YPAR as Process

Supporting Youth Development Through Youth Participatory Action Research

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As a new Latina immigrant to the United States, Julia remembered feeling devalued and marginalized because she did not speak English: "People … tell you that you are less for not knowing how to speak the language, because this is a country where only that [English] language is spoken." Julia then enrolled in a Spanish-facilitated youth participatory action research (YPAR) program, in which she and her peers designed and analyzed a survey on how other immigrant students had learned English.

Through analyzing data, she discovered that many others shared her struggle. Doing so reframed her understanding of her experience: "I have more confidence in myself, and I can share things in some other classes. And I dare speak English without fear and share my ideas," she noted. Julia's journey shows that when the topic of a YPAR project centers young people's lived experience, it can be deeply transformative.

In YPAR, young people develop and implement research and action projects (Cammarota and Fine, 2008). YPAR is often used to support youth-generated

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knowledge and action, but it is also recognized for its value in youth development. In particular, YPAR supports youth in developing critical consciousness, which is the process of critically reflecting, developing motivation, and taking action to change injustices (Cammarota and Fine, 2008). Research has documented that YPAR supports the development of critical consciousness, but there is less understanding of the mechanisms by which it does so.

We explore the programmatic components by which YPAR supports the development of critical consciousness and, thus, youth development more broadly. To do this, we implemented YPAR with four cohorts of middle and high school youth in Northern California. Using data generated from youth focus groups and educator interviews, we explore how the youth's topic selection—in particular, having an open topic selection, as opposed to one that is constrained by the adult facilitators—was pivotal in affording the opportunity to develop critical consciousness. First, we discuss relevant literature, program implementation, and our methodology. We then explore our findings, including a discussion of the practical implications for the use of YPAR as a tool for youth development.

Youth Participatory Action Research as a Developmental Pathway

Positive Youth Development, Youth Empowerment, and Critical Consciousness

Positive youth development (PYD) is a field of research and practice that examines the inputs that lead to positive outcomes for youth by taking an asset-based approach, placing young people and their context at the fore (Arnold, 2018; Lerner et al., 2011). The long-term goals of PYD programs are to help young people develop positive norms, skills, and attitudes to successfully negotiate a transition into adulthood (Arnold, 2018). PYD frameworks and approaches predict that when youth are engaged in high-quality programs, they will experience better outcomes and fewer adverse health or risk-taking behaviors (Arnold, 2018; Lerner et al., 2011).

In the literature on youth development, the role of empowerment is central. However, youth empowerment is often poorly defined, lacking conceptual clarity and using a multitude of definitions (Úcar Martínez et al., 2017). One more radical conception of empowerment comes from Brazilian educator Paulo Freire, who developed the concept of *critical consciousness* (Freire, 2018; Úcar Martínez et al., 2017). Critical consciousness involves an oppressed group coming to critically analyze and seeking to change social injustices. It involves three domains: (1) critically reflecting on social injustices; (2) gaining critical motivation to change the injustices; and (3) taking action to address them (Christens et al., 2016; Freire, 2018; Watts et al., 2011).

Youth have been shown to benefit from developing critical consciousness. For example, critical consciousness can address feelings of powerlessness and internalized oppression by providing a means to challenge the dominant culture (Ginwright & Cammarota, 2002; Ginwright & James, 2003; Watts et al., 2011). Among these youth, it can also build resilience (Ginwright, 2010). For people of color, engaging in community action to address inequities may help such communities cope with the hardship of structural oppression (Hope & Spencer, 2017).

Youth Participatory Action Research

YPAR emerged as a youth-centered extension of participatory action research (PAR). PAR was developed, primarily by scholars of color, as a way to co-create knowledge with communities, who then co-own and leverage that knowledge for change (Ayala et al., 2008; Cammarota and Fine, 2008). YPAR was developed with the same goals and perspectives applied to youth contexts, emerging from critical youth studies, to provide "young people with opportunities to study social problems affecting their lives and then determine actions to rectify these problems" (Cammarota and Fine, 2008, p. 2). The topic of YPAR projects may be constrained or predetermined by adult facilitators, as discussed by Luguetti et al. (2024) and Anderson et al. (2021), or could be open, unconstrained, and determined by youth.

Critical consciousness can address feelings of powerlessness and internalized oppression by providing a means to challenge the dominant culture.

