Still I Rise: How Single Black Mothers Utilize Non-Dominant Capital to Navigate Service Delivery Systems

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INTRODUCTION
Cultural capital is defined as non-financial social assets that promote social mobility beyond economic means, such as education, intellect, style of speech, dress, and even physical appearance.

OBJECTIVE
To gain a deeper understanding of the non-dominant domains of cultural capital that Black mothers who have children with ASD use when navigating the special education system.

METHODS
- This is a qualitative study; 5 in-depth semi-structured interviews were conducted using a grounded-theory approach (Glaser et al, 1967)
- A coding key was created using various definitions of cultural capital (Yosso 2005, Carter 2003, Lo 2016).
- Descriptive, in-vivo coded techniques were used to analyze the interview transcripts

RESULTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Cultural Capital</th>
<th>Example</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Navigational Capital</td>
<td>The ability to maneuver through institutions not created with Communities of Color in mind (Yosso 2005)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Example</td>
<td>“And I need to get where I need to go, so I’m going back to the table, figure out what do I need, and how to come back to you in a different way.”</td>
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<td>Resistant Capital</td>
<td>Knowledges and skills fostered through oppositional behavior that challenges inequality (Yosso 2005)</td>
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<td>Example</td>
<td>“I’m going to go a different route to let you know you don’t have a fool sitting here.”</td>
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<tr>
<td>Linguistic Capital</td>
<td>The intellectual and social skills attained through communication experiences in more than one language and/or style (Yosso 2005)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Example</td>
<td>“It’s okay. If you feel that you can’t do your job in this function, I would rather you tell me that and move on, and let’s get someone who can.”</td>
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</tbody>
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SUMMARY AND DISCUSSION
- In service delivery systems, black mothers must be savvy in how to use non-dominant (linguistic, resistant, navigational) cultural capital in dominant (white, middle-class) settings in order to get the resources they need for their children with disabilities.
- Linguistic capital reflects the mothers’ ability to code-switch, which facilitates communication with service gatekeepers.
- Resistant capital is essential for black women to advocate for their children in the face of institutional discrimination.
- Navigational capital gives black mothers more agency by validating their suggestions in their child’s intervention plan through research and networking.

STRENGTHS AND CHALLENGES
- This study gave voice to and validated the experiences of an underrepresented population.
- These findings are not generalizable.

REFERENCES