THE ROLE OF IDENTITY AND IMAGINATION
IN THE LITERATE PRACTICES OF ADOLESCENT GIRLS:
FOUR CASE STUDIES FROM INDIA

by

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This dissertation is dedicated to my nai nai. Thank you for always watching over me and seeing all the places I would go even before I took my first step.

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ABSTRACT

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The purpose of this qualitative case study is to explore the literacy practices of marginalized adolescent youth in India and the relationship of those practices to imagination and identity construction. More than just tools for communication, language and literary practices allow individuals to express their selves and identities as they voice their thoughts, negotiate meaning (Dyson & Genishi, 2005; Gee, 2003), and enact themselves within society (Janks, 2010; New London Group, 1996). This qualitative case study took place in Lucknow, India; the subjects were a group of adolescent girls at a nonprofit all-girls school in a seventh-grade classroom. Drawing upon Vygotsky's work on imagination, new literacy practices (New London Group, 1996), and a social constructivist approach to understanding identity, this study looks specifically at the multimodal literacy practices of youth and their ability to communicate expressions of the self. At the center of this study is the question: How do adolescent girls from an economically disadvantaged population in Northern India use literate practices to negotiate and express identity that is both imagined as well as actual? To answer this question, I collected data in the form of student compositions, formal and informal interviews, and observational notes. Using discourse analysis, the data revealed the ways in which the girls used literacy to agentively position themselves as actual selves in their societies, as imagined social selves and others, in relationship to social others, and in imagined events.

CHAPTER 1. INTRODUCTION

In a 1929 interview in *The Saturday Evening Post*, a reporter asked Albert Einstein, "How can I form at least a dim idea of the fourth dimension?" To assist in comprehending such an abstract and complex concept, Einstein began his response with the word "imagine." Einstein then asked the man to visualize "a scene in two-dimensional space—for instance, the painting of a man reclining on a bench" (Viereck, p. 17; see Figure 1 below). The reporter, George Sylvester Viereck, described Einstein as "the man whose name is on every lip and whose thoughts hardly anyone understands" (p. 110). In this same interview, Einstein famously declared that "Imagination is more important than knowledge. Knowledge is limited. Imagination encircles the world" (p. 117). As Einstein and many others have noted (e.g., Vygotsky, 1991, 1997, 2004; Egan, 1992; 2008, and Greene, 1982), the development of imagination is an important mental function; however, most schools and classrooms are unsuccessful in stimulating imagination and creativity in children (Egan & Madej 2010), and students are often given intelligence tests rather than assessments on divergent or creative thinking (Alexander & Shoshani, 2010). Furthermore, though it should be a crucial element in education, imagination is often outside the focus of educational research or only superficially mentioned (Egan & Madej, 2010). Fettes (2010) described imagination as an ability to "open the door to an expanded sense of what the world may hold" (p. 9). Entrepreneurs and innovators echo Fettes' sentiments, lauding imagination as one of the most important human skills needed for the future (Bidshahri, 2017; NPR Staff, 2012; Pistrui, 2018).

Rita J. King, a self-proclaimed futurist, used the term "imagination age" to describe a theoretical period beyond the information age in which creativity and imagination are key drivers

of economic development (Bidshahri, 2017). In the same article, Bidshahri (2017) called for an educational reform emphasizing the importance of 21st century skills such as imagination and creativity. Bidshahri (2017) concluded the article with a quote from Sheikh Mohammad bin Rashid Al Maktoum, the prime minister of Dubai who posted the following statement on his Twitter account in 2015: "The future belongs to those who can imagine it, design it, and execute it. It isn't something you await, but rather create." Years later, Al Maktoum's tweet echoes Einstein's insights on the importance of imagination for expanding our understanding of the world and for future developments.

A)

B)

Figure 1. Quotes about Imagination

However, the current instructional priorities in classrooms often overlook the role of imagination in the development of our youth, instead focusing on standardized tests and other more easily measurable skills. This can no longer be the case especially as we embark upon this new age of creativity and innovation where the ability to think outside the box is central to progress. Imagination must be at the center of how and why we educate our youth. This change can start with a look at literacy and literacy education as reading and writing ignites the

imagination, and imagination can be easily made evident and articulated through reading and writing. Furthermore, there is no better time to re-examine the ways in which imagination is sparked and fostered through literacy than now, when definitions of literacy have shifted (New London Group, 1996; Hull & Nelson, 2005; Quinlan & Curtin, 2017), and how we engage in literacy practices has changed drastically from the modes through which we communicate, to the speed of communication and its reach. As illustrated with Figure 1, the ways we communicate ideas have changed and what is defined as literacy has changed, from an interview printed in the newspaper versus a tweet with likes and retweets. In more recent definitions of literacy, literacy is considered multimodal (New London Group, 1996), interactive (Gee, 2003), and collaborative (Boling et al., 2008) as new cultural and social shifts and technological development have played an important role in pushing us to re-conceptualize and redefine literacy. In these new literacy spaces, it is now more important than ever before to draw upon theories of imagination to help us understand and think about all the different possibilities for literacy. Furthermore, imagination, made evident through our literacy practices, can lead to different and additional ways of thinking about, constructing, and articulating the self. Literacy as a vehicle for the articulation of thoughts, ideas, and feelings can mean different imagined possibilities for selves and worlds. This study brings together these different ideas (literacy as multimodal, imagination as critical to development, and identities and literacies as mutually influential) to explore the ways in which identities are situated in our imaginative multimodal literacy practices.

In this study, I examine the relationships between identity, imagination, and literacy. To explore these relationships, I draw upon theories of imagination and consider articulations of identities that are both factual as well as imagined. Ultimately, this qualitative study aims to build upon literature on identity and literacies by drawing upon the theoretical frameworks of

imagination and the ideas from Markus and Nurius's conceptualization of the possible self-theory (Egan, 1992, 2008; Markus & Nurius, 1987; Vygotsky, 1991, 1997, 2004). In this first chapter, I address the background, literature, problem statement, conceptual framework and purpose of the study. Next, I present the research question, definition of terms, significance of the study, and methodology. I conclude with the limitations and a summary of the subsequent chapters.

Background of the Study

As an educator and graduate student in a department of education, I have always been interested in the lives of students and teachers both domestically and abroad. My own educational experience crossed continents when at the age of 8, my family decided to move from China to the United States. My first years in classrooms in China were drastically different from my experience as a student in the United States. Early memories of getting hit on the hand with a ruler in Chinese classrooms for answering a question wrong often stopped me from raising my hand in my new English-speaking classrooms. In addition to the new customs and ways of doing things, I was also struggling with the new and different ways of communicating. I eventually learned English and learned that in this new land, teachers were not allowed to hit students. However, my early experiences of straddling two different cultures, languages, and educational spaces stayed with me well into adulthood. When I finally made the decision to pursue a career in education, I naturally gravitated towards teaching English as a Second Language. I wanted to work with students like myself, who were learning not only a new language but a new way of being. As an English as a Second Language teacher in New York, I was blessed with the opportunity to work with students from around the world, observing and learning from them the different ways of being, thinking, and doing. My years in New York only ignited my desire to

see more, understand more, and experience more. Observing my students from Tibet, Guatemala, Ecuador, Dominican Republic, Vietnam, etc. ignited my interest in the teaching and learning practices in other countries. How do teachers in other countries teach? Are they more effective or less? How do teachers motivate students in other countries? What curriculum do they teach? What do they leave out? To answer these questions, I traveled extensively and accepted teaching jobs in different countries with different cultural and instructional practices, from an all-female college in Saudi Arabia to non-profit schools for marginalized Romani students in Hungary and everywhere in between.

My interest in different cultures matched my pursuit for social justice. As a political science student at the University of San Francisco, I protested with Tibetan students outside the Chinese consulate and marched with human rights advocates from San Francisco to San Quentin the night Stanley Williams was executed. When I graduated with my bachelor's degree, I was not interested in an office job with a retirement plan or any claims to the social ladder. Instead, I applied to the Peace Corps and accepted a volunteer position working with youth and women in a village in Morocco. I spent two years in Beni Tajite which translates into "they came, and they left." The village, once thriving due to the mining industry, has since deteriorated to a small agricultural village with one elementary school and one middle school. During my time as a Peace Corps volunteer, I worked with the local women's organization, Nedi Neswi, teaching English to youth and learning how to make bread from the women. I grew familiar and comfortable with my rural living conditions of bucket baths and Turkish toilets. Through my interactions with the Moroccan women and children, I found myself becoming an advocate for those with quieter voices like children and women. I also came to believe that it was through

education that change could happen. Eventually, this faith in the transformative power of education led me to pursue a doctoral degree in education.

During the summer of my second year as a doctoral student, I decided to embark on a yoga retreat in India. In addition to practicing yoga and learning about Indian culture, I searched for and visited different schools throughout India. During one of these explorations, I came across the Inspiration Girls School. I was drawn to the population of students they serve as well as their overall mission: to educate and enable girls to take a stance against discrimination and repression. The non-profit school works specifically with underrepresented girls. Some of the girls come from violent families in addition to living in poverty. Other girls come from villages where girls are arranged to be wed as young as 13- or 14-years-old. Still others moved from villages where education was not available for girls and women, and they are now learning to read and write for the first time.

When I reached out to the school, I was first greeted by the volunteer coordinator. After a few Skype video calls and e-mail exchanges, and with open arms, they invited me to work with them and conduct my research at their school The school spoke to my passion for education, aligned with my own understanding of literacy as more than just words and acquired skills, as well as my pursuit for social justice and empowerment for women and youth. This school was purposefully chosen because of its location and the socio-economic status, age, and gender of the students. Additionally, this research site was selected to capture a culturally and socio-economically underrepresented population in literacy research. As the researcher, it was important for me to give voice to these girls and bring to light the literacy practices of these girls whom may be limited by their social, cultural, and economic surroundings. Finally, it seemed

possible that the particularities of this research site could reflect a unique socio-cultural context where identity struggles are potentially more formative.

The specific dynamics of the school allowed for a unique opportunity to explore and examine the relationship between identity, literacy, and imagination. This study specifically looks at critical cases of underprivileged adolescent girls ages 14 to 15 in the city of Lucknow, India. Because culture shapes women's identity, a lack of support from society stops females from exploring their identities (e.g., Matteson, 1993). Moreover, in comparison to the developed world, in the developing world, boys gain autonomy, mobility, opportunity, and power while girls are often deprived of these assets (Mensch, Bruce, & Greene, 1998). Identity formation especially in adolescent females may be complicated due to the traditional roles expected of them in countries like India (Sandhu, Singh, Tung, & Kundra, 2012). Yet, identity formation is a major psychosocial developmental task of adolescence that is related to psychological well-being (Erikson, 1968; Sandhu et al., 2012). Considering these factors, I chose to analyze specific cases of students during a critical developmental stage, living in a society where they may not only be economically disadvantaged but also marginalized based on their gender. I am especially interested in exploring the literacy practices and identity expressions of girls from this socio-culturally marginalized group, specifically the ways in which, through literacy, adolescent girls can imagine or reimagine oneself. The purpose of selecting these critical cases is to see if literacy can provide alternative forms of self-expression to challenge previously defined societal roles through the lives and stories of these girls.

Summary of Literature

Within this study, I define literate practices as complex events that involve more than just the decoding of words and sentences or the acquisition of information but involve readers and

writers in the work of imagination, identity, and transformation. The relationship between identity development and literacy has been widely studied (Ivanič, 1998; McAdams, 2001; Moje & Luke, 2009). When writers write, they are in fact making identity statements about themselves (Ivanič, 1998), and the stories that they write have the potential to produce and construct identities (Bruner, 1987, 2003; Moje & Luke, 2009). Defining literacy as more than a set of skills, Ivanič (1998) used the term 'site of struggle' to highlight the ways in which literacy provides a context for the negotiation of selves and worlds. Text is thus "a site of struggle in which writers are negotiating an identity" (Ivanič, 1998, p. 332). Literacy practices involve selves engaged in negotiation with other selves and social others where multiple voices are in conversation and negotiation with one another (Bakhtin, 1981; Holquist, 2002). Through these negotiations, identities and worlds are constructed and reconstructed, and worlds and selves are transformed. Specifically, when adolescents read and write, they engage in a transformative literary experience (Rosenblatt, 1994) where selves and worlds are negotiated (Bruner, 2003; McAdams, 2008; McLean, 2008) through a process of design and redesign using multiple modes (New London Group, 1996). In order to gain insight into the complex activity of literacy, I draw from literature on literacy practices as spaces for identity work (Bruner, 2003; McAdams, 2008; McLean, 2008; etc.), literacy as multimodal (Gee, 2003; Janks, 2010; Kress, 2004; New London Group, 1996 etc.), and imagination as a critical component of literacy activities and the exploration of selves (Enciso, 2017; Wissman, 2009).

Literacy defined as multimodal (Kress, 2004: New London Group, 1996) acknowledges that oral and written language in linguistic form has limits in terms of expressing the fullness of human experiences (Stein, 2000). Literacy practices limited to these oral and written linguistic resources can constrain our meaning-making abilities, our self-expressions and the selves we

wish to construct. Instead, "multiliteracies" as defined by the New London Group (1996) involves more than the oral and written language incorporating various modes of representation such as "the visual, the audio, the spatial, the behavioral" (New London Group, 1996, p. 64). Each mode carries different potentials and limitations (Kress, 1997). For example, image as a mode can produce certain effects and communicate certain meanings that the written language cannot. As the result of these affordances, different modes not only enable different forms of cognition, expressions, imagination and meanings but the meaning conveyed through one mode cannot be conveyed the same way through another mode (Stein, 2000). Hence, even when different modes appear to carry the same information, in actuality, they express very different messages. It is possible then that each mode (e.g., a written story versus a verbally told story versus an image) can afford a different enactment of the self. Each mode, as a powerful resource for meaning making (Hull & Nelson, 2005), can potentially enable new expressions and constructions of the self. Additionally, New London Group's (1996) definition of 'multiliteracies' suggests that youth as agentive users and designers of their literary worlds participate in an active process of design. As agentive designers, the idiosyncratic design choices are reflections of identities and the cultures and backgrounds that house these identities. Design choices in compositions are always intentional and purposeful with specific goals (New London Group, 1996) and through the active engagement with literacy and using different modes, students design meaning, selves, and worlds.

At the intersection of identity, literacy, and imagination, scholars, such as Wissman (2009) and Enciso (2017), have explored and discovered interesting ways in which socially situated identities and literacies are integrally and powerfully related to acts of imagination. In her work with young adolescent girls, Wissman (2009) created an elective course encouraging

students to explore "literacy as embodied knowledge and action" (p. 40) through engagement with poetry, song lyrics, etc. As a focus of this course, she was especially interested in how social identities were reflected in or shaped literary production, as well as how autobiography could be an act of social resistance. She built the curriculum with her students around her personal understanding that literacy, specifically autobiographies, were reflections of socially situated identities and experiences. In the analysis of the poems her students composed, Wissman (2009) found that her students used language imaginatively, purposefully, and powerfully to explore identities and to create more socially just worlds. Similarly, Enciso (2017) explored stories as activities that allowed for reimagining the present as well as move us through past and future landscapes. Through stories, we begin to understand imagination as a social practice and through imagination, we become more aware of our own and each other's humanity (Enciso, 2017), building towards our sense of self in relationship to social others.

Situating imagination as a social practice, Enciso's (2017) definition of imagination considers social injustices and inequalities and its relationship to imagination: "Imagination entails the effort to manage gaps in time between what is, what has been, and what might become within contexts of unequal histories and expectations for speaking and being heard" (p. 35). Thus, through the active engagement of the imagination, we gain perspective and control over our past, present, and future within context of social, political, and cultural inequalities (Enciso, 2017). Furthermore, imagination is needed to fill the gaps in understanding needed to make sense of each other and each other's cultural, historical, and social differences (Enciso, 2017). Through this understanding of ourselves and our worlds, made possible by imagination, we not only come to see and understand ourselves and our worlds better but can also begin to work towards building better possible futures.

Theoretical Framework

Sociocultural theory is applied in my conceptualization of identity, literacy, and imagination within this study. Sociocultural theory views individual cognition as related to and rooted in social and cultural contexts. Specifically, human cognitive development originates from social relationships and interactions and thus is tied to cultural, social, and historical contexts within which these mental functions occur (Vygotsky, 1997). As a result, identity development, or the cognitive awareness of the self, is socially situated, constructed through social relationships and rooted in family relations (e.g., as a daughter or brother), in social roles (e.g., as a woman or a student), in cultural roles (e.g., as an Asian American or Latino American), and in social class (Penuel & Wertsch, 1995). Within a sociocultural framework, identities and literacies are both socially situated and reflect our social, cultural, and historical influences. Through social participation, identities are negotiated and constructed, and these identities can be reflected or articulated in literacy practices. Similarly, literacies are situated within our social environments from the local newspapers where information is gathered, to access or lack of access to material and digital resources.

From a sociocultural framework, these socially ascribed identities are negotiated in conversations and interactions with others (Bucholtz & Hall, 2005) and these social actions and interactions result in identity development (Penuel & Wertsch, 1995). For example, the use of language is an action rooted in culture and society and through social language interactions, identities are produced (Bucholtz & Hall, 2005). In their article, Bucholtz and Hall (2005) approached identity as a sociocultural phenomenon, defining identity as the "social positioning of self and other" (p. 586) which is manifested and made evident through language. Language, as a cultural tool used in human actions, gives shape to identity. Specifically, "by speaking and

listening to others . . . the signs as incorporated into the flow of action actually construct, or build up, the sense of self by providing terms to individuals they may employ when talking about themselves to others" (Penuel & Wertsch, 1995, p. 91). Language and literacy, as cultural tools for the articulation and negotiation of identities, are manifested in activities by social participants within cultural and historical contexts. Speech and the use of language are human actions that require cultural tools, such as pens or laptops. These cultural tools, rooted in society, history, and cultures, are resources that transforms human actions (Penuel & Wertsch, 1995). Furthermore, these cultural tools (e.g., objects, symbols, narratives, or images) are essential to identity development and are used to develop aspects of one's identity (Bartlett, 2005). Cultural artifacts, such as narratives and cultural stories situated in social, historical, and cultural realities, are used to negotiate and construct certain identities. For example, reading and writing are social activities that reflect cultures and histories while also spaces for the negotiation of identities. Beyond this, I draw upon Vygotsky's work on the imagination and dialogism (Bakhtin and Hermans) to frame the ways in which imagined selves, rooted in reality, are social and in negotiation with other imagined and real selves.

In addition to a sociocultural framework on identity and literacy, I borrow from Vygotsky's theoretical framework on imagination and the psychological theory of possible selves (Markus & Nurius, 1987) to help frame this study. A Vygotskian framework on imagination situates imagination as central to intellectual and emotional development and as integrally linked to reality. According to Vygotsky (2004), imagination is necessary for world making and everything that was created by men is the product of the human imagination. Imagination begins in childhood, matures throughout adolescence, and becomes a critical component in creativity and innovation in adulthood (Vygotsky, 1991). Not only is imagination

traced throughout human development, imagination is also critical to development (Vygotsky, 1991). Imagination is connected to emotional wellbeing (Vygotsky, 1991) and considered to be an important aspect of identity formation (Markus & Nurius, 1986; Shank, 2016). When present in narratives, imagination can enable one to experience a past event from a different perspective providing different understandings of the self, the event, and others (Mackenzie & Atkins, 2008). Moreover, imagination, according to Vygotsky (1991, 2004), is not the absence of reality but integrally connected to reality; it develops alongside conscious meaning-making and logical thinking. Imagination takes aspects of reality and creatively reworks it into something new, and, thus, imagination is rooted in reality (Vygotsky, 2004). This understanding of imagination beckons us to reevaluate our priorities in educating our youths and consider classroom spaces that foster the development of imagination. In doing so, we can help our students "master their imagination" (Gajdamaschko, 2006, p. 21) and tap into their creativity to test the boundaries of what is real and to reimagine and design our future.

To further particularize how imagination and identity come together, I draw on the psychological theory of possible selves in its conceptualization of identity. According to Markus and Nurius (1987), possible selves are what individuals believe "they might become, what they would like to become, and what they are afraid of becoming" (p. 157). Possible selves are rooted in past experiences while, at the same time, being future oriented in how people conceptualize their yet-to-be-realized potential selves (Markus & Nurius, 1986). Possible selves are not detached from reality. Similar to Vygotsky's notions about the relationship between imagination and reality, possible selves are constructed through elements of reality and reflections of reality. The theory of possible selves builds understanding towards how imagination and identity can spring forth action: "With an analysis of possible selves, we hoped to gain further understanding

about the interpretive matrix of the self and the ways in which it confers form, meaning and significance to action" (Markus, 2006, p. xii). Vygotsky's theory on imagination combined with a theory of possible selves provides a context for understanding imagination and its role in identity. Vygotsky situates imagination as related to and rooted in reality, meaning that what is imagined is both a reflection of reality as well as having the potential to become reality. Additionally, possible self-theory attends to aspects of the self that are imagined or projected which hold the potential to transform actual selves. I build from these two theories and draw upon approaches to new literacies to form a conceptual framework for understanding how meaning, and selves, are constructed. These two theories together is used to situate identity as a fluid process with room to imaginatively expand beyond actual limitations.

Context

This study was conducted in the city of Lucknow in Northern India. Lucknow is the capital of the state Uttar Pradesh and an important center for government and commerce as well as arts and culture. As such, the city is fascinating and colorful both culturally as well as socially. As the capital of Uttar Pradesh, many official politicians reside in gated mansions. Within many of these wealthy neighborhoods there are also scattered plots of abandoned land where migrants from neighboring villages have set up makeshift houses with cardboard and poles. The Inspiration Girls School is located in a wealthy neighborhood where many of the local politicians live. The school runs as a private school during the day time for the children of many of these wealthy families that live nearby. In the evening, the school transforms into a non-profit all-girls school for the girls that live in the nearby small city slums. The school is one part of a non-profit educational foundation with the mission to provide equal education to all children, with a special focus on girls from low socio-economic backgrounds. Most of the girls attending this school

come from neighboring slums and work full or part-time as domestic helpers. To accommodate the work schedules of these girls, the school runs in the afternoon from 2:30 to 6:00 p.m.

The school was founded in 2003 to specifically serve the largely ignored and invisible population of youth in India who were both poor and female. The founder of The Inspiration Girls school, Dr. Urvashi Sahni, (2017) described the students at her school as "unvalued, uncared for, victims of neglect and violence, girls and their mothers have lives that are precarious, circumscribed, unfree, and hard" (p. 4). In a country where patriarchal structures not only silence the voices of girls and women but also reduce their value, girls from poor families are often encouraged to stay home rather than go to school and get married rather than pursue a career. Often times, marriages are arranged and forced "without the consent of the children." As such, "it would be more appropriate to describe child brides as girl slaves and child marriage as girl slavery" (Sahni, 2017, pp. 5-6). Urvashi Sahni found that the education offered to girls in India was still not enough as many schools do not provide the support the girls need and ultimately push them out, "providing access to education to girls isn't good enough" (Sahni, 2017, p. 7). The Inspiration Girls School was founded with the belief that educating girls should be a fundamental human right and with the goal to provide quality education including social, emotional, and political learning through a "rights-based approach, and a strong focus on child-responsive and respectful pedagogy" (Sahni, 2017, p. 47).

To help capture the intricacies of literacy practices as it relates to these girls' lives, I lived in a one-bedroom apartment that was across the street from the school. Living close to the school allowed me to travel to the school at a moment's notice in case of schedule changes or last-minute events, thus making all school functions, such as the graduation ceremony or a student gallery opening, accessible. My proximity to the school also permitted me certain access to the

students and the community. I was able to watch the students from my roof top and could observe their after-school behaviors. For example, I noticed how many of the students who attended the private morning school had the luxury of hanging out with friends after school at the little café across the street from the school buying and eating snacks or drinking tea. While the girls attending the afternoon Inspiration Girls school usually hung out in the playgrounds inside the school, sitting and talking. Additionally, by living across from the school, the students and teachers saw me as someone living in their community, and, as such, I partially opened up my world for their observation. The students knew things about me like where I bought my groceries, what things I usually would buy from the local shops, and that I would always get a cup of freshly squeezed orange juice after school. The location of my residency also allowed me to observe the students outside of the classrooms. I knew which of the students walked home from school, where they lived, where their mothers and fathers worked, or what things they would purchase from the local stores to celebrate certain holidays. Ultimately, all of these different aspects of my relationship to the community and physical proximity to the participants played a role in both the data collection as well as data analysis process as it gave me, at least in part, an insider perspective.

However, while I did live in the same physical neighborhood as the school and some of the students, my one-bedroom apartment was notches above the conditions the students lived in. Most of the girls lived in the city slums in tents, with little or no electricity. Though some of the girls did live in similar one or two-bedroom apartments those apartments were usually shared with a large family of eight or more. On the contrary, I lived in a one-bedroom apartment, by myself, with wireless internet, an electric air conditioner, running hot water, a bed with a mattress, and a house keeper that came twice a week. So, while, in terms of physical proximity,

my home was within blocks away from where the girls lived, the actual conditions and amenities of my home created a different kind of distance between myself and the girls. As a researcher, I am well aware of this distance and aware of the fact that while the girls revealed personal aspects of themselves to me, they also never stopped seeing me as an outsider. My time living 'in the field' thus provided a certain degree of understanding and context for interpreting the data that was collected; however, it never truly granted me access as 'an insider.' My position both as an insider as well as an outsider is further elaborated in Chapter 3.

Participants

The participants in this study were middle school girls in the 7th grade ages 14 and 15. I purposefully chose these girls because they were in the critical age of adolescence when imagination and identity are particularly important aspects of development (Erikson, 1968; Vygotsky, 1991). Additionally, the participants were socially, economically, and physically located both in mobility and stagnation, empowered yet marginalized, educated yet with limited opportunities, and with both defined as well as open possibilities for selfhood. Moreover, due to the school's openness to Western culture, volunteers from the United States and Europe were welcomed to the school on at regular bases to work with the teachers and students. Teachers and leaders at the school also often sought out opportunities for the students to travel internationally. Such opportunities included attending film festivals in Europe or exchange programs to the United States. These opportunities were scarce, but nevertheless, the mere announcement of these opportunities opened up possibilities for these girls to see the world and themselves differently. With connections to the United States and Europe, students from The Inspiration Girls School had access to foreign students, researchers, teachers, volunteers, and opportunities to study and visit abroad in the United States and Europe despite being limited in other regards.

However, even though these opportunities were present and visible, the social move out of the slums of India is tremendously difficult. Within the physical walls of The Inspiration Girls School, the students were free to have empowered discussions around social roles, gender roles, political issues and justice and injustice. The girls were empowered during the school day by their teachers and through discussion circles to think about a better world for themselves, their families, and their futures. Yet, outside the school hours, the girls lived in and faced a social reality where their gender, social class, and economic status positioned them to be marginalized, ignored, neglected, and consumed. While students had access to and were receiving a quality education, the social, economic, and cultural realities of India mostly worked to maintain the status quo limiting their social mobility and opportunities. Thus, even as many of their educational practices enabled open discussions, awareness, and contemplation, the students were also very much aware of the fact that many aspects of their futures were already defined. This dichotomy created a unique opportunity to challenge and push against the limits of reality. The unique context which situated the participants of this study can potentially provide more fluid and differing expression of the self. This research site and the participants were thus purposefully selected to enable and enrich our understanding of different literacy practices, as well as the purpose, the product, and the possibilities of literacy for the actual, as well as imaginative, expressions of the self.

Purpose Statement and Research Questions

The purpose of this research is to explore identity, actual as well as imagined, as it relates to new literacy practices by analyzing students' expressions of selves in multimodal compositions within the uniquely situated socio-economic communities of marginalized adolescent girls in Northern India. This research study aims to reevaluate the purpose of literacy

with children at the center, observing how and what they do with literacy rather than seeing literacy as skill sets of what children are able to be competent at. Thus, the guiding research question is: How do adolescent girls from an economically disadvantaged population in Northern India use literate practices to negotiate and express identity that is both imagined as well as actual? The purposeful selection of the participants in this study provides a specific social context through which to explore this kind of work. This study specifically aims to shed light on the imaginative activities of adolescent girls from a marginalized population through the analysis of their literacy practices in hopes of furthering conversations around the importance of imagination in adolescent development and education.

Significance of the Study

I initially approached this study with a focus on literacy and multimodal literacies practices, interested in the ways in which new literacies with its inclusion of multiple modes intersected with identity development. However, as data was gathered and reviewed, my attention expanded to include imagination and the role of imagination in identity and literacy. As such, the significance of this study is multidimensional: extending the research on the role of imagination in adolescence, examining the potentials of literacy beyond a set of skills, and exploring adolescent identity development with underrepresented and marginalized populations.

While imagination plays an important role in human development, it is often left out of educational research and discussions with much of our current focus on standardized tests and proficiency on specific literacy skills. In their discussion of design thinking as an approach to learning, Carroll et al. (2010) presented imagination as central to a creative learning process that fosters active problem solving. Similarly, Egan (2008) emphasized the importance of flexing our imaginative muscle and cautions us against the mundane classroom: "Sometimes it seems as

though the classroom is a place for doing the opposite–stripping knowledge of its human context and human meaning…And all the while, meaning, emotional and imaginative engagement with knowledge, fail to kick in" (p. 279). Egan (2008) concluded his paper with a call for educators "to engage the imaginations of adolescents in learning about and engaging with the wonders of the world" (p. 282). In providing students with the space "to imagine without boundaries and constraints," students can become empowered with the "tools and confidence to change the world" (Carroll et al., 2010, p. 52). Yet, the limited role and lack of importance placed on imagination is evident in classrooms and curricula. While our education system continues to focus on fill in the blanks and multiple choice on standardized tests (Carroll et al., 2010), supporters of the imagination movement argue that schools and classrooms must instead provide spaces for students to explore and have 'what if' and 'what could be' experiences (Wong, 2007). Additionally, while the importance of emotional engagement with the text has taken precedence, and many schools and classrooms have begun to place an emphasis on fostering a love for literacy, there is still a gap in our definitions of literacy and approaches to literacy education (McKellar, 2007). Rarely are students challenged to imaginatively engage with the text (McKellar, 2007, p. 5). Even tasks where students are asked to compose their own conclusions seem "restricted to situations that involve logical deduction rather than creative engagement" (McKellar, 2007, p. 5).

An analysis of mission statements for schools and recommended best practices in education found little mention of imaginative engagement for students (Egan, 1992; Richmond, 1993). When educators discuss the development of the intellect, rarely is the development of the imagination mentioned (Gajdamaschko, 2006), and many school-based literacy programs continue to measure competency through a series of texts of increasing difficulty (McKellar,

2007). This is a critical problem that must be addressed if we want to educate students to be creative innovators in the future rather than assembly line workers (Robinson, 2006). This is especially important for underrepresented or economically and socially disadvantaged populations of students, who are not typically afforded the same opportunities. Given Vygotsky's claim that during the adolescent years, imagination transforms and impacts intellectual development, behavior, and understanding of the world (Gajdamaschko, 2006), it is important to include imagination in educational discussions, especially for students during the critical adolescent years. Additionally, borrowing from Erikson's stages of development (Erikson, 1968), the critical years of adolescence are a period during which youth are actively working to develop a sense of identity. While we are always enacting a self, during certain periods such as adolescence, a concern for identity may be especially compelling as a developmental task (Erikson, 1968).

Outside the realm of education, research in psychology has explored different theories on imagination and identity development, including a body of work around the idea of imagined possible selves or the possible self-theory. My study draws from the body of research on possible selves and imagined possible identities and considers it within classrooms and educational spaces. Specifically, I aim to advance our understanding of the role of imagined identity by providing a way of looking at these imagined identities through students' written compositions. In considering students' written compositions as a space for the articulation and exploration of identities and the engagement of the imagination, I ultimately aim to situate imagination as an important component in education research, an important topic of discussion on identity development, and an integral piece of literacy instruction. Thus, this study asks the questions, "If instead, literate practices placed students at the center, creating space for agency, imaginative

freedom, and flexibility in modes of communication, what would we find? If we look beyond the politically created national and state standards, beyond sets of expectations of what students should or must do at set grade levels and quantitative measurements of knowledge and skill, and instead look towards the creative process of students as literacy users in literacy spaces, what would we find?" Finally, this study is significant in shedding light into the literate practices of adolescent girls from an underrepresented population, a unique and largely overlooked population. This study thus looks at the role of imagination in the lives and literate practices of students attending a nonprofit all-girls school with a school curriculum which aims to empower all students, especially for students in disadvantaged populations with limited resources or opportunities.

Summary of Methodology

In this study, I use a qualitative, single-embedded case study approach (Yin, 2014) to explore the ways in which marginalized adolescent girls attending a non-profit all-girls school in Northern India engage in literate practices. Qualitative research method is appropriate for this study as it focuses on meaning in context through interviews, observations, and analysis and is based upon the view that "reality is constructed by individuals interacting with their social worlds" (Merriam, 1998, p. 6). Thus, within the unique context of an all-girls school in Northern India, data for this study includes interviews, artifacts, and observational field notes. Within the various types of qualitative research, a case study was most appropriate to help answer my research question as case study research can help highlight the complexity of human experiences (Dyson & Genishi, 2005) and is most applicable for inquiries into a contemporary phenomenon within its real-world context (Yin, 2014). A case study approach therefore accounts for both the uniqueness of the experience that is literacy engagement for identity development as well as the

specific context within which this study takes place. Case studies allow researchers to enter into people's 'imaginative universes' through observations, interviews, and analysis of artifacts (Dyson & Genishi, 2005; Geertz, 1973). Thus, a case study approach allowed me, as the researcher, to enter into the actual and imagined universes of the girls to explore the ways in which their literacy practices were places for the enactment of identities.

Within various types of case studies, a single-embedded approach (Yin, 2014) was used to answer the research question posed in this study. A single-embedded case study design was most appropriate for answering the research question because it allows the researcher to observe the phenomenon (literate practices of marginalized adolescent girls) through an in-depth analysis of individual units of analysis (the girl student participants). In this study, the case under investigation is the literacy practices of marginalized adolescent girls attending The Inspiration Girls School, a non-profit all-girls school in the city of Lucknow, and the subunits of analysis are the individual girl students. This case or phenomenon under investigation is bounded by the location (a metropolitan city in Northern India), time (for the duration of eight months), age of the participants (students in the 7th grade), economic and social status of the participants (marginalized and poor), and the gender of the participants (female).

Assumptions

Several assumptions underline this study. First of all, I view identity as multiple and social and entwined with literacy and imagination. In conceptualizing identity this way, I draw from Moje and Luke's (2009) discussion on the three common assumptions related to identity research: identity as social, identity as multiple, and identity as recognized by others. The first assumption is that identities are not individually constructed or possessed, and social memberships, contexts, and social interactions all help to shape identities. Additionally,

identities are multiple, and the individual stories people tell changes over time as new experiences are accumulated. Finally, identity is recognized by others as individual people are called into an identity by the recognition of others (Moje & Luke, 2009). This study takes up these assumptions regarding identity. Additionally, this study takes up the assumption that imagination is based on and tied to reality (Vyogtsky, 1991) and that literacy provides a space for the imagination and has the potential to enable identity construction.

