Equity and Excellence in Education

Black Liberatory Practices in Education

2023
Guest Editors: Gholnecsar (Gholdy) Muhammad & Thema Monroe-White
Black people in the United States have consistently been denied a sacred place for sound and more advanced education (Webber, 1978; Anderson, 1988; Foster, 1997; Milner, 2006; Williams, 2009; Butchart, 2010; Givens, 2016).

Despite systematic disregard of Black children and the centering of Eurocentric norms, Black teachers have worked to turn schools into safe havens for students—moving beyond mandates of skills and test-prep and offering students education that is responsive to their histories, identities, and liberation. Black teachers’ philosophies, mindsets, commitments, and practices historically played a pivotal role in shaping not only the educational experiences of Black students, but also in shaping the Black community (Irvine, 1989; Cecelski, 1994; Walker, 1996; Foster, 1997).

Researchers have found that connections forged in shared racial identity learning environments between Black teachers and Black students can render classrooms and schools as spaces of humanization as Black teachers function as role models, cultural translators, other parents, and advocates (Roberts, 2010; Dumas, 2014; Williams, 2018).

The presence of Black teachers, combined with the possible cohesion or ‘cultural synchronization’ they have with Black students communicates to students that they deserve and have a right to educational excellence (Irvine, 1990). Black teachers can be particularly powerful pedagogues for Black students, creating spaces to transform students’ classroom environments, identities, experiences, and subsequent academic and life outcomes.

In this special issue, we invite submissions of manuscripts that examine the excellence of teaching and learning among Black teachers.

Submissions must center liberatory pedagogies with goals of understanding how Black teachers take up liberatory practices to advance the educational achievement of Black children.

Black liberatory practices involve teaching and learning methods or approaches that center the histories, identities, liberation, and excellence of Black education. Some examples of Black liberatory Practices include centering joy, critical love, positive racial identity, sociopolitical consciousness, and culturally responsive education. These approaches have been found to show academic success and wellness of Black children and teachers. We invite authors to take up the question:

Which Black liberatory practices in education have helped advance pedagogies with Black children?

The editors invite manuscripts (essays, theoretical and empirical) that take up perspectives from scholars, researchers, and practitioners (educators, community organizers, activists, both adult and youth), that address any of the following questions:

- What are Black liberatory practices