Although it was initially conceived as a tool for youth-generated knowledge and change, YPAR has also proven beneficial for youth development, especially for promoting empowerment and critical consciousness (Anyon et al., 2018). YPAR has been shown effective in building relational empowerment among youth (Langhout et al., 2014) and positioning youth as experts in understanding and changing their own experience (Bertrand, 2018; Ozer & Wright, 2012; Scorza et al., 2017; Villa et al., 2018). YPAR also supports youth in developing agency and envisioning change (Bertrand et al., 2017; Scott et al., 2015). Anderson et al. (2021) examined the process of developing critical consciousness in YPAR more closely. They found that at the beginning of the program, youth tended toward individual, as opposed to systemic, analyses of injustice. However, through the YPAR process, they were able to place their individual-level attributions of injustices alongside dialogue about structural inequities and thus develop a more systemic level of analysis.

Although YPAR supports the development of critical consciousness, there is little research on the mechanisms by which this happens. Anderson et al. (2021) examined the pedagogical practices that support critical consciousness; however, in general, there is a lack of attention to implementation of YPAR (Leman et al., 2024). Our research addressed this gap by exploring how youth developed critical consciousness and the mechanisms of YPAR that afforded this in a multi-site, multi-year YPAR project.

Program Implementation and Context

Data from this project were generated through a YPAR study we conducted over three years at four school sites. Most programs were offered after school, although two took place during school hours. Both in-school sessions and afterschool programs were facilitated by an outside educator, using the same curriculum, and with an emphasis on youth development (as opposed to typical classroom pedagogies). The program was led by the University of California 4-H youth development program; the specific sites are listed in Table 1. Groups were facilitated in English except for site A, which was facilitated in Spanish. Educators were trained in the *Community Futures, Community Lore* curriculum (Erbstein et al., 2021), which outlines nine *stepping stones* (program phases) that guided the youth and adult educators in their YPAR projects (see Figure 1). Programs were implemented on a weekly basis during the school year for 60 to 90 minutes each, with each session including at least one stepping stone activity.

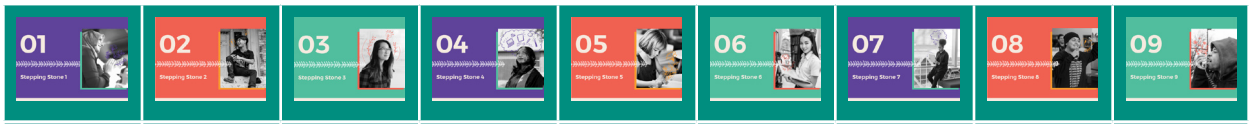
Exploratory Research Methods

Our research was exploratory and qualitative, starting with the viewpoint that knowledge is created through social interaction and shared meaning, rather than existing as an objective truth that can be measured independently of people and context (Creswell & Poth, 2018). We employed semi-structured educator interviews and youth focus group interviews to solicit adolescent meanings and experiences (Krueger & Casey, 2014; Seidman, 2013). We analyzed interview transcripts using thematic analyses (Braun & Clarke, 2006, 2022; Braun et al., 2019).

Data Collection

The research team conducted individual educator interviews and youth focus group interviews at the end of each program year. Interviews were conducted in English, except those at site A, Year 1, which were conducted in Spanish and then translated into English. Youth focus groups were formed randomly as subsets of youth from each site. We used semi-

Figure 1. *Community Futures, Community Lore* Curriculum Stepping Stones



Get Ready for Your Project	Get to Know Your Project & Team	Choose a Focus: What Do You Want to Change?	Develop Your Research Plan	Practice Research Skills	Conduct Research	Analyze Your Data	Create & Share Final Product	Take Action

Table 1. YPAR Sites, Participants, and Youth-Identified Research Topics

During School or After School	Number of Sessions (Minutes per Session)	Educator(s)	Youth
Site A: Public high school with a high Latinx population. In year 1, the program took place during an English learning class within the school day; in year 2, the program was offered after school. Youth participants in both cohorts were Latinx English language learners.			
Year 1: During	23 (75 min)	1 Latino male	16 (16 Latinx; 6 female/10 male)
Year 2: After	8 (75 min)	2 Latino males	10 (10 Latinx; 4 female/6 male)
Site B: Public K–8 school with half of the youth from lower socioeconomic status families. Youth identified as Latinx and participated during after-school hours in both years 1 and 2.			
Year 1: After	11 (90 min)	Latina female (first author)	4 (4 Latinx; 4 male)
Year 2: After	12 (60 min)	Latina female	7 (5 Latinx, 2 African American; 5 female/2 male)
Site C: Public high school with a majority White student body (less than 10% and 1% of youth identified as Latinx or Black, respectively). The program was offered during the school day.			
Year 2: During	13 (60 min)	Latina female	11 (5 Latinx, 2 African American, 4 non-identified; 6 female/5 male)
Site D: Continuation high school, with a lower-than-county average graduation rate. The program was offered as an afterschool activity.			
Year 2: After	12 (60 min)	2 Latino males	8 (5 Latinx, 1 African American, 2 White; 5 female/3 male)