Limitations

This study is a qualitative case study of a small and selective group of adolescent girls living in a unique community. The relatively small sample size is a limitation because the sample does not represent all adolescent students in all classrooms and schools. Thus, findings in this study may be unique to this population, age, and gender and may not be generalizable in the traditional sense. However, qualitative research holds value and is significant in its own right. Qualitative research has the ability to provide in-depth insight into a specific phenomenon. The in-depth understanding gained through qualitative studies can be applied carefully to understand different populations and situations. So, while the study is with a small group of students in a unique context, it is possible that the findings may be applicable to larger populations.

The school at which this study took place also provides a unique context for the study along with certain limitations. The school, with the mission of empowering girls through critical dialogue that challenges the status quo, no doubt influenced how the student participants of this study viewed this research project and their interaction with me as the researcher. Additionally, the participants in this study were recruited from the same classroom and all six participants had the same homeroom teacher as their primary instructor which is limiting in its perspective. Participants were also selected based on their ability to communicate in English. It is possible

that students more proficient in English are more extroverted, sociable, and welcoming of different cultures and ways of thinking. Another limitation is the amount of time available to conduct this study. The study took place over the course of eight months total with the initial two months as observation time. An extended study over the course of a full academic year could possibly produce more insight on the phenomenon under study.

It is also important to note that this study does not aim to find the best practices in literacy for all students. Rather, its purpose is to discover possibilities for literacy that may not be at the forefront of our current educational practices, but which are valuable. Merriam (1998) cautioned case study researchers to be mindful of the fact that case studies are in fact only a part of the whole, not the whole. A case study is just that, one case; it is not the entire phenomenon itself (Dyson & Genishi, 2005). However, in depth analysis of single cases can produce knowledge that is transferable to other contexts. Thus, while this study takes place in Northern India, I aim to use this study to draw implications for the importance of imagination in literacy across international contexts. Finally, Merriam (1998) stated, "Both the readers of case studies and the authors themselves need to be aware of biases that can affect the final product" (p. 42). As such, another limitation of this study is the researcher bias in both the data collection process as well as the data analysis. The role of the researcher and my beliefs and values going into this study that could have led to certain biases during the collection and the analysis of the findings will be further elaborated in Chapter 3.

Summary and Organization

Chapter 2 of this study discusses the literature review along with the theoretical and conceptual framework. Chapter 3 describes the methodology of this study including a description of the data collection and data analysis process. Chapter 4 provides the results of the study

presented in three separate cases. Finally, Chapter 5 offers a summary of the findings along with

a discussion, limitations of the study, and classroom implications.

CHAPTER 2. REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

In this chapter, I provide a summary of the literature which undergirds this study. I begin with a discussion on identity and its relationship to literacy. In this section, I address socially situated identities, the role of gender and culture in identity research, and the role of globalization in adolescent identity development. Next, I draw from a sociocultural framework to situate literacy as a social practice and draw upon dialogism as a lens for explaining ways in which identities are negotiated through literacy and articulated through literacy events. In my conceptualization of literacy, I use a multimodal framework to define literacy as inclusive of multiple modes and literacy users as agentive and intentional designers. Finally, I draw upon discussions on the different theories for imagination and its relationship to identity and literacy including Ivanič's definition of 'possibilities of self-hood' and Markus and Nurius' 'possible self-theory' to characterize identity as not only situated within immediate realities but also encompassing the imagination.

Defining Identity

In this study, I am interested in identities as reflected and articulated through literacy. As an educator, student, and literacy researcher, I see the importance of identity in education because who we are is integral to how we learn. While current standard-focused curricula and classrooms often neglect important questions around identity development, there is a growing recognition in education research that the identities students bring into the classroom play into the ways in which students learn (Menard-Warwick, 2005).

Carving a space for the recognition of identity work in education is important for many reasons. First, students bring diverse experiences into classrooms and we need to validate

students for who they are, what they bring, and their individual unique lived experiences. By doing so, teachers not only validate students' lived experiences but can also help students develop into their fullest possible selves. Second, how we come to understand and define ourselves is important not only from a developmental perspective but also from a wider sociocultural perspective. How we define and position ourselves shapes how we interact in society and the actions we partake in society (Holmer-Nadesan, 1996; Markus, 2006; Moje & Luke, 2009; Penuel & Wertsch, 1995). Specifically, this growing interest in the relationship between identity and literacy is partially motivated by the interest in foregrounding literacy users as agentive social actors which is, in part, a reaction to views of literacy as skill-based and separate from people's motivation (Moje & Luke, 2009).

One way that that literacy and identity work has been studied is through stories. In recent times, a number of theorists have presented compelling arguments for the ways in which identity is not only represented but constructed in the stories people share (Bamberg, 2004; Georgakopoulou, 2007; Mishler, 1999; Wortham, 2001 as cited by Moje & Luke, 2009). Specifically, "learning a language or taking on new literacies in particular social contexts has consequences for the identities of its users" (Menard-Warwick, 2005, p. 254). In posing and responding to the question of why identity matters and why it matters within the context of literate practices, McCarthey and Moje (2002) wrote, "identity matters because it…shapes or is an aspect of how humans make sense of the world and their experiences in it, including their experiences with texts" (p. 228). While identities shape people's textual and literate practices, literate practices also "play a role in identification and positionings" (McCarthey & Moje, 2002, p. 229). Specifically, as we read and write, we come to understand ourselves and our surrounding world in different and particular ways. Given this importance on identity and literacy, I am

interested in the ways in which identity is articulated and constructed through the use of literacy with marginalized adolescent girls.

In this first section, I will elaborate on how identity is conceptualized in this dissertation. I first outline identity as a social construct drawing upon literature which situates identity in cultures, societies, and the role of gender in identity construction. Next, I review the literature on adolescent identity formation and, more specifically, adolescent identity formation in Eastern cultures such as India. I then review literature situating literacy as a social practice and a site for identity formation. In this section, I also draw upon dialogism to make the case that when a person interacts with texts, those textual interactions are in fact interactions with 'others' present in the text. I conclude this section by drawing upon literature on multimodal literacies and present a definition for literacy in this study as multimodal and inclusive of various modes.

Socially Situated Identities

Individual identities are situated within social and cultural contexts. Who we are is defined and created through our social interactions, social norms and expectations, and cultures and traditions. As such, identities have multiple layers and the negotiation of identity involves aspects of one's class, race, religion, ethnicity, and gender (McGinnis et al., 2007). A sociocultural framework posits human development as tied to social means of communication and interactions and, as such, societies and cultures play a key role in human cognitive development and individual development is shaped by society (Vygotsky, 1986). Identity, as shaped by social contexts and in social relationships and interactions, is in an ongoing process that develops and changes over time and is thus fluid and multiple (Ivanič, 1998; Moje & Luke, 2009; Ochs, 1993). Using a sociocultural approach to defining identity thereby captures "the ebbs and tides" of identity construction across time and space (Ochs, 1993, p. 298). Across

different times and in different social spaces, individuals take on a multitude of different positions, "social personae," roles, relationships, and social statuses all of which contribute and construct one's identity (Ochs, 1993, p. 288). For example, upon birth, a person's identity or sense of self is already largely defined based on the social group(s) to which they belong to (Stets & Burke, 2000). This identity given at birth as a girl or a boy, Chinese or India, rich or poor, etc. moves and alters throughout one's life as our social positions change, and our relationships and group affiliations change. Identities, socially situated, are thus the result of "reflexive activity of self-categorization" as members in particular social groups or in social roles (Stets & Burke, 2000, p. 225-226). While a sociocultural approach to understanding identity as relational to cultures and societies allows us to account for the fluid and multiple identities one holds, these fluid, multiple identities are not fragmented but rather blended together into a dynamic mosaic (Ivanič, 1998; Menard-Warwick, 2005; Ochs, 1993). Finally, a social cultural approach views the relationship between identity and society as not only integral but also bidirectional: a reciprocal relationship where identities are influenced by society and individual identities are what makes up societies (Adams & Marshall, 1996; Hermans, 2001; Mead, 1934: Stets & Burke, 2000).

Consistent with a social constructivist perspective on identity, Moje and Luke (2009) studied the ways in which identity is conceptualized through the lens of five metaphors for identity: identity as difference, identity as a sense of self, identity as mind or consciousness, identity as narrative, and identity as position. Specifically, in the identity as position metaphor, identities are constructed through the negotiation of different social positions. Thus, identities are produced as people are called to participate in certain positions and as people take up or resist these positions (Moje & Luke, 2009). These identities continue to form and sway through

experience as people come to imagine future positions and future selves moving across these positions (Moje & Luke, 2009). Identities, as social positions, are negotiated as people respond to each other through interactions, share stories and experiences, and shift positions as they position themselves in new stories (Moje & Luke, 2009). Through these social interactions and shared stories, individuals are invited to also speak up, resist, and take up certain positions (Moje & Luke, 2009). Identities, as social positions, are thus fluid and multiple, but also agentive and deliberate.

In addition to social relationships and social roles, culture also plays an important role in shaping individual identities, and studies have found that the ways in which people describe themselves differ based on the culture in which they live (Fiske, Kitayama, Markus, & Nisbett, 1998; Triandis, 1989). As such, culture can both enable, silence, and challenge elements of identity which may not fit perfectly into culturally accepted norms (McLean, 2008). For example, in Eastern cultures such as Japan and India, ideas of human nature and human relationships are different from those in Western cultures (Roland, 1988). Additionally, certain cultural practices can limit the degree of freedom and independence for specific social groups. For example, the cultural practice of arranged marriage in India affects the degree of freedom and the role of women in Indian society. In different cultures, notions of the self are also different. For example, while Western cultures conceives of an individualistic independent self, Eastern cultures conceptualize a familial self or a we-self (Roland, 1988). In Eastern cultures, such as India, the independent self is often viewed as secondary and existing within a family, community, or society (Roland, 1988). Specifically, in India, the development of the individual self goes hand in hand with the intense interdependencies of family relationships, and within

dominant organizational structures of the family and society (Roland, 1988). Thus, studies on identity must take into considerate these cultural differences.

Gender

Understanding identities as situated in societies and cultures means that we must take into account gender, culturally defined gender roles, and the social expectations for these gender roles. Unique to this study is the gender of the participants as well as the gender expectations within this particular culture. Thus, I will take some time to review the literature on the impact of gender on identity development in general as well as specific to Eastern cultures (e.g., India).

Identity development in women (Belenky et al., 1997: Gilligan, 1982) as well as identity development in Eastern cultures (Roland, 1988) is heavily influenced by social relationships. Children and adolescents are taught the social norms and expectations for different gender roles, including what it means to be a wife or husband, mother or father, by parents and through other social relationships (Basu, Zou, Lou, Acharya, & Lundgren, 2017). Past childhood and adolescence, Belenky et al. (1997) found that as women approached adulthood, their relationships to others were central to their development. Through interacting with others, listening and responding, women "draw out the voices and minds of those they help to raise up. In the process, they often come to hear, value, and strengthen their own voices and minds as well" (Belenky et al., 1997, p. 48). Women, compared to men, may rely more heavily on social relationships for situating their sense of self in part due to the increase of sense of responsibility women feel towards others (Gilligan, 1982). It is thus important to acknowledge not only the ways in which identity is formed through social interactions, but also the ways in which gender and norms around gender roles in society impact identity development.

Adolescent Identity Formation

In addition to being relational to society and culture, identity formation as conceptualized within this study takes into consideration the critical developmental period of adolescence. Identity has been discussed as a psychological construct that has specific salient developmental periods (Erikson, 1968). Furthermore, identity formation during adolescence is argued to be related to psychological well-being (Erikson, 1968; McLean, 2005, 2008; Sandhu et al., 2012). Specifically, during this developmental period, adolescents are able to hold multiple variables in mind at one time (e.g. scientific reasoning, metacognition, abstract thinking, etc.; Harter, 2003, 2006; Harter & Monsour, 1992; Harter, Bresnick, Bouchy, & Whitesell, 1997 as cited by McLean, 2008). With this ability to hold these different variables in mind at the same time, adolescents are able to develop ideas of the self and, particularly, the self across time in the past, present, and future (McLean, 2008). These new cognitive skills, such as scientific reasoning and metacognition, evident in adolescent years allow adolescents to see the self across time and begin to bring coherence to that self (McLean, 2008). Through the process of reflective meaning-making, identity emerges in adolescence and is then revised, deepened, and sustained throughout adulthood and beyond as new experiences and aspects of the self arise, influence, integrate, and alter one's fluid and multiple identities (McLean, 2008).

Adolescent Identity in India

During the critical stages of adolescence, social influences, such as social relationships with family members and others, and cultural norms and expectations are especially influential. These influences become even more pronounced in Eastern cultures, such as India, that emphasize an interdependent self rather than an independent self (Graf, Mullis, & Mullis, 2008). While in Western societies, adolescent identity development is often encouraged through greater

freedom in exploring life choices, occupations, and social relationships; in non-Western cultures, adolescents are often restricted in terms of social relationships, life choices, and career choices (Graf et al., 2008). In collectivist cultures such as India, identity is a process of becoming through connections and relationships with others within societies, rather than as a journey of self-discovery (Berman et al., 2014). Even as Indian youth begin to experience a sense of separation and distance from their parents during adolescence, this separation is met with a strong interdependence upon the extended family (Roland, 1988). In Indian culture, the extended family plays a critical role in influencing and helping individuals decide all major life decisions including education, marriage, careers, etc. Thus, identification for adolescents in India is not only influenced by parental figures but also the customs, traditions, and values held by extended families and communities. This is especially applicable for girls in India as cultural traditions, such as dowry, often involves financial contribution from extended family members. Thus, identity development for adolescent girls in Eastern cultures, such as India, is heavily influenced by social relationships, social norms, and cultural expectations around gender.

Specifically, in India, gender expectations for women can be restricting and limiting in certain respects as the ideal Indian woman is expected to be cooperative and obedient, as well as "slow to offer opinions and able to endure difficulties" (George, 2002, p. 210). By looking at the disadvantaged urban communities of Delhi, India and Shanghai, China, Basu et al. (2017) discovered that the boys and girls living in the same community were directed into different life pathways during their adolescence. Parents tended to pass on the traditional norms they grew up with and, thus, children's identities were the result of the situated cultural, social, and political systems (Basu et al., 2017). In India, gender roles were more strictly enforced, and mobility was limited for girls more so than boys. For example, in India, "restrictions on clothing by parents

and elders on girls aged 11-13 years were key in defining feminine identity" and upon entering puberty, girls were no longer allowed to wear short skirts, jeans, or tank tops (Basu et al., 2017, p. S26). Additionally, the girls and their parents described a different set of behavioral expectations for girls in India including not fighting with their parents, proper posture, being calm and gentle, and being expected to fulfil "the roles of wife and mother by learning household chores" (Basu et al., 2017, p. S27). Women in India are expected to maintain traditional gender roles as wives and mothers and these expectations can serve to influence and restrict the identity development of women in India. With the burden of the dowry and the time and energy family members extend in orchestrating arranged marriages, women identities in India revolve around marriage and motherhood. The transition from childhood to adulthood and from a girl to a woman takes place through marriage, most of which are arranged by parents and family elders. Thus, the extended family plays an essential role in making a critical and impactful life decision for girls in India. Once a woman is married, she moves in with her new husband's family and her identity becomes integrally tied to being an obedient wife and future mother (George, 2002). Thus, as a daughter, wife, and mother, the social interactions, relationships, and cultural expectations all play an essential role in shaping the identities of adolescent girls in India (George, 2002).

Globalization and Identity in India

However, many of the traditional values, cultural norms, gender expectations, and collectivist values are shifting in the face of globalization, especially for rapidly globalizing countries such as India. According to Berman et al. (2014), "the threat that globalization has placed on the collectivist ideal in these countries is keenly felt by the young people coming of age during this psychosocial historical context as they are being torn between two polar-opposite

demands" (p. 293). With globalization, the internet, mobility of resources, people, and ideas, adolescents from around the world are beginning to develop a bi-cultural identity that is both rooted in local as well as global cultures (Graf et al., 2008). These bi-cultural identities have the potential to yield "different developmental trajectories based on culture" (Graf et al., 2008, p. 59). The impact of globalization and its influence on identity development is especially significant in India, a country that is "steeped in diverse traditions" while challenged by globalization which is "causing dissonance in terms of attitudes, values, and skills between the old and new" (Suchday, 2015, p. 81). Especially for the younger generations, Western values and attitudes of independent often clash with traditional values of group-focused interests and interpersonal, interdependent selves (Berman et al., 2014; Rao et al., 2013). The effects of globalization on identity development is especially relevant for adolescents due to the fact that adolescents are both at a critical stage for identity development as well as more open to global influences such as foods, clothing, and the media (Jensen, 2003). In the face of rapid globalization, youth in India must negotiate between adapting an identity based on traditional norms and viewpoints, or adopting an identity more consistent with a modern global culture (Berman et al., 2014).

Rather than developing conflicting identities between the traditional versus the new or the local versus the global, Indian youth are in fact aware of the global influences and responding to these changes by blending their local ways of life with new incoming global customs (Berman et al., 2014; Rao et al., 2013). This blending of cultures is used by the Indian youth as a coping mechanism, allowing them to maintain their collectivist values and not be threatened by Western ideas of individualism. Specifically, while youth in India may be open to certain aspects of Western ways of life and globalization, they continue to identify with interdependence and

collectivistic life aspirations (Rao et al., 2013). Thus, Rao et al. (2013) concluded that while

rapid globalization is impacting the identity development of youth in India, these different and

sometimes conflicting values, traditions, and ways of life are not in dynamic opposition with one

another. Instead, youth in India are able to take "refuge in traditional identities" while "actively

remixing" the old with the new for an overall healthy identity development in the contexts of

large-scale changes due to globalization (Rao et al., p. 22).

The impact of globalization and Western influences shapes girls' identity development in

India differently in comparison to boys. Looking specifically at the adolescent identity

development of girls, Thapan (2001) found young women in India in a struggle between socially

defined roles and expectations and their own sense of individualism. Contemporary social and

economic changes in India are affecting the social roles of women, and, despite the limitations

imposed by family and social structures, women in India are becoming more individualized in

their sense of self (Roland, 1988). Traditional gender expectations for women in India are

intermingling with globalization and modernization creating a unique space for women's identity

in contemporary India (Dhawan, 2005). Specifically, Thapan (2001) characterized Indian

womanhood as an ambivalent state where young women in India struggle between social and

familial expectations while wrestling to redefine their identities in different situations as India

continues to modernize. While traditional social roles, such as being a self-sacrificing caregiver

of the family, continue to influence the lives of women in India, new economic, political, and

social developments conflict with certain traditional notions. For example, while the majority of

females in India affirm social expectations related to the traditional home-maker's role, they also

express the desire to be autonomous, independent, and assertive (Dhawan, 2005). This change in

how women in India think about themselves, their relationships, and roles in society is important

to consider as we focus on adolescent girls and their literate practices as spaces for the articulation of selves in a culture with shifting social roles and expectations.

Literacy as Social Practice and Sites for Identity Formation

From a sociocultural framework, reading and writing are social and cultural practices (Barton, 1991; Bloome, 1987; Fairclough, 1992; Gee, 1990; Street, 1984) and thus literacy is not a set of skills to be acquired but rather socially situated practices that are made up of individual social participants in activities with social others with implications for individual identities. Specifically, when people engage in reading and writing practices, they are constructing sets of social relationships: social relationships between readers and authors, as well as social relationships among the people present in the reading or writing event itself (Bloome & Katz, 1997). Thus, to teach students to read and write is to socialize "students to act, think, feel, use language, and value in particular ways" (Bloome & Katz, 1997, p. 216). A sociocultural framework on literacy also aligns with new understandings of literacy as multimodal and embodied texts. Multimodal texts can have important implications for identity work and the individual identities students bring into the classrooms (Kelly, 2012). Literacy as a socially situated practice takes into account the lives and identities of the students engaged in acts of reading and writing and the identity development process inherent in literacy and language.

In addition, from this perspective, literacy is a means of human communication directly linked to individual consciousness. Through different means of communication, such as talking, reading, and writing, individual cognition is developed (Vygotsky, 1978). These different means of communication reflect cultures and societies, and the different aspects of cultures and societies, such as social expectations for women and wives are present in the various ways in which we communicate. These different cultural and social remnants of our conversations, texts,

etc. then work to shape our identities. For example. the literate practices of one's socio-cultural community may vary drastically from another, influencing and shaping the ways in which identities are voiced (Gee, 2009). Additionally, the cultural narratives and social discourses mold and shape a person's identity over time with each new discursive event bringing about new expressions of the self (McAdams, 2001, 2008). Considering literacy as a social practice thus provides the means by which identities are created (McLean, 2008). Situated in cultures and societies, our literate practices reflect these sociocultural realities while also shaping individual identities and vice versa.

Literacy and Identity

Literacy as a social practice reflects the individual social actors that inhibit societies; and literacy, reflective of society, is also what shapes individual identities. Literacy is shaped by culture and contexts and are ways for knowing and "performing identity" (Williams, 2005, p. 343). Literacy as a social practice is a reflection of the individual identities which make up these societies. Through literacy acts, individuals converse with social others, shaping identities. Specifically, the different social positionings readers take up when engaging in literacy acts create a space of contrast for identity formation as the attempt to integrate these contrasts contributes to the formation of a narrative life story (McLean, 2008). Who we are matters when we engage with the text, and subsequently, our interactions with different texts involves negotiation of identities. Acknowledging this relationship between identity and literacy is critical for classroom instruction and how we teach reading and writing in schools. Schachter and Galili-Schachter (2012) proposed a literacy instructional framework for identity literacy that shows when readers read, they are in actuality engaging in a process of identity development. In their identity literacy framework, text is recognized as an "embodied meaning system" in which the

practice of reading calls upon the reader to engage in dialogue with this meaning system which holds the potential to define and redefine the self (Schachter & Galili-Schachter, 2012, p. 30). Literacy, more than other disciplines in school, "has the potential to facilitate identity development" as reading and writing are practices that lend themselves to the exploration of identities and provide opportunities to respond to different life experiences (Broughton & Fairbanks, 2003, p. 433). Making room for identity literacy in schools allows students in our classrooms to have agency where they can explore their individual identities in relationship to societies and social others.

Wissman (2011) examined the literate practices of students in an elective course, and concluded that literacy should enable wider spaces for students to "critique injustice and claim new possibilities" and "set the stage for inquiry into identities, lived experiences, and literacies in an affirmative, affective, and relational way" (p. 433). Such open spaces for literacy may also open possibilities for student centered agentive acts and, ultimately, provide opportunities for students to "rise up" (Wissman, 2011). Similarly, Wissman (2007) found that the adolescent girls in her study used poetry to "author themselves" outside their dominant discourses and resist politics of silencing (p. 340). Literate practices, such as reading and writing autobiographical works of living authors helps students learn strategies for self-representation, self-definition and social critiques (Wissman, 2009). Furthermore, the adolescent girls in her study were most drawn to and used autobiographical texts as acts of the imagination "to live more freely, critically, and powerfully" (Wissman, 2009, p. 44). Actively engaging in literacy, the students used writing to document life events, to find meaning and understanding, to resist, and "to search for a sense of belonging in the sociopolitical landscape in which they are often marginalized due to their race, gender, youth, and/or language" (Wissman, 2009, p. 149). Thus, the relationship between

identity and literacy is important not only for the negotiation and development of identities but for the agentive repositioning of selves in societies and to empower students to imagine all the possibilities.

Dialogism and Identity

Dialogism further and more specifically details the ways in which identities and literacies are relational. Identities are socially situated and negotiated in dialogue with social others. A dialogical approach to the conceptualization of identity centers around the fact that individuals are in a constant state of interaction with other selves. These other selves include both other people as well as variations of oneself across time and space (Hermans, 2001; McLean & Breen, 2016). The self then develops through ongoing dialogue between the various selves including dialogue between the individual self and social others, both real as well as imagined and dialogue between the various 'I positions' (Hermans & Gieser, 2012). These various dialogues or conversations can be made evident through reading, writing, and speaking. Literacy, as a social means of communication is an especially important space where the self, through ongoing dialogue with either the readers, authors, or fictional and real actors in texts, is negotiated and constructed. Through the lens of dialogism, we can think of identity development as an act of imagination and reflection which takes place through the conversations between the various selves within the individual and the different voices in texts (McLean & Breen, 2016). In this way, a dialogical lens brings together these different ideas into a more cohesive way of thinking about the relationship between identity, imagination, and literacy.

It is through dialogic activity, or the different voices and dialogues in socially situated literate practices, that identities are negotiated and constructed. From a dialogical perspective, language and words are all filled with human intentions and situated within specific social

contexts (Bakhtin, 1981). Language, charged with intention and impulse, is comprised of multiple voices with each speaker expressing their own intentions in a constant state of conversation with one another (Bakhtin, 1981). Through these conversations and dialogue between the different voices, these different voices act upon and inform each other (Hermans, 1996). The person and the collective are thus in an ongoing conversation, and through these interactions, new ideas and thoughts transpire that inform both the individual as well as the group. Thus, both the individual and the group are in a continual "process of change and innovation" (Hermans, 1996, p. 47).

The different voices or positions of the self are most specifically conceptualized by Herman (1996) as multiple I-positions where the self takes on the form of multiple positions and each of the I-positions are in dialogue with one another. Each I-position is like different "characters in a story" with their own experiences to share and their own stances, views, wishes, motives, feelings, and memories (Hermans, 1996, p. 33). These different I-positions thus can agree, disagree, interrogate, and criticize one another (Hermans, 1996). These different voices or I-positions, each with their own intentions and feelings, are present when readers engage with the text and the act of reading results in a multi-voiced, dialogical symphony of conversations and interactions. Similarly, when writing, writers are also engaged in dialogical interactions and navigating between a multitude of voices each with their own desires and intentions. These different voices or I-positions push against each other, struggle and negotiate, and bring about the conditions that shape identities. Thus, it is precisely through literate practices where dialogical interactions with multiple voices are present, between the different I-positions and voices of social others, that a space is created for the negotiation and formation of identities. Conceptualizing literacy as a dialogical phenomenon and identity as situated between and within

the multiple voices present in this dialogical interaction, I will next draw upon McAdams' (2001) term "life stories" to discuss the impact of literacy on identities across the trajectory of one's lifetime.

Life Stories and Literacy Events

Though dialogism helps to explain the ways in which identities are socially negotiated through conversations and social interactions, narrative theory provides a way to see these interactions as manifested through stories. McAdams (2001) defined identity itself as a story complete with setting, scenes, character, plot, and theme. Because human beings are storytellers by nature (Bruner, 1986) the self is both the storyteller as well as the stories that are told (McAdams, 2008). When we author our life stories, constructing and recounting the past, present, and future, we are simultaneously constructing and reconstructing our selves (Fivush & Buckner, 2003). Specifically, during adolescence and into adulthood, people begin to reconstruct their personal past, come to understand the present, and anticipate the future through the internalization of the evolving life story (McAdams, 2001). Life stories thus serve as one way of framing and understanding identity as fluid and dynamic, changing across time, and made evident through the stories we share. They entertain, educate, inspire, motivate, conceal, reveal, organize, and disrupt different parts of the self across time and space and help us make sense of our lives (McAdams, 2008).

More specifically, identity (as defined by McAdams, 2001) is not the same as the self or self-concept but, rather, it is the arrangement of particular qualities of a person's self-understanding. Thus, during adulthood, people begin to construct life stories to provide unity and purpose to their lives (McAdams, 2001). Thus, human intentions are at the heart of narratives and life stories (McAdams, 2001, 2008). These human intentions, desires, and motivations show

up in the form of the "imago" or an idealized personification of the self in our life stories

(McAdams, 2001, p. 106). The *imagoes* evident in life stories reflect our intentions, desires, and

motivations, such as the desire for power, achievement, or intimacy (McAdams 2003). In fact,

young adolescents often playfully engage the imagination and construct "fantastical

autobiographical stories" around possibilities and their "potential greatness or uniqueness"

(McAdams, 2001, p. 106). As such, life stories include not only events of one's past but also

goals, desires, and dreams for one's future. Thus, even as life stories are articulated in the

present, they hold both memories of the past as well as hopes for the future. Understanding

identity through the lens of life stories is particularly important for this study as life stories, while

based on biographical facts, extend considerably beyond these facts as individuals selectively

appropriate experiences and draw upon imagination to interpret and construct past events in an

attempt to make sense of themselves in their social worlds (McAdams, 2001, 2003). Moreover,

in these various life stories, the self is not static, rather in a constant state of construction and

reconstruction to meet the specific needs of specific situations and each new story creates a new

identity (Bruner, 2003).

Finally, life stories are bound to social surroundings. Stories, like identities, are cultivated

in social contexts as we always listen and tell stories in a social context (McAdams, 2001). All

stories are constructed with a social other, or audience, in mind and are reflections of the culture

and traditions of a given society within specific situations and contexts (McAdams, 2001;

McLean et al., 2007). Depending on the occasion, audience, and purpose, people provide

different storied accounts of their lives (Mishler, 2004). These situated stories then become part

of people's self-concepts and help individuals make connections between their experiences and

their selves (McLean et al., 2007; McLean & Breen, 2016). Identities are constructed through the sharing of these stories (McLean et al., 2007).

Similar to the ideas from life stories, 'literacy events' (Barton, 1991; Heath, 1983; Ivanič, 1998) focus not on the individual or the text but the people and the actions which constitute the literacy event and the interplay between text, the surrounding social contexts, and linguistic choices. Our identities, as expressed through literacy events, consist "not of a person's life-history, but of the interpretation they are currently putting on their life history" (Ivanič, 1998, p. 16). Identity becomes a process of interpretation and reinterpretation through these literacy events. Through participation in literacy events, the self is in dialogue and negotiation in the interpretation and reinterpretation of events. Through this dialogue, the self is renewed and revised (Georgakopoulou, 2006, 2007; Lysaker, 2007). Literacy activities, such as storytelling, is important for making sense of past experiences, especially negative experiences such as suffering, humiliation, or terror (Zingaro, 2009). Sharing one's story is both empowering as well as therapeutic with enduring political and social value (Zingaro, 2009). Literate practices, such as the construction of the narrative, is a mode for making sense of the self and others. Conversely, we experience the world through stories or narratives (Georgakopoulou, 2007). The process of narrativizing life experiences is a process of co-construction and making meaning and life events take form and individuals make meaning and arrive at understanding through the sharing of stories with others.

How we share stories with others also shape how we think and remember these past events and, ultimately, how we think about ourselves (Pasupathi, 2001). In fact, the stories that are remembered and told reflect not the reality of that specific experience. Rather, it is the process of telling and the interaction with the listener that shape how experiences are

remembered, emotions towards past events, and, ultimately, future actions based on memories of past events (Pasupathi, 2001). Thus, the listener or the audience is a co-constructor of life stories as people purposefully choose to talk about certain events and interpret those events in specific ways with respect to particular listeners (Pasupathi, 2001). In conversations with social others, self-conceptions are stabilized or altered as "conversational reconstructions of the past can involve the rehearsal of existing self-conceptions or discarding old self-views and constructing novel ones" (Pasupathi, 2001, p. 663). This view of life stories and identities provides another layer to understanding how identity is socially situated and negotiated through literacy. Through the sharing of past events and life stories, individuals are in a dialogical conversation with listeners or audiences and through this interaction, understanding of past events and identity are co-constructed. Through dialogism, we come to understand identities as formed through our social interactions and conversations. These dialogical interactions are furthermore made evident through the construction and articulation of the life story. Thus, dialogism combined with narrative theory provide a useful framework for understanding the relationship between identities and literacy.

Multimodal Literacies

In their 2017 study, Quinlan and Curtin found that the students had both outside school identities, as well as inside school identities. Adolescents showed a preference for their outside of school identities, many of which are performed and negotiated in new online literacy spaces through social media, multiplayer online games, etc. (Quinlan & Curtin, 2017). These multimodal digital spaces allow adolescents to perform and enact new and different identities (Williams, 2008). These spaces also require the youths to engage in "complex rhetorical choices" in how they wish to express and portray themselves (Williams, 2008). In these digital online

spaces, youths are gaining literacy experiences, forming and enacting identities, and interacting with an audience in far more complex ways than in previous generations (Williams, 2008).

It is thus important, within this study, to consider expanding definitions of literacy as multimodal and interactive. The New London Group (1996), along with other literacy researchers (see Gee, Kress, Jewitt, Van Leeuween, Hull, Stein, etc.), began to redefine literacy as "multiliteracies" to include various modes beyond language to account for the increasingly linguistically, culturally, and technologically diverse forms of communication. These various modes of representation can include hybrid cross-cultural discourses: code switching, dialects, visual and iconic meanings, gestures, language, and material objects (New London Group, 1996). At its core, multimodality is the study of resources for meaning-making and the ways in which different modes are combined to make meaning. Advocates for multimodality argue that while the written language enables one form of cognition, visual language conveys a different message (Stein, 2000) and enables a different form of cognition (Kress, 1997). A visual image can produce a different effect compared to a linguistic description and the meaning conveyed in one mode cannot be conveyed the same way in another mode (Stein, 2000). The inclusion of multimodality thereby broadens the human ability for meaning-making through the 'potentials' of each mode (Kress, 1997). Defining literacy as multimodal opens up a wider space for meaning-making as different modes can provide different ways for expression.

The idea of the 'potentials' of resources is derived from Gibson's term 'affordances' which Gibson uses to describe the "possibilities or opportunities" of the 'medium,' 'substances' and 'surfaces' in terrestrial environments (Gibson, 1986, p. 18). For example, different shaped enclosures afford different possibilities of inhibiting them (Gibson, 1986). The affordances of these different mediums, substances, and surfaces in the environment then allow people to

behave differently. For example, clothing, when worn, becomes part of the user's body, like an extra layer of skin rather than part of the environment. In this way, 'affordances' are not just qualities of the environment or of the medium but must be considered in relationship to the user (Gibson, 1986). When looking at an object, we not only perceive their qualities but also their affordances, and objects should be analyzed and evaluated based on their affordances. Applied to literacy and multimodal literacy, affordances reflect the potentials and limitations of different modes with each mode affording its user different possibilities for meaning-making (Kress, 1997).

Multimodal analysis includes the mode as well as how people use modes (Jewitt, 2013). As such, the New London Group (1996) intentionally used the word "design" to describe multimodal compositions. The word "design" highlights the productive power of literacy and the agency of the designer (Janks, 2010; New London Group, 1996). Multimodal designs recognize the importance of students' creativity to generate infinite possibilities for meaning-making (New London Group, 1996). Furthermore, the process of designing multimodal text is dynamic and active, and it is precisely this dynamic and active design process that allows for the construction and transformation of the self (New London Group, 1996). The designing and redesigning of multimodal texts produce change "both in the object being transformed and in the individual who is the agent of transformation" (Stein, 2000, p. 334). Thus, through the designing of multimodal texts, "people transform their relations with each other, and so transform themselves" (New London Group, 1996, p. 76).

Imagination, Identity, and Literacy

This next section will trace the literature on imagination across time focusing on not only its importance but also the relationship between imagination, human development, identity, and

literacy. I will first review the literature on imagination and literacy. Next, I will discuss the research on adolescent development and imagination. Drawing upon Vygotsky, I will outline the ways in which imagination is tied to reality. Finally, I conclude with possible self-theory which makes a powerful connection between identity development and imagination.

