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## Exploring Technology through the Integration of Culturally Relevant Pedagogy and Issues of Social Justice

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# Exploring Technology Through the Integration of Culturally Relevant Pedagogy and Issues of Social Justice

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## Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to explore the integration of culturally relevant pedagogy and culturally responsive teaching in a summer enrichment program for a group of diverse high school students identified as low-income and/or first generation college students.

## Participants

- Total Participants: 11
- Female: 7
- Male: 4
- Race/Ethnicity (self-identified): African American/Mixed with other stuff—one, African American—three, Asian—one, White—two, African American, Indian—one, Mexican—one, Gray—one, Did not identify—one
- All students were between the ages of 15 to 17
- All students were enrolled in grades 9-12 at schools in the community
- All students were identified as low-income and/or first generation college students

## The Course

- Upward Bound Summer Enrichment Program at a medium-sized public university in the Midwest United States
- Computer science course: *Exploring Technology Through Issues of Social Justice*
- Course assignments and curriculum were aligned to the International Society for Technology in Education Standards Student
- Students created digital presentations, digital timelines, and ePortfolios surrounding issues of social justice
- June-July 2015, the course met Monday through Thursday for 50 minutes

## Methodology

- **Methodology:** Action research
- **Data sources:** Students' blogs, parts of students' digital presentations, and teacher's reflective journaling
- **Data Analysis:** In vivo coding, emerging codes organized into categories, and then categories organized into themes
- **Validity and Reliability:** Triangulation of data sources

## Students' Topics of Study

Students chose to study social justice issues such as police brutality, social class and music in education, racism, Affirmative Action, the national debt, legalization of medical marijuana, and Black Lives Matter.

## Findings

### Emerging Themes:

- **Teaching and learning:** Planning the course, instructional decision making, meeting students' needs, and teacher learning
- **Students' connection to course content and issues of social justice:** Culturally relevant pedagogy—academic success, cultural competence, and critical consciousness; students' continued use of resources; student opinions on issues; and connection of issues to students' lived experience