the focus group and interview will be audio recorded.

We will see each child on a one-to-one basis and arrange scheduling with his/her teacher to make sure that s/he does not miss important classroom activities. This study has the approval and support of your child's school.

Your child's responses will remain confidential.

Any information that is gathered in connection with this will remain confidential. No reports about the study will contain your child's name. We will not release any information about your child without your permission. Subject identities and all other information gathered will be kept under lock and key by the researcher and her advisor. The photos will be used in academic publications and presentations without your child's name attached to them. The data collected from the journals, focus group and individual interviews will also be published in academic journals and presentations and used in a master's thesis.

Taking part is voluntary.

There are minimal to no risks linked with participation in this study. Your child's participation is voluntary. If you choose not to have your child take part, neither you nor your child will be penalized.

We will also ask your child to participate and only children who want to will take part in the study. Your child may choose to stop at any time.

If you have any questions about the study, please feel free to contact Rachelle Purnell, Graduate Researcher at rachp92@vt.edu or by telephone at 302-632-5083. You may also contact her advisor Dr. James Anderson II at jcanders@vt.edu or by telephone at 540-231-2608. If you have questions about the conduct of the study, or your rights as a participant, you may contact the VT IRB Chair, Dr. David M. Moore at moored@vt.edu or (540) 231-4991.

Attached is a form for you to sign. Please indicate whether or not you agree to have your child be in the study and have him/her return the form within one week. Please see the section below the signature line and have your child this and take the time to review this section with them to explain their participation. We would greatly appreciate your cooperation in this research.

_____

RESEARCH STUDY CONSENT FORM

I have read and understood the information provided to me about the research study being conducted in my child's classroom by researchers from Virginia Tech.

_____ I give

_____ I do not give my permission to have my child (Child's Name) included in the study.

_____ _____

(Parent's Signature) Date

Appendix D

Minor Assent Section

Who are we?
My name is Rachelle Purnell and I am a student at Virginia. I work in the Department of Agricultural, Leadership, and Community Education.

Why are we meeting with you?
We want to tell you about a study that involves children like yourself. We want to see if you would like to be in this study too.

Why are we doing this study?
We want to know more about you. We want to know what it means to you to be Hispanic/Latino. We also want to know makes you Hispanic/Latino, what food you like, what foods you eat at home, and where your food comes from.

What will happen to you if you are in the study?
We will give you a camera. You can use this camera to take pictures of family, food and what it means to you. You will have 2 weeks to take pictures. You must return the camera after you are finished. You will also take notes in a journal. Your notes will be for each picture you take. We will also ask you some questions in a group to talk about the pictures you took. This is not a test like you usually have in school. You won't be graded on anything you do. Your answers to the questions will be recorded on a voice recorder and I will be the only one listening to your responses. You will also participate in a one on one interview with me.

What are the good things and bad things that may happen to you if you are in the study?
There are minor to no risks if you are in this study.

Do you have to be in the study?
No you don't. No one will get angry or upset with you if you don't want to do this. Just tell us if you don't want to be in the study. And remember, you can change your mind later if you decide you don't want to be in the study anymore.

Do you have any questions?
You can ask questions at any time. You can ask now. You can ask later. You can talk to me or you can talk to someone else at any time during the study.

_____

Student's Signature Date

Appendix E

Demographic Survey

Please answer the questions below. Have your parents help you with questions you do not know or understand. Return this form with your signed parent permission and assent forms, ONLY if you want to participate.

1. What is your gender?
    a. Male
    b. Female

2. How old are you?
    a. 8-9
    b. 10-11
    c. 12-13

3. What is your grade level?
    a. 3rd grade
    b. 4th grade
    c. 5th grade
    d. 6th grade
    e. 7th grade

4. Are you of Hispanic, Latino, or Spanish origin?
    a. Yes
    b. No

5. What is your approximate average household income?
    a. Less than $25,000
    b. $25,000 to $34,999
    c. $35,000 to $49,999
    d. $50,000 to $74,999
    e. $75,000 to $99,999
    f. $100,000 to $149,999
    g. $150,000 or more

6. What language is primarily spoken at home?
    a. Spanish
    b. English
    c. Both
    d. Other:_____

7. In your own words, what is local food?

Appendix E

PhotoVoice Project Steps

Step 1. Take pictures. Think about these guiding questions:

- What activities best show my culture as a Hispanic/Latino child?
- What activities reflect the opposite my culture in my community?
- What items show foods related to my culture? Which items do not show foods related to my culture?
- What items show healthy foods in my community?
- Where does the food I eat come from?
- What in my life or community has helped me understand my food and where it comes from?
- What in my life or community has prevented me from understanding my food and where it comes from?
- What do I want to tell other people about my culture and the foods we consume?
- What are my hopes for the future? And what might help me get there?

Step 2. Write down the date, time and place of the picture you took and a description of the picture. You can write any additional feelings you may have about the photo.

Step 3. When you feel you have taken enough pictures that represent the food system in your community and things that represent your culture in your community (about 30 pictures), you may hold on to your camera until our next meeting and continue to take notes in your journal.

Step 4. Turn in your camera and journal during the next meeting when the project leader returns to collect them.