Given the current focus on assessments and standards, it is not surprising that imagination often falls to the sidelines of educational research. The push for standards and ways of assessing performance on these standards means that educators and researchers alike overlook the role of imagination in the development of our students and in our classrooms (Murris & Kell, 2016; Robinson, 2011). McKellar (2006) found that educational research books such as the *Handbook on Research on Teaching* (4th ed., 2001) and the *Handbook of Reading Research* (3rd ed., 2000) did not even list the term "imagination" in their index. In fact, standardized national curricula on literacy focus mainly on cognitive development and include scripted textbooks that present language and literacy to students as simply the means to refer to things in the world rather than language as involving "the poetic, the emotive, the phatic and the metalinguistic" (Murris & Kell, 2016, p. 2-3). Education is also often thought of as a means by which children are shaped into the norms and expectations of the adult society (Judson & Egan, 2013). As such, imagination is often neglected when considering what should be valued in education and what we teach our children. Lastly, imagination is an abstract concept in comparison to mathematics or history and thus few educators actually understand how to implement imaginative practices in their classrooms (McKellar, 2006; Tierney, 1994).

To overlook the importance of imagination in education can be detrimental to the overall development of students. At the 19th World Congress on Reading, Spencer (2003) stated, "Imagination is the ultimate freedom. It lets all of us realize how things might, or could, or

otherwise" (p. 110). Rather than as an afterthought, imagination must be understood as "an extraordinary tool for meaning-making and…an essential part of the learning process" (Shank, 2016, p. 1). Imagination enables a space for diversity and possibility: "resisting singular, definitive interpretations of truth, imagination breeds creativity and engagement with diverse possibilities" (Shank, 2016, p. 2). Judson and Egan (2013) defined imagination as "one of the great workhorses of learning, and that we ignore it at the cost of making learning more ineffective than it should be and much schooling more tedious than it need be" (p. 345). The freedom afforded through imagination allows limitless possibilities for the future both in terms of individual selves as well as societies, as imagination has "the power to become a force, and in that sense an inspiration for social development and growth, for intentional change at many levels of social organization, not just for the individual" (Boyatzis & Akrivou, 2006, p. 633). In light of these statements emphasizing the importance of imagination, as freedom, as essential to learning, as possibility, and as connected to tangible future actions, it is essential to make a space for imagination in our classrooms and curriculums. The importance of imagination for development at an emotional, individual, and social level cannot be understated. Understanding imagination can mean insight into understanding ourselves and our worlds with implications for our futures and the possibility to explore imaginative activities is especially salient in literacy instruction as texts offer the space for readers and writers to engage their imagination to explore selves and worlds.

Imagination and Literacy

Links between literacy and imagination are both numerous and various. In this section, I will provide an overview of some of the literature that looks at the relationship between literacy and imagination. Pelttari (2016) outlined five uses of imagination in literacy instruction: to

comprehend text, to engage in the world depicted through text, to make sense of narrative and expository texts, to learn about self and others, and to enhance reading. Specifically, Pelttari (2016) argues that when children are given the space to read and imagine, they "are transported to places they have never seen" and power of language lies in its ability to enable readers and writers to imagine and create new worlds and wonders (p. 106). Imagination allows readers and writers to experience new worlds and imagine not only their own possible future actions, reactions and emotional responses but also the imagined actions, reactions and emotional responses of others (Mackenzie & Atkins, 2008). As such, imagination can enable readers and writers to understand a situation from multiple different perspectives and think through the emotional impact of decisions (Mackenzie & Atkins, 2008). Gaining access to different perspectives can then create different affective responses. For example, a bullied child may imagine standing up to the bullies and imagine a sense of triumph. On the other hand, immediately following that imagined scene, the child may feel a disbelief and dismiss her previous imaginings as a fantasy (Mackenzie & Atkins, 2008). This example provides different ways of imaginatively experiencing the same event and the emotions and thoughts accompanying these different experiences with each imaginative experience opening up a different process of making sense of and understanding the event, self, and others.

Comber et al. (2017) specifically examined the impact of imagination on literacy instruction in classrooms and, as part of their "Imagination Project," invited teachers to create opportunities for students to engage their imagination as part of their literacy instruction. Teachers were asked to design units which included imaginative tasks. One teacher in particular made an "Imagination Station" which invited students to imagine and write about local and global futures. In another example, Comber (2016) asked students to redesign part of the school

grounds. Through this project, Comber (2016) found that both the students and teachers were able to expand their semiotic repertoires and engage in imaginatively representing themselves in the spatial world of the school and beyond. For Comber et al. (2017), these opportunities to incorporate imagination is essential especially in the given contemporary landscape of standardized testing and regulated curriculum and to not do it, can be detrimental. Enciso (2017) situated literate practices of storytelling as central to reimagining our past, present, and futures. Enciso (2017) defined imagination as "the effort to manage gaps in time between what is, what has been, and what might become within contexts of unequal histories and expectations for speaking and being heard" (p. 35). She illustrated this definition through her experiences working with students in a story club. Through this story club, she found that the students used their imagination to imagine themselves amongst each other and being transported across time and space in order to gain a measure of perspective and control over their past, present, and future (Enciso, 2017). Finally, in their study on adolescent poetic literacy in online spaces, Padgett and Curwood (2015) found that teens adopted identities of poets and "connected imaginative elements, self-expression, and self-identification" (p. 402). As we can see illustrated in the examples above, imagination can propel students into different spaces and across different times, and this ability to be transported is significant for many different reasons including identity development, empowerment, and understanding.

Adolescent Development and Imagination

While imagination is available at different times and in different ways in children's lives, because of the importance of identity formation during adolescence the role of imagination may take on more weight. (Erikson, 1968; McLean, 2005, 2008; Sandhu et al., 2012; Vygotsky, 1991). In an essay, H. W. Chase (1911) stated, it is "in the adolescent youth that we find the

springtime of imagination…It is with the dawn of adolescence that the imagination blossoms out…The adolescent is not a reasonable being – he is an imaginative being" (p. 19).

According to Vygotsky (1991), imagination begins in childhood but takes shape and matures throughout adolescence. In comparison to imaginative play in children, fantasy in adolescence stems from new demands of the emotional life, creating a richer more creative environment (Vygotsky, 1991). As the result of these demands, the adolescent creates fantasy and imagination to serve the needs, moods and feelings that may seem overwhelming (Vygotsky, 1991). The adolescent fantasizes when he or she is unsatisfied. This unfulfilled wish then ignites the imagination as the adolescent uses their fantasy to fulfill the wish (Vygotsky, 1991). While the fantasy may not be real, the feelings evoked by these fantasies are real and do exist (Vygotsky, 1991). Imagination, during adolescence is thus critical for development as well as emotional wellbeing.

Imagination and Reality

It is possible that some of the levity around imagination is rooted in the false understanding that imagination lies solely in the realm of fantasy and is the opposite or the absence of reality. In this section, I will review literature that situates imagination as grounded in reality rather the absence of it.

To start, Engel (2013) defined imagination as an exploration of the different kinds of reality. Through the process of exploring the boundaries between the real and the not-real, we can gain insight and begin to solve problems by going beyond our immediate lived experiences. Imagination can also be conceptualized as representations of objects, feelings, or events in our minds that are not immediately available in the here and now (Carlson & White, 2013). Or put in a different way, imagination is not the opposite of reality but the ability to perceive that which is

not there (Moore & Barresi, 2013). Through this ability to perceive objects, feelings, and events which are not in the immediate here and now, imagination extends from and transcends reality. For example, imagination is looking at an apple seed and seeing an apple tree or practicing scales on a piano and envisioning a concert hall performance (Wenger, 1998). Thus, imagination is not the opposite of reality but is linked to an understanding of reality (Vygotsky, 1991) and the planning for anticipated futures (Singer & Singer, 1976, 1990, 2005). Imagination involves the engagement with real human experiences to consider possibilities beyond the limits of one's own experiences (Taylor, 2013; Shank, 2016).

During childhood, the child's play imitates the real things the child saw or heard from an adult. However, with the help of imagination, these elements of reality are never reproduced exactly the same as was previously experienced (Vygotsky, 2004). Vygotsky argues that play is not a replication or reproduction of experiences in reality but is a "creative reworking" (Vygotsky, 2004, p. 11) in which children construct a new reality that meets their own needs and desires. Thus, real human needs, motives, and desires for something different fuel the imagination (Vygotsky, 2004). We see this type of imagination and play in the creative work of story making. Explaining children's story making, Vygotsky (2004) explained how all elements of the situation are known to the child from previous experiences; however, the child's unique combination of these different elements creates something new. In these imaginative and creative activities, the brain "combines and creatively reworks elements" of past experiences and "uses them to generate new propositions and new behaviors" (Vygotsky, 2004, p. 9). Thus, while imagination is rooted in reality, it extends beyond reality providing the opportunity for and enabling humans to alter and create their own future based on their specific needs and desires.

In fact, what arises out of the imaginative minds of men and women are the cultural, artistic, scientific, and technical creations that we see in and around our world (Vygotsky, 2004). Vygotsky (2004) argued that all things in the world that are created by men are the result of imagination: "absolutely everything around us that was created by the hand of man, the entire world of human culture, as distinct from the world of nature, all this is the product of human imagination and of creation based on this imagination" (pp. 9-10). Things once created in the imagination can materialize and, once given material form, has the potential to alter reality (Vygotsky, 2004). For example, the concept of the iPhone began in the imaginative mind of the creator but, once it took on the material form, the iPhone had very real implications in terms of how humans communicated with each other and with technology. Imagination is also associated with reality on an emotional level (Vygotsky, 2004). Imagination influences how we feel about things. While things in the imagination may not correspond directly to reality, the emotions it evokes are real human emotions that a person feels (Vygotsky, 2004). Every construct of the imagination, real or unreal, affects how we feel and evokes real emotions. For example, imaginary characters in a story or movie bring joy, sorrow, and excitement and we experience these emotions in real life "truly, seriously, and deeply" (Vygotsky, 2004, p. 20). Imagination, thus, is a reflection of reality and also what inspires the creations and emotions in our real world. These lived experiences in reality provide the bases for imaginative creative construction.

Possibilities of Selfhood and Possible Selves

Imagination, in relationship to identity, is powerful for envisioning ourselves in present and possible futures (Norton, 2010; Shank, 2016). Imagination can enable us to imagine ourselves and our lives as it is currently but also as we wish or desire it to be, known as "possibilities of selfhood" (Ivanič, 1998, p. 10) or as "possible selves" (Markus & Nurius, 1986,

p. 954). In this section, I will first draw upon Ivanič's conceptualization of possibilities of selfhood, then present Markus and Nurius's possible self-theory. Together, these two similar ways of defining selfhood and identity help highlight the role of imagination in identity development. In the research on identity and literacy, different terms such as 'self,' 'identity,' 'personhood,' etc. still need some clarification. In some studies, 'self' is defined as aspects of identity associated with individual feelings while 'person' includes aspect of identity associated with a socially defined role (Ivanič, 1998). Fairclough (1992) used 'ethos' to describe a person's identity related to the world views and social practices. Furthermore, Ivanič (1998) differentiated between identity as a noun which suggests a fixed state versus identity as a verb which refers to a process. For the purpose of this study, I find Ivanič's term possibilities of selfhood especially useful in discussing identity as it relates to literate practices. Ivanič used the term possibilities of selfhood to account for identity that is socially constructed but also multiple, hybrid, and fluid. Building on Foucault's term subject position, possibilities of self-hood situate individual's identities as "a complex of interweaving positionings" (Ivanič, 1998, p. 10). Possibilities for self-hood include three ways of thinking about the identity of a person through the act of writing: the autobiographical self, the discoursal self, and self as author. Together, these 'possibilities of selfhood' are "shaped by individual acts of writing in which people take on particular discoursal identities" (Ivanič, 1998, p. 27). Identities are constructed in literacy practice through the purposeful designing and redesigning of texts. This combination and re-combination of texts opens up new possibilities for self-hood. This struggle between identities, texts, and social positions that contribute to the changing possibilities for self-hood (Ivanič, 1998).

Markus and Nurius (1986) introduced the term "possible selves" (p. 954) to present an alternative way to look at selves and identities as not only situated in the present and past

experiences but future oriented and linked to future actions. Possible selves represent individual's ideas of what they might become, would like to become, or are afraid of becoming, thus linking cognition and motivation (Markus & Nurius, 1986). Additionally, possible selves are linked to both the past and the future as they come from past representations of the self but also include aspired future representations of the self (Markus & Nurius, 1986). Related to identity and development, Markus and Nurius (1986) argued that individuals can be viewed as producers of their own development as possible selves are purposefully selected and constructed. As a component of identity, possible selves not only provide a context for current view of the self, but more importantly, they highlight and explain future behaviors as it relates to individual conceptualizations of one's own identity. Possible selves, whether they are symbols of hope or reminders of tragic futures to be avoided, nevertheless provide "impetus for action, change, and development" (Markus & Nurius, 1986, p. 960). Possible selves thus function as incentives for future actions. Imagining our future initiates the process and directs action towards creating that future (Markus & Ruvolo, 1989). An individual's ideas for what is possible for themselves give rise to feelings of competence and optimism and these feelings can impact behaviors (Ruvolo & Markus, 1992; Singer, 2006). The imaginative capacity of the human mind enables us to invent and create ourselves and our worlds (Markus, 2006). Identity through the lens of possible self theory thus involves all the variations of what a person can be, wishes to be, and ultimately actively works towards becoming and, rooted in reality, extends into actual feelings and thoughts about oneself.

Conclusion

In this chapter, I first reviewed the literature on identity, literacy, and imagination as it relates to this study. From a sociocultural framework, identity within this study is conceptualized

as socially situated. These socially situated identities draw from our social relationships, cultural expectations, gender roles, and incoming influences from different cultures as the result of globalization. Furthermore, these socially situated identities are negotiated and constructed through social practices such as social conversations with oneself and with social others. As such, the process of identity formation can be made evident through literacy activities such as life stories and other literacy events. Having made the connection between identity development and literacy, it is important to clearly define literacy as used in this study. More specifically, drawing upon New Literacy Studies (New London Group, 1996) and multiliteracies provide a framework for thinking about the interconnected relationships between literacy, identity, and society. In New Literacy Studies, literate practices take place within social, cultural, and political contexts, leading these socially situated literacies to play a role in identity construction (McGinnis et. al., 2007). In digital and multimodal literate practices such as MySpace, personal webpages, and blogs, the youth were using "literacy practices to construct, perform, and transform their transnational identities" (McGinnis et al., 2007, p. 300). Certain signs, used and reused through time and space, can become emblems of identity (Agha, 2005). These signs not only come to represent our identities, but also become our identities. Thus, in addition to analyzing the modes within a composition, studies in multimodal discourse analysis are increasingly interested in the relationship between the use of modes to the identities of the literacy users (Bhatia, Flowerdew, & Jones, 2008). These digital, multimodal spaces hold the possibility for different ways to negotiate and construct identities for its users (Norris, 2008) and provide opportunities for students, as agentive designers to engage their imagination in the work of self-building. Thus, defining literacy as multimodal provides a framework for looking at the ways in which identities are negotiated, imagined, and constructed through the engagement with

texts attending to the important relationships between identity and literacy, imagination and

identity, and imagination and literacy.

CHAPTER 3. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The purpose of this qualitative, single-embedded case study was to examine in depth the literacy practices of adolescent girls in a specific social and cultural context to provide insight into how literacy activities enables the imagination and the negotiation of identity. Specifically, this study sought to explore how expressions of the selves, both actual and constructed through imagination, were articulated and negotiated through written multimodal compositions. The study took place within a 7th grade classroom, in a non-profit all-girls middle school, The Inspiration Girls School (pseudonym) in the city of Lucknow in Northern India. The research site was purposefully chosen to address a gap in research on the role of literacy in marginalized groups from cultures such as India where social issues of gender inequality and poverty can be defining characteristics of one's identity. Data were collected from a total of seven participants, six students and one teacher, over the period of eight months. All participants were female, including the classroom teacher. Data for this study included artifacts, interviews, and observational fieldnotes.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this case study was to explore the literacy practices of adolescent girls for their potential to engage the imagination and enable negotiations of identity within a very specific context. The guiding question for this study is: How do adolescent girls from an economically disadvantaged population in Northern India use literate practices to negotiate and express identity that is both imagined as well as actual?

Chapter 3 provides description of the research methodology employed for this study, including the role of the researcher, the research design, the site and participants, recruitment,

data collection, data analysis, and a brief discussion on the limitations of the study. The section

on the role of the researcher outlines my previous experiences relevant to my role as a researcher

as well as a discussion of my situation and stance as a researcher during the course of the study.

The research design section describes the case study approach used for this study. The section on

the site and participants provides information on the school where this study took place and a

brief overview of the student participants in this study. Finally, the data collection and analysis

section outline the data collection methodology and procedures used during the study related to

how data was collected, analyzed, and presented.

The Researcher

When conducting qualitative research in the field, researchers often assume social roles

in the lives of their participants (Adler & Adler, 1987). One of these roles is to take on

membership status as an insider of the group under investigation (Adler & Adler, 1987). As a

member the researcher is able to gain insight into the culture or group they are studying and

observe human life in its natural context (Adler & Adler, 1987; Denzin, 1970). Thus, within

qualitative research, the researcher is often regarded as the primary instrument of the study

(Saldaña, 2011). Erickson (1986) used "interpretive" to describe this crucial relationship between

the researcher and the researched, naming the key feature of participant observational research as

the "interest in human meaning in social life and in its elucidation and exposition by the

researcher" (p. 119). As the primary instrument, qualitative researchers "bring their own

worldviews, paradigms, or sets of beliefs to the research project, and these inform the conduct

and writing of the qualitative study" (Creswell, 2006, p. 15). Thus, it is important to be aware of

the assumptions and biases of the researcher when conducting qualitative research and make

them explicit in the writing. Given this, I will now describe my role as the researcher within this study, background and past experiences, as well as beliefs and potential biases.

The role of the researcher is complicated whether she is an outsider with neutrality and objectivity (Yates, 2004) or an insider with knowledge and understanding of the situation (Hymes, 1972; Merton, 1972). However, both as an insider as well as an outsider, trust has to be earned (Baird, 1998). As an Asian woman, I was in some ways an insider and able to sympathize with the girl participants using my own personal knowledge and experience as an Asian woman. Gender roles in India are similar to those in China, where boy children are traditionally valued over girl children as they carry forward the family legacy help support aging parents. While these traditional beliefs and values are slowly evolving in larger cosmopolitan cities, cultural practices such as aborting or killing girl babies are still practiced in certain rural Chinese villages and amongst families with little economic capital. I grew up listening to these stories from the female members of my family constantly reminding me of how lucky I was to be born into a family that valued and wanted to educate girls; others were not so lucky.

Due to my own Asian background, in certain aspects, I could relate to the students, and I felt that reciprocated from them. The students called me 'Didi,' which means sister. However, my overall role at the school was multifaceted and included being a teacher, friend, and researcher in addition to being a "sister." As a result, though I gained access as an insider in some respects, I also remained an outsider in others for the duration of my time at the school. This was in part because my life experiences and privileges separated me from my participants. I never had to worry about being forced into marriage at a young age to a man I did not love or fear not being educated due to the fact that I was female. Raised in a middle-class family, I never had to worry about working instead of studying or having enough food to eat. These different life

experiences separated me from my participants in both positive and negative ways. As an outsider, I was able to view things with distance and partial objectivity. This objectivity, however, came at the cost of a limited understanding of what I observed. To mitigate this, I purposefully took time to meet with teachers outside of school and spend time with members of the local community.

Nevertheless, both as an insider as well as outsider, I brought my personal values, beliefs, and biases to the research. While quantitative research aims to minimize or eliminate researcher bias, however, qualitative research makes bias visible. As Creswell (2006) puts it "In a qualitative study, the inquirers admit the value-laden nature of the study and actively report their values and biases as well as the value-laden nature of information gathered from the field" (p. 18). Therefore, it is important for the researcher to explicitly state their values and beliefs since the stories presented and the interpretation of these stories are informed by their beliefs and values. Given my previous experience as an ESL and EFL teacher both domestically as well as internationally, I hold a unique perspective regarding language acquisition and instruction. I taught English as a Second Language domestically in New York and English as a Foreign Language abroad in Turkey, Hungry, Dubai, and Morocco. My own prior experience as an ESL and EFL teacher was mostly filled with lessons on English grammar, pronunciation, spelling, etc. with little room for meaning making. However, throughout my years of teaching, I always believed that in addition to the structure of language, its purpose and function is equally important and must be acknowledged and accounted for in classroom instruction. Teaching reading and writing with students involves more than just attention to sentence structures and verb tenses, as literacy is also a space for the exploration of selves and worlds.

Research Design

This study utilized a single-embedded case study research design (Yin, 2014). Case study, as a qualitative research methodology, has been widely used across various disciplines (Hitchcock & Hughes, 1995). Case study research can provide insight into "how" and "why" questions and help investigate a phenomenon in depth within a real-world context through multiple sources of evidence (Yin, 2014). Key characteristics of case study research include a focus on individual representatives of a group, a setting within the participants' natural context, and in-depth descriptive details drawn from various data sources (Hancock & Algozzine, 2017). Through interviews, observations, and the collection of artifacts, case study researchers endeavor to enter into other people's lives and ultimately "aim to construct interpretations of other people's interpretations" (Dyson & Genishi, 2005, p. 17). A case study approach was intentionally chosen for this study because case study research can provide in-depth analysis of the social phenomenon under investigation (Yin, 2003). Furthermore, a case study approach aligns with a constructivist paradigm recognizing that "truth is relative and that it is dependent on one's perspective" (Baxter & Jack, 2008, p. 545). In case studies, researchers aim to gain deep understanding of situations in hopes that these insights can influence change (Hancock & Algozzine, 2017). Thus, a case study approach was selected as the best method for exploring the ways in which adolescent girls, within the contexts of their school and local communities, enact identities within their literacy practices.

More specifically, case study is widely used in literacy research and identity research. Dyson (1983) used a case study approach focusing on five children in a kindergarten classroom to analyze the ways in which children used speech during their writing processes. Lam (2000) explored the identity development of youth in online written correspondences through the case

study of one Chinese immigrant teenager's written correspondences on the internet. To understand the relationships between identity, culture, and literacy, Compton-Lilly (2006) used a case study approach to explore how African American student identities were constructed and revised through literacy learning. Wood and Ashfield (2008) looked at how interactive whiteboards support literacy and numeracy instruction through the analysis of observational data, interviews, and focus group discussions. In their 2009 study, Neumann, Hood and Neumann explored parent-child interactions and its relationship to emergent literacy skills in young children through the case study of one parent scaffolding her child in emergent writing at home. These are just a few examples of the use of case study in research on literacy, identity, and literacy and identity.

While case studies are useful in illuminating the particularities of a specific phenomenon, case studies are often criticized for being too narrowly focused; after all, how informative is it to study just one student or a small group of students? What can we really learn and how can we possible generalize with such a small sample size? Dyson (1997), instead, asked the question, "what *can* be done with thousands of children *but* count them?" (p. 177). In advocating for case study research, Dyson (1997) highlighted an important pitfall in large quantitative studies especially in the field of education:

> In mass, children—and the challenges they present—are faceless, nameless, and overwhelming. But these massive numbers of children are not isolated individuals; they are social participants included, or so we hope, in particular classrooms and schools, in particular institutions and communities. (p. 177)

Thus, in highlighting individual students, we are also opening a window into their socially situated lives, classrooms, schools, and communities. Through case study research, we do not seek a one size fits all teaching strategies or predictions of outcomes. Instead, "through the richness of singular experiences" (Dyson, 1997, p. 177), case studies offer insight into the

complexities of learning and development. A case study approach was thus most appropriate for highlighting the complex relationships between identity, literacy, and imagination.

In case study research, it is critical to first establish what binds the case. In fact, binding a case is essential to what data is and is not collected (Dyson, 1997; Geertz, 1973; Merriam, 1998; Stake, 1988; Yin, 2003). Merriam (1998) combined Smith's (1978) use of the term 'bounded system' with Stake's (1995) use of the term 'integrated system' and defined the case "as a thing, a single entity, a unit around which there are boundaries" (Merriam, 1998, p. 27). In this study, the case is the literacy practices of marginalized adolescent girls in Northern India and the case is bounded by multiple factors including the age, gender, and location of the participants.

Within the broad framework of case study research, Merriam (1998) presented three different types of case studies:

1. A descriptive case study which presents a detailed account of the phenomenon under study. Descriptive case studies are entirely descriptive and often serve to form a database for future comparison and theory building.

2. Interpretive case studies also contain rich thick descriptions but help to illustrate, support, or challenge theoretical assumptions held prior to the data gathering.

3. Evaluative case studies which contains descriptions, explanations, and judgements.

Within these three different definitions, this study can be best described as an interpretive case study, as my aim was to explore the literacy practices of these adolescent girls by collecting rich data and providing thick descriptions to help illustrate the phenomenon being studied.

Single-Embedded Case Study

More specifically, this study takes on the form of a single-embedded case study (Yin, 2014). A single-case study design differs from a multi-case design. First of all, single-case

designs are situated within one context with either one or multiple units of analysis whereas

multi-case designs involve different cases situated within their own contexts. In other words, a

single case design is similar to a single experiment (Rowley, 2002; Yin, 2014). According to Yin

(2014), single-case studies are most appropriate when the case under investigation is "critical,

unusual, common, revelatory, or longitudinal" (p. 51). A rational for the use of a single-case

study can be due to its revelatory nature (Yin, 2014). When a researcher "has an opportunity to

observe and analyze a phenomenon previously inaccessible to social science inquiry" (Yin, 2014,

p. 52), the use of a single-case study can be justified due to its ability to unveil new information.

Because, this exploration into the literacy practices of adolescent girls living in a marginalized

community is situated within one specific context, and, I had access to a very specific

community, this can be considered a potentially revelatory single case study with the ability to

shed light on the phenomenon under investigation.
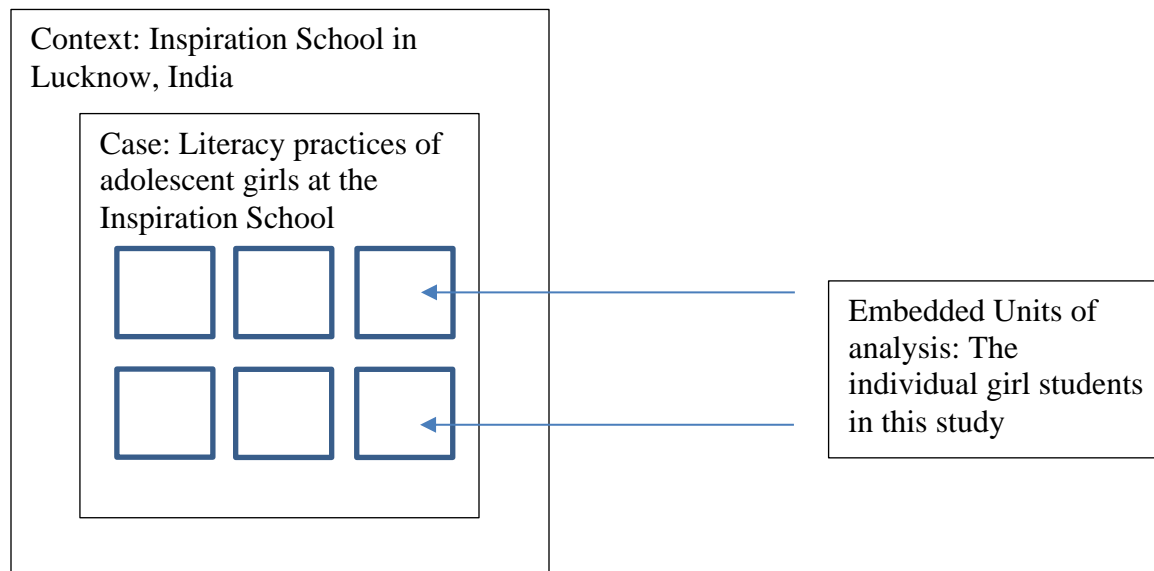
Figure 2. Context and Case Illustration.

Single-case study designs are further differentiated into two categories, holistic and embedded. What differentiates a holistic case design from an embedded case design is the number of units of analysis. Holistic case studies consider the case as one unit while embedded designs utilize sub units of analysis (e.g., meetings, locations, or roles) and these sub units are drawn together to provide an overall understanding of the phenomenon (Rowley, 2002). For example, in an embedded case study, the main unit of analysis may be a company as a whole while the sub units of analysis are the individuals within the company such as owners or employees (Scholz & Tietje, 2002). These sub units of analysis "add significant opportunities for extensive analysis, enhancing the insights into the single case" (Yin, 2014, p. 56). Thus, a single embedded case study was most appropriate for this study as it allowed for the examination and analysis of the literacy practices of individual girls situated within the context of this particular community. In this study, the literacy practices of marginalized adolescent students at the Inspiration School is the single bounded case while the sub units of analysis are the individual students (see Figure 2). The rationale for using a single embedded case design for this study is

that the individual students together contribute to the overall understanding of this complex phenomenon.

Site and Participants

This research site was purposefully chosen as a site of interest to shed light on the socially situated literacy practices of adolescent girls in this unique socio-cultural community. Specifically, the research site and the participants provided a unique opportunity to explore the role of imagination and literacy practices in the identity formation of adolescent girls from an economically disadvantaged population in Northern India. Additionally, as I was interested in the possibilities of literacy for identity formation, I purposefully searched for a school community where classroom literacy instruction allowed for such exploration and a population of students where this study might be most impactful. Prior to conducting the study, I had communicated with the volunteer coordinator at The Inspiration Girls School through multiple e-mails and Skype video calls. It was during these various e-mails and calls that I was introduced to the mission of the school, which resonated with my own beliefs about education and literacy.

The mission of the organization is to provide education for underprivileged girls living in the city of Lucknow in Northern India. In order to accomplish this mission, the school uses a Critical Feminist Pedagogy (Sahni, 2017, 2018) to enable and empower the students to take a feminist stance in their lives. The Critical Feminist Pedagogy framework used at the school is rooted in the belief that education can transform marginalized students' sense of self and understanding of their society and ultimately, empower students through action to transform unequal social structures in their worlds (Sahni, 2018). At the center of their approach to empowerment for girls are weekly critical dialogue circles on a variety of topics to help students manage their daily lives outside of school such as "How to respond to cat calls on the streets"

and "personal hygiene." These critical dialogues are designed to empower the students, through teacher-facilitated practice of critical thinking, in a safe environment. Additionally, these dialogue circles are spaces for students to voice their thoughts, concerns, and feelings, as well as use their own experiences as valid sources of knowledge (Hooks, 1994). Not only are students made aware of the various oppressive power structures in their lives, they are also asked to critically examine social and political structures in relationship to their own lived experiences (Hahn, 2013; Sahni, 2018).

The mission of the organization resonated with both how I felt about schools as not only places for students to be educated but also places where futures and possibilities are broadened. Additionally, I felt that the economic and social representation of the students they served would allow for greater and more in-depth exploration of my research question. The organization itself believes in the power of stories to empower the lives of their students and organizes a variety of projects from digital storytelling to storybook making. This focus on storytelling and the lives of the students as individuals outside of the classroom were aspects of the school I felt especially valuable for this study.

Inspiration Girls School

The school where this study takes place is located in Lucknow, the capital city of the state Uttar Pradesh in Northern India. Located in one of the wealthier neighborhoods of the city, the school runs in the morning as a private co-ed school and in the afternoon as an all-girls school for underprivileged girls. Cars, auto-rickshaws, bicycles, motorcycles, and pedestrians line up as parents and guardians drop of the students, blocking traffic on the narrow two-lane street that runs perpendicular to the front door of the school. In the mornings, the students come in school uniforms with boys in collared shirts and long trousers and girls in collared shirts and

pleated skirts. The private school students vacate the campus in the early afternoons as The

Inspiration Girls School students enter the school dressed in the traditional Indian school uniform

"salwaar kameez," a knee-length tunic over baggy pants. The school uniform is one of many

things that distinguishes the girls from the private school students. The girls who attend the

afternoon school come from extreme poverty. In India, this means that in addition to the lack of

resources and material goods, these girls often come from families in rural villages where there is

also a lack of access to education, especially for girls. At the young age of 14 and 15, many of

the girls are already faced with the possibility of arranged marriages, working to help support the

family, and saving up for their own dowries. Thus, the school runs in the afternoons to

accommodate the working schedules of the girls.

The students at the school mostly come from families where one or both parents are

illiterate. Parents of these students are often unemployed with seasonal or temporary jobs and

often go through long periods of unemployment. Some of the mothers were housewives but most

worked part time as 'sweepers' or house cleaners. Here, I include the word 'sweeper' because

'housecleaners' as a term over glorifies the work they do. Sweepers in India are of the

'untouchable' caste, the lowest socio-economic caste, stigmatized and underpaid. Jobs such as

sweepers hold the lowest status in society (Srivastava, 1997) and often not only face

discrimination but physical violence (Mendelsohn & Vicziany, 1998). The "untouchables" do

this work because it is believed that "by assigning these tasks to people who were already

polluted, the society spared the normal people" (Srivastava, 1997, p. 16). The job of a sweeper is

not only undesirable but degrading. Collecting one or two pieces of bread from the houses they

cleaned as a small wage is a common practice in addition to rummaging through trash bags for

things that could be recycled and reused. This practice of finding material resources in various

places is something we see in the multimodal compositions created by the participants of this study.

The Inspiration Girls School, founded in 2003 with 80 students and 4 teachers, provides education for over 800 girls from the neighboring slums. The students attending the Inspiration Girls School are often older than students in the traditional Indian school system. For example, the girls in this study are between the ages of 14 and 15 but are enrolled in the 7th grade. Different factors contribute to this age difference. Sometimes it is due to a late enrollment, sometimes it is because students are held back a year from a previous grade, and sometimes it can be due to a personal event that caused students to drop out of school for a year or more. Attending to this unique population with many factors influencing their formal education, the school itself is a place that encourages, empowers, and provides a space to both discuss and escape the issues they face at home. Challenging traditional practices, such as arranged marriages and the traditional social roles for women, the school was started as an effort to provide not only education for girls but to enable them for better futures. While the school initially set out to provide literacy and numeracy education for girls, it soon became apparent that more was needed. Thus, a specialized curriculum for this particular population of students was implemented as the result of critical discussions with small groups of students (Sahni, 2017). In these small, critical discussion groups, the girls were invited to critically examine their lives through literacy, art, and drama. As the result of these discussions, the new curriculum focuses on "life outcomes" rather than "learning outcomes" (Sahni, 2017). In addition to reading and writing instruction, the school curriculum focuses on educating girls to view themselves as an equal persons, to emerge with a sense of agency and control, and to gain critical understanding of the social and political structures to be able to challenge these structures (Sahni, 2017). In

addition to the instructional curriculum, the school is built upon a "culture of care" where students address teachers as "aunty" "to reduce the traditional hierarchical distance between teachers and students" (Sahni, 2017, p. 64). Additionally, teachers work hard to build trust with students, taking time to get to know each individual student's family life and circumstances while at the same time sharing their own life stories with students, with the belief that "teaching and learning do not happen in a vacuum; they happen in the social contexts of students' lives and their worlds" (Sahni, 2017, p. 70). In addition to the emotional support teachers and staff provide to the students, the school follows the state-mandated curriculum with a focus on literacy and mathematics. Students are also taught social studies and science with Hindi as the primary language of instruction and English as a second language. English is taught starting in the first grade and taught "aggressively" to ensure mastery (Sahni, 2017). In addition to these content classes, the school organizes various events throughout the academic year such as debates, dances, art competitions, etc. These events all have focused themes around issues of gender justice (e.g., marriage, education for girls, democracy, etc.).