structured interviews with 16 educator questions and ten youth questions. The interviews and focus groups were recorded and transcribed. We conducted six educator interviews and 15 youth focus groups in the two years reported here. This project was approved by the University of California's Institutional Review Board. All names have been changed to pseudonyms to protect participants' anonymity.

Data Analyses

Our inquiry was grounded in thematic analysis, a flexible analytical method for constructing themes in qualitative data (Braun & Clarke, 2006, 2022). We analyzed transcripts collaboratively, through a consensus-based process designed to emphasize diverse perspectives. All the authors coded the 2019 educator and youth transcripts and developed codes independently and then came together to discuss and agree upon an initial code set. We applied these codes to all data, with one team member serving as the primary coder and the other members serving as reviewers. Discussions followed to reach inter-coder agreement (Cornish et al., 2014).

Links among Lived Experiences, Topic Selection, and Critical Consciousness

We discovered a tight intertwining of young people's lived experiences, their selection of a topic for their YPAR projects, and their development of critical consciousness. Youth cohorts selected topics and defined research questions that were directly related to their lived experiences. Then, through the research phase of the project, they systematically investigated this issue, enabling them to reflect on

their own experiences. When time allowed, cohorts then used this new knowledge to generate action projects. Our findings indicated that, during YPAR, a primary mechanism for youth to develop critical consciousness was having the ability to identify the topic of their YPAR project, as opposed to a topic that was constricted by adults.

Lived Experience and Topic Selection

After forming as a group, the youth participants' first task was to select a topic for their YPAR projects. There were few, if any, constraints on their topic selection; youth were encouraged to select any social issue they found salient and interesting (see Table 2). This autonomy was difficult for many youth, as Isabella at site A said: "Sharing the ideas, I think, was the most difficult, because you feel that other people are going to make fun of what you say." This sentiment was expressed by many youth across sites. The educators worked with the youth, using the curriculum and their own personal experiences, to help them find their voices. One educator, Derek, responded when asked how involved they were in topic selection, "It was 100 percent them [youth]. I was really just trying to see what they cared about."

Although an open topic selection was challenging, the interview data revealed that it was rewarding; many youth identified choosing their topic as the most interesting part of the project. For example, at site A, where the topic was methods for learning English, Allan said, "The interesting thing about the project was that there are many methods to learn English." Similarly, at site B, Cassie said, "[The project] is not for school, so we do have a little more freedom to choose a topic that we want to talk about, that maybe the school wouldn't have allowed us to talk about."

The crux of the issue was not just that the topic was "interesting" or that participants valued the "freedom," but rather that, with this freedom, participants were able to define a YPAR project that was directly related to their lived experiences. In all instances, their topics—methods for English language learning, cafeteria food, or racism in their school or wider community—reflected aspects of young people's lives where they experienced marginalization and were struggling for agency (see Table 2).

For example, at site A, all the youth were English language learners. Their topic was experiences and methods of learning English. They wanted to know how other English language learners had acquired

Table 2. Summary of Research Topics, Methods, and Action by Site

Site	Topic	Research and Action
Site A	English language learning: Youth identified inadequacy of formal language learning instruction and investigated what worked best.	Created survey for peers to understand how they best learned English Created afterschool learning space for them to practice English
Site B	School food: Youth wanted to get rid of "fake food" at the school and bring in fresh options.	Developed peer survey about opinions on school food Interviewed school personnel to learn how to improve food options
Site C	Ethnic studies: How to implement an ethnic studies class at school.	Initial topic was homelessness, but changed after youth experienced racism from White teacher Examined syllabi from other courses and talked with administrators about incorporating ethnic studies classes
Site D	Racial bias: What causes people to act with racial bias and how to address those issues.	Developed interview protocol to ask peers and adults about their experiences of racism

the language, which they investigated through surveys with their peers. Their focus on English language learning reflects a daily struggle in their lives. This is clear in Mateo's comment, where he describes his experience of not speaking English: "[S]ometimes you are afraid to pronounce things and that's the problem, that you know what you are going to say, you can defend yourself, but at the same time it gives you as a type of anxiety when talking." This sentiment resonated with other youth.