Appendix G

Photo Taking Guidelines

Photo Taking Tips

- Try different angles
- Keep the sun to your back or off to the side
- Make sure your subject is in the center of the photo
- Be sure that the subject fills the photo

Common Mistakes and Ways to Avoid Them

- Keep fingers and other objects away from the lens
- Be careful not to cover the flash
- Stand about 3-8 feet away from the subject of the photo
- Prevent blurry photos by holding elbows close to sides and avoid movement while pressing the button

Photo Etiquette and Things to Remember

Stay safe! Make sure you are "safe when you take the picture. For example:

  - Stand on a solid surface
  - Look before you step into or cross a street.
  - Be aware of things around you like traffic.

- *Ask permission*. Always ask permission before taking people's photos for this project. Ask them to sign a photo consent form (provided in your information packet). If people can be recognized in a photo, ask permission before showing their pictures.
- *Be respectful*. If someone doesn't want their picture taken, respect their feelings.
- *Be prepared*. Be ready to explain about the project to family, friends, or strangers, if they ask what you are doing. A simple explanation is, "I am part of a PhotoVoice project exploring my culture and the food system of my community. We are taking pictures of our lives and the community we live in and talking about them with the project leaders. Thank you for letting me take your picture."
- *Sometimes you don't need permission*. In a public place like a store, you can take someone's photo without permission, especially if the person is far away and can't be recognized.

Appendix I

Media Release Form

I am part of a PhotoVoice project exploring my local food system and aspects of my identity. We are taking photographs of our community, people in the community that represent parts of our identity and the food system and talking about them with the project leader.

If you agree to let me take your photograph for this project and give your permission to copyright and use photographs that include your picture in presentations and discussions, as long as you are not identified by name or through other background information, please sign your name below. These photos will be used by the participants of this study in conversation, presentations and for academic purposes in explaining the results of the study and published in a master's thesis for research purposes. If you would like a copy of this photo, please write down your address.

I grant permission to have my photo taken for this PhotoVoice project and for the use of the photograph(s) in any presentation, which include focus group discussion among study participants and academic publications. Images will be stored in a secure location and only authorized staff will have access to them. They will be kept as long as they are relevant and after that time destroyed or archived.

Name_____ Age (if under 18):_____

Address (if you'd like a copy of the photo):_____
_____

Signature_____

Consent of parent or legal guardian if above individual is a minor:

I consent, individually and, as parent or legal guardian of the minor named above, to the above terms and provisions. I hereby warrant that I am of full age and have every right to contract for the minor regarded above. I state further that I have read the above information release and that I am fully familiar with the content.

Name of guardian_____

Relationship_____

Guardian signature_____

Name of photographer_____ Date_____

Appendix G. Focus Group Protocol

The focus group will convene at the conclusion of the photo taking period. The focus group will meet for a one hour to elicit discussion based on the questions listed below. During the focus group, various pictures taken by participants will be displayed to elicit further conversation pertaining to the listed questions. Photos will also be used to elicit information about commonalities across the expressed identities and commonalities in the understanding of the food system.

- Who does most of the cooking in your household?
    - Do you help with preparing any meals? How often do you help?
    - Do you want to learn family traditions and recipes?
- Tell us about your favorite foods prepared by your family.
    - Do you know how this is prepared? What items are used? Do you know where these items come from?
- How often do you eat at restaurants or fast food places?
    - What is your favorite restaurant?
    - Do you feel like the foods you consume are healthy?
- Does your family have a garden?
    - Would you be interested in gardening and growing your own foods to eat?
- How do you feel about fast food restaurants such as Taco Bell?
    - Do you feel as though they are representative of your culture? Why or why not?
- What in my life or community has helped me understand my food and where it comes from?
    - What in my life or community has prevented me from understanding my food and where it comes from?

Focus Group 2 Guidelines

Attitude

- How do you feel about eating food that is locally grown versus food that travels a long distance to get to you?
- Who do you think benefits from eating locally grown foods?
- How do you think growing your own food and your culture are related?
- How do you feel about males being in the kitchen?
    - Do you consider it different if they are grilling?

Subjective norms

- Are there certain foods you are not allowed to eat as a part of your culture? Are their certain foods you have to eat?
- Think about the people written on the board. (Teachers, Priests, Older Siblings, Parents, Grandparents, Aunts & Uncles) What do you think their thoughts are on youth becoming involved in the food system and making decisions about food?
- How do you think these people's opinions might change about youth being involved if you actually got involved?
- Now I would like you to think about which of the people written on the board might influence your food choices and you becoming involved in growing your own food. Whose opinions about this, if anyone, would most likely change your level of involvement?
- Do your parents typically eat both traditional foods and foods here in the United States (such as pizza, spaghetti and meatballs, hotdogs, etc.)?

Intentions

- If a community garden were started here in your community for traditional products, would you get involved?
    - What would this space look like? What types of activities would be done? What types of products would be grown?
- Would you become involved in a program that allowed youth to bring more traditional food into the community? Why or why not?
- Would you continue to eat traditional foods once you are older?

Perceived behavioral control

- Do you feel it is important to be true to your culture? Why or why not?
    - Is it important in terms of food, religion or cultural practices?
    - What would you do to protect your culture from places like Taco Bell and Chipotle?
        - What is your level of confidence in protecting and demonstrating your true culture?
    - How can you continue to make that change as you continue to get older?
- What do you think of your ability to become involved in the food movement (promoting the right to food, true cultural food)?
    - How confident are you about becoming involved in the food movement?

Quantifying Questions

How many of you have gardens at home and grow different herbs and medicinal plants?

How many of you have interests in gardening?

How many of you have worked in your family gardens and can name and identify the plants?