A critical component of the girls' education is what Sahni (2017) called "Dialogical Circles of Empowerment." These circles of empowerment aim to "raise girls' critical consciousness of oppressive social norms, power structures, and the gender relations that impact them" (Sahni, 2017, p. 112) which is accomplished through critical dialogue. Students at The Inspiration Girls School engage in these critical dialogues once a week. These classes begin with an art project that provides a safe space for students to express their experiences and emotions. These artistic expressions then lead to critical dialogues led by teachers. Teachers ask students various questions to explore different situations and possible solutions, such as "If you are walking on the street and a boy says something to you, like teasing you, how do you respond in these

situations?" or "What if you were married right now, how would your life be like? How would your life change?" The purpose of this persistent questioning is "to help the girls find ways of resisting…push the girls to generate solutions" (Sahni, 2017, p. 119). The "Circles of Empowerment" generated attention from the students and teachers, making them effective and valuable ways to communicate individual values. During my time at the Inspiration Girls School, the teachers and students looked forward to these weekly dialogical circles. In the days prior, students would share their excitement and anticipation for the meeting while afterward, they would reflect and contemplate the topics discussed.

I was assigned to one specific 7th grade class at the recommendation of the school principal and volunteer coordinator, taught by Preeti (pseudonym), the English teacher and designated homeroom teacher. At the beginning of the school year, I spent the first 2 months observing the classroom, the students, and the teacher. I occasionally co-taught with the classroom teacher or helped "keep an eye" on the students while she had to step out for meetings. The co-teaching usually meant me sitting in front of the class alongside the teacher, and the two of us facilitating discussions with the students. In the beginning, it took some time for the students to become accustomed to my American accent so the classroom teacher, Preeti, often had to translate my English. However, the students quickly adjusted to my accent and would seek me out during lunch time or between classes to ask me questions and tell me about themselves. When I was not co-teaching, I spent most of my time sitting in the back of the classroom observing and taking field notes. The students attended different classes throughout the day including Math, P. E., English, Computer, History, Music, and Hindi. Most of my observations and interactions with students occurred during their English language class, although I did also occasionally observe them in Music class or History class. The classroom

themselves were pretty basic. There were no smartboards or computers. In fact, no technology

of any sort other than the cell phone hidden in the teacher's purse. Yet every inch of wall space

was decorated with students' art work. In the summer heat, windows and doors were left open

for the occasional breeze as there was no central air conditioning and the electric ceiling fan was

often broken.

Living Conditions

About half of the girls in this study lived in tents constructed on plots of abandoned land

in the middle of the city. These abandoned plots of land were surrounded by large luxurious

houses where the local politicians and the wealthy live. Occasionally, the land owners would

come back to build something on the land, in which case, the family or families are forced to

move. The other girls lived in rented rooms, usually in a one-bedroom apartment shared between

a family of six or seven. In both situations, the living shelters were not permanent nor secure.

Girls that lived in temporary housing (urban slums) worried about when, how, and where to

bathe each morning. They would have to wake up before the sun each morning to shower in the

dark so to have some privacy. The lack of privacy and security was especially a concern for the

girls and for their families as sexual harassment and incidences of rape were often reported in the

overcrowded and impoverish urban slums (Kulkarni et al., 2017). This is one of many reasons

that the families often pressured the girls to get married at a young age. Beginning around the

ages of 14 and 15, many girls at the school were forced into arranged marriages and forced to

drop out of school. The girls living in rented rooms faced their own problems as most parents did

not have a stable job or stable income and struggled to pay rent. These families often moved

around as rent prices went up, or sometimes would have to move back to their village.

This lack of security at home inevitably carried into their school lives when often students would miss a month of school at a time. When major events happened at home such as a parent losing a job or having to move, students were often sent to their home villages to stay with grandparents and other extended families until the issue was resolved. Other times, students who were older siblings at home would have to stay home to help take care of their younger siblings or find extra work to help support the family financially. Given these very real living uncertainties, the girls often wrote and talked about getting real, secure jobs, so they could buy a house for their families and discussed the importance of education in meeting these goals. To be educated was important for these girls. In the face of many obstacles, they struggled and fought to continue attending school. Economically, the lack of resources including money for school uniforms, shoes, or books, as well as things that we often take for granted such as electricity or running water, made studying and doing homework difficult. Socially, education was often not available and not valued for girls and the economically disadvantaged. Parents of girls often were more concerned with getting the girl married rather than educated, and parents often pulled the girls out of school once they reached a certain age.

While as a country India is rapidly modernizing, girls in certain parts of the country and from certain socio-economic populations, such as the girls represented in this study, are still very much subjected to traditional practices, such as dowry and forced marriages. Girls, unlike boys, are viewed as property and a burden to the family with a hefty dowry needed to marry them off. Additionally, for the girls in this study, poverty is often justified by the caste system, and the poor are still viewed as the 'untouchables.' The poor or the 'untouchables' were born into it, it is in their blood, in their karma. As such, poverty was a very sensitive topic and something that none of the girls ever directly identified with. Thus, it almost never came up in my interactions

with these girls and I never forced them to talk about. Even when the girls eventually opened up

to me in general, they never wanted to put on paper or say out loud these aspects of their lives.

Recruitment

The participants were selected for this study using purposeful sampling based on their

ability to inform the research question, overall interest in participating in the study, and English

language proficiency. Upon first arriving at the school, I was introduced to and met with all the

different homeroom teachers. Eventually, Preeti (pseudonym), the 7th-grade English teacher was

recommended to me by both the school principal and founder of the school based on their

knowledge of my study and my research question. All the students in her 7th-grade homeroom

class were invited to participate. With the help of Preeti and my own classroom observations,

potential student participants were identified and invited to initial interviews with me. In these

interviews, students were asked about their interest in the English language, their interest in

working with me on this research project, and their overall comfort in reading and writing in the

English language. Eight students were initially selected to participate in the study based on their

interest in the research study, teacher's recommendation based on students' overall interest in

school and average attendance, and informal assessment of the students' English conversational

fluency in the interviews. Informed consent forms in Hindi were provided to the parents of the

eight students and in English and Hindi to the eight student participants. Each of the eight

students were then individually interviewed using a formal student interview protocol (see

Appendix A) with a set of predesigned questions including the following: "Tell me about your

family" or "What is your favorite subject in school?" Additionally, during these interviews, I

also opened up and allowed the students to ask me questions. Students asked me questions like

"Where are you from?," "Do you have children?," "How many brothers and sisters do you

have?," or "Do you like India?" The purpose of these interviews was to familiarize myself with each participant and introduce myself to the students. These initial interviews were each approximately 15-20 minutes in length and were recorded and later transcribed. Two of the initial eight participants left the study prior to the end due to personal reasons. Six of the eight students were able to complete the study.

Data Collection

Although I was able to interview and collect data from all six students in the study, four focal students were selected for analysis, and their stories are presented in the following chapter. These four students were selected for the following reasons: frequency in submitting their compositions, quality of their compositions, and uniqueness and relevance to the research question. These four students attended school regularly, and thus I was able to meet with them on a regular basis to discuss their compositions. Additionally, these four students were enthusiastic about the study, took pride in their compositions, and were always excited to meet with me for our interviews. I was able to meet with these four students on a regular basis, and this consistency of meeting and collecting their compositions allowed for a higher quality as well as quantity in the data that was collected. As such, the multimodal compositions I collected from these four participants were rich in quality and content.

The Participants

While all the girls attended The Inspiration School, went to many of the same classes, and came from very similar social backgrounds, their personalities, family compositions, living situations and stories are were different. Maya is the middle child with one younger sister and one older brother. Keya has two older sisters, one older brother, and two younger sisters.

However, all the older siblings have married and moved away and, of the siblings still living at home, Keya is the oldest. Gita has five sisters, four older and one younger, and no brothers. Monisha has one older brother, one younger brother, and one younger sister. The living situation of these four girls were also different. Their living situations largely depended on their family's financial situations as well as the parents' jobs. Other families, with older siblings who have jobs and live at home, could afford better living conditions such as an apartment. For example, Maya and her family lived in an apartment because Maya's older brother lived with them and worked so he was able to help contribute financially. Similarly, Monisha's older brother lived with them and held a secure job as a security guard, so the family lived in an apartment as he was able to help out financially. However, Keya's older brother married and moved away and did not help out the family financially. Thus, Keya, her parents and her two younger sisters lived in the slums five blocks from the school. Gita's family consisted of all girl children and no boys and thus it was extremely unsafe for them to live in a tent where public bathrooms are shared with other families. Thus, she and her family lived in an apartment, though they struggled to afford it and often had to move. The girls also differed in their personalities. Maya for example loved to have conversations about anything and everything. She looked forward to our interviews and sought me out before and after school just to talk. While Gita, for example, was a lot more reserved and soft-spoken.

The lives of these students shape who they are and the stories they share and do not share. Maya's physical limitation is something we see weaving in and out of her written compositions and our interviews. Similarly, aspects of Kaya's family life show up in how she chose to situate herself with in her family and within her society. Gita's determination as a student and in helping support her family is reflected in the quality of work and level of detail in her compositions.

Monisha, new to the school, often wrote about her many friends. These different aspects of the individual participants thread in and out of what is shared and what is not shared in their compositions and interviews. These different aspects of the girls also show up in what they chose to write and how they chose to communicate their ideas and thoughts. Finally, just as my analysis of the student data involved contextualizing their work within their families, communities, and lives, I ask that you read the following chapter in light of the lives, families, and communities surrounding the girls.

Observation

The study was conducted over the span of 8 months with an initial 2-month observational period. Data was collected in the form of multimodal compositions (described in further detail below), formal and informal interviews, and observational field notes. The observational period was initially planned for one month; however, due to the high temperatures, the official government of Lucknow delayed the start of the school year. Even though the official start of the school year was delayed, teachers and school staff still reported to school on the original start day to greet any incoming students and parents, as well as prepare for the school year. Many students also showed up during this period of time to register, meet informally with teachers and other students, and to just "hang out" at the school. This delayed start allowed me a couple of additional weeks to meet with the school staff members and observe the students and teachers as they prepared for the new school year. This period also allowed me to form a relationship with the classroom teacher. I was in her class on a daily basis and would go with her to the teacher cafeteria during lunches to sit and eat with all the other teachers and staff members at the school. It was not long before she invited me to her home for dinner where I got to meet her family. We conducted our first informal interview as well as subsequent formal and informal interviews in

her house. This initial observation period provided essential background information and gave me insight into the social and cultural context for my work as well as help triangulate the data analysis by providing me with an additional layer of understanding into the lives of the participants.

Multimodal Compositions

The multimodal compositions students were asked to create aligned with scholarly conceptualizations of multimodal literacies as open spaces for meaning making, rooted in creative and intentional uses of resources, and involved the intentional use of different modes to create and communicate different meanings (Kress, 1997; New London Group, 1996; Stein, 2000; etc.). These multimodal compositions include images and illustrations in juxtaposition with the written text. The students did not participate in any multimodal literacy practices which included technology. The multimodal compositions collected for this study were composed on construction paper, lined paper, colored papers or printer paper with pencils, colored pencils, crayons, and pens. I use the term multimodal compositions as the overarching term when referring to the written journal entries, illustrations, picture books, poems, story books, and letters created by these students. It is also important to note that as non-native English language speakers, there were grammar and spelling errors in the students' compositions. The data presented in Chapter 4 reflects these errors. For the most part, the errors were minor and did not impede upon the understanding and analysis of the compositions. In instances where the grammar or spelling errors impeded my understanding of the text, I would member check with the students to confirm the exact meaning in their compositions. In the Appendix B, I provide examples of these different multimodal compositions.

After meeting and getting to know the students in the study through observations and individual interviews, I asked the students to compose a variety of different multimodal compositions (see Table 1). These assignments were open ended, and students were instructed to write, draw, or paint their responses. Students were prompted with suggestions, such as "Tell me about your family" Or "Show me your house." Some of these compositions were part of whole class assignments that all students in the class participated in. However, most of the assignments were idiosyncratic and students could decide on how they wanted to respond to my prompting questions. The students also completed their compositions at different times. For example, one of the student participants, Maya, would have something new to show me on a weekly basis. For the most part, however, these multimodal compositions were regularly collected bi-weekly depending on the school schedule and students' personal lives. Factors that influenced the frequency of these compositions included national holidays, family holidays, school exams, or illnesses. Whenever the students finished a new composition, I would take the composition home to review and formulate questions. The students would then be interviewed afterwards regarding their compositions. Thus, the frequency of the interviews reflected the frequency of compositions I received. Some of these multimodal compositions were composed using color-pencil illustrations, others were journals that contained drawings, diary entries, poems, short stories, etc. The students took great care and time when working on these compositions and would thus mostly work on these at home rather than at school, as there was not enough time in the school schedule to work on them. As these assignments were often completed at home, I provided any additional materials for students to use in these assignments such as colored pencils, markers, large construction paper in different colors, and composition notebooks. Additionally, I checked in with the students daily to see if they had any questions for me or if they needed any additional

materials. The students always took the materials I offered but would never ask for anything

more.

Table 1: Student Compositions and Interviews

Student	Compositions	Interviews
Maya	12 compositions including illustrations, journal entries, self-portraits, picture book, handmade card, and letters.	9 interviews including 1 initial formal interview and 1 closing interview
Keya	6 compositions including illustrations, journal entries, and picture book.	4 interviews including 1 initial formal interview and 1 closing interview
Gita	7 compositions including illustrations, journal entries, and picture book.	4 interviews including 1 initial formal interview and 1 closing interview
Monisha	4 compositions including picture book, journal, and illustration	6 interviews including 1 closing interview

Interviews

In addition to the collection of the students' compositions, students were also individually interviewed. According to Merriam (1998), "Interviewing is necessary when we cannot observe behavior, feelings, or how people interpret the world around them" (p. 72). Because I was not able to observe the students during the creation process of their compositions, interviews served to further understand the purpose and process of these compositions (Merriam, 1998). The formal interviews took place either in the school library when it was unoccupied or in the school computer lab when class was not in session. These two spaces provided privacy for the interview and sufficient space for me to set up the interviews. The initial formal interviews were conducted to get to know the students better and to introduce myself to the students. These initial formal interviews included questions, such as "How long have you been a student at this school? What is your favorite subject in school? What words would you use to describe yourself? What is your favorite kind of stories? Do you read together with your younger sister and brother? What kind

of job do you want to have when you grow up?" See Appendix A for the complete interview protocol.

The subsequent interviews were about the students' compositions. These interviews took the form of semi-structured interviews where students were presented with their compositions and asked to reflect and discuss certain aspects of what they had composed. These interviews were conducted to collect information regarding how the compositions were constructed, why, and the meanings inside the compositions. In preparation for these interviews, I would review the student's compositions and formulate a set of questions based on these compositions. Thus, the initial analysis of the student's artifacts guided the subsequent data collected from the interviews. During these semi-structured interviews, the student's compositions were placed on the desk in front of them and I asked questions, such as "Who is this? (I point to a figure in the student's drawing) Why is your sister inside the house? What were you thinking when you wrote this? Why did you write this story? Tell me about this story that you wrote." The students' compositions were purposefully selected and placed on the table in front of the students so the students had access to their compositions and could point to things or pick it up. These interviews were conducted on average bi-weekly or once a month. Towards the end of the study, the frequency of these interviews decreased due to students' schedules for midterm exams. As data were collected and analyzed, the interviews became increasingly focused and I began asking questions related to specific things she wrote and related to my research question. For example, "In this story here, why did you write about your mother reading the newspaper? Here you write about the forest, is this a real place that you saw or something that you are thinking?" These semi-structured interviews were used to triangulate the data as they permitted the participants to describe and explain their compositions themselves. The total number of student artifacts and

interviews differed depending on student availability and the frequency in which the compositions were submitted to me.

Informal interviews took place at various locations including by the school gate after school with students while they waited to be picked up, next to the playground during lunch and breaks, or walking up and down stairs between classes. Informal interviews were never scheduled or planned in advance. These interviews often spontaneously occurred whenever students had early dismissal and were just "hang around" after school, whenever I would run into them outside of school, or whenever a teacher was late to class or there was a schedule change allowing me some extra time to talk to the students. In preparation for these spontaneous opportunities to interview the girls, I had a recording device with me at all times. Thus, all interviews, formal and informal were recorded and transcribed.

Teacher Interviews

Throughout the study, I worked closely with the classroom teacher, Preeti, and developed both a professional and personal relationship with her. I was invited to her home on several occasions, often had dinner with her family, and occasionally helped her son with his English homework. Her insight into the students, the culture, and community was useful in helping me understand the data as well as helping me gain access into the community. I collected formal and informal interview data with Preeti. I interviewed her once at the beginning of the study and again at the conclusion of the study. Both formal interviews took place inside her home in her living room. The initial interview focused on how she became a teacher, her teaching philosophy, her instructional approach, and her experience working with this population of students. At the end of the study, I interviewed her once again on her thoughts about the school year, the progress of her students, and shared with her and discussed with her the students'

compositions. The interview data with the classroom teacher were used to triangulate the analysis. The findings detailed in chapter 4 incorporate data from the interviews with Preeti as her understanding and knowledge of the students provided a further layer contextualizing the student data.

Data Analysis

As a single-embedded case study, the analysis consisted of both individual, within-case analysis of each individual girl participant as well as a cross-case analysis between all four girl participants. Eisenhardt (1989) noted the importance of careful and in-depth data analysis in case study research as the volume of data in case study research is often extremely large given that research problems in case study research are often open-ended. In case study analysis, the goal is to become "intimately familiar with each case as a stand-alone entity" (Eisenhardt, 1989, p. 540). To allow for this in-depth analysis of each individual student participant, I purposefully selected four students for their ability to inform the research question. The within-case analysis took place first as the data sets for each of the four individual student participants were reviewed in isolation. For this first round of within-case analysis, I applied discourse analysis (Gee, 2011) and multimodal discourse analysis (Baldry & Thibault, 2006) to the data sets. Focusing on the data sets of these four participants allowed me to provide an in-depth analysis of the lives and stories of these individual student. This in-depth analysis of individual cases allows for the unique patterns of each case to emerge before looking for generalized patterns across cases (Eisenhardt, 1989). During this phase, I reviewed the data of each participant as a standalone data set looking at patterns across the compositions and interviews of each participant.

Next, a cross-case analysis was applied to see the data holistically and identify any similarities or differences between the four participants as it relates to my research question.

Thus, the within-case analysis of the four individual student participants was coupled with a cross-case analysis of all four student participants for both a micro and macro view of the data. According to scholarship on the design of case study research, the cross-case analysis can consist of selecting categories and then looking for similarities and differences across different cases (Eisenhardt, 1989). The purpose of the cross-case analysis is to "force investigators to go beyond initial impressions, especially through the use of structured and diverse lenses on the data" (Eisenhardt, 1989, p. 541). As a single-embedded case study, a cross-case analysis approach was used to compare similarities and differences and consisted of looking at patterns between the four student participants. Finally, because case study research is an iterative process through which themes, concepts, and relationships between variables emerge (Eisenhardt, 1989), the final phase of the data analysis consisted of going back and forth between reviewing the patterns and themes within each individual participant as well as across all four participants. I now more specifically describe the within-case analysis that took place between the four data sets.

Within-Cases Analysis

The initial data analysis for this study occurred simultaneously while data were collected which helped formulate the subsequent interview questions. As Merriam (1998) wrote, "Data collection and analysis is a simultaneous activity in qualitative research. Analysis begins with the first interview, the first observation, the first document read" (p. 151). As soon as students turned in a composition, I reviewed the composition in light of the research question and developed a set of interview questions. These interview questions were used at the start of the individual interviews with the students and helped me develop understanding for the rational and process behind these compositions.

Once I had all my data, I took a first pass at the data by reading through the interviews and compositions for each girl participant and, using the concepts of identity outlined in Chapter 2, I applied an open coding (Strauss & Corbin, 1990). This took the form of margin notes and different annotations such as circling and underlining. This first layer of open coding did not yield significant results and having done this, I realized I needed a more systematic way of breaking down the data in order to organize and make sense of it. Thus, I next applied Gee's (2011) discourse analysis and demarcated all the data into "idea units." These idea units were labeled alphabetically (a, b, c, and so on) and a group of idea units forming a speech sentence were grouped into a "macro-line" (Gee, 2011). These macro-lines were labeled with a number: 1, 2, 3, and so on. So 1a and 1b together formed a macro-line. Groups of macro-lines that were linked to one unitary topic were organized into "stanzas" (Gee, 2011). Each stanza represents a single important event, at a single time and place, and with a specific character or perspective. The example below is a section from an interview transcript with the participant Maya, demarcated using Gee's (2011) approach to discourse analysis into idea units, macro-lines, and stanzas.

Stanza 4:
1a. My mother can't read,
1b. my father, my brother
1c. they can't read.
2a. I'm thinking that,
2b. I just think and write.

Stanza 5:
3a. I wish my parents
3b. could read like this
3c. and that this kind of situation
3d. could happen in my life
3e. and so I just think
3f. and I write.

Stanza 6:
4a. My parents are old people
4b. and during that time,
4c. education was not for everyone
4d. and especially for girls.
5a. Families don't allow girls to study,
5b. they don't allow girls
5c. to even go to school.

Figure 3. Example Analysis of Maya's Transcript

Breaking the data up into idea units, micro lines, and stanzas allowed me to see the

specifics of the data in a more microscopic and organized way, and through the discourse

analysis, I was able to see the different themes in the data given my conceptualization of identity.

Thus, after demarcating the data using Gee's discourse analysis, I then went back and coded each

micro line (1a + 1b + 1c). For instance, in the example above, lines 1a, 1b, and 1c together

revealed a factual statement of participant herself and was given the initial code of *factual*

statement. While lines 2a and 2b revealed a desire and a thought and was assigned the initial

code of *inner thought.* In the first round of coding, I ended up with eight codes: 1) Emotional

statement, 2) factual statement, 3) desire or feeling, 4) past events, 5) imagined situation

statement, 6) moral statement, 7) description, and 8) cultural or social. As I went back and

reviewed these codes, I found that the codes for emotional statement, factual statement, desire or feeling, and past events were all statements about the participant themselves. Thus, the initial four codes (emotional statement, factual statement, desire or feeling, and past events) were combined and collapsed into *statement of self*. The initial eight codes were thereby combined and collapsed resulting in the final five thematic categories: 1) statement of self; 2) imaginary situation; 3) cultural, historical, or social statement; 4) value statement; and 5) general description. The table below outlines the five thematic categories along with examples from the data. These five codes were then applied to all the interviews and written compositions for all four participants.

Table 2: Thematic Coding Categories

Categories	Properties	Examples
Statement of self	a) emotional statement: A feeling, liking something, loving something b) factual statements about oneself c) A desire, intention, or inner thinking or an internal conversation about a thought, desire, feeling or goal d) A personal story from the past, retelling of past events	a) 1) I feel so happy. a) 2) I love my family b) 1) I am a girl. b) 2) I am 15 years old. c) 1) Today I thought a lot, if I should write about myself or not. But my mind says I should write about myself. d) 1) Last year my mother asked me to perform some drama and I perform a very well.
An Imaginary situation	Description of an imagined place, event, or situation	1) My parents are in the garden. Mummy is reading the paper and daddy is sitting on the chair.
A cultural, historical or social statement	a) Related to culture, history, or society e.g. cultural festivals, facts about India. b) Cultural jokes or riddles	1) Id is a Muslim Festival. People go to the Mosque and pray.
Value Statements	A statement or story with a moral teaching A statement on principles, morals, or value systems.	1) The only difference between human and animals is that human live with others with love, with helping and supporting nature.
A General description	A description of a person, place or thing.	1) My house is very small.

The discourse analysis and the five thematic categories were applicable for the interview data and the written compositions but did not address the multimodal compositions such as the illustrations, picture books, and other images included in the compositions. Therefore, I next applied Baldry and Thibault's (2006) approach to multimodal discourse analysis to the multimodal compositions. The visual elements in the multimodal compositions were analyzed along with the functions of the visual elements. Visual elements included frame, vector, distance,

positioning, color, or lines were noted and analyzed along with the function of these elements

such as the use of different colors to separate the title from the body or the physical positioning

of different figures within one composition or the physical positioning of the figures in an

illustration and what the positioning communicates. In Figure 4 below, the student, Keya

illustrated her family in a "long shot" (Baldry & Thibault, 2006) which creates distance between

the figures in the image and the viewer. Additionally, Keya's physical positioning in the

illustration is on the outside next to her father rather than in the center. Finally, her two sisters in

the illustration are colored in light pink, her mother in blue and purple, her father in blue, and she

herself in yellow and black. In comparison, Maya's self-portrait (Figure 5) is a close shot, direct,

and centered, and in black and white. Table 3 outlines the various components of multimodal

analysis for these two examples.

Figure 4. Keya's Family Portrait

Figure 5. Maya's Self-Portrait

Table 3. Analysis of Portraits

	Example 1	Example 2
Distance	Long shot	Close shot
Positioning	Keya positions herself next to her father on the outside.	Direct and centered
Color	Sisters – pink dresses Mother – blue and purple Father – Blue Keya – Yellow and black	Black and white

Cross-Case Analysis

The discourse analysis which yielded the five categories in conjunction with the multimodal discourse analysis of the different visual elements allowed me to see instances of when students engaged their imagination and the different ways in which they articulated their identities. However, this first layer of analysis resulted in a dispersed understanding of the individual girls and did not answer my research question "How do adolescent girls from an

economically disadvantaged population in Northern India use literate practices to negotiate and

express identity that is both imagined as well as actual?" from a holistic perspective. Thus, a

cross-case analysis of the data was conducted using Gee's (1999) anchoring questions for the

different components of what he called a "situation network." This next level of analysis helped

answer the research question and also helped me make sense of the data across the different

students. Because I was specifically interested in the function of literacy for these girls and

specifically how they use literacy for the articulation and creation of identities, I applied Gee's

questions for the different components of literacy to understand the different ways the students

intentionally used literacy for specific purposes. These questions were applied to all the data,

interviews and multimodal compositions, across all four student participants. These questions

allowed me to further analyze the multimodal compositions beyond the initial layer of macro-

lines and stanzas or colors and frames and get at the purpose and function of the literacy

practices of these girls.

Discourse analysis, according to Gee (1999), is situated within certain social contexts as

language always reflects as well as constructs the situation or context in which it is used. As

such, discourse analysis is multidimensional and involves a network of different components

including semiotic (the sign systems such as language or images); activity (the specific social

activity or activities in which the participants are engaging in); material (the place, time, bodies

and objects during the interaction); political (distribution of social goods such as power or status

during an interaction); and sociocultural (personal, social, and cultural knowledge, feelings,

values, identities, and relationships). These five components then form a system or a 'situation

network.' This situation network can be analyzed, according to Gee (1999), through the

questions found in Table 4.

Table 4: Situation Network Analysis Questions

Building Task	Questions (Gee, 1999)
Semiotic building	What sign systems are relevant in the situation (e.g. speech, writing, images) How are they made relevant? What social languages are relevant in the situation?
World building	What are the situated meanings of some of the words and phrases that seem important? What situated meanings and values seem to be attached to places, times, bodies, objects, artifacts, and institutions?
Activity building	What is the larger or main activity going on in the situation? What actions compose these activities?
Sociocultural-situated identity and relationship building	What relationships and identities (roles, positions) and sociocultural knowledge and believes are relevant?
Political building	What social goods (status, power) are relevant?
Connection building	What sorts of connections are evident in the situation?

These five components (semiotic, activity, material, political, and sociocultural) were considered and applied to the data for a cross-case analysis. These five different components were used to help identify similarities and differences among the data collected from the four different participants. For example, in the interview expert above (stanzas 4-6), Maya described the education of parents rooted in the sociocultural histories of India:

> My mother can't read, my father, my brother they can't read. I'm thinking that, I just think and write. I wish my parents could read like this and that this kind of situation could happen in my life and so I just think and I write. My parents are old people and during that time, education was not for everyone and especially for girls. Families don't allow girls to study, they don't allow girls to even go to school.

In this interview excerpt, the semiotic includes the verbal language used by the participant to describe this situation during our interview but is also rooted in the written composition that prompted this interview and her reflection of that written composition. The activity includes the social activity of participating in a research project but also the social activity of reading and writing for girls and women in India. The material includes the notebook which houses the journal entry that prompted this interview. The political involves the social good of education and literacy, the status of women in India, and the privileges of the higher versus lower castes in India. Finally, the sociocultural involves Maya's identity as an educated girl, with a disability, living in India, with parents who were not educated. The use of Gee's discourse analysis and the six building tasks help situate Maya's text and interview within the sociocultural contexts of being a girl in India, within political and social goods of access to education for women, and within historical opportunities for women in India. In light of these building tasks, Maya's wish that her parents were literate, is an intentional self-positioning in an imagined event, in conversation with social, cultural and historical realities.

Gee's (2011) framework for discourse analysis and the demarcation of the data into macro lines and idea units allowed me to see the data on a micro level while the five components of a situation network (Gee, 1999) helped me see the data on a macro level with consideration for the broader context and purpose of language. Using this framework helped highlight common themes across the different data sets and helped me see the different categories: statement of self, an imagined situation, a cultural, historical or social statement, value statements, and general descriptions, within context of the students' lives, their intentions, and functions of their literacy. For example, the above interview excerpt with Maya is connected to her written composition where she describes herself playing in her garden while her mother is reading the newspaper.

This written scenario of her family together in the garden is connected to social and political goods of education for women and her socially situated identity in relationship to her parents. Thus, in this composition and subsequent interview, Maya communicated her identity by positioning herself in her social world via her self-positioning in this imagined event. Using the questions outlined for each of the six building tasks, I was thus able to view see patterns across the data sets of all four participants resulting in four common themes that were identified as it relates to the research question. The data and discussions are thus organized and presented in Chapter 4 according to these four themes: 1) Agentive self-positioning in society, 2) Self-positioning as imagined social others, 3) Self-positioning in relationship to social others, and 4) Self-positioning in imagined events.

Trustworthiness

Credibility and trustworthiness are important factors to consider when collecting, analyzing and presenting the findings of a qualitative study (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Sandelowski (1993) argued that trustworthiness can be achieved by the researcher making the research process visible or "leaving a decision trail." Similarly, Saldaña (2011) noted the importance in the believability of the researcher's presentation of the data in qualitative research. In this study, I establish credibility through several different ways. First of all, I draw from related works in the field, presented in chapter 2, to help inform my thinking (Saldaña, 2011). Next, I establish credibility by specifying the particular data analytic methods I used (Saldaña, 2011). Additionally, data were triangulated through the inclusion of multiple data sources including: observations, compositions, interviews with students and interviews with the classroom teacher. Triangulation of the data increases the accuracy and dependability while helping to reduce researcher's biases (Miles & Huberman, 1994; Yin, 2014). These different

components of the study are presented with thoroughness in these chapters to make the research

process visible and the presentation of the data and subsequent analysis clear for fellow

researchers.

Data validity in this study follows Merriam's constructivist approach to knowledge and

the belief that there are multiple versions of knowledge since knowledge is co-constructed. This

study defines reality as "holistic, multidimensional, ever-changing; it is not a single, fixed,

objective phenomenon waiting to be discovered, observed, and measured" (Merriam, 1998, p.

202). Data validation should "provide the reader with a depiction in enough detail to show that

the author's conclusions 'make sense'" (Merriam, 1998, p. 199). Through detailed descriptions

of the students' compositions and interviews, the context of the research site, background

information of the participants, and my own identity as the researcher, I aim to provide validity

for this study by providing the reader with as much detail as possible about the study. Doing so, I

hope the readers can draw their own conclusions based on the thoroughness of the information

presented.

Additionally, the analysis of the compositions was corroborated with the participants

themselves through interviews with each individual participant where they were presented with

and asked specific questions about their compositions. This process of member checking further

helped establish credibility for this study. Member checking was in the form of semi-structured

interviews with each individual student where they were asked questions about their

compositions, the materials they used, and their overall compositional process. In order to

prepare for these interviews, data analysis took place while data were still being collected. As I

collected the student's artifacts, I read through them and noted down places where I needed more

clarification or wanted the student to further explain. These notes guided the questions I asked

the student during the interviews where I laid out the student's artifacts and asked clarifying questions. This enabled the participants to play an active role in ensuring the trustworthiness of the data. Furthermore, I presented my findings and interpretations of the data to the classroom teacher. I asked the classroom teacher to confirm my interpretations with regards to the student compositions. One formal interview with the classroom teacher occurred at the end of the semester in her home. During this formal interview, the classroom teacher was presented with the collection of all of the students' compositions and asked to share general thoughts on the artifacts and reflect on entirety of the literacy project as a whole. Informal interviews occurred periodically throughout the data collection process either before school or immediately after school. During these informal interviews, the classroom teacher was presented with one or a couple of the artifacts and asked specific questions and any background information about the student she felt were relevant to the compositions (e.g., Maya talks about moving from Assam to Lucknow; how long have you known Maya? Maya describes her house with a garden and cows; do you know anything about her living situation? Why do you think Greeta wrote this?). Finally, the observational field notes further helped triangulate the data as my observations of the girls in the classroom and around the school provided an additional layer of understanding into their lives and their worlds. For example, during lunch and other school activities, I observed Maya always sitting on the side with a friend watching the other students play. This observation helped me understand and analyze statements in her compositions where she wrote about playing, swimming, or other activities.

Ethical Considerations

In a country where culturally accepted practices such as dowry can translate into perspectives of women not only as property but as a burden to the family, where poverty is

stigmatized, and where gender issues are complex and often culturally accepted such as child marriages, this study raises important moral, ethical, and social questions. In addition to exploring the literacy practices of these girls during this unique developmental period, the study fulfills a social justice agenda by drawing attention to an underrepresented and largely underexplored population. In light of the sensitivity of the topics discussed and the research population, upon initially meeting with the classroom teacher and students, I provided informed consent forms to the student participants in both English and Hindi. I invited the participants to ask me questions regarding the study and answered any questions about their rights as participants. I made the goals of the study explicit and shared my research question with them.

Additionally, taking a child-centered approach to data collection, the participants were both involved as well as consulted in the research process (Mauthner, 1997; Stein, 2008). Stein (2008) noted the importance of a child-center approach to data collection; with open-ended assignments and open-ended interview questions, children are able to direct the research and talk about or write about issues important to them. A child-centered approach to data collection attempts to equalize the power relationship between the researcher and the researched. With ethical and moral obligations as a researcher and my role as a 'sister' to the girls, I approached the interviews with sensitivity and respect for the parts of the girls' lives which they wished not to discuss allowing them to lead the discussions. I asked them why they wrote different things and if what they wrote was a real situation but would never judge their answers nor ask questions that appeared to judge their writings. At the end of each interview, I would again encourage them to write about and talk about the things they wanted to and remind them that they were not being graded on the work that they shared with me. Additionally, as Behar (1994) warned, in qualitative research we ask participants to reveal themselves and open themselves up for

vulnerability, but we ourselves remain invulnerable. In attempting to address this inequality, I would begin each interview by asking students if they had any questions for me. Throughout the research project, I maintained awareness of differences and power relationships and issues of gender and poverty with my student participants. Both in the writing as well as the interviews, the students disclosed personal and sensitive information about themselves. Writing in itself is a vulnerable act but is even more so for this specific population due to their marginalized social positions since being poor in India is often stigmatized. The things that the students shared with me took a great deal of courage on their part. Finally, to protect the privacy of the participants, all the names of individuals and the school in this study are pseudonyms.

Limitations of the Study

There are several potential limitations to this study including my own limitations as a beginning researcher, the selection of research site, and the nature of the research method used. As a Western educated woman, my educational experiences, cultural understanding, and life experiences were drastically different from that of the participants in this study. This is something I was aware of going into this study and why I purposefully designed the study to allow for ample participant reflection and the opportunity to speak about and explain elements of their own compositions. I was also very intentional in seeking the local expertise of the classroom teacher and often shared with the classroom teacher the students' compositions, and the insights gathered from the classroom teacher were used to triangulate the data analysis.

I was specifically interested in exploring the literacy practices of marginalized adolescent girls as it was a population not widely researched within the field of literacy education. This interest brought me to the city of Lucknow in Northern India and the school, The Inspiration Girls School. While this site was advantageous in its ability to provide a unique perspective on

issues of literacy and identity development, the specific demographical characteristics of this school and the students it serves also limit the generalizability of my findings. The cultural experiences and socio-economic position of the participants along with the age and gender of the participants is unique to this research population and plays a significant role in the findings of this study. In qualitative paradigms, it is believed that people's experiences are situated within specific historical, social, and cultural contexts and thus, there can be multiple interpretations of reality, or multiple realities (Tesch, 1990). Thus, small qualitative studies hold the potential to illuminate a specific phenomenon situated within its specific context. As such, it is possible that small qualitative studies can provide deeper understanding of a phenomenon and as the result of that, add valuable knowledge to the larger research community. Qualitative study can achieve this by providing rich descriptive details and well-written reports to enhance the understanding of the topic or phenomenon for the readers.

CHAPTER 4. RESULTS OF THE STUDY

Imagination is the beginning of creation. You imagine what you desire, you will what you imagine and at last you create what you will. -George Bernard Shaw

The purpose of this qualitative embedded single case study is was to explore the literacy practices of marginalized adolescent girls for their ability to ignite the imagination and enable explorations of identity. At the center of this study is the question: How do adolescent girls from an economically disadvantaged population in Northern India use literate activity to negotiate and express identity that is both imagined as well as actual? This chapter presents the findings of the study as generated from the analyses described in chapter 3 using the compositions and interviews of the four student participants. In each section I present data examples from the four participants followed by a discussion. These four participants and the selection of their compositions were specifically chosen in light of and for their ability to answer the research question. The data and discussions are organized and presented according to the four themes, which were identified using Gee's discourse analysis and the questions associated with his framework for situation network analysis. The discussion within each of the four themes include both the within-case analysis as well as the cross-case analysis and is the combined application of Gee's discourse analysis, framework for situation network, and multimodal discourse analysis. While the demarcation of the data into micro lines and stanzas allowed me to see the individual idea units within the data more clearly on a micro level; the application of Gee's framework for the situation networks and their related questions allowed me to recontextualized the data for the cross-case analysis on a macro level with consideration for the socio-cultural contexts. The final four themes presented in this chapter are: 1) Agentive self-positioning in society, 2) Self-

positioning as imagined social others, 3) Self-positioning in relationship to social others, and 4) Self-positioning in imagined events. Under the theme "agentive self-positioning in society," we see the girls empowered to situate themselves as educated and financially independent women in their societies. As imagined social others, the girls rewrite their identities as different and imagined others either as a girl living in a wheelchair or as an imagined, helpful friend. Under the theme "self-positioning in relationship to social others," the girls situate their identities in relationship to social others in very specific cultural, social, and historical contexts. Finally, as selves in imagined events, the girls creatively write themselves into imagined scenarios such as playing in the garden or swimming in a pool. Under each theme, I present two to three different student compositions or excerpts from a student composition and any relevant interview data. The data is presented under these four themes for organizational purposes. However, it is important to note that these themes do not live in isolation but weave in and out of each other. For example, the self in an imagined event is also agentive, and in relationship to social others. Similarly, the agentive self can also be situated in relationship to social others as well as situated in an imagined future.

Maya, Keya, Gita, Monisha

Given that these literacy practices as well as the identities articulated through these literacy practices are socially situated, I will take some time to first introduce each of the four participants individually and share as much of their lives as was shared with me. There were similarities that thread through these four participants along with many differences and it is worthwhile to introduce each of the four participants individually to help situate and make sense of the data.

Maya wanted to be a lawyer when she grows up so that she could "punish those that do bad things in society and teach them how to be good in society" (Journal Entry). Due to poverty, illness, and remoteness of her home village, Maya did not start attending school until two years before I met her, at the age of 12, when her family moved from their village in Assam to Lucknow. They found Inspiration Girls School where she and her younger sister could attend school for free. Maya lived with her mother, father, her younger sister, older brother and sister-in-law. In their family, only she and her younger sister could read and write Hindi and English. Maya was trilingual as her first language was Bangali. Maya spoke Bangali at home and, while her parents could understand and speak Hindi, they could not read or write. Both her parents worked as sweepers (housecleaners). Maya was different from the other students in her class as she was the only one with a physical disability. When Maya was 13, her family moved from Assam to Lucknow so that Maya could be treated for the cancer in her leg. A family friend had recommended a hospital in Lucknow where they treat patients like Maya for free. When her family took her to the hospital, the cancer had already spread and her leg had to be amputated. This often came up in our interviews as it was something that made her noticeably different from the other girls, limited her activities, and in general made many things harder for her to do. It took her longer to get ready in the morning, she could not take a bus to school, and she could not participate in school dance performances or other physical activities. When I sat with the classroom teacher to look through Maya's compositions, the teacher remembered a specific event from the previous school year when the class was discussing ideas for their annual function. Preeti, the classroom teacher, suggested a mime performance and showed a video of it. Maya was very excited when she saw this "because it was like, she could sit and she could act something." But the other girls were not excited and insisted on a dance performance instead.

Maya left the class and later in a private conversation with Preeti, expressed her sadness that she again would not be able to participate in the school function. Reflecting on this past event, Preeti told me, "that was the day where I felt that she wants to do everything that which she is not able to do."

With all these obstacles in life, Maya was still optimistic and extremely positive and grateful for what she had. She would often say things like, "My life is very good, I have my parents and my brother and they all love me" or wrote things like, "Helping, supporting other is a very good thing, this is a great work." Maya was also unique in that she often challenged accepted norms and would present very different and alternative says of thinking about situations. The classroom teacher mentioned during an interview, "If you give her two sentences, then she can make a story. But that story will be totally different from other things." Preeti shared another memory of Maya with me during one of our interviews, when they had a class discussion on the issue of 'eve-teasing,' which is traditionally defined as when a boy is teasing a girl. Maya raised her hand and asked, "What if a girl whistles to a boy?" Recalling this event, Preeti told me, "So it makes me smile sometimes in class."

Keya was 14-years-old at the time of the study and had four sisters and one brother. Her favorite subject was English; she liked everything about English. She enjoyed happy and funny books, and she did not like romantic books. Keya described herself as "cool" and "intelligent." With five daughters in the family, Keya's parents struggled to make ends meet and worried about saving money for their daughters' dowries. Two of her older sisters had already married and moved away. She was now the oldest in the family with two younger sisters. As the older sister of two, Keya described herself as someone who is "hard working." Keya wanted to become a

police officer when she grew up so that she could serve society and support her family. She wanted to "give them all the good things in life," and she wanted her family "to be proud" of her.

Issues of gender equality, education, and child marriages were important for Keya. At the age of 14, her family was pressuring her to get married. In fact, her family was so worried that they often brought her back to their village right before the school's annual exams. Her mother would tell her that they would return to Lucknow before the exams, but the classroom teacher shared, "they never bring her back." The family would lock her inside a room and only let her out if she agreed to get married. Each time, Keya refused, fought back, and negotiated with her parents until they let her go back to school. In our interview, Preeti described Keya as "a marvel." Preeti also told me that Keya had one brother who "usually abuses the mother. So they were living separately." Last year, the brother wanted Keya to come and live with him and his wife to help take care of their children. Keya agreed but under the condition that she would still be allowed to attend school. However, her brother wanted her to work full-time and did not want her to go to school anymore so he took all her books and burned them. After this, Keya ran back home to her mother. Preeti described Keya as a fighter, "She'll fight back, she'll come back."

Gita was the second youngest in a family of six girls. She was 14-years-old during the time data was collected for this study. Her favorite subject in school was English; in fact, she wanted to become an English teacher when she grew up. Gita also loved to dance and sing and was an artist. In the school performance at the beginning of the year, Gita was one of the main dancers. Gita was also extremely quiet and reserved. During our interview, I often had to ask her to repeat herself multiple times because she spoke so softly that I could barely hear her. Gita lived with her four older sisters and one younger sister and their parents. Her mother worked as a cook at a nearby cafeteria and her father works as a security guard. Her father often lost his job

and went through long periods of unemployment. "I've seen this girl growing," Preeti reflected in our last interview. Preeti began teaching at that school the same year Gita enrolled as a student, around 6 years ago, so the two were very close. Earlier in the year, Gita's father and sister both lost their jobs at the same time and they were forced to move out of their one-bedroom apartment. With six daughters, it was unsafe for them to live in the urban slums because of exposed public bathrooms and the high occurrences of sexual assault on girls in the slums mentioned earlier. Gita, worried they might have to move back to the village, broke into tears after school one day. When Preeti offered to give her some money, she replied, "'I don't want to take help from you. I want to do something and earn money. It's not that I'm asking you for the money. I'm asking you to help me to get work.' So it very impressive that she is doing something and she is helping her family," Preeti recalled during one of our interviews.

During one of our interviews, I learned that Monisha was one of the first girls in her family to attend an English medium school, so to be identified as a literate person in English was something she took pride in. Monisha was aware of how lucky she was:

> My whole family, my aunties, my grandmother's daughters have studied in the local colleges. And I am studying in English Medium school. And I will study about many things. But my aunties have not studied English Medium, only Hindi Medium studies. My aunties have many struggles, my father also has many struggles. But they will educate us.

Other than this one time, Monisha did not speak about her family during any of our other interviews.

Monisha was also new to the school. Her father recently lost his job so the family had to move, and she and her younger siblings had to transfer schools. Concern for cleanliness and outer appearance was of great importance for these young women, and this was no exception for Monisha. Thus, any critique of being dirty was taken very sensitively, and the girls took great

care to braid their hair every morning and wash their school uniforms. In addition, as poverty was stigmatized, the girls worked hard to keep up their appearances despite home situations. The girls had to purchase their own school uniforms but were offered financial assistance if they asked for it. Most of the girls wore uniforms from previous years. As this was Monisha's first year attending the school, she did not have a school uniform from the previous year. For the first two weeks, she wore the same two outfits alternating them and stood out since all the other girls were in school uniforms. A senior student ran into her in the halls and asked Monisha why she was not in school uniform stressing that uniforms were part of school regulations. Monisha, embarrassed and upset, got into a fight with this senior student. Preeti, the classroom teacher later spoke with Monisha about this incident and learned that her father had just lost his job and they could not afford new uniforms. The teacher reminded Monisha that the other students at the school were going through similar situations, and that she should not get angry about it. As poverty was something that was stigmatized and often times something that the girls were ashamed of, they often tried hard to hide it or would not speak about it openly. Thus, Monisha was sensitive to these issues and often avoided sharing with me details about her family or their living conditions.

Agentive Self-Positioning in Societal Critique

Using analysis of the following compositions and interviews, I will discuss the ways in which the girls position themselves purposefully within their societies. As described in chapter 3, the discourse analysis and multimodal analysis aided in the within case analysis of the individual girls. Gee's situation network was then applied to all the data sets for the cross-case analysis. The combination of the within case analysis and the cross-case analysis yielded these four key categories. Across the different data sets, the girls position themselves in relationship to different

social practices and social roles. I will first present a picture book created by Keya, a multimodal mixed-genre composition that incorporates humor along with illustrations, which discusses and challenges gender roles and the expectations placed on girls in India. Next, I will present a poem written by Keya about herself, her family, and her future. Finally, I will share a poster composed by Maya describing her hometown Assam and the subsequent interview where she situates Assam within the social practice of child marriages.

Keya's Picture Book

Keya's multimodal picture book reflects the different components of a typical regular book. The book with a hand-crafted cover is bounded together through an intricate folding of the pages. The picture book is made with colored construction paper and is a complex layered composition. She added recycled blue construction tape along three sides of her picture book to create a boarder which frames her book. The pages are bound together by crisscross cuts which she then folds over. This allowed her to bind the book together using the actual pages as binding so that she did not need any additional material resources. Her name, written in different colored bubble letters, is on the cover along with her grade level (see Figure 6). On the inside of the cover page, Keya has glued a small passport sized picture of herself and written below her photograph is the name of her school, her name, and her grade level. Inside the first page, Keya inserts a smaller book which opens up to two riddles. This smaller book is made with white printer paper. She covered the outside with red strips made with a marker running diagonally across (see Figure 7). On the inside, Keya drew lines with a ruler and to create lined papers on which she wrote two jokes.

Figure 6. Keya's Book Cover

Figure 7. Keya's Book Insert

On the next page, there is another smaller book embedded within the larger book which folds in and out like an accordion. On these two pages, Keya used three different colored inks, red, blue, and black, to separate the title, subheading, and text. The title in red reads, "Live your life with Laughter." The subheadings in black ink reads, "At a cinema theater" and "Unmarried Man." Below the subheadings, Keya wrote the two jokes in blue ink. The first joke:

> At a cinema - One woman put a gun on the head of the manager and said my husband is watching movies with another woman. Ask them to come out now! or else I will shoot you. Manager got frightened and made an announcement in the hall that any man watching this movie with another women other than their wife, come out from the theater. Fast, after two minutes of the announcement, the whole theater got empty.

The second joke:

> Unmarried Man - I don't want to get married, I get afraid of all women.
> Father - Get married son, after that you get afraid from only one woman and rest all you will like.

On the last two-page spread immediately following the jokes, Keya wrote a short paragraph along with an illustration. The title, "The roles of woman" is written above the illustration. In blue ink, the written text reads:

> I am proud to be a girl. Who is now ruling the whole world. Earlier the world use to chase her. But now they are ready to praise her. She by her power every situation. She is strong and has determination. She plays different roles in her life. She is daughter, sister, and then wife. Praising girls we always be less. I thank God for giving this happiness. Happiness forever to rule the world. I am proud to be a girl.

Figure 8. Daughter, Sister, Wife

On the page next to the written text, Keya drew three female figures. Keya drew the picture on white paper which she then cut and glued into her book. The illustration is of the different stages or roles of women, which she labeled, "Daughter," "Sister," and "Wife" (see Figure 8). A girl in pigtails wearing an orange shaded dress with a flower in the front and matching orange shoes was labeled "Daughter." The figure labeled "Sister" is dressed in traditional Indian clothing, a purple and red kurtis or long shirt, with matching purple leggings and shoes. The "Sister" is also wearing a scarf with matching purple earrings. The last figure, the "Wife," is dressed in a traditional India sari with a sindoor on her forehead and matching green and pink bangles (bracelets) on her wrists.

Keya's Multimodal Social Critique

On the cover of Keya's picture book, she wrote her name along with her grade level and homeroom affiliation (class). This information is framed inside a blue border which she constructed out of blue masking tape. According to Baldry and Thibault (2006), a frame was used to separate what is inside from the space that is outside and provides "implicit indication as to how the picture is to be viewed" (p. 10). Keya's use of the blue frame directs our attention to the text inside the frame, identifying information about herself. Inside the cover of the picture book, Keya included the age along with the name of her school and her grade level right below her passport sized photograph situating her identity in relation to her group affiliations. Doing so immediately communicates at least three different things to the audience: that she is a student, that she is educated, and her education level (the seventh grade). The information about herself, her age, grade level, and name of her school, in isolation without her photograph may simply be a reflection of what she normally writes on top of her school work or homework. It is possible that Keya saw this assignment as something associated with her school work or as a class

assignment and so she wrote the same information she would on a class assignment. However, this information juxtaposed with a photograph of herself communicates something slightly different. The personal information in juxtaposition with her photograph becomes a design choice, purposefully presented together to communicate a specific message to her audience. The inclusion of her photograph on the inside cover of her picture book reflects an "About the Author" page on the inside or the back of a published book. From this perspective, the information about her age, grade level, and the name of her school is not so much a heading for a class assignment, but reflects information about herself that she purposefully selected to share with her audience. This information situates herself as someone currently attending school and thus, someone who is educated, currently in the 7th grade, and the author of this book, a particular social position, one important to her as a girl living in her specific sociocultural context.

On the same page as her photograph, are the two jokes about a cheating husband and a son who does not want to get married. When I asked Keya about these two jokes, she told me she wrote them for laughter and then preceded to explain to me:

> Earlier, here in India, girls were not allowed to go to study. But now a days they are going to school to study and boys are also going and the girls are wearing short short skirts and things and the boys are attracted to the girls and they try to tease the girls or they are trying to talk to the girls and that is difficult.

While Keya did not provide any clear explanation for why she included the jokes in her picture book, we can see from the interview that the jokes are related to her understanding of the roles of girls in her society and the relationships between boys and girls in her society. These jokes were not random but purposefully selected by her because of how they relate to issues of gender. Thus, we see that her multimodal composition reflects her awareness of the social issues and gender roles of men and women in India and her purposeful use of humor to discuss and critique

these issues. Through her composition, she is able to negotiate and challenge these gender expectations and roles. Through this process, she is not only constructing her own identity but also shifting the traditional roles and expectations for women in India. The jokes in Keya's picture book are situated within the social contexts she lives in and related to her processing and making sense of these social roles and relationships. Being the oldest girl living at home, after both of her older sisters married and moved away, her family is now working to arrange her marriage. Keya is resisting her family's plans for her to marry as quickly as possible as she wishes to continue her studies and want to focus on her education and her future career. Thus, through her multimodal compositions, her own identity as a girl and as a future wife are aspects of her identity that is being negotiated through engagement with these jokes.

On the final page of her picture book, Keya illustrated the different roles of women, as a daughter, a sister, and a wife. The three figures (daughter, sister, and wife) differs in their dress, accessories, as well as hair style. Keya does not draw any jewelry on the little girl. Instead, the pigtails and one-piece dress with a flower narrates a sense of childhood innocence. Unlike the other two figures, this little girl has her arms spread out with palms facing up showing a sense of openness and receptivity. The illustration of the sister shows an adolescent girl standing with her arms behind her back, the typical position students take when a teacher walks into the room as a sign of respect. Keya dressed the "Wife" figure in a sari, a symbol of national identity, associated with maturity, sexuality, and marriage and is the formal Indian dress (Banerjee & Miller, 2003). Young girls before puberty do not wear saris as it is usually a symbol of a married woman. Additionally, the "wife" is decorated with a sindoor, a red-colored powder worn by married women on the top of their head at the parting of the hair. In traditional Indian culture, a married woman will continue to wear the sindoor after marriage. To stop wearing the sindoor would

signify the death of the husband as it requires a ritual to wipe off the sindoor to signify becoming

a widow. This is a custom prevalent in rural communities but is usually not seen in bigger cities

such as the one Keya and her family currently live in, but a practice common in the rural village

where Keya and her family is from. In addition to the sindoor, Keya decorated the "Wife" figure

with bangles or the traditional Indian bracelets, worn by married women or new brides. In this

illustration of the three figures accompanying her written text, we can see the clothing of the

figures become increasingly more traditional with added details of accessories that represent

maturity and womanhood, something that is not communicated in her written text. Keya

intentionally adds detail in the clothing and accessories and use color to differentiate the three

figures in the illustration and communicate meaning about the importance of all the different

roles of women throughout life.

The verbal interview with Keya further communicated something different and additional

to the written text and the illustration. When we discussed this illustration during our interview,

Keya told me:

> The girls take the family forward. And often, parents don't give worth to the baby
> girls. And everyone think that the girls are like a burden and that she will not
> make money and she will not help the family. And only the boy children will
> make money and that is the profit of the family. Here I wanted to explain that in
> the beginning, she was the daughter of someone, sister of someone, and then the
> wife of someone, and then the mother of someone. And that is how she carries on
> and she moves the society forward. And here the girls are doing such good work
> that they are always ahead of the boys. Daughter, sister and wife. I'm talking
> about the many roles of woman in life. The girl children always bring life, bring
> the next generation of life. But now a days, for example, fathers are saying that
> girl children are not good. But it is not like that. Girl children bring life forward,
> we create the next generation. I just wanted to write this and draw this on a piece
> of paper so that whomever sees this gets the clear message that the girl children
> are the ones creating the next generation. So this was the clear message I wanted
> to give to everyone. That the girl children are very important for the family.

By juxtaposing the joke, her written text, along with her illustration, Keya's picture book puts her in conversation with the larger society as she critiques current social normal towards women and attempts to redefine the role and place of women in Indian society. According to Gee's (1999) building task for sociocultural-situated identity and relationship building, Keya is articulating her knowledge about the different gender roles in her society in contrast with her beliefs for these gender roles should be. Through her picture book, Keya is building towards a sociocultural-situated identity (Gee, 1999) and as a girl with a voice, communicating an important social message, that girls should be valued in society. Keya started out by positioning herself as the author and concludes with an important social message of empowerment for all girls. Doing so, Keya positioned herself as a strong female figure in society, a leader, while simultaneously challenging the accepted gender roles in her society.

In our interview, Keya described the events that led to her decision to make this book the way that she did, which allows us to see her agency as the designer of the composition. Aligned to a multiliteracy framework (Gee, 2003; Kress, 1997; New London Group, 1996), Keya is the agentive user of literacy and her compositions reflect her intentional design choices and her actions surrounding these design choices. Through the interview, Keya shared with me how her mother had in fact asked her to help with house work but she did not listen to her mother and went to read the newspaper instead:

> Whenever my mother use to go to work at my auntie's place, and when I didn't finish my work and would start doing something else, my mother would say, "ok you finish your work and then afterwards, whatever you want to do you can do." But I wouldn't listen to my mom and would start reading the newspaper. And one day before I was reading the newspaper, you had told us we had to make a picture book. So at that time, the thought came to my mind, why don't I just include these things in the book…I was thinking that in a book must have everything, all these different parts, jokes, stories. So I wanted to make a complete book. While reading the newspaper and reading these jokes, I was showing my mother these jokes and my mother said, "If you want to read something, then read something

different, why are you reading this?" But I didn't listen to my mom and continued reading the jokes and afterwards, I decided to take these jokes because I really liked it and take these jokes and include it in the book.

Design choices can be made either consciously or unconsciously, "choices can be made *unconsciously* in the act of making and different forms of desire can motivate such unconscious choices" (Stein, 2008, p. 119). While Keya does not make the direct connection between the jokes from the newspaper and her written text "The Roles of Women," we can see how Keya is challenging the traditional expectations of women in India by disobeying her mother. Rather than doing what is normally expected of girls in India, to help with housework, Keya would instead read the newspaper, something that is normally associated with educated men in India. In doing so, she takes an agentive self-position in society, as a literate person who reads the newspaper. She then designed a picture book that allows her to communicate this identity to the world with her as the literate, educated, female author.

It is equally important to discuss Keya's book as a multimodal composition which combines written texts along with illustrations. Through cutting out, pasting, adding a border, and binding, Keya ultimately creates a 3D book: a polished complex literary piece that speaks through multiple modes. Within this single artifact, we find a wide variety of modes including writing, a photograph, and drawing. Throughout the picture book, Keya created distinct spaces between headings, body, text, and illustration with borders along with the use of different kinds and colors of paper. She drew lines to make lined paper which she used for written text while drawing her picture on white printing paper which she then glued that into the book. Keya purposefully used different modes and resources to articulate her message by adding value and importance to her work that she may not be able to do with language alone. In the process of constructing this multimodal picture book, the material resources, what was available and what

was not available, along with how Keya utilized the available materials all played a role in the

process of design and the resulting product. The cover, the binding, the photograph, along with

the rest of the book is significant when we consider the available material resources and that

certain material resources for these girls are very limited. This photograph that she has of herself

is likely something that she does not have many of and by including this photo in her picture

book, she is agentively making the design choice to use up a limited resource. In an interview

with the classroom teacher, Preeti further elaborated on the intricacies of these multimodal

compositions,

> see, they have cut the paper and they have pasted all the parts and they have
> picked up the pictures and they have written so it must have taken a lot of
> time…they borrow, or they make. I think we throw all these things and they make
> use of it. From the trash. And she has done this by herself. She has copied it, she
> has traced it and she has cut it and she has pasted it." When I asked her if Keya
> would have had access to newspapers in the house, Preeti told me that it is not
> accessible to them and she must have taken it out from the trash.

From a multimodal literacy framework, Keya's intentional design choices and use of

resources is important to consider. The resources Keya used such as the newspaper, blue

masking tape, photograph, etc. by themselves do not hold significance. Rather, through the

intentional use of the designed, resources are imbued with meaning and used for specific

communicative purposes and the resources are made anew as they are refined in use and contexts

(Kress, 1997). Semiotic resources as not pre-given but affected by its use and alters as it moves

through different social contexts and as sign makers appropriate the different resources to meet

their interest (Bezemer & Kress, 2008). Keya creatively used her available resources to create

this intricate, multimodal composition. The resources are repurposed through Keya's intentional

use. Additionally, the materials are socially situated (e.g. from the trash) and how she used them

(how she cut, glued together, bounded together) is also socially situated within cultural practices

such as how she bound the pages together. This multimodal composition is situated within specific social contexts and speaks to Keya's identity within those specific social contexts both in terms of what was used and how it was used.

Through a multimodal discourse perspective, the jokes are recontextualized from the original text (the newspaper) and reassembled to create a new text (Keya's picture book). This recontextualization results in "moving meaning material from one context with its social organization of participants and its modal ensembles to another, with its different social organization and model ensembles" (Bezemer & Kress, 2008, p. 184). Furthermore, "recontextualization" as a process of moving concepts into new domains which "allows it to migrate from familiar domains and attach itself to new conceptual territory, which in turn produces new variations on the concept and subsequently new texts" (Stein, 2008, p. 118). This act of recontextualization is not simply an act of copying but is purposeful and results in a new text. The meaning of the jokes from the newspaper, as a semiotic resource, is transformed when used in Keya's picture book. The jokes, recontextaulized in the picturebook, send a very different message. Within context of the larger social message of the picture book, that girls are powerful, strong and determined, and should be praised, the jokes serve to empower rather than disempower women. Women are not the victim of cheating spouses or undesirable and unmarriable. Rather, they are powerful and daring and should be feared rather than fearful. Keya's multimodal composition recontextualizes these jokes articulating a very different message regarding gender roles in India while simultaneously agentively positioning herself within these new roles of women.

Keya's Poem

     Keya's poem titled "My Wish" (Figure 9) on a purple colored paper articulates the different things she wished for in life. In the poem, she wrote that she wants to become an IPS officer (Indian Police Service) so that she could "serve the society." Additionally, she wants to support her family and "give them all the good things in life." Keya also aspires to do good things for society and "help needy people." At the end of the poem, she wishes something for herself, to pursue her hobbies like dancing and singing.
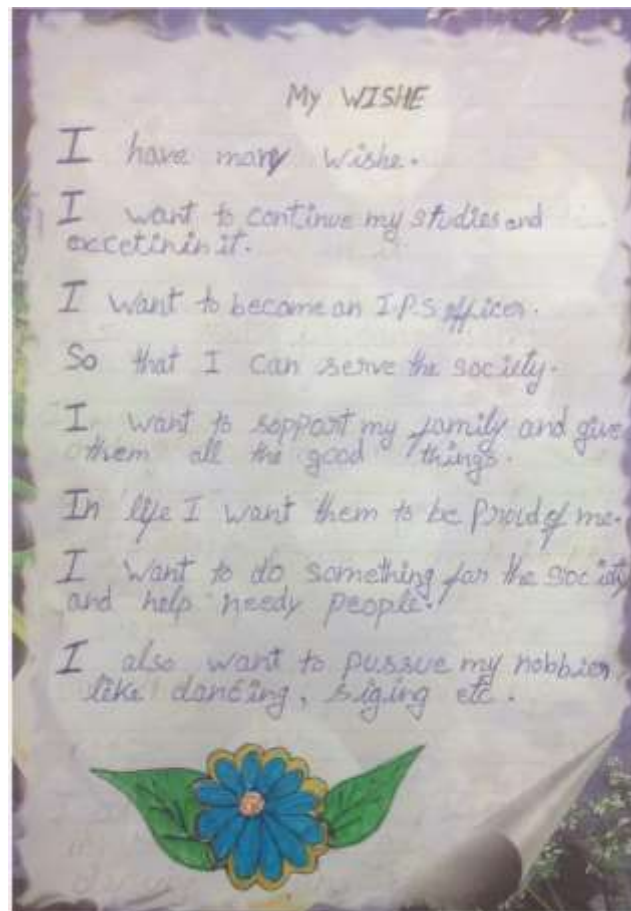

Figure 9. Keya's Poem

The poem reads as follows:

I have many wishes,

I want to continue my studies…

I want to become an IPS officer

So that I can serve the society.

I want to support my family and give them all the good things.

In life I want them to be proud of me.

I want to do something for the society and help needy people.

I also want to pursue my hobbies like dancing, singing, etc.

Keya's Agentive and Socially Situated Future Self

The use of Gee's discourse analysis (2011) and the demarcation of the data into micro

lines and stanzas allowed me to pay attention to the individual ideas within each students'

writing. In this poem the individual units were coded as statements of self which we see in the

statements of Keya's desires and intentions of wanting to continue her studies, becoming a police

officer, and helping to serve society. In the above poem, Keya tells us that she has many wishes

and then continues to list out all the different ways in which she wants to help society and help

her family. She wants to become a police officer to serve society, she wants to help support her

family, she wants to be able to give her family all the good things in life, she wants her family to

be proud of her, and she wants to do good for society, such as helping those in need. It is only in

the last line that Keya reveals a personal wish for herself, to be able to pursue her hobbies such

as dancing and singing. The application of discourse analysis revealed that the majority of the

text are statements in relationship to social others such as members of the society or her family.

The demarcation of the text into macro-lines and stanzas (Gee, 2011) also allowed me to see

more closely Keya's agentive positioning of herself in her society. In addition, Gee's (1999) framework analyzing language in context was used in making sense of the data. Discourse analysis, according to Gee (1999), should involve consideration for the whole picture and language is always composed of clues or cues to help listeners or readers understand the use of the language within context. In this poem, we see that the social good of financial stability and being able to support one's family is important for Gita as is education. Gita wants to continue studying so that we can do all these other things for her family and for her society. This desire to continue her education and the importance Keya places on her own education is an essential part of how Keya conceptualizes her own identity. As mentioned in Chapter 3, Keya's family often bring her back to her village pressuring her to get married and making plans to arrange her marriage. They also intentionally coordinate these visits around end of the year school exams further disrupting Keya's education and jeopardizing her ability to graduate to the next grade level. Yet Keya fights, negotiates, and always eventually returns back to school just in time for exams. In light of these realities and her circumstances, education for Keya is especially important. Through her poem, Keya is able to agentively and intentionally negotiate her identity as a student, educated to have an empowered future.

In addition, in this poem, Keya expresses with us what she aspires to be when she grows up: an IPS officer. IPS officer in this context is connected to status and the economic benefits of a stable government employment in addition to aspects of power relationships and gender roles. IPS stands for The Indian Police Service which was created in 1948 to replace the Indian Imperial Police. The position of an officer with The Indian Police Service is traditionally male dominated. In fact, the first female officer to join the IPS was in 1972. While the Indian government works to encourage more women into these roles, many vacancies for women police

officers remain unfilled. In a report on the status of women police officers, Prenzler and Sinclair (2013) found that in India, in the year 2010, only 5.1% of police officers and recruits were female. This is important considering the reporting and investigating of sexual crimes against women in India, overall representation of women in positions of authority, the general treatment of women, among other things that impact the day to day lives of women and girls in India. The impact of having female representation in the police force is important. Keya wants to be an officer to help support her family and be able to provide them with things, but also so that she can serve society and help people in need. In the lines of the poem, Keya positioned herself within her society as someone who can have a positive impact on the larger community. By stating that she wishes to be an IPS officer, Keya is letting the world know that women can in fact be police officers and can help provide for the family, redefining certain traditional ideas of women as dependent upon male figures (e.g., fathers and husbands).

The statement "I want to support my family" is also contradictory of the traditional expectations for females in India where the practice of dowry is still very much a reality and girls are often seen as a burden. The use of Gee's discourse analysis and the demarcation of the data into lines and stanzas allowed me to see the individual statements in the data and the use of Gee's situation network allowed me to make meaning of these statements within context of societies and cultures. As such, it is important to view Keya's statement "I want to support my family" within the societal expectations for girls and surrounding Indian cultural practices. In the traditional practice of dowry, the men in the family (e.g., fathers, uncles, and older brothers) must contribute to the dowry for the girls in the family when they get married. The amount of dowry for the girl is an important factor for the groom's family in the negotiation of the arranged marriage and engagements can often fall through due to disagreements over the dowry. Thus,

girls in the family can often become a financial burden for not only the parents but also close male relatives. Thus, for the girl to take on the role of supporting the family is in contradiction to the normal social views of women in India. Similar to Keya's picture book, in this poem, Keya again reimagined the roles of women in positions of power in society as a police officer who serves society, help the needy, and provide for the family. Keya does this through agentively positioning herself in these different and powerful roles within her society and in relationship to her family members.

Maya's Poster on Assam

Before moving to Lucknow, Maya and her family lived in a village in the state of Assam in Northeast India. Assam is widely known for its natural beauty including rare species of birds, animals, and plants. Maya grew up in Assam and often speaks of it fondly. Maya wrote about Assam in her journal and we later talked about her composition during an interview where she reflected on the social practices of Assam as it relates to her own identity as a girl in India. In her journal, Maya described Assam as:

> Sun rise in the morning with beautiful light and lighten the whole world. From this beautiful rays the tree, plants, animals, birds, … start singing and dancing. Like butterflies sitting on the flower, dancing. From the mountain, water is falling, coming down with a beautiful sound: chum, chum. Beautiful birds are flying in the sky. On the tree, singing bird is singing cuckoo. In the greenfields, the zum, zum sound is coming.

Maya's Critique of Child Marriages

Maya painted a descriptive picture of a nature scene with movement, sound, and color. Maya described Assam with the light from the sun shining on the plants and animals and the water falling from the mountain. Maya also described the place in detail using onomatopoeia to create the sounds of the water falling from the mountains, "chum, chum," and the sound of the

wind blowing through the greenfield, "zum, zum."

When I asked Maya about this composition, Maya transitioned from describing a place of natural beautiful to discussing the social issues facing young girls in India. Maya told me during our interview:

> Real place, in Assam. Very beautiful but I don't like it. Small girls is married, I don't like. I don't like Assam, small small girls are getting married Many times, I'm thinking, why? I talk to my brother's wife, about why small small girls are getting married.

Through discourse analysis of the interview, we can see how the stanzas and idea units within the written composition represent the theme of and is situated within certain social realities in India such as child marriages. Specifically, referring back to Gee's (1999) framework for discourse analysis and the connection building task and the socioculturally-situated identity, I reviewed the data in light of the following questions, "What sorts of connections are made to previous or future interactions, to other people, ideas, texts, things, institutions, and discourses outside the current situation?" and "What relationships and identities (roles, positions), with their concomitant personal, social, and cultural knowledge and beliefs (cognition), feeling (affect), and values, seem to be relevant to the situation?" (pp. 93-94). To the first question, Maya, during an interview, made the connection between the physical place of Assam and the social practice of child marriages. In her written composition where she is imagining the physical attributes of Assam, she is simultaneously brought back into the social realities and reminded of her previous interactions with people and ideas within the context of what is socially and culturally accepted in Assam. As such, her written composition describing the beauty of Assam is connected to and tarnished by the accepted practice of child marriages. In answering the second question, Maya's identity as a girl and woman in India is immediately relevant to cultural beliefs around child marriages. As such, while Maya situates herself as coming from the physical place of Assam, she

also simultaneously positions herself as someone with different cultural believes and values, specifically being against the social practice of child marriages. In contrast to her written discourse of an ideal place with flowers and waterfalls, Maya, during the interview, was critical of the social issues in Assam, issues that directly affects her life and identity as a girl. With the statement, "I don't like Assam, small small girls are getting married," Maya took an agentive stance and positions herself in contrast to the social and cultural norms of where she was originally from. Her statement from the interview reflects (Wissman, 2011) belief that literacy can and should enable students to critique injustices and uncover new possibilities.

Opportunities like this, to critique and uncover, do not reside solely in definitions of literacy as a singular mode. Instead, we see from the data that the written composition sparked the spoken conversation, and each different mode, communicated something different (Kress, 1997; Stein, 2000). The written statement communicated a place full of natural beauty and all the positive attributes of Assam, while the spoken interview highlighted negative cultural traditions. The space created for Maya to express herself and make meaning of her world through different modes allowed for these two seemingly separate things to be connected in relation to one another. The beautiful of Assam is tarnished by these repressive social practices. And specifically, when reflecting upon such a beautiful and magical place, where birds sing and butterflies dance, Maya is pushed to critique and ask questions of why (Sahni, 2018). Through this process, Maya agentively positions herself in her world and her society by asking these critical questions, situating herself as opposed to these repressive practices and, hopefully, empowered to transform these unjust social structures.

Identities in Conversation with Societies

Through these literacy practices, we see Maya and Keya agentively positioning themselves in their social worlds both actual and imagined. As such, Keya and Maya's identities are developing in conversation with social practices (e.g., child marriages) and social roles (e.g., women's roles in society) and the expectations associated with these gender roles. These self-positionings are also acts of the imagination. Keya imagines her future career as a police officer and, furthermore, imagines that future position in relationship to her family and her society. In doing so, she is able to imaginatively position herself as someone who can provide support for her family and help members of her society. Similarly, Maya, through imagining the natural beauty of Assam, is situated both physically and socially in Assam. There, she is reminded of certain cultural practices and positions herself against these practices. More than ways of expressing ideas and thoughts, these artistic multimodal compositions are ways through which Maya and Keya come to understand themselves situated in their worlds. Through their active participation with literacy, Maya and Keya redefine the boundaries of their identities.

Self-Positioning as Imagined Social Others

From a dialogical perspective, selves take on the form of multiple 'I positions' engaged in conversations with one another (Hermans, 2001). Identity is negotiated and formed through the interactions between these different 'I positions' both imagined as well as real and as selves and as others (Hermans & Gieser, 2012). In the two stories below, we see the girls position themselves as imagined others in their societies. By taking on a self-position as an imagined other, Gita and Monisha see and experience the world from a different perspective and, through these different experiences, come to understand the social others in their lives as well as themselves.

Gita's story about Roli

In one of Gita's last journal entries, she wrote a fictional story based on true events titled, "Events in Lucknow." The story was about a girl name Roli and the events that occurred after she was hit by a car on her way home from school:

> One day there was a(n) afternoon. Roli go to school. After school the car come and bumped Roli. Roli was very hurt and she is crying loudly. Her leg is hurt. No person help Roli. I looked at many people standing on road side. I go there and I am looking that Roli is crying and she was very hurt. I say to the people, please help me she is my friend. Two people came and helped me. We called the ambulance to go to the hospital and go to the hospital.

Gita's Agentive Reimagining of Events

When we discussed this story during one of our interviews, I learned that these events did indeed take place but slightly different from the story Gita wrote. What actually happened was that when Gita herself was walking home from school, she was hit by a car. Gita told me during our interview that she was hit and hurt but no one came to help her. She stood on the side of the street by herself and cried while people just walked by her ignoring her and she could not believe that no one came to help her. Rather than retelling the events as it actually happened, in the written retelling, Gita agentively positioned herself as the hero of the story who helps take care of her friend. If we break down this imaginative retelling of the story even further, we find three different layers of Gita's self-positioning: as the observer, as the hero, and as the person who inspires others to do good. Firstly, Gita positioned herself on the outside as an observer of the events taking place. After seeing "many people standing on (the) road side" and not helping Roli, she then positioned herself as the hero who goes to help her friend. More than just the hero, Gita ultimately positioned herself as the person who is able to inspire others to do good through her own acts of kindness. Two people come to help and, together, they go to the hospital. Through imagination and writing, Gita is able to re-write the events of her life, one in which she was hit

by the bus and where no one came to her rescue, to create a series of events where she, as the heroine, comes to the aid of her friend and both girls are brought to safety. In this situation, not only does she empower herself by situating herself as the person who helps her friend, but she situated herself from the perspective of the others watching the accident and rewrites a society where people help one another.

In analyzing Gita's story above, the task of activity building was especially applicable in considering the specific actions taking place around the specific activity described in her story. For activity building, discourse analysis asks the questions: "What is the larger or main activity going on in this situation? What actions compose these sub-activities and activities? (Gee, 1999, p. 93). In responding to these questions, the main activity which resulted in her written story was the accident which occurred while she was walking home from school. The related actions included the reactions from the bystanders which included watching the accident unfold and not doing anything. This activity and the action of the social participants led to the creation of Gita's story. However, rather than rewriting exactly what had taken place, Gita purposefully rewrote the story with a different set of events and outcome. Gita first used her imagination to empathize with the bystanders as she placed herself as one of them. She then used her imagination to imaginatively build a better society where people help one another. Furthermore, the act of positioning herself as an imagined social other which allowed her to see the events from the perspective of an outsider requires both empathy and imagination. Her imagination allowed her to empathize with others so that even though she lives in a society where others do not treat her with kindness and no one came to help her when she was hurt in the actual event, she is still able to come to see others as having the potential for kindness and imagines herself as one of them who would then come to help Roli. This is because we are able to step outside of our own

internal worlds through empathy and imagination (Sherman, 1998). By stepping out of her internal world, Gita takes on a different identity. Drawing from Herman's work of the multiple I-positions, through these different self-positions, as selves and as others, and as imagined selves and imagined others are in conversation with one another. Through these conversations, identity is negotiated and constructed.

Monisha's story about Sunita

Monisha loved writing different stories and wrote many in her journal. In our interview, she told me:

> Stories are so interesting. They give us some reasons, some explanations. And so many other things they give us. When we read stories, like Hindi stories, loves stories, English stories, everything. We know our past like this, our future like this. And that is my reason, I will read a story and write a story.
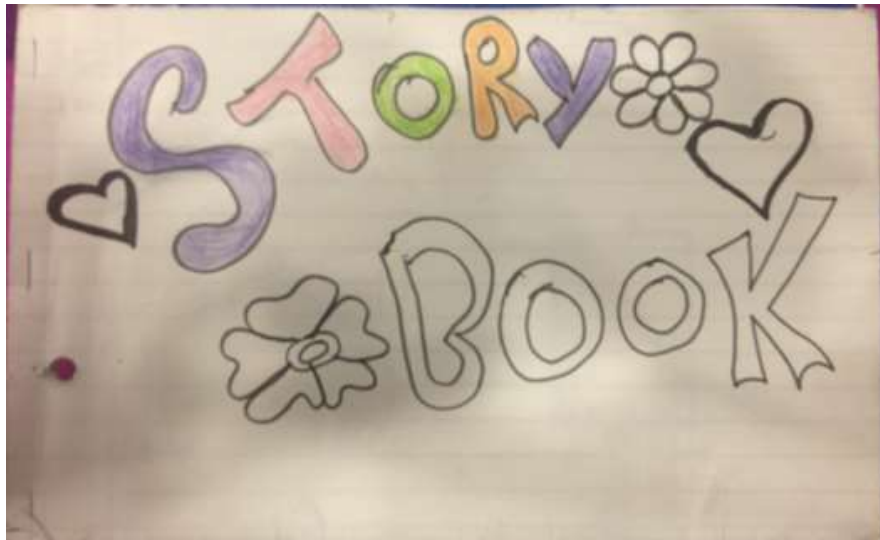

Figure 10. Monisha's Story Book

"Sunita wheelchair" tells the story of a girl who lives in a wheelchair. The cover of the book reads: "Story Book" in bubble letters (see Figure 10).

> This story is (about) a girl who is walking with the help of a wheelchair. The girl name is Sunita. One day Sunita was sitting on her bed and thinking about her

work today. She remember to go to market to buy some things. She have to get ready but there was difficulty in dressing and getting ready. She get ready at 8:00 o'clock in the morning. She speak to her mother and ask for pickle. Mother say, in the cupboard, you can take by yourself. I will go to market today Mummy. "You can go yourself?" Yes mummy. What to buy from the market? 1 kg sugar and some biscuits and cold drinks. Sunita take a market bag and sat on her wheel chair. She reached to the market and the shop. There were streets to walk to reached to the shop but it is difficult for Sunita. Anan is an old friend of Sunita. Sunita takes help from Anan and she reached the shop to buy sugar and back home.

Monisha's Self-positioning as Another

In the story of Sunita, Monisha used literacy to build social understanding into the lives of others. Through the construction of the life and daily events of the imaginary character Sunita, Monisha used literacy and her imagination to extend herself into the lives of another to build understanding into the situated identity and social relationships of another (Gee, 1999). Through the use of Gee's framework for situation network, we see Monisha making connections through the construction of this story. Monisha used her imagination to think about the day to day activities of a girl in a wheelchair. Although Monisha did not make any associations between the girl in the story, Sunita, and her friend and fellow classmate, Maya, it is very possible that this story is loosely based on Maya who lost a leg at a young age due to cancer and uses crutches along with an artificial limb to get around. Who this story is about is not important for this discussion. What is significant is Monisha's decision to write about someone with a physical disability, even though she herself does not have any physical disabilities, and her selection of the events detailed in the story. The story starts with the things that Sunita has to do, go to the market to buy some things, and then details all the other things she must first do in order to complete this task. She has difficulty getting dressed, she has difficulty getting ready, and finally, she encounters difficulty reaching the store until a friend comes to help her. In order to write this story, Monisha must position herself as the imagined social other she is writing about. She must

then imagine a typical day as someone who has a physical disability. Through her use of imagination, Monisha considers all the difficulties in accomplishing simple daily tasks someone in a wheelchair might encounter, such as getting dressed and going to the market. Monisha is able to do this by positioning herself as someone else and imagining the lives and worlds of others. Through imagination, Monisha is transported (Enciso, 2017; Pelttari, 2016) into a day in the life of the imaginary character, Sunita. Through this literacy act, Monisha is able to think about and experience the actions and emotions of another (Mackenzie & Atkins, 2008). Doing so, she is able to consider different perspectives and the actions of others that result from these different perspectives.

In fact, one of Monisha's favorite picture books during this 6-month period is about the city of Venice. She stated she wrote this story:

> Because this story is my favorite story. I imagine I'm living in Venice and I'm shopping and living in the water. I close my eyes and I'm imagining, I will like…live in this world. I want to go there. And go to school there. And one day I will go.

Monisha spoke about this book twice during our interviews and each time she would close her eyes to describe the place. Each time she told the story, she would add little details not in the original picture book, like how a student in Venice would take the boat across the water to school each morning. In these story examples, Monisha used literacy to propel herself into other worlds and lives where she can think imagine how life would be from different perspectives. Similar to Gita, through imagination, Monisha is able to position herself as imagined social others. Doing so, she is able to better understand her social world and herself.

Selves as Imagined Social Others

The girls' abilities to be empathetic and their desire to relate and understand the lives of others allow them to position themselves as others and see things from the point of view of another. This act of empathy requires that they use their imagination to think about the events from different perspectives. Gita and Monisha's stories where they are positioned as imagined social others are different. In Gita's story, Gita positioned herself as a person on the sidewalk observing the events. Gita situated herself as the heroic bystander and reimagined the series of events as a bystander. She then imagined herself not only helping her friend Roli but also inspiring others to help. Monisha used her imagination to imagine the life of her friend Sunita who is in a wheelchair. Monisha imagined the specifics of her day to day life if she were to be in a wheelchair, things that many people often take for granted, such as getting dressed in the morning or walking down the street. Taking on these different positions as social others requires imagination. With the use of their imagination, the girls are able to position themselves as others to consider and experience their worlds from different perspectives.

From a constructionist perspective, the self is dialogical (Hermans, Kempen, & van Loon, 1992) or consisting of multiple different positions. These different positions can be enacted and made visible through literacy. Specifically, the self as a "dialogical narrator" (Hermans et al., 1992) is embodied and social with others inside the self-structure, "resulting in a multiplicity of dialogically interacting selves" (Hermans et al., 1992, p. 23). The different positions Gita, heroic bystander, and Monisha, girl in the wheelchair, take on are not outside of themselves. In fact, these positions are inside their own selves or the different inner dialogical selves interacting with each other. These different dialogical selves interacting with one another builds towards socially situated identities. The Gita who was hit by the car and injured and despondent that no one came

to help her is in conversation with the Gita who is the bystander observing the accident, who is in conversation with the heroic Gita who was able to help her friend. These different selves in conversation with one another not only situate oneself in relationship to social others (e.g., Gita in relationship to the bystanders watching the accident) but build towards socially situated identities.

<p style="text-align:center">Self-Positioning in Relationship to Social Others</p>

In the following compositions and interviews, I present how the girls situate themselves in relationship to social others. Identity as a social construct is situated in our society and in relationship to social others. In the compositions below, we will first look at one of Maya's journal entries where she shares the story of how she lost her leg. Next, I present an illustration Keya made of her family. Through these different compositions and interviews, I will explore how the girls' self-positionings are in relationship to social others, such as their family members or friends, which are further situated in social, cultural, and historical realities.

Maya's Physical Disability

In a journal entry, Maya identified herself as a person with a physical disability within the decisions and actions of her family members. Furthermore, these decisions made by her parents are located within the social realities of India. Maya's identity is situated in a chain of social events and, in Maya's understanding, this chain of events led to her being disabled. In her journal, Maya wrote:

> Didi, you want my story. Today, I'm writing about myself for the first time. I don't know, is this right or not. If I make any mistakes please forgive me. My story is this, that when I was 11 years old, one day, suddenly, so much pain started in my leg. We went to the doctor and did a check-up. Then he said my leg is affected by cancer which is never going to cure. I was very sad after listening to this. From then until now, I see myself, then I feel that why I am not like other

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people. I cannot blame my parents because they think that this was written in my fate. And what can they do about it? Their parents also did careless things to them. If my parents were literate, then I would not be handicapped today.

Maya's Disability in Relationship to Societies and Histories

Maya was at first unsure if she should write this story and shared her hesitations in telling me this story. In setting up the story this way, Maya told us that composing this story took much consideration, which not only gives weight to this particular incident in her life but also acknowledges the vulnerability of writing. When I showed this journal entry to Maya during our interview, Maya retold a similar story. In the journal, Maya wrote that her leg was hurting and they went to the hospital and learned that she had cancer. During our interview, when she first complained about the pain in her leg, her parents gave her medicine. A year later when her parents finally took her to the hospital, they learned the cancer had spread and they had to amputate her leg. In the interview, she specifically mentioned the doctor being angry at her parents and blaming her parents for not bringing Maya to the hospital earlier:

> When it happened in the beginning, it was hurting so much. So my dad thought if they give medicines or bring to the doctor then it would be fine and like this, one year passed. So when they suggested that they bring me to the hospital here in Lucknow, and when the doctor saw me, he was very angry at my parents. The doctor said it was too late. If you had brought your daughter before, then you could save her leg but now it is not possible and when the doctor said these things to my father, then he realized his mistake. (Are you angry at your parents?) Not angry, but my parents, they are not literate, they are not educated. They haven't been to the school. My parents are from an earlier time and there were few schools. The education was not there at the time and that's why they didn't study. And for my mother, sending girls to school was not allowed and that's why she couldn't study. So the school was not available for the girl and education was only available for the boys but my father didn't go to school.

In both Maya's journal entry as well as the interview, she mentioned her parents' illiteracy and lack of education, connecting her identity within previous socio-cultural contexts (Gee, 1999). She also connected the reality of her disability with the social good of education

and literacy (Gee, 1999). The decisions and actions of her parents due to their lack of education are situated within the social realities surrounding their lives including the limited opportunities for women and people living in poverty. The socially situated chain of events that led to Maya's current physical state stems from inequalities rooted in Indian society. These inequalities include limited education for women and people of the lower caste. As such, her parents were not educated and are illiterate and thus did "careless" things and made a series of poor decisions that led to the amputation of her leg. Specifically, her father's "mistake" led to the amputation of her leg and he made the mistake(s) because he was illiterate and uneducated. Her parents lived during a time when there were limited schools, especially in rural areas, and girls often stayed home in rural villages to help with housework. During the interview when I asked Maya if she was angry with her parents, she immediately brought up education and literacy reiterating that her parents were uneducated and that was the reason why they made the mistakes they did. Specifically, the lack of education and literacy is situated within the socio-historical issues of gender and class inequalities. Thus, her own identity as a person with a physical disability is equally situated within and connected to both social goods (Gee, 1999) as well as the realities of the social others in her life (her parents) as the result of lack of access to these social goods. In Maya's self-positioning as a person with a disability and her understanding of the events that led to the amputation of her leg, the social and historical realities of her parents are a critical contributing factor.

Maya concluded her written story with an imagined alternate scenario with her use of the conditional "if" statement where "if" her parents were literate, then they would have made informed, better decisions, and she "would not be handicapped today." This "if" statement is the beginning of her imagining her possible self (Markus & Nurius, 1986), a self where she is not

handicapped because her parents were educated and got her the right medical attention before it was too late. This version of Maya's possible self is a reminder of her tragic past (Markus & Nurius, 1986) but also speaks to her future actions. By making this connection between her disability and being literate/educated give impetus for future action (Markus & Nurius, 1986). Maya sees the importance of education and will likely continue to educate herself for herself and her future. We see in the interviews and compositions from Maya how her understanding of identity and sense of self is positioned not only within her own immediate social surroundings but also situated within the historical and social realities of India. In both Maya's written composition as well as the interview, Maya's sense of self and identification as someone with a physical disability is related to, and exist within, a socially situated chain of events.

Keya's Family Portrait

In Keya's illustration of her family, she draws herself along with her father, mother, and her two sisters. While there are other siblings in the family, Keya only included the two sisters who still live at home in her illustration. The illustration was on a large white construction paper I had given to the girls. Keya used pencils and colored pencils to color in each figure. Keya is standing on the left wearing a yellow and green T-shirt and black pants. Her father is to her right wearing a blue shirt and blue pants. The youngest sister is standing to the right of her father wearing a red dress and next to her is the second youngest sister wearing a pink dress. On the far-right side is their mother wearing a traditional Indian sari (see Figure 11).

Figure 11. Keya's Family Portrait

Keya's Articulated Physical Positioning

The application of multimodal discourse analysis and particularly the ideas of color,

positioning and distance reveals Keya's purposeful positioning of herself in her family portrait.

In terms of physical location, Keya positioned herself next to her father while her two sisters are

positioned between her mother and father. The positioning and distance (Baldry & Thibault,

2006) in this illustration communicates a couple of different things. The positioning of her two

younger sisters, between her mother and her father, is a secure position, protected by the mother

on one side and the father on the other side. Keya instead positioned herself in the illustration on

the outside next to her father. In doing so, Keya not only physically separated herself from her

two younger sisters but also situated herself as someone with the potential to take care of the

family, as a protector of the family. Additionally, Keya distanced herself from her younger

siblings in the illustration in her selection of clothing. Keya drew herself wearing a T-shirt and

pants while her two younger sisters as well as her mother are all wearing traditional Indian

women's clothing. The mother is wearing a traditional sari and the two sisters are wearing froks

which are dresses for young girls in India, while Keya is wearing Western clothing, a yellow T-

shirt and black pants. Keya's use of color further differentiates her from her sisters and her

mother. Her two younger sisters are in light pink dresses and her mother is in a purple skirt,

colors often associated with femininity. Keya dresses herself in a yellow T-shirt with a face of a

woman and the word "Thinky" with black pants and black shoes. The color black is a dark

contrast to the bright colors her sisters and mother are wearing. Lastly, Keya further illustrated

her distance from her siblings by drawing her sisters wearing a pigtail and a ponytail while her

hair is down and pulled back behind her shoulders showing a sense of maturity.

In this composition, we can see Keya intentionally positioning herself in her family

through the ways in which she illustrates herself in the picture alongside the other members of

her family. The body of scholarly work on multimodality and literacy (Gee, 2003; Hull &

Nelson, 2005; Kress, 1997; Lankshear & Knobel, 2006; New London Group, 1996; Stein, 2000)

positions students as agentive users of language and literacy and as designers and meaning

makers who compose not only texts but selves and worlds. Additionally, literacy is multiple and

always involves situated ways in which language amongst other symbol systems are used "to

communicate, construct meaning, and enact identities in varied social and cultural worlds" (Hull

& Stornaiuolo, 2014, p. 17). Reflected through her physical position in the picture as well as her

Western clothing, she purposefully enacted an identity and articulated her role in her family and

the society. She not only distanced herself from her younger siblings physically but also through

her dress and her hair. As such, we see Keya situating herself as an adult in her family, able to protect and take care of the other members of her family, rather than as a child needing to be protected.

Maya's Self Portrait

Maya's self-portrait (Figure 7) depicts her in a black and white pencil drawing on white construction paper. The illustration shows her head and her shoulders. She is wearing a headband with her hair down and behind her shoulders. She depicted herself with a stern expression and an unwavering gaze. Her lips are pressed together, and she is gazing directly at the reader. Maya left the background of the illustration blank and drew a neck line for a plain V-neck T-shirt. Other than the headband gathering her hair back, Maya did not draw any other accessories or decorative elements.
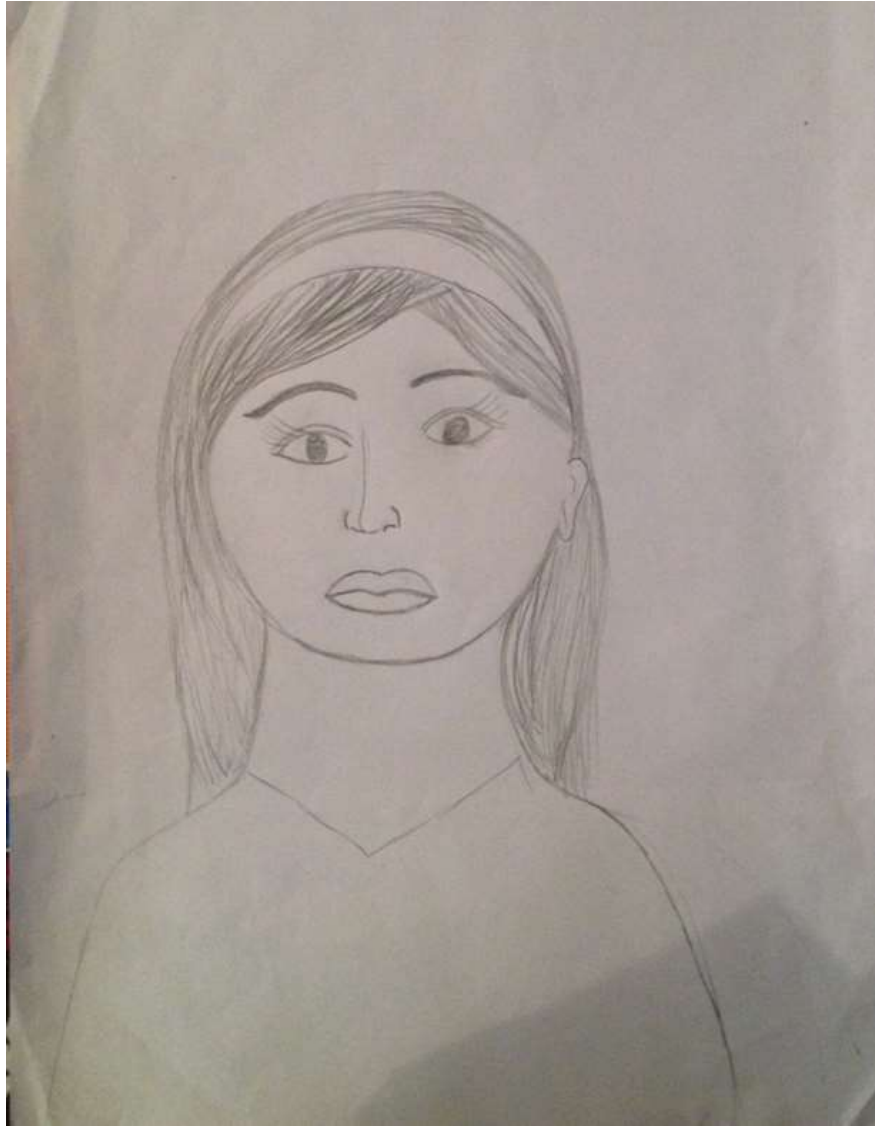
Figure 12. Maya's Self Portrait

Maya's Multimodal Self

Maya's self-portrait presented above is significant and reveals how she sees and situates herself in relationship to social others in a couple of different ways. The distance, gaze, and perspective (Baldry & Thibault, 2006) are all elements of this illustration that communicate very specific things about herself to her audience. The intentional application of distance in visual images simulates closeness or distance between the viewer and the participant(s) in the text in

varying degrees (Baldry & Thibault, 2006). A "very close shot" would include less than the head

and shoulders, while in a "very long shot," the human body would occupy a small part of the

picture (Baldry & Thibault, 2006, p. 39). According to Baldry and Thibault (2006), this image

would constitute as a "close shot" as it reveals her head and shoulders. In comparison, Keya's

family portrait (Figure 11) would constitute as a "long shot" as the illustration depicts the

entirely of Keya's body from her head to her feet. According to Baldry and Thibault (2006),

"close shots express intimacy and personality" whereas long shots expresses distance and

objectivity (p. 39). In addition to the distance depicted in Maya's self-portrait, the gaze and

perspective are equally important visual features which communicate specific aspects of her

identity. Maya's gaze is direct and at the viewer. This "direct gaze" establishes eye contact

between Maya and the viewer of the text (Baldry & Thibault, 2006, p. 40) and engages the

viewer and Maya in an interpersonal relationship. The perspective from how she is positioned is

also direct. The viewer looks directly at her and vice versa. Multimodal discourse analysis of this

composition resulted in my being able to identify the particular aspects of Maya's self-portrait

and the application of Gee's discourse analysis helped illuminate these visual aspects in

relationship to their purpose and their function.

When placed next to Maya's other illustrations and pictures, Maya's self-portrait is

different from all her other multimodal compositions in her intentional use of color or lack

thereof. The use of black and white reflects Maya's expressionless gaze as if making a statement

of both colorlessness and emotionlessness. In comparison (Figure 13b and 13c), Maya's other

compositions are exceptionally colorful with very little, if any white spaces, with even the

backgrounds colored in. The use of colors in compositions have special salience, significance,

and function (Baldry & Thibault, 2006). However, the selection and inclusion of color in text

should not be viewed in isolation, but rather in relation with other visual features (Baldry & Thibault, 2006). The intentional use of black and white in relation to the expressionless, direct gaze, and physical proximity to the viewer together communicates a couple of different things. Maya sees herself and her current life as colorless and she confronts the viewer with this fact with her direct, close up, emotionless gaze. In contrast, through her imagination, the world outside her own physical self is colorful, exciting, and adventurous. Maya's use of color (see Figure 13) reflects her descriptive language regarding the rest of the world, with birds flying through the sky and singing and butterflies dancing. Similarly, the use of black and white in her self-portrait reflects how she talks about herself as "the only one sitting in the house…I'm the only one."

a)   b)   c)

Figure 13. Maya's Use of Color

This application of multimodal discourse analysis (Baldry & Thibault, 2006) allowed for a more systematic and intentional way of looking at the different student compositions as it relates to my research question. Using multimodal discourse analysis and focusing on distance, gaze, perspective and the intentional use of color in the students' compositions allowed me to analyze the multimodal compositions and see how Maya purposefully presented herself and articulated

her identities. The distance and the gaze situate Maya within close proximity of the reader/viewer as if she is "in your face" confronting you with the realities of her identity. Yet, the use of black and white distances her from the rest of the world which she colorfully illustrates with crayons and colored pencils. Thus, Maya's self-portrait conveys a contrast in the positioning of herself. She is both close to, next to the audience, as well as distant and far away from the rest of the world. In her use of black and white, her gaze, and her proximity to the viewer, Maya situated herself both as being close to, as well as being alone and different from, her society and the rest of her world and confronts us to acknowledge this aspect of her identity by staring straight at us.

Identities Situated in Societies

Identities are socially situated and as such in relationship to social others. These socially situated identities can be assigned or constructed. In the compositions presented above, we see how Maya and Keya's socially situated identities are constructed in relationship to social others. Maya's identity as a physically disabled person is situated within the social and historical realities of her parents' lives. Although her parents' illiteracy is a given reality, something she cannot change, it is nevertheless her decision to associate her disability with her parents' illiteracy. In doing so, she situated her identity in relationship to her parents and their lives situated within India's sociocultural realities. In other words, she constructed her own identity in relationship to her parents' lives and the social realities of their times. In the example of Keya's family portrait, Keya actively constructed her identity by the purposeful physical positioning of herself in relationship to the other members of her family. In Maya's self-portrait, she situated herself in relationship to us, the viewers, confronting us to acknowledge the realities of her

identity. In both Keya and Maya's compositions and interviews, we see them actively constructing their identities through self-positionings in relationship to social others.

Self-Positioning in Imagined Events

In the following section, I hope to highlight the role of imagination in the literacy practices of the participants as it relates to their identities. In the first discussion, I present an excerpt from Maya's journal where she described herself playing in the garden with her parents. Next, I present a letter Maya wrote to her pen-pal where she mentioned helping her mother in the house as one of the things she loves doing. Finally, I present a second excerpt from Maya's journal where she wrote about a swimming pool, describing the water and the children playing.

Maya in the Garden

When I asked Maya to write about her family and her house, Maya wrote the following in her journal:

> I am a girl. I am 15 years old. I live together, with my parents and my house. My house is very small. It has a beautiful garden. My parents are in the garden. Mummy is reading the paper and daddy is sitting on the chair. I am playing with the butterflies. I am trying to catch flowers.

Maya: Daughter of an Educated Woman

In this excerpt, we see Maya locating herself in an imagined scenario with her parents in a beautiful garden. The use of Gee's discourse analysis and the demarcation of the text allowed me to see the different idea units within the text. Specifically, Maya used the present tense to describe the actions of her parents and painted a picture of her family in the midst of leisure activities in a garden where her mother is literate, her dad relaxing, and she herself is playing and chasing butterflies. Additionally, the situation networks helped contextualize these different statements within social and cultural contexts. When I interviewed Maya about this journal entry,

she told me very matter-of-factly:

> My mother can't read, my father, my brother they can't read. I'm thinking that, I just think and write. I wish my parents could read like this and that this kind of situation could happen in my life and so I just think and I write. My parents are old people and during that time, education was not for everyone and especially for girls. Families don't allow girls to study, they don't allow girls to even go to school.

The reality of Maya's life is different from how she imagined it in her journal entry. In referring to Gee's (1999) questions for activity building, I made sense of this excerpt in relationship to the broader activities and actions. Her mother cannot read or write, they do not have a garden in their house, and she walks on crutches and is not able to run and chase butterflies. However, through writing, Maya can re-envision a different life for herself.

Through this interview, we can see that the image of her family and her life introduced to us in her journal entry was not a lie nor was Maya trying to hide or cover up the truth from me. Maya was in fact very open, willing to share, and aware of the fact that her parents are illiterate. Maya's written composition is not an illusion or fantasy but an opportunity for Maya to reflect on reality by altering the things in her reality that she wishes were different. Maya is very clear about how she came to write this imagined scenario; she was thinking about it and wishing that her parents could read and so she decided to write it. The written composition is the reflection of her desire "that this kind of situation could happen in my life." Through her imagination, Maya is able to place herself with imagined social others and construct a different identity for herself. She is a 15-year-old girl living in a house with a beautiful garden, playing and chasing butterflies while her parents read the newspaper and relaxed in a chair surrounded by flowers.

Maya located her family within the historical and social context (Gee, 1999) of India to explain why her parents are illiterate. She explained that because her parents are "old people," they lived during a time when education was not allowed for girls. Furthermore, Maya positioned

her family within the social and cultural realities of India by connecting their lives to issues of gender inequality, "education was not for everyone and especially for girls." By drawing attention to the issue of gender inequality, it is possible to infer that Maya purposefully positioned her mother reading the paper rather than her father in her written discourse. It would be reasonable for Maya to write about her mother cooking while her father was reading the paper. Yet, she purposefully wrote, "Mummy is reading the paper." In doing so, she not only imagined a fictional situation but engaged in an active reconstruction of social norms and agentively, through her writing, works to redefine the traditional roles of Indian women within the family. Through imagination, Maya is able to re-envision gender roles in India. As has been discussed by Sarbin (2004), "…imagining is not an internal happening but a 'doing,' a set of actions that can be described as attenuated or muted role-taking" (p. 6). In imaginatively constructing a situation where she is in the garden with her parents, spending time with her parents, playing and reading together, Maya is "doing a set of actions" by assigning different gender and socio-economical roles for not only herself but also her mother. By positioning her mother as the person reading, rather than her father, Maya is making a statement about gender inequality in India. Through the writing of an imagined situation such as this one, Maya is assigning herself a different identity where she and her family are more economically and socially well off than they actually are, where they have a house with a garden, and where they, as a family, are from a social class that they can afford to spend leisure time together. By assigning her mother the identity of someone who is not only literate but someone who reads the paper leisurely in the garden, Maya re-negotiated her own identity as the daughter of an educated woman. Selves and texts are related in time and space to histories, cultures, and societies (Jones, 2009; Scollon, 2008). As such, Maya's identity is situated not only in her personal history but

also in the social and cultural history of India. In describing her parents as "old people," Maya situated her current state within historical, social, and cultural context of India, during a time when "education was not for everyone and especially for girls." By imagining a situation where her mother is literate, Maya is, in a sense, re-writing India's social and cultural history and, by doing so, re-writing her own personal history.

Maya has assigned India's social conditions as the cause to her losing her leg. This assigned cause and consequence relationship (McKeough & Generaux, 2003) between literacy and her handicap encourages Maya to reconstruct a different imagined lived experience. Imagination is rooted in reality and it is specifically the understanding of causal relationship in the actual world that enables the imagination: "It is because we know something about how events are causally related that we are able to imagine altering those relationships and creating new ones" (Walker & Gopnik, 2013, p. 342). Our ability to imagine other possible events and worlds is rooted in our understanding of the causal relationship from real life experiences. Maya sees and understands her physical disability as the result of her parents being illiterate. The awareness of this causal relationship motivates her to imagine an alternative scenario where her parents are literate, and, in relationship to her parents being literate, her own imagined identity allows her to happily play in the garden chasing after butterflies. These casual relationships enable the imagination to think about and envision how things could be and how things should be and, ultimately, "allows you to deliberately do things that will change the world in a particular way" (Walker & Gopnik, 2013, pp. 342-343). Understanding the causal relationship between India's social issues, her parent's education, and her own situation, Maya deliberately re-wrote a world where things are different, setting off an alternative chain of events and painting a different image of her life.

Maya helping with Chores

During the middle of the semester, Maya exchanged pen-pal letters with a middle school student in New York. In Maya's pen-pal letter, she introduced herself and talked about her friends and her hobbies:

> My name is Maya. I am fifteen years old. I study in class VII-A. I have many friends but my best friend is Neela. My hobby is singing. I like mangos. I love to help my mother.

Maya: The Helpful Daughter

When I interviewed Maya about this letter, she told me:

> I like to help my mother in all the housework but I cannot do that. I think to help her in sweeping the floor or doing the dishes or cooking even but I cannot do. It's not possible all the time. I don't do any work at home actually, but I think if I could help her, it would be very good. I'm going to home and all the time, I'm the only one sitting in the house, in the bed, with the T.V. All the time, I'm the only one."

Related to the socioculturally-situated identity and relationship building task (Gee, 1999), we see Maya constructing an imagined scenario where she takes on a different identity in relationship to the social actors in her life. In this imagined world, she is able to help her mother around the house and, thus, takes on a different identity as a daughter with a different relationship to her mother. In her actual world, she is limited from many physical activities, including helping out with chores around the house, and, as the result, feels isolated from the rest of her family members. She describes herself as being alone often in the room watching T.V. In her pen-pal letter, Maya took on a different and imagined identity, one in which she is a daughter who helps her mother with chores around the house. This identity is situated in relationship to her mother in the imagined social activity of a mother and daughter working together to complete chores around the house.

In the letter, Maya wrote, "I love to help my mother." The demarcation of the data using Gee's discourse analysis allowed me to focus in on each individual statement. Through this written statement, Maya is expressing an "emotional truth" (Daiute & Lightfoot, 2004, p. 25) as Maya later confided in the interview that it is her wish and desire to help her mother, but she does not actually do any housework at home. Imagination in literacy or literary fantasy is intended to "represent the reality of the interior" (Daiute & Lightfoot, 2004, p. 25). The truth of the literary world lies not in its direct correspondence with the material world but in the degree to which it represents an interior reality, the truth of human emotions (Daiute & Lightfoot, 2004). In the form of a written letter to a pen-pal, Maya is able to express her interior emotional truth. In a separate interview, Maya had told me, "I want to help my family. I want to support my family because the way my family is supporting me." By writing the statement, "I love to help my mother." She is articulating an identity that reflects the emotional truth of her interior world rather than the physical truth of her material world. Maya is articulating a desired identity, though not realized in physical actions, of a loving, helpful daughter who helps to lessen rather than increase the burden of her family. The statement of helping her mother also echoes the imagined scene discussed earlier where Maya is spending time with her parents in their garden because the reality of her situation is that she is often at home alone: "the only one sitting in the house…all the time, I'm the only one." It makes sense that she would want to imagine and be in a situation where she is spending time together with her parents doing different things. Thus, she re-wrote her identity as a girl who spends leisure time with her parents in the garden and who helps her mother around the house. Through writing, Maya is able to reconstruct an identity based on the truth of her interior desires and wishes.

Maya Swimming

In a journal entry, Maya pasted a picture of a swimming pool she cut out from a magazine and wrote on the next page:

> This is swimming pool. They are children swimming. This water is very cold and water color is blue and there outside children play-area. There are very green places. The teacher is sitting outside and seeing this swimming play and they are together very happy.

Maya: The Athlete

When I interviewed Maya about this page in her journal, Maya told me:

> One time, there was a competition in the morning and I'm thinking and writing. I like swimming pool. Water is cold and the children are jumping. The swimming pool is very beautiful. I like it. (Do you know how to swim?) I knew how to swim earlier but now I cannot. Earlier times, but now no because of my leg.

When I asked her if she knew how to swim, Maya told me that she used to but cannot anymore, making a connection or "looking backward and forward" to her past (Gee, 1999, p. 94). Oatley (2002) stated fiction becomes a "simulation for our emotions (p. 41). Through this simulation, emotions are evoked when we identify with characters and things. In her description of the swimming pool, Maya wrote about how the "water is very cold," as if she was inside the swimming pool feeling the water on her skin, and that the children and the teacher are "very happy," as if embodying the emotions of the characters in her text. Maya's written discourse is compositing a simulation and she does this by "thinking and writing." By writing about the swimming pool and the children playing happily in the swimming pool, Maya imagined a situation in her mind of an activity she used to be able to do but now cannot.

More than understanding the development of imagination in adolescence, it is important to understand the purpose of imagination in adolescence (Vygotsky, 1991). Especially during adolescence, imagination can serve the emotional needs, moods and feelings that can be

sometimes overwhelming (Vygotsky, 1991). Maya uses writing as therapy. By exploring and voicing her inner emotions, thoughts, and desires, she is able to build self-understanding and world-understanding. Writing is rooted in self-expression (Moje, Overby, Tysvaer, &Morris, 2008). Moje et al., (2008) found that many of the adolescents used writing as a therapeutic act and students reported writing when they felt sad or angry. In my interview, Preeti observed similar things:

> And see, all what she has written is that she loves nature. She loves flowers and butterflies and she loves sunshine and she wants to be free and go out so I mean, she has some restrictions about moving out and everything and now she wants to be free. These drawings, these pictures, it shows that she wants to play football. She wants to go out. She wants to go away from the home and she wants to enjoy the food and the greenery and nature. The things that she is not able to do right now.

Imagination can help the healing and coping process of children with chronic physical disorders. Illnesses are not only biomedical but also social as a person with an illness is often considered out of sort with "usual norms of being" (Clark, 2013, p. 559). Imagination can help "children recalibrate from a disordered state…and reorder their conceptions of self and experience" (Clark, 2013, p. 559). This is reflected in these excerpts where Maya is constructing the "norms of being" a 15-year-old girl: someone who spends time with her family, plays outside in nature, goes swimming, and helps her mother.

The Multiple and Colorful Identities of Maya

Through these different compositions and excerpts, Maya positioned herself and constructed her identity in these different imagined events. These instances of imagination are not fantastical avoidance of reality as Maya is in fact very much aware of the fact that these are imagined events. Her imagination is motivated by an "unsatisfied wish" (Vygotsky, 2004, p. 217) and the process of imagination or the completion of an imaginary thought is the alteration

of the unsatisfied state of being (Vygotsky, 2004). In the first imagined scenario where her mother is reading the paper, Maya is able to alter an unsatisfied state of reality by constructing a different situation, one in which her mother is literate. Maya mentioned her wish that her parents were literate on multiple occasions and always in relationship to losing her leg. In constructing this imagined scenario, Maya is also negotiating and constructing her own identity.

Bloome, Carter, Christian, Otto, & Shuart-Faris (2005) defined three aspects of personhood. Firstly, even as people are influenced by factors outside their control, people also "create and re-create the worlds in which they live…and fashion alternative ways of living their lives that eschew given structures and strictures" (Bloome et al., 20015, p. 4). Additionally, people situate themselves locally and globally, across time and space and people take actions based on their understanding of their wider social contexts. Finally, there is no separation between people and the events in which they are part of (Bloome, e. al., 2005, p. 4). Through the use of imagination, Maya is re-creating a world and fashioning an alternative way of living her life in response to circumstances outside her control. Maya also positions herself within the social context of India both in her time as well as in her parents' time articulating relationships between her life and the socio-economic history of India. This, in a way, becomes a subtle critique of socio-economic-political situations in India as what happened to Maya during her childhood is tied to India's issues of gender inequality, lack of education in rural areas, and economic inequalities. Maya's writing is in response to all these social situations surrounding her; yet, it is also an active re-creation of these situations in imagining something better. The events that led to the amputation of her leg is not separate from but a part of her identity. Thus, reimagining these events also reimagines her identity. Dewey (1934) wrote, "The whole self is

an ideal, and imaginative projection" (p. 19). Thus, it is precisely in her imaginative writing, that Maya is able to renegotiate her identity and self-positioning in her society.

Conclusion

The different multimodal compositions presented above are complex signs and texts that portray the micro and macro sites where they are embedded (Stein, 2008) and sites where identities are negotiated and constructed through different self-positionings in relationship to social others and in real as well as imagined events. Throughout these different compositions, we see Keya, Maya, Gita, and Monisha negotiating between different voices, in different self-positionings, using multiple modes of communication, and situating their identities within their social worlds. Through these different compositions, we see the girls' constructing their identities through self-positionings which requires the engagement of their imagination and which can be made evident through multimodal literacy practices. Additionally, the analysis of the interviews helped illuminate the function and purpose of these different compositions as well as make connections between these compositions to the lives of these students. These different self-positionings can take on the form of different selves as well as others and can be imagined as well as actual. The different instances of identity construction discovered through the analysis of these multimodal compositions were in the forms of self-positioning in society, self-positioning as social others, self-positioning in relationship to social others, and self-positioning in imagined events. As self-positioning in society, we see instances where the girls situate their identities and their lives within the social realities, such as the roles and expectations of girls in India and accepted social practices for girls in India. In self-positionings as social others, we see the girls situating themselves as an imagined social other and thinking about and experiencing the world through the perspective of that social other. Through these different compositions, we

also see how the girls situate their identities in relationship to social others both in space and across time. Maya situated her identity as someone with a physical disability within India's historical timeline. Keya situated her identity spatially in relationship to the physical positioning of the other members of her family. Finally, selves are also negotiated and constructed through imagined events where Maya situated her identity in imagined places doing imagined activities that her actual self could not do.

CHAPTER 5. SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The purpose of this qualitative case study is to explore the literacy practices of marginalized adolescent youth in India to look at the relationships between literacy practices, identity construction, and imagination. Through language and literacy, individuals are able to express their identities, voice their thoughts, negotiate meaning in their social worlds, and position themselves within their society (Dyson & Genishi, 2005; Gee, 2003; Janks, 2010; New London Group, 1996). Research on literacy also invites a multidimensional definition of literacy to include various different modes arguing that different modes can present different opportunities for meaning making. Literacy as more than vocabulary and comprehension and as multimodal and multidimensional can be spaces for identity building and inviting spaces for imaginative engagement with the text, selves, and others. In broadening the definition of literacy to include multiple modes, this study is interested in how adolescents engage in multimodal literacies to build their identities. Furthermore, within this study, these identities are not limited to factual statements but include both what is imagined and actual and considers imagination as rooted in reality and integrally tied to development and creativity. This qualitative case study on the literacy practices of four adolescent girl students from a nonprofit all-girls school in Northern India aimed to capture how identities, both imagined as well as actual are expressed through literacy practices. Over the span of 8 months, I lived in the city of Lucknow in Northern India and worked with the select group of students and teacher. Data was collected in the form of formal and informal interviews, student written compositions, and observational notes. All four participants were from the same 7th grade homeroom and from similar socio-economic backgrounds.

Summary of Findings

The purpose of this qualitative single-embedded case study was to explore the literacy practices of marginalized adolescent girls as it relates to articulations of identity. At the center of this study is the following question: How do adolescent girls from an economically disadvantaged population in Northern India use literate activity to negotiate and express identity that is both imagined as well as actual? I used a single-embedded case study design to examine in-depth the multimodal compositions of four girl students in the 7th grade at an all-girls nonprofit school. Data was collected in the form of interviews, compositions, and observational notes. Through within and cross case analyses of the written compositions and interviews with the four student participants, I illustrated how literacy practices, beyond sets of skills to be acquired, are spaces for imagination and the negotiation of identities. The findings confirm previous research on the relationships between literacies and identity as well as research on multimodal literacy practices and its ability to open up alternative ways of expressions and that different meanings are expressed through different modes. Specifically, findings indicate that students communicate different aspects of their identities through different modes. Additionally, the findings support conceptualizations of identities as multiple, fluid, and situated within social, historical, and cultural contexts. The girls' identities were multiple articulated as themselves and as others, fluid moving across past, present and future, and negotiated in relationship to social others and historical and cultural contexts. In the multimodal compositions, students demonstrated agency in the articulation of identities in relationship to society, as imagined social others, in relationship to social others, and in imagined events which were socially and culturally situated. Finally, the data pointed to a relationship between imagination and identity. participants

actively engaged in imaginative activities when constructing their identities in their compositions as imagined others or as selves participating in imagined events.

In their compositions, Keya and Maya agentively articulated their identities in relationship to social expectations and traditional social roles, using literacy for the purpose of situating their identities as strong, independent, and empowered to fight against social inequalities. Rather than passively accepting given social roles, Keya and Maya used literacy to reposition and express themselves as strong female figures within their social worlds. Doing so, Keya and Maya situated themselves as social actors actively participating in and resisting certain social positioning of women (e.g., as weak, as individuals to be married off, and as dependents) (Moje & Luke, 2009). Specifically, in Keya's multimodal composition, we see her agentively using resources for specific needs and purpose to design her composition and communicate a specific message to her audience (New London Group, 1996). She took old newspapers, scrape pieces of masking tape, pieces of construction paper, and creatively combined the different resources together to orchestrate a multimodal ensemble (Hull & Nelson, 2005; Janks, 2010; Jewitt, 2013; New London Group, 1996; Stein, 2000). Through this multimodal composition, Keya used humor and art to make a statement about the importance role that women play in society. Keya's poem further reflects the ideas from her picture book as she situated herself as a student, being educated for an empowered future where she can have an impact on her family and her society. Moreover, through intentional statements in her poem, Keya is simultaneously renegotiating both her own identity as a girl as well as gender expectations for all girls and women in India. Similarly, Maya, in reflecting upon her written composition on Assam, agentively takes up the social issue of child marriages and positioned herself as someone opposing this tradition. Doing so, she is purposefully using literacy as a function to negotiate her

identity as a girl and her stance as a member of her society that is opposed to the practice of child marriages. Reflecting what Wissman (2009) discovered in her study, Keya and Maya are actively engaging in literacy to make sense of their social worlds, critique and resist certain social norms, and search for a sense of belonging. In doing so, they are able to "live more freely, critically, and powerfully" (Wissman, 2009, p. 44). Words are socially charged with intentions and impulses (Bakhtin, 1981) and in these compositions, we see Keya and Maya intentionally use language to articulate and express their intentions for themselves and for their worlds.

As imagined social others, the students constructed imagined identities and positioned themselves either as the imagined others or as authors writing the lives of these imagined others and in doing so, use literacy as a function to purposefully situate themselves in their lives and worlds. Gita imaginatively reconstructed the past events of her life to articulate a more ideal and kinder society. Gita, through her story, is able to represent herself in a different position and tell a new story (Moje & Luke, 2009) as she interacts and responds to the other social actors involved in event of that day. From a dialogical framework (Bakhtin, 1981; Hermans, 2001), Gita's identity is negotiated and constructed through these social conversations and interactions between herself as the girl who was hit by the bus, the girl watching the accident, the girl who helped her friend who was hit by the bus, the girl who inspired others to help her friend get to the hospital. Furthermore, her positioning in this new life story reflects her idealized self, her desires, and her intentions (McAdams, 2001). In this version of her life story, she is able to engage her imagination and construct a version of herself reflective of her desires for society, her aspirations for her future (McAdams, 2001). Reconstructing the events of the past, Gita is able to reimagine her own past (Enciso, 2017) and imagine a different future for herself (Comber, 2016). As McAdams et al. (2001) stated, the imaginative and creative powers in life stories allows us to not

only remember what actually happened but also intentionally choose how we wish to remember and understand it. Gita's intentional choice to rewrite the events differently, and positioning herself differently within these events, create opportunities for her to renegotiate her own identity, herself situated in her social world, and the actions of others in her social world. Similarly, Monisha used her imagination to write about the daily events of an imagined social other to consider and experience the world through a different perspective. Doing so, Monisha is using literacy and her imagination to learn about herself and others (Mackenzie & Atkins, 2008; Pelttari, 2016). Ultimately, these imagined future positions and future selves and the movement across these positions allow for Monisha and Gita's fluid identities to sway and form (Moje & Luke, 2009).

As identities in relationship to social others, the student situated their identities in relationship to their parents and siblings articulating themselves both as members of their families, as different from their families, and as impacted by their families. This design choice to situate themselves in relationship to members of their family is intentional and is not only an expression of their identities but negotiate aspects of their actual as well as their possible selves. Keya negotiated her identity through the physical positioning of herself in her family portrait and Maya situated her identity as a person with a physical disability in relationship to the lives of her parents. As discussed in Chapter 2, identities are shaped and defined through social interactions and the multiple layers of one's identity can include class, race, religion, ethnicity, gender, etc. (McGinnis et al., 2007). Keya, in the articulation of her identity, situated herself intentionally in relationship to the members of her family as part of her family but distinctively different. Doing so, she negotiated the many layers of her identity as a girl, as an Indian girl, and as an Indian teenager educated in an English medium school. These social relationships reflect and shape her

identity that is fluid and multiple (Moje & Luke, 2009; Ochs, 1993). Keya's composition is also

very much aware of the new in combination with the old and her multimodal composition

reflects the blending of local and global cultures (Berman et al., 2014; Rao et al., 2013). While

she herself is wearing Western clothing, black jeans, and a T-shirt, her sisters and her mother are

clothed in traditional Indian clothing. This intentional design reflects her awareness of the

changing traditional Indian culture impacted by globalization and incoming Western values and

global influences, such as foods, music, and clothing (Jensen, 2003). Hence, her identity is

situated in these shifting social traditions, norms, and expectations. Similarly, Maya's

composition reflects her multidimensional identity situated within social, historical, and cultural

contexts. As her life story (McAdams, 2001, 2008), Maya situated her physical disability within

historical and cultural contexts of India and drew relational lines between different events in the

past. present, and alternative future. These different cultural and historical realities impact the

Maya's identity on an individual level (Vygotsky, 1986). Specifically, from a social

constructivist approach, Maya's identity is constructed over interactional time as well as

historical time (Ochs, 1993). Situated in social interactions and historical contexts, these social,

cultural, and historical realities influence and shape Maya's identity (Adams & Marshall, 1996;

Hermans, 2001; Mead, 1934; Stets & Burke, 2000). Through her life story, she made the

connection between these relational events (McAdams, 2001, 2008). However, like Keya,

Maya's identity and understanding of herself and her world is equally impacted by globalization

and Western values, such as the belief that women equally deserve to be educated (Berman et al.,

2014). Because ofthis belief and understanding around the importance of education for all and

the value of education for a better life, Maya is able to consider the "if" scenario that if her

parents were educated and her mother was literate, their choices that impacted her life would

have turned out differently. In both Maya and Keya's compositions, we see the girls situating, negotiating, and constructing their identities through social positions, interactions, and contexts (Ivanič, 1998; McGinnis et. al., 2007; Moje & Luke, 2009; Ochs, 1993).

Finally, regarding identities situated in imagined events, Maya imagined activities which her actual self cannot perform, such as swimming or helping out with chores around the house, and rewrote her identity as someone who helps her mother around the house and plays in the garden. Through these different I-positions, reflection, and imagination (Maya with the physical disability, Maya helping her mother with chores around the house, Maya playing in the garden, and Maya, the daughter of a literate and educated mother), Maya creates her identity (Hermans, 1996; McLean & Breen, 2016). Maya's life story, situated in social and historical past, extends beyond the last and present into her future goals and desires as she constructs what McAdams (2001) called "fantastical autobiographical stories" (p. 106). Through writing, Maya used her imagination to interpret the past and construct a future as she makes sense of herself in her world (McAdams, 2001, 2003). Drawing upon ideas from possible self-theory (Markus & Nurius, 1986), Maya painted us a picture of her aspirations for herself and, doing so, she is transported (Pelttari, 2016). More importantly, rather than passively accepting her identity as a girl with a physical disability limiting her movements, she conceptualized her identity as someone who is physically active, helpful, and playful. As a symbol of hope, Maya's construction of her possible-self, articulated through literacy, provides her with a sense of mastery and control over her own body and her life (Markus & Nurius, 1986; Singer, 2006) and empowers her to articulate her identity to the world as the girl she envisions for herself. Using literacy as a means to imaginatively construct and reconstruct herself, Maya expressed the multiplicity of her identity to the world, not limited to her disability, but as someone active, playful, and helpful.

In my final interview with the classroom teacher, I had presented Preeti with all the different student compositions and asked her for her overall thoughts. Reading over Maya's journal composition about her mother being in the garden reading the newspaper, Preeti excitedly proclaimed to me:

> Yah, this is a sign! This is a sign that they want to get empowered, they want to get literate. Whatever their mother's are going through, they don't want to follow the same pattern. They want to do something different. It is a sign that they are changing.

The girls' identities are situated not only in relation to the people in their lives, such as their parents, but also rooted in the historical and social contexts that shaped their parents' lives, such as the lack of access to education for girls. Additionally, for these students, imagination is power, and, through imagining, they are able to empower themselves in their lives:

> What I feel is that everybody has written something that which they want to do. That is their imagination. And I am proud of all of them. Because they have not written what I have or what you have asked them. They have not written what anybody else is expecting them to write. They have written what they think. What are their dreams. So I'm proud of them. I'm proud of all of them. And they have their own world, their dream world. And at least whatever they are imagining, they are writing. (Preeti)

As Preeti pointed out during our final interview, the girls composed things that were meaningful to them, the futures they aspire for themselves (to travel, to work and support their families, to swim, etc.), and the people they aspire to be (educated, financially independent, helpful to others and important in society).

Implications

Our current educational standards across the nation focuses on teaching students to master a certain set of skills. The Common Core Standards for reading, used in schools across the country, focuses on teaching students skills, such as: cite several pieces of textual evidence,

determine a theme or central idea…and analyze its development, or analyze how a drama's or poem's structure contribute to its meaning. Imagination is only mentioned in the Common Core Standards as part of the English Language Arts Standards for Writing, "CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.7.3: Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, relevant descriptive detail, and well-structured event sequence" (Common Core State Standards Initiative, 2019). Yet, if we look to the definition of imagination as laid out by the imagination researchers and theorists discussed in this study, this task of imagination does not even come close to their vision of imagination as a creative learning process that fosters active problem solving (Carroll et al., 2010), to engage students in imagining a world without boundaries (Carroll et al., 2010), as a tool for understanding the world (Gajdamaschko, 2006). Instead, the Common Core Standard's inclusion of imagination is just asking students to write using descriptive detail within a structured sequence of events, a task bound to a structural and sequential understanding of the world, testing students' students' understanding of story structures rather than inspiring them to use their creative powers.

According to Education Week, 43 states and the District of Columbia have adopted the Common Core State Standards (Ujifusa, 2015) meaning that the majority of schools are following a set of standards with little if any regard for imagination. As reported by Ujifusa (2015), even states that have officially reversed their adoption of the Common Core likely still follow a similar set of standards. Indiana, for example replaced, the Common Core with standards that were quite similar, and South Carolina adopted new standards that were closely aligned to the Common Core standards (Ujifusa, 2015). Despite efforts by the state to repeal, states and schools will likely continue to use these standards to guide their curriculum for the time being (Ujifusa, 2015). This attention and dedication to the standards is reflected in

International Literacy Association (ILA; 2017) report, which included survey responses from 89 different countries and territories with a total of 1,594 responses. In this report, "Assessment/Standards" ranked number 1 among all hot topics at both the community and country level (ILA, 2018). While 33% of respondents rated "Assessment/Standards" as a hot topic, only 7% rated "Multimodal Literacy" as a hot topic. With all this attention on the standards, it is important to know that these standards have not equated to higher test scores on end of year assessments. Brown (2015) referenced Randi Weingarten, president of the American Federation of Teachers, declaring that the focus on standardized tests has failed. Literacy practices in schools focus on getting the correct answer on a multiple-choice exam, annotating for key information, or the ability to effectively pull out evidence to support a claim at the cost of authentic literacy engagement.

McKellar (2007) argued that the current definition of literacy is lacking the "sense that reading and writing are part of a web of activities that lead to a deeper engagement of students in a sociocultural context of meaning" (p. 6). Reading and writing are powerful tools for learning about selves and others and making sense of the world. McKeough and Genereux (2003) acknowledged that narrative thought informs us about the consequences of human actions and thus serves as a tool for organizing and constructing lived experiences and can help children develop their overall social and psychological functioning. Moreover, as some have noted, while learning can come from what is real, learning can also happen while children are engaged in activities of the imagination (Lillard, 2013). It is important that curriculum and instruction for reading and writing attends to this authentic application and deep engagement beyond the superficial skill-based tasks. Furthermore, as multimodal literacy gives alternative means for

expressing oneself, this may be especially relevant for students from marginalized populations where their voices are often silenced or ignored.

In this study, I demonstrated, by drawing upon the lives and stories of these three girls, how imaginative writing can be a powerful practice for adolescent girls to articulate their identities and position themselves within their worlds. Ultimately, to articulate imagined reality is to reconstruct actual reality. As Greene (1982) stated, literacy allows us to perceive possibilities. Literacy, as a tool to empower students, can take place in fictional imaginative writing where students are able to represent their worlds and themselves as they wish it would be rather than as it might factually be. In doing so, they are empowered via vicarious embodiment while able to reflect and think critically about social realities. In order to imagine alternative situations, one must reflect and think critically about their actual situations. Within the social, economic, and cultural contexts of these students' lives, imaginative and fictional writing for these girls is a form of empowerment, a place of refuge. Literacy as an imaginative space for readers and writers becomes a powerful tool to construct and think about situations outside their actual realities. In light of the social, economic, and cultural contexts of these students' lives, one can view their use of imagination as a way in which these students are able to construct different truths, imagined worlds, and articulate stories of empowerment. Texts as dialogical and cross-chronotope help us make sense of selves situated in societies, cultures, and histories across time and space. In addition, the role of imagination in literacy can be especially empowering for students with social or material limitations, to represent their world and themselves as they imagine it to be. In doing so, literacy can help cope with actual realities as well as potentially encourage alternative views on situations. Ultimately, literacy as imaginative spaces not only help us see and understand the world differently, but these different ways of seeing and

understanding the world and selves can have real implications for our actual selves and worlds. Thinking about imagination this way is especially important in light of the social and physical contexts of the participants in this research project. As the participants represented in this study is bound not only by social norms of what is available and expected of girls, but also physical limitations due to lack of economical capital and physical disabilities, the role of imagination in the literacy practices of these girls serve not only as playfulness but as a critique against actual realities.

As such, this study contributes to the current body of scholarship on literacy practices and identity development by drawing upon theories of imagination as it relates to literacy and identity, as well as by exploring the unique socio-culturally situated context that undergirds this research. From a research perspective, a large body of literature exists on the relationship between literacy and identity development. There is also a substantial body of work on imagination and identity development including studies in the field of psychology that look at the possible self-theory. Yet, there are very few studies that examine the intersection of all three of these areas: imagination, identity, and literacy. The findings from this study highlight the relationship between these three areas. Specifically, this study urges researchers in both the field of education as well as psychology to consider the intersection of all three of these areas. Furthermore, this study considers the sociocultural contexts that is unique to the participants within this study, a population that is not often at the forefront of literacy and educational research. In this study, I illustrate the ways in which literacy practices and identity development is revealed through the uniqueness of the cultural and social contexts of this specific population. The findings are more potentially compelling due to the unique socio-cultural context of the research site and its participants. Thus, I add to the current body of literature on identity

development, literacy practices, and imaginative activities by bringing in findings from this specific and idiosyncratic population. The ways in which imaginative activities and identity development occurs in these girls, situated within this unique socio-cultural context and articulated through their literacy practices, adds to the current body of scholarship on identity development, literacy practices, and imagination.

Lastly, this study has implications for classroom practices and curricular designs for reading and writing. The findings of this study urge educators to consider both the role of imagination as well as identity development in the reading and writing practices of the students in our classrooms. Literacy instruction in the classroom that allow for and open up the space for students to engage in imaginative activities can have implications for the identities and selves that inhibit these spaces. Doing so, can be impactful in a couple of different ways. Through imaginative activities that invite students to explore their identities, students can be empowered to understand, stand up, and critique various structures in their lives. Curricular and instructional practices that make space for and foster the imagination of students can also result in an overall more creative society and world where citizens are not only more aware, but also able and empowered to consider alternative and creative solutions to problems. Thus, this study has implications for the rethinking and redesigning of educational systems around the world, to consider, purposefully plan, and create opportunities for students to engage in both imaginative activities and conversations that foster identity development and to make imagination part of our agenda for rethinking education for all our students.

Recommendations

In addition to the findings presented above, this study has also revealed several areas for potential future inquiry. First, the data from this study highlighted the ways in which the students

used imagination in the construction and articulation of their identities. The relationship between these imagined events and imagined selves to action in the present and future from a possible-self theory framework holds great potential for further investigation on the relationship between identity, imagination, literacy and possible action. Secondly, the data collection phase was limited to a period of eight months. As identities are fluid and dynamic across time and space, future research might illuminate ways in which identities, imagined and real, change over time. Thirdly, as an exploratory case study, I was interested in the ways in which expressions of identity manifested in students' multimodal compositions. Further research can potentially shed light into how these different expressions of identity relate to, or influence, aspects of the self, such as self-efficacy, self-image, self-esteem, or empathy. Additionally, this study is limited by both the number of participants and the location of these participants. Future research on participants in different countries, from different socio-economic backgrounds, and different age groups and gender are needed to provide different insight and a more holistic description of the phenomenon.

In addition to these research recommendations, there are a couple of recommendations for educational practice. The results from this study highlights an important connection between literacy, imagination, and identity. As educators, it is necessary to be aware of this connection and design classroom instructions to support student's imaginative development and identity development alongside the teaching of literacy skills. The inclusion of such instruction can empower students to become agentive users of literacy with purpose and function. Classroom literacy practices should provide space and time for students to write and rewrite themselves situated in their social worlds, time for students to reflect and make meaning of selves and world

through their textual interactions, and opportunities for students to imaginatively engage with limitless possibilities.

Concluding Remarks

Literacy is not only the decoding of words and sentences but a social event where identities and social agencies can be negotiated and enacted. Ideas in contemporary literacy research engages us to reconsider the meaning, purpose, and function of literacy as more than a set of skills to be acquired but as a tool for self-understanding and world-understanding (Hull & Nelson, 2005; Kinloch, 2009; McAdams, 2001; Moje & Luke, 2009). Literacy practices can engage students to create possible worlds and imagined futures with equal potential to encourage alternative views on situations and the world. Furthermore, selves and texts are socially situated and, as such, literacy allows for the positioning and repositioning of selves that can challenge and push again constraints and limitations. How we believe something could be or should be eventually leads to the actions that make our imagined realities into our actual realities. For children like the girls in this study, enabling the imagination can help compensate or compliment a development of the self. In examining the relationship between identity and literacy, imagination can be a powerful means for the enactment of selves. Imagination allows students to extend past themselves and their immediate realities to where their minds are able to traverse in order to reach far and wide places. This is especially important for children, such as the girls represented in this study, who are otherwise limited due to their socio-economical and physical contexts. As educators with the responsibility of working with children and youth, "We owe them the sight of open doors and open possibilities. We need to replace the drab presence of declining literacy with images of flowers and new realities. Literacy, after all, ought to be a leap" (Greene, 1982, p. 329). The girls in this study do just that. They take a leap of faith when they

write, unsure if what they are writing is correct but nevertheless, ventures into the unknown

fearlessly.

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APPENDIX A. FORMAL STUDENT INTERVIEW PROTOCOL

Hi _____. How are you?

I will be audio recording our conversation, is that ok?

Do you have any questions for me before we get started?

Q1. What is your name?

Q2. How old are you?

Q3. How many years have you been studying at this school?

Q4. What is your favorite subject in school?

Q5. What is the most difficult subject in school?

Q6. Do you like to read?

Q7. What is your favorite book?

Q8. What kinds of books do you like to read?
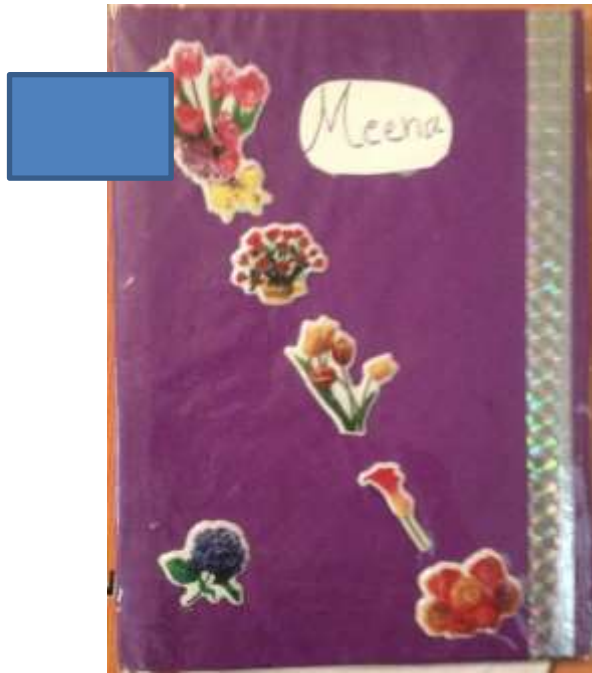
Q9. Do you read when you go home?

Q10. Do you speak English at home?

Q11. What goals do you have in life?

Q12. What do you like to do in your free time?

Q13. What three words would you use to describe yourself?

Q14. Tell me about your family.

APPENDIX B. EXAMPLES OF STUDENT COMPOSITIONS

(Maya's Picture book)

(Maya's self-portrait)

(Maya's illustration of a Hindi story)

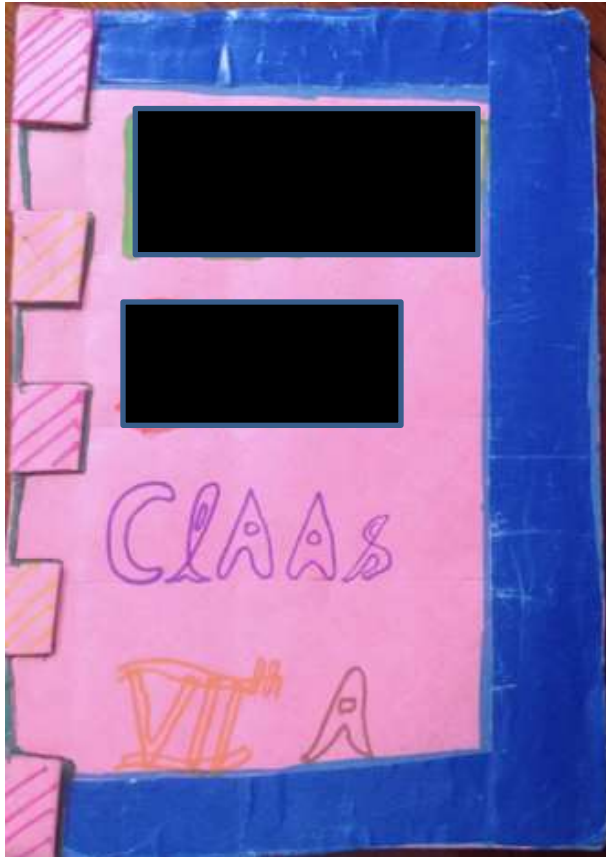(Maya's illustration of a Hindi children's story)

(Keya's Family portrait)

(Keya's journal entry)

(Keya's page from picture book)

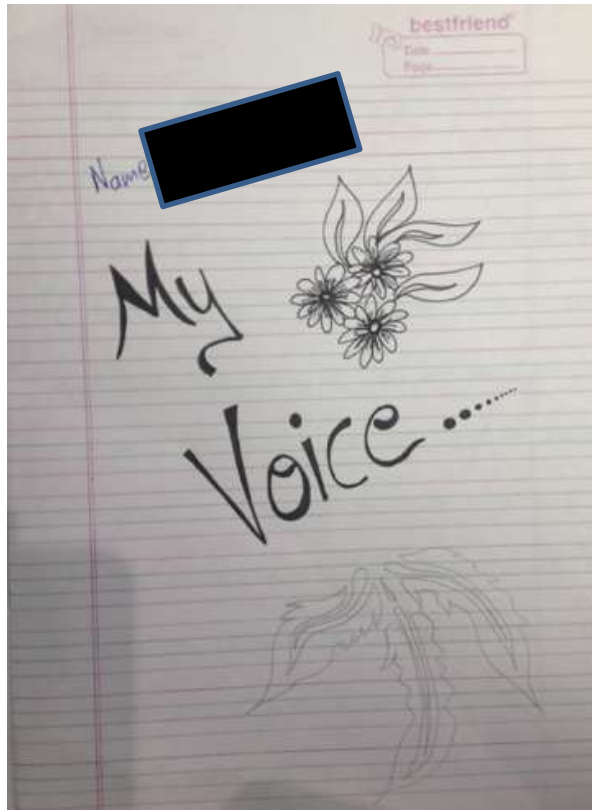(Keya's cover of picture book)

(Gita's journal entry)

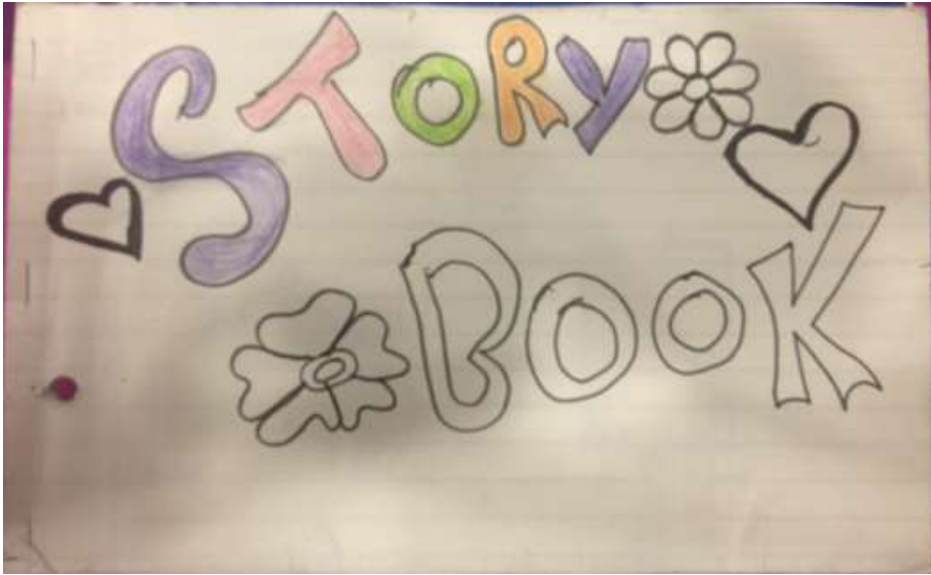(Gita's picture book cover)

(Gita's Story of Arjuna 1)

(Gita's Story of Arjuna 2)

(Gita's first page of journal)

(Monisha's landscape of the country side)

(Monisha's cover of picture book)

APPENDIX C. FORMAL TEACHER INTERVIEW PROTOCOL

As you know, this study is about your students' and their literacy practices. To help me understand the context of your students, I also be asking you some questions throughout the study. However, these questions are not to judge or evaluate your teaching practice. And no one, other than myself and my professor will be able to review these answers. I will not share this with anyone and everything is completely confidential.

Before we begin, do you have any questions for me?

Q1. When did you decide to become a teacher? What motivated this decision?

Q2. In what ways do you consider yourself a successful teacher? Can you recall any past or present experiences where you have felt or feel unsuccessful as a teacher?

Q3. Tell me about your formal professional education to become a teacher and your initial experiences as a teacher (i.e., the facts about your professional education and a list of workplaces).

Q4. How long have you been teaching? What do you consider your strengths and weaknesses in the initial years of teaching?

Q5. What are your "best" and "worst" teaching experiences? In what way were they good or bad?

Q6. Can you summarize briefly your teaching philosophy? What do you think makes a good literacy lesson?

Q7. What is a common or reoccurring goal or objective you have when teaching a literacy lesson?

Q8. What experience do you have using technology in your classrooms? Do you wish to integrate more technology into your classrooms? If so, how? If no, why?
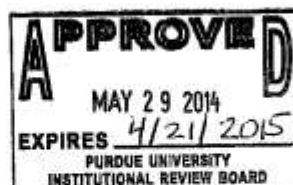
Q9. How do you see your role is as a teacher?

How would you describe your relationship with your students?

Do you have any questions for me?

APPENDIX D. ASSENT AND CONSENT FORMS

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Supporting Document C: Student Assent Form

Assent Form

Project Title: Identity and Multimodality: Self Construction through Multimodal Compositions
Investigator(s): Judith Lysaker, PhD., Janet Alsup, PhD., Alice Ying Nie, Doctoral Student

We are doing a research study. A research study is a special way to find out about something. We want to find out how adolescent girls express identity in their literacy practices.

You can be in this study if you want to. If you want to be in this study, you will be asked to make classroom projects that will be collected.

We want to tell you about some things that might happen to you if you are in this study. You will be asked to make different projects over a six month period. When you are working on these projects, you will be video recorded. The researcher will also ask you some questions when you are working on these projects. After each project, the researcher will interview you about your project. These interviews will also be video recorded.

You will be given a class period, 50 minutes each, two times a month to work on these projects. The interview with the researcher will last 30 minutes to 1 hour. You will be interviewed after completing each project. The entire research will last 6 months.

If you decide to be in this study, some good things might happen to you. You might learn about different technologies and improve your literacy skills. But we don't know for sure that these things will happen. We might also find out things that will help other children some day.

When we are done with the study, we will write a report about what we found out. We won't use your name in the report.

You don't have to be in this study. You can say "no" and nothing bad will happen. Participating or not participating in this study will not affect your grade in class or your class standing. If you say "yes" now, but you want to stop later, that's okay too. No one will hurt you or punish you if you want to stop. All you have to do is tell us you want to stop.

If you want to be in this study, please sign your name.

I, _____, want to be in this research study.
(write your name here)

☐ I give my permission to be videotaped
☐ I do not give my permission to be videotaped.

_____   _____

Overall, how do you feel about your project?

Supporting Document B: Verbal script to be read to students and parents at the information session described in section D of the application

"I am doing a research study. A research study is a special way to find out about something. I want to find out how students like your children make different projects. Your students' teacher will assign different project topics to students like your children. I will be in the classroom video recording students like your children as they work on these projects. I will also be interviewing students like your children during and after these projects.

You can be in this study if you want to. If you want to be in this study, you and your child will have to first complete the parent consent and student assent letters.

If you decide to be in this study, your children might benefit from these literacy assignments and learn things about themselves as writers. But we don't know for sure that these things will happen. We might also find out things that will help other students in their literacy practices.

When I am done with the study, I will write a report, give presentations, and publish papers about what I found out. I won't use your student's name in the report or papers. I might also show your students' projects but I won't use their name or any information that would identify them to anyone.
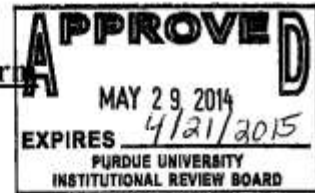
You don't have to participate in this study. You can also decide not to participate at any time. All you have to do is tell me.

I will now give you a copy of the consent and assent letters. These are in both Hindi and English. Please feel free to ask any questions about the research or anything in these letters."

Supporting Document C: Student Assent Form

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सहायक दस्तावेज सी: छात्र स्वीकृति फार्म

स्वीकृति फार्म

परियोजना शीर्षक: पहचान और Multimodality स्वनिर्माण मल्टीमॉडल रचनाओं के माध्यम से।

अनवेषक (ओ) : जूडिना लएसकर, पीएचडी. जेनेट अलसूप, पीएचडी. ऐलिस यिंग नआई, डॉक्टरेट की छात्रा।

हम लोग एक शोध अध्ययन कर रहे है। शोध अध्ययन एक विशेष तरीका है, कुछ के बारे में पता लगाने का। हम पता लगाना चाहते है, कि कैसे लड़कियों अपनी पहचान साक्षरता अभ्यास के माध्यम से व्यक्त करती है।

यदि आप चाहते है तो आप इस अध्ययन का हिस्सा बन सकते है। यदि आप इस अध्ययन में भाग लेना चाहते है तो, आप को कक्षा के परियोजना को बनाने और उसे एकत्र करने को कहा जायेगा।

यदि आप इस अध्ययन में हैं, तो हम आपको कुछ चीजों के बारे में बताना चाहते है जो हो सकता है आप के साथ घटित हो। आपको छ: महीने की अवधि में विभिन्न परियोजनाओं को बनाने के लिए कहा जायेगा। जब आप इस परियोजना पर काम कर रहे होगें, उस समय आपका वीडियों रिकार्ड किया जायेगा। शोधकर्ता भी आप से कुछ सवाल पूछ सकते है, जब आप इस परियोजना पर काम कर रहे होगें। प्रत्येक परियोजना के बाद, शोधकर्ता आपका साक्षात्कार करेगें आपके परियोजना के बारे में ये साक्षात्कार को भी वीडियों रिकार्ड किया जायेगा।

आपको इस परियोजना में काम करने के लिए महीने में दो बार 50 मिनट की अवधि वाले दो कक्षा दिये जायेगें। शोधकर्ता के साथ साक्षात्कार 30 मिनट से एक घंटे तक का हो सकता है। हर बार परियोजना को पूरा करने के बाद आप का साक्षात्कार किया जायेगा। पूरा शोध छ: महीने तक चलेगा।

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यदि आप इस अध्ययन में शामिल होने का निर्णय लेते है, तो कुछ अच्छी बातें आपके साथ हो सकती है। आप विभिन्न तकनीकों के बारे में जान सकते है, और अपने साक्षरता कौशल में सुधार ला सकते है। लेकिन ये चीजों ऐसी ही घटित होगी इसका हम दावा नही कर सकते। ऐसा भी हो सकता कि हम कुछ ऐसे चीज खोज ले जो किसी ना किसी दिन बच्चों के काम आ सके।

जब हम इस ध्ययन को पूरा कर लेगें, तब हम एक रिर्पोट लिखेगें कि हमने इसमें क्या पाया। हम रिर्पोट में आपके नाम का उपयोग नही करेगें।

आप पे इस अध्ययन में शामिल होने का कोई दबाब नही है। आप कभी भी ना कह सकते है और इससे बुरा कुछ नही होगा। इस अध्ययन में भाग लेने से या न लेने से आप के कक्षा के ग्रेड और कक्षा के स्टेंडिग पर कोई प्रभाव नही पड़ेगा। यदि आप अभी हाँ कहते है, और बाद में इसे बन्द करना चाहें तो भी कोई समस्या नही आयेगी। यदि आप इसे बन्द करते है तो कोई भी आप को किसी भी तरह का कोई नकसान नही पहँचा सकता है। आपको बस इतना करना है कि आप इसे बन्द करना चाहते है।, हमें बतायें।

आप इस अध्ययन में रहना चाहते है, तो अपने नाम पर हस्ताक्षर करें।

मैं...इस शोध अध्ययन में रहना चाहता हूँ

(यहां अपना नाम लिखें)
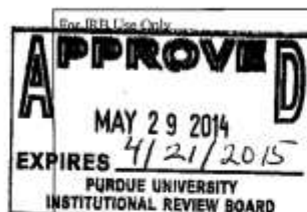
☐ मैं वीडियों टेप किए जाने की मेरी अनुमति देता हूँ।

☐ मैं वीडियों टेप किए जाने की मेरी अनुमति नही देते हूँ।

_____

शोधकर्ता के हस्ताक्षर   दिनांकः

Supporting Document E: Parent Consent Form

For IRB Use Only

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RESEARCH PARTICIPANT CONSENT FORM
Identity and Multimodality: Self Construction through Multimodal Compositions
Alice Ying Nie, Doctoral Student
Judith Lysaker, Associate Professor
Janet Alsup, Professor
Department of Curriculum and Instruction
Purdue University

What is the purpose of this study? The purpose of this research is to examine the relationship between identity and literacy practices in girls like your child.

What will I do if I choose to be in this study? If you choose to be in this study, I will collect classroom projects from students, like your children. The students will be given a classroom project. The students will then have classroom time to work on these projects. I will be videotaping your student during the classroom period when they are working on these projects. Afterwards, I will interview students about their projects. You will be provided with a copy of these interview questions upon request.

How long will I be in the study? I will gather this information over a six month period. **I will work with your student's classroom teacher to design a set of projects given to the students two times a month over six months. The projects will take up one class period, or 50 minutes, two times a month. After each project, I will interview your student. These interviews will be 30 minutes to one hour long. These projects will be included in the regular class curriculum so students will not be missing out on any required coursework. The entire project will be six months long.**

What are the possible risks or discomforts? There is minimal risk to students, like your child, from participating in this study. Your child will be participating in normal, routine classroom instruction. Participating or not participating in this study will not affect your child's grade in this class.

Are there any potential benefits? There are no direct benefits to the students. Indirect benefits to the students include: Students may receive literacy instruction and technology instruction. Students may also gain more practice with various technologies.

Will information about me and my participation be kept confidential? A pseudonym (fake name) will be used to identify and track your child's participation in the study and in all scholarly works. Your child, his or her classroom teacher, school, and/or community will not be identified in any scholarly works. Portions of some videotape clips or portions of student projects may be used in classes that train teachers to show teaching methods. We may publish articles for teacher training purposes or give presentations about the study, but no individuals will be identified by name. All video and audiotapes, field notes, and photocopied work will be

stored in a secure filing cabinet in the office on the Prerna Girls School campus. The data will be stored for up to five years after the completion of the study.

Only the project investigators will have access to the data. All data not used for teacher training purposes will be destroyed: videotapes will be magnetically erased and field notes and all computer presentations will be destroyed at the end of the project. The project's research records may be inspected by the Purdue University Institutional Review Board or its designees and by Purdue University to ensure that participants' rights are being protected.

What are my rights if I take part in this study? Your participation in this study is voluntary. You may choose not to participate or, if you agree to participate, you can withdraw your participation at any time without penalty or loss of benefits to which you are otherwise entitled.

Who can I contact if I have questions about the study? If you have any questions about this research project, you can contact: *Judith Lysaker (765-494-2355) or Alice Ying Nie (231-203-3888).*

If you have questions about your rights while taking part in the study or have concerns about the treatment of research participants, please call the Human Research Protection Program at (765) 494-5942, email (irb@purdue.edu)or write to:

Human Research Protection Program - Purdue University
Ernest C. Young Hall, Room 1032
155 S. Grant St.,
West Lafayette, IN 47907-2114

Documentation of Informed Consent

I have had the opportunity to read this consent form and have the research study explained. I have had the opportunity to ask questions about the research study, and my questions have been answered. I am prepared to participate in the research study described above. I will be offered a copy of this consent form after I sign it.

Student's Name: _____

☐ I give my permission for my child to be videotaped.
☐ I do not give my permission for my child to be videotaped.

_____   _____
Participant's Signature   Date

_____
Participant's Name

_____   _____
Researcher's Signature   Date

Supporting Document D: Parant Consent Form

Research Participant Consent Form
Identity and Multimodality: Self Construction through Multimodal Compositions
Alice Ying Nie, Doctoral Student
Judith Lysaker, Associate Professor
Janet Alsup, Professor
Department of Curriculum and Instruction
Purdue University

इस अध्ययन का उद्देश्य क्या है? इस शोध का उद्देश्य लड़कियों में साक्षरता और पहचान प्रथाओं के बीच सम्बन्धों की जॉच करने के लिए है।

यदि मै इस अध्ययन के लिए चुना गया तो मै क्या करूँगा? यदि आप इस अध्ययन के लिए चुने गये तो मै छात्रों से कक्षा की परियोजना एकत्र करूँगा। आपके बच्चों से भी छात्रों को कक्षा में परियोजना दिया जायेगा। छात्रों इस परियोजना पर काम करने के लिए कक्षा में समय दिया जायेगा। मै आपके छात्रों का वीडियोटेप करूँगा। जब के कक्षा में इस परियोजना पर काम कर रहे होगें। उसके बाद मै छात्रों का साक्षात्कार करूँगा उनके परियोजना पर। आपके अनुरोध पर इन साक्षात्कार में सवालों की एक प्रति के साथ उपलब्ध कराया जायेगा।

मै कब तक इस अध्ययन में रहूँगा? मै छः महीने की अवधि तक इस जानकारी को इकट्वा करूँगा। मै आपके छात्रों के शिक्षक के साथ एक परियोजना बनाने पर काम करूँगा जो परियोजना छात्रों को महीने में दो बार छः महीने तक दिया जायेगा। इस परियोजना में महीने में दो बार 50 मिनट के कक्षा का समय लग जायेगा। हर परियोजना के बाद मै आपके छात्रों का साक्षात्कार करूँगा। यह साक्षात्कार 30 मिनट से एक घंटा तक चल सकता है। इस परियोजना को नियमित रूप से कक्षा के पाठ्यक्रम में शामिल किया जायेगा। जिससे की छात्रों को किसी भी आवश्यक कोर्स कार्य पर याद नही किया जाए। पूरी परियोजना छः महीने तक चलेगा। सम्भावित खतरें या असुविधायें क्या है? छात्रों को इस अध्ययन में भाग लेने से कम से कम जोखिम है, आपने बच्चों की तरह आपके बच्चे सामान्य, नियमित कक्षा अनुदेश में भाग लेगें इस अध्ययन में भाग लेने वा न लेने से आपके बच्चों के कक्षा के ग्रेड पर कोई प्रभाव नही पड़ेगा।

क्या कोई सम्भावित लाभ है? इससे कोई सीधा लाभ छात्रों को नही है। छात्रों को मिलने वाले अप्रत्यक्ष लाभ शामिल है: छात्रों को साक्षरता शिक्षा और प्रौद्योगिकी शिक्षा प्राप्त हो सकता है। छात्रों को विभिन्न प्रौद्योगिकियों के साथ अधिक अभ्यास का फायदा मिल सकता है।

क्या मुझे और मेरी भागीदारी के बारे में जानकारी को गोपनीय रखा जायेगा?

इस अध्ययन में और विद्वान कार्यों में आपकी बच्ची की पहचान और भागीदारी का ट्रैक पता करने के लिए एक नकली नाम का इस्तेमाल किया जायेगा। आपके बच्चे के कक्षा के शिक्षक, स्कूल और या समुदाय किसी की भी इस विद्वान कार्य में पहचान नही किया जायेगा। छात्र परियोजनाओं में कुछ वीडियों टेप क्लिप या अंश का भाग शिक्षकों के शिक्षण विधियों को दिखाने के लिए कक्षाओं में इस्तेमाल किया जा सकता है। हम शिक्षक प्रशिक्षण प्रयोजनाओं के लिए लेख प्रकाशित या अध्ययन के बारे में प्रस्तुति देने के लिए इस्तेमाल कर सकते है। लेकिन कोई भी व्यक्ति नाम से नही पहचाना जायेगा। सभी वीडियों और ऑडियोटेप्स, फील्ड नोट्स और फोटोकापी प्रेरणा गर्ल्स स्कूल परिसर के कार्यालय में एक सुरक्षित दाखिल कैबिनेट में संग्रहीत किया जायेगा। डेटा अध्ययन के पूरा होने के बाद पांच साल के लिए संग्रहीत किया जायेगा।

केवल परियोजना जॉंचकर्ताओं को ही डेटा तक पहुँच होगी। शिक्षक प्रशिक्षण उद्देश्यों के लिए इस्तेमाल में नही आने वाली सभी डेटा को नष्ट कर दिया जायेगा। वीडियोटेप को चुम्बकीय से मिटाया जायेगा और फील्ड नोट्स और सभी कम्प्यूटर प्रस्तुतियों को परियोजना के अन्त में नष्ट कर दिया जायेगा। परियोजना के अनुसंधान रिकार्ड प्रतिभागियों के अधिकारों की रक्षा की जा रही है, यह सुनिश्चित करने के लिए purdue University Institutional Review Board या उनके पदनामित द्वारा और Purdue University द्वारा निरीक्षण किया जा सकता है।

यदि मै इस अध्ययन में भाग लेता हूँ तो मेरे अधिकार क्या होगें? इस अध्ययन में आपकी भागीदारी स्वैच्छिक होगी। आप इसमें भागीदारी नही भी ले सकते है, या यदि आपने भाग लिया भी और किसी भी समय आप अपनी भागीदारी वापस लेना चाहें तो किसी भी तरह की लाभ की हानि के बगैर आप अपनी भागीदारी वपापस ले सकते है।

अध्ययन के बारे में यदि मेरे कोई प्रश्न हो तो मैं किनसे सम्पर्क कर सकता हूँ? यदि आपके कोई प्रश्न है: इस शोध परियोजना के बारे में तो आप सम्पर्क कर सकते है, Judith Lysaker (765-494-2355) या Alice Ying Nie (232-203-3888)

इस अध्ययन में भाग लेने के दौरान अपने अधिकारों के बारे में भी चिन्ता हैं, तो आप कॉल अथवा ई—मेल कर सकते है, Human Research Protection Program को -(765) 494- 5942, Email (irb@purdue.edu) अथवा लिखे

Human Research Protection Program- Purdue University

Emest C.Young Hall, Room 1032

155 S, Grant St.,

West Lafayette, IN 47907-2114

सूचित सहमति के प्रलेखन (Documentation of Informed consent)

मुझे इस सहमति पत्र को पढ़ने और अनुसंधान अध्ययन को समझने का अवसर मिला है। मुझे शोध अध्ययन के बोर में सवाल पूछने का अवसर निला है, और मेरे सयालों का जबाब भी दिया गया है। मै ऊपर वर्णित शोध अध्ययन में भाग लेने के लिए तैयार हूँ, और इस पर हस्ताक्षर करने के बाद मुझे इस सहमति पत्र की एक प्रति की पेशकश की जायेगी।

छात्र का नाम :...

☐ मै मेरे बच्चे के वीडियों टेप करवाने के लिए अनुमति देता हूँ।
☐ मै मेरे बच्चे के वीडियों टेप करवाने के लिए अनुमति नही देता हूँ।

_____   _____
प्रतिभागी का हस्ताक्षर   दिनांक

_____
प्रतिभागी का नाम

_____   _____
शोधकर्ता के हस्ताक्षर   दिनांक

Supporting Document F: Teacher Consent Form

For IRB Use Only

APPROVED
MAY 2 9 2014
EXPIRES 4/21/2015
PURDUE UNIVERSITY
INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD

RESEARCH PARTICIPANT CONSENT FORM
Identity and Multimodality: Self Construction through Multimodal Compositions
Alice Ying Nie, Doctoral Student
Judith Lysaker, Associate Professor
Janet Alsup, Professor
Department of Curriculum and Instruction
Purdue University

What is the purpose of this study? The purpose of this research is to examine the relationship between identity and literacy practices in adolescent girls.

What will I do if I choose to be in this study? If you choose to be in this study, I will work with you to create bi-weekly projects for your students. When you present these projects to the students, I will video record your classroom presentation. I will also videotape the classroom period when students are working on these assignments. Additionally, I will interview you throughout the six month period. In these informal interviews, I will ask you questions regarding the project, your thoughts on the projects, and your thoughts regarding the students' work. I will also conduct two formal interviews with you at the beginning and end of the research.

How long will I be in the study? I will gather this information over a six month period. **I will work with you to design a set of projects given to the students two times a month over six months. The projects will take up one class period, or 50 minutes, two times a month. I will interview you two times, once before the research study begins and once at the end of the research study. These interviews will last one hour each.**

What are the possible risks or discomforts? There is minimal risk for participating in this study. You and the students will be participating in normal, routine classroom instruction and will be exposed to no more risk than he or she would encounter everyday in their classroom. Your decision to participate or not to participate in the research study will have no effect on your relationship or employment at the school.

Are there any potential benefits? There are no direct benefits to the students. Indirect benefits to the students include: Students may receive literacy instruction and technology instruction. Students may also gain more practice with various technologies. The potential benefit to the teacher is an improved method of literacy instruction. The potential benefit to society is the understanding of identity as it is related to literacy practices.

Will information about me and my participation be kept confidential? All information will be kept confidential. Your name will not be recorded on any of the materials in this study. Instead, your identity will be

recorded as the "Teacher of participant ____." Student participants' names will not be on the data forms either. Pseudonyms will be used instead of student names. All video and audiotapes, field notes, and photocopied work will be stored in a secure filing cabinet in the office on the Prerna Girls School campus that only the researcher will have access to.

Only the project investigators will have access to the data. All data not used for teacher training purposes will be destroyed: videotapes will be magnetically erased and field notes and all computer presentations will be destroyed at the end of the project. The project's research records may be inspected by the Purdue University Institutional Review Board or its designees and by Purdue University to ensure that participants' rights are being protected.

What are my rights if I take part in this study? Your participation in this study is voluntary. You may choose not to participate or, if you agree to participate, you can withdraw your participation at any time without penalty or loss of benefits to which you are otherwise entitled.

Who can I contact if I have questions about the study? If you have any questions about this research project, you can contact: *Judith Lysaker (765-494-2355) or Alice Ying Nie (231-203-3888).*

If you have questions about your rights while taking part in the study or have concerns about the treatment of research participants, please call the Human Research Protection Program at (765) 494-5942, email (irb@purdue.edu) or write to:

Human Research Protection Program - Purdue University
Ernest C. Young Hall, Room 1032
155 S. Grant St.,
West Lafayette, IN 47907-2114

Documentation of Informed Consent

I have had the opportunity to read this consent form and have the research study explained. I have had the opportunity to ask questions about the research study, and my questions have been answered. I am prepared to participate in the research study described above. I will be offered a copy of this consent form after I sign it.

☐ I give my permission to be videotaped.
☐ I do not give my permission to be videotaped.
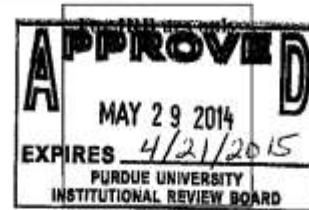
_____   _____
Participant's Signature   Date

_____
Participant's Name

_____   _____
Researcher's Signature   Date

Supporting Document E: Teacher Consent Form

Research Participant Consent Form
Identity and Multimodality: Self Construction through Multimodal Compositions
Alice Ying Nie, Doctoral Student
Judith Lysaker, Associate Professor
Janet Alsup, Professor
Department of Curriculum and Instruction
Purdue University

इस अध्ययन का उद्देश्य क्या है? इस शोध का उद्देश्य लड़कियों में साक्षरता और पहचान प्रथाओं के बीच सम्बन्धों की जाँच करने के लिए है।

यदि मै इस अध्ययन के लिए चुना गया तो मै क्या करूँगा? यदि आप इस अध्ययन के लिए चुने जाते है तो मै आप के साथ छात्रों के लिए द्वसाप्ताहिक परियोजना बनाने के लिए काम करूँगा। जब आप इस परियोजना को छात्रों के समक्ष कक्षा में प्रस्तुत कर रहे होगें उस समय वीडियों रिकार्ड करूँगा। कक्षा में विद्यार्थी जब इस कार्य पर काम कर रहे होगें मै उनका भी वीडियों टेप करूँगा। साथ ही मै आपका छः महीने की अवधि तक साक्षात्कार करूँगा। इस साक्षात्कार में मै आप से इस परियोजना के सम्बन्ध में, छात्रों के कार्य के सम्बन्ध पर आपके विचारों पर सवाल करूँगा। साथ ही में मै आप के साथ दो साक्षात्कार करूँगा। एक शोध के प्रारम्भ में और दूसरा उसके अन्त में।

मै कब तक इस अध्ययन में रहूँगा? मै छः हीने की अवधि तक इस जानकारी को एकत्र करूँगा। मै आप के साथ एक परियोजना के सेट बनाने पर काम करूँगा जो छात्रों को महीने में दो बार छः महीने तक दिये जायेगें। इस परियोजना में महीने में दो बार 50 मिनट के कक्षा का समय लग जायेगा। मैं आपका दो बार साक्षात्कार करूँगा। एक शोध अध्ययन के शुरू होने के पहले और दूसरा शोध अध्ययन के खत्म होने के बाद। यह साक्षात्कार एक घंटे की अवधि का होगा। सम्भावित खतरें या असुविधायें क्या है? इस अध्ययन में भाग लेने के लिए आपको कम से कम जोखिम है। आप और छात्रों को सामान्य नियमित कक्षा अनुदेश में भाग लेगें और कक्षा में हररोज की समस्या को उजागर किया जायेगा। इस शोध अध्ययन में भाग लेने या ना लेने के फैसले से आपके स्कूल के रिश्ते या रोजगार पर कोई प्रभाव नही पड़ेगा।

क्या कोई सम्भावित लाभ है ? इससे कोई सीधा लाभ छात्रों को नही है। आप साक्षरता शिक्षा और प्रौद्योगिकी शिक्षा प्राप्त कर सकते है, जो इसके अप्रत्यक्ष लाभ हो सकते है आपको विभिन्न तकनीकों के साथ और अधिक अभ्यास का फायदा मिल सकता है। शिक्षक के लिए सम्भावित लाभ, साक्षरता शिक्षा को बेहतर तरीकों को जानना हो सकता है। साक्षतरा प्रथाओं से सम्बन्धित रूपों में पहचान की समझ, यह समाज के लिए सम्भावित लाभ हो सकते है।

क्या मुझे और मेरी भागीदारी के बारे में जानकारी को गोपनीय रखा जायेगा? सभी जानकारियों को गोपनीय रखा जायेगा। आपका नाम इस अध्ययन में किसी भी सामग्री पर दर्ज नही किया जायेगा। इसके बजाय, आपकी पहचान को इस रूप में दर्ज किया जायेगा "भागीदार के शिक्षक.....................।" छात्र प्रतिभागियों के नाम भी डेटा फार्म पर नही होगा। छद्मनाम (नकली नाम) नाम को उपयोग किया जायेगा। छात्रों के नाम के बजाय। सभी वीडियो और ओडियोटेप्स, फील्ड नोट्स और फोटोकापी प्रेरणा गर्ल्स स्कूल परिसर के कार्यालय में एक सुरक्षित दाखिल केबिनट में संग्रहीत किया जायेगा और केवल जाँचकर्ताओं को ही डेटा तक पहुँच होगी।

केवल परियोजना जाँचकर्ताओं को ही डेटा तक पहुँच होगी। शिक्षक प्रशिक्षण उद्देश्यों के लिए इस्तेमाल में नही आने वाली सभी डेटा को नष्ट कर दिया जायेगा। वीडियोटेप को चुम्बकीय से मिटाया जायेगा और फील्ड नोट्स और सभी कम्प्यूटर प्रस्तुतियों को परियोजना के अन्त में नष्ट कर दिया जायेगा। परियोजना के अनुसंधान रिकार्ड प्रतिभागियों के अधिकारों की रक्षा की जा रही है, यह सुनिश्चित करने के लिए purdue University Institutional Review Board या उनके पदनामित द्वारा और Purdue University द्वारा निरीक्षण किया जा सकता है।

यदि मै इस अध्ययन में भाग लेता हूँ तो मेरे अधिकार क्या होगें? इस अध्ययन में आपकी भागीदारी स्वैच्छिक होगी। आप इसमें भागीदारी नही भी ले सकते है, या यदि आपने भाग लिया भी और किसी भी समय आप अपनी भागीदारी वापस लेना चाहें तो किसी भी तरह की लाभ की हानि के बगैर आप अपनी भागीदारी वपापस ले सकते है।

अध्ययन के बारे में यदि मेरे कोई प्रश्न हो तो मैं किनसे सम्पर्क कर सकता हूँ? यदि आपके कोई प्रश्न है: इस शोध परियोजना के बारे में तो आप सम्पर्क कर सकते है, Judith Lysaker (765-494-2355) या Alice Ying Nie (232-203-3888)

इस अध्ययन में भाग लेने के दौरान अपने अधिकारों के बारे में भी चिन्ता है, तो आप कॉल अथवा ई-मेल कर सकते है, Human Research Protection Program को (765) 494- 5942, Email (irb@purdue.edu) अथवा लिखे।

Human Research Protection Program- Purdue University

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155 S, Grant St.,

West Lafayette, IN 47907-2114

सूचित सहमति के प्रलेखन (Documentation of Informed consent)

मुझे इस सहमति पत्र को पढ़ने और अनुसंधान अध्ययन को समझने का अवसर मिला है। मुझे शोध अध्ययन के बोर में सवाल पूछने का अवत्तर मिला है, और मेरे सवालों का जबाब भी दिया गया है। मैं ऊपर वर्णित शोध अध्ययन में भाग लेने के लिए तैयार हूँ , और इस पर हस्ताक्षर करने के बाद मुझे इस सहमति पत्र की एक प्रति की पेशकश की जायेगी।

☐ अपने वीडियों टेप करवाने के लिए अनुमति देता हूँ ।

☐ मै अपने वीडियों टेप करवाने के लिए अनुमति नही देता हूँ।

_____   _____

प्रतिभागी का हस्ताक्षर   दिनांक

_____

प्रतिभागी का नाम

_____   _____

शोधकर्ता के हस्ताक्षर   दिनांक