The saliency of the topic was also reflected in interviews with youth at site B. These youth, all of whom were low income, chose to address their selection of food at the school cafeteria. Food is an inherently personal topic, but for low-income youth, it is also a place of further marginalization. During the project, these youth came to call the cafeteria food "fake food"; in the interview, Eli elaborated: "Because we get served like really cheap, nasty food (school cafeteria food) that isn't even like food and we want like actual food." Eli's complaint about the school's food was more than simple dislike. Despite finding it "cheap and nasty," all the youth in the project were eating cafeteria food anyway. As low-income youth, they did not have the opportunity to bring food from home as wealthier youth could. They also had limited food choices at home. One youth, Emiliano, commented that they would use what they learned in this project "[a]t my house because we get the same food as the school does. I'm pretty sure the school gets stuff from the food bank, and I get it from there." Another exchange revealed that several of the youth access food through WIC, a federal nutrition program. WIC provides important access to food, but it also severely limits the food choice, as those using it can purchase only pre-approved items with the benefit. Thus, in selecting cafeteria food as their topic, youth at Site B were creating an opportunity to influence something that deeply affected their daily life, yet they had limited agency over it.

Youth at sites C and D both chose to address racism, albeit through different lenses. At site C (all youth of color in a predominantly White school), participants had originally chosen to address homelessness through their YPAR project and were making headway in doing so. Then, during a field trip, one of the participating youth experienced racism from a White teacher. The group then decided to change their topic to researching and developing an ethnic studies class at their school. The educator at this site described the change as follows:

> They went [on a field trip] and had this horrible experience. And they were like—why is it that nobody knows who we really are? And one of the high schools that they went to visit actually had an Ethnic Studies class and they were like, "Why don't we have that?" … And they were like, "Alright, we want an Ethnic Studies class."

In this case, youth expressed to the educator a sense that "nobody knows who we are." As youth of color in a predominantly White school, these young people experienced erasure and misunderstanding of their identity at school. They then sought to change that by creating education that reflected their needs.

Youth at site D centered their YPAR project on understanding racial bias in their wider community. The cohort of youth were mostly Latinx, living in a predominantly White town. With the support of educators, they crafted the following question: "How do people in our community experience and express racial bias?" As youth of color, these youth had faced such bias. As Maria said, "We all face similar struggles and that bias can affect us all and we have to know we have biases too." Thus, with the autonomy to identify their YPAR topic, these youth also defined one that related to their lived experiences.

Youth expressed to the educator a sense that "nobody knows who we are."

Selecting a topic was the most challenging aspect of the project for many youth—and it was also pivotal for many. Given an open choice of topics, all groups selected a topic that was connected to their daily lived experiences—as youth who do not speak English, as youth who were low income and have limited choice over their food selection, and as youth who experienced racism in their schools and community. This is not to say that an open topic *inherently* will lead youth to choose one that is connected to lived experience (although we believe, based on this research, that that is likely), but rather that it *allows for* that opportunity—and, in these projects, that proved beneficial.

Youth Afforded Opportunities for Critical Consciousness

We found evidence that many youth engaged in the various domains of critical consciousness: critical reflection, critical motivation, and critical action (although not all youth and sites engaged in these domains evenly), and that doing so was connected to the open topic selection. Having the autonomy to define their own topic afforded these youth the opportunity to identify a topic closely connected to their everyday lived experiences; then, as they moved through the YPAR process, they reflected critically, developed motivation, and, in some cases, took action on their issue, and thus their lived experience.

We found the strongest evidence for critical reflection. For example, many youth from site A, who were English language learners investigating methods of language acquisition, commented that a key lesson from this project is that people learn English through different methods, without a "right" way of doing it. For instance, when asked what he learned from this project, Barrett said:

> That English is very difficult. That it is not very easy to speak, since what we have learned are the ... methods of learning English. ... Because there are people who—not all people use the same method, there are people who learn differently.

These youth had previously expressed that not knowing English created "anxiety" and a sense of insecurity. By gathering other people's experiences, they came to understand that their difficulty with English was not their personal problem or failing, but, rather, unresponsive methods of teaching. Or, as Barrett said, "not all people use the same method; there are people who learn differently."

A similar process was observed at the other sites. For example, at site D, where youth were examining racial bias, Maria said, "Racial profiling was so prevalent, and I didn't think my peers would have faced it. It was hard to learn that they did and how it affected them."

Through the YPAR research phase, youth were able to connect their experiences of oppression in conversation with their peers. Similar to the process described by both Anderson et al. (2021) and Bloomer and Brown (2024), this enabled youth to move from individual-level attribution, thinking that the problems they faced were theirs alone, to a systemic-level attribution, understanding that their experiences of oppression are not individual failings, but rather faced by many and shaped by societal factors beyond their control. This process of critically reflecting on their own experiences is described by Damian at site B. When asked what he learned from the project, he said:

> Well, I think teaching other people the same way we did, to analyze society; and I think that people would be a little less selfish if we would tell them as: "Think of that problem that you have; another person also has it." That is, the program helped us analyze the problems of society.

There is also ample evidence that many youth began to develop critical motivation to create change. When asked what he learned from the project, Fabian at site B said, "I learned that you can change school things." Similarly, Maria at site D described the project as "an educational program where we talk about how the issues affect us at various levels, like the school board vs. a teacher vs. our points of view and it's important to see how we can make change." And Sadie at site C described the YPAR project as "a good way to get together with your friends or make a group with people who have the same interests and make a change, definitely, like anything, your community or what surrounds you." These youth expressed a sense that they can make societal change. In their comments, the youth emphasized the connection between this novel motivation and the proximity of their topic to their own lived experiences. Sadie said it is to "make change [with] your community or what surrounds you."

Many youth began to develop critical motivation to create change.

There is evidence for critical action, although not at all sites. Youth at site A were able to move to the action phase of YPAR. Leveraging their newfound knowledge, they created an afterschool club in which they could practice English in a non-pressured setting, using popular media. Because their experiences of oppression came not only from lacking English fluency but also from the unresponsive pedagogy of their classroom, their move to create an afterschool club that better suited their needs reflects action to change an oppressive situation.

Unfortunately, the other sites were not able to finish developing and implementing their community action projects, in part because implementation took longer than expected (see discussion that follows), and in part because of interruption by the 2020 pandemic. Nevertheless, youth at all other sites were in the process of planning their projects and, given the three additional months they had planned for, likely would have enacted them. Youth at site B, who were examining the reasons for their cafeteria's "fake food," were working with their school staff to introduce fresher and more culturally relevant food options. Youth at site C were developing a proposal for an ethnic studies class and youth at site D were considering opportunities to share their findings. Because all the issues addressed through the YPAR projects were proximal to the youths' lived experiences, the subsequent action projects thus represent changes that would address the structural inequities in their lives.

Even though not all critical consciousness domains were observed at all sites, nor did our research assess whether all youth experienced critical consciousness, our results nevertheless support the conclusion that YPAR created a context in which youth could develop critical consciousness, and that having an open topic selection was central to doing so. When given the freedom to select a topic, these youth were able to define a project that was closely connected to their lived experiences; then, during the YPAR process, and especially the research phase, they were able to critically reflect on their own experiences in the context of their peers' experiences, moving from an individual-level to a systemic-level attribution. This, in turn, helped them develop critical motivation, the sense that they could create change, and, when time allowed, critical action.

YPAR created a context in which youth could develop critical consciousness.

Balancing Topic Autonomy and Project Completion

Through this project, we expanded knowledge about programmatic elements of YPAR that support critical consciousness development. We found that, among these sites, giving youth the freedom to define the topic of their YPAR projects was pivotal in affording them the opportunity to develop critical consciousness, although not all sites or all youth engaged with all domains of critical consciousness. For the youth who did, there was a tight interweaving of young people's selection of their YPAR topic, their lived experiences, and their development of critical consciousness. Given the autonomy of an open topic selection, cohorts selected topics that were connected to their daily lived experiences of oppression. Then, through the YPAR process, they could systematically examine—and, in some instances, change—their conditions of oppression, which led to the development of critical consciousness.

We found the most evidence for youth engaging in critical reflection, which is particularly beneficial for youth development. For the youth in this project, the critical reflection came largely through the research phase, when they discussed their own experiences of oppression in conversation with their peers. Youth in these projects were able to do so because they had the autonomy to define their own topic. However, this was a lengthy and difficult process, and ultimately impinged on their ability to complete the entire YPAR project within the timeline of the program. Although the pandemic shutdown was a key reason that many sites could not finish, the program also took longer than we had initially allotted; we envisioned the program being one semester long, but it would have likely taken a full school year for successful completion. This was due in part to the amount of time spent selecting a topic.

Our findings thus suggest that when program duration is limited, educators may face a trade-off: They may confine topic choices to keep the project moving and improve the likelihood that youth will reach the action phase, or they can leave the topic selection open, creating a rich opportunity for critical reflection, but at the expense of not enough time to fully complete the action phase. Balance is key but is difficult to achieve in time-limited programming. This finding is similar to what Zeller-Berkman et al. (2015) and Stacy et al. (2018) found: When engaging in participatory research or evaluation with youth, constraining the autonomy of youth helps with timeliness, but limits youth voice. Programs with sufficient time can achieve both aims. However, a year-long program can be difficult to implement and

many educators may face a choice between depth of participation and project completion.

Our findings have implications for both YPAR theory and practice. YPAR can be thought of as a *product* or a *process* (or both). Historically, YPAR emerged as an approach for producing youth-generated knowledge and action, thus emphasizing the *products* or outcomes of YPAR. These products are significant for their epistemological contributions and likely support youth engaging with critical action. In our study, however, we came to see YPAR as a *journey*, as it was engagement with the *process* that afforded youth the greatest development gains. The time that youth spent debating possible topics, selecting an issue, and then conducting research on that issue fostered deep critical reflection. Deemphasizing the final product and foregrounding the investigative journey may thus enhance the opportunity for youth development.

As with all research, ours contains limitations. We drew on a relatively small sample size and our qualitative methodology, though allowing for an open exploration of youth-determined outcomes, did not allow us to investigate how evenly outcomes were experienced by all youth. In addition, youth programming is complex and influenced by many factors; thus, there are likely other aspects that shaped critical consciousness development. Furthermore, we acknowledge that the connection between an open topic selection, lived experience, and the development of critical consciousness is not the *only* way for youth to develop critical consciousness in a YPAR project, but rather is *one possible* pathway. Thus, our research findings are not definitive, should be generalized cautiously, and rather highlight a pattern that was found in these cases.

Implications for Practitioners

Our work suggests that developmental gains ensue when young people are given autonomy and time to determine their own YPAR project topic. This finding has direct implications for practitioners. Educators who launch YPAR projects should first clarify their primary goals and make them explicit to the youth involved in the project. If the intent is to co-produce research findings or actions, YPAR may function more as a product, likely requiring more adult guidance and tighter topic boundaries. Such expectations should be communicated during recruitment and the earliest sessions. When the objective is youth development, however, adults should consider foregrounding YPAR as a process. This means allowing participants ample time, mentorship, and emotional safety to identify issues that resonate personally and collectively. Doing so may lengthen implementation and feel daunting for youth, yet it can enable deeper critical reflection. To ease this phase, facilitators can provide structured support, such as guided brainstorming protocols, reflective journaling prompts, and peer-feedback circles.

To support youth in identifying a meaningful topic, we suggest using structured activities that combine reflection and discussion with concrete planning. For example, in the *Community Futures, Community Lore* curriculum (Erbstein et al., 2021), the "Real versus Ideal" activity asks groups to describe their current school or community on one chart and their ideal version on another, then analyze gaps, underlying causes, and decision-making power. The activity "Choosing a Topic for Change" draws on notes from the previous activity: Youth sort issues, barriers, allies, and steps toward the ideal on a four-column chart, then debate feasibility and set initial goals. Together, these exercises give youth voice in topic selection while providing educators clear points for guidance and scaffolding. In addition, Kohfeldt and Langhout's (2012) "Five Whys" activity may also be helpful.

Educators who launch YPAR projects should first clarify their primary goals and make them explicit to the youth involved in the project.

Developmental gains in YPAR can arise when young people have the autonomy to define a research topic that resonates with their lived experience, even if doing so lengthens the project or inhibits completion. Offering autonomy is one pathway to foster critical consciousness in YPAR projects. Educators can safeguard this autonomy while still offering structure through scaffolded activities such as the activities above. As calls to scale up YPAR continue (Anyon et al., 2018), we hope that practitioners will prioritize the process of inquiry, providing intentional supports that help youth surface and analyze their experiences of marginalization. By centering youth voices in this way, YPAR can fulfill its promise as both a rigorous research approach and a transformative pathway to empowerment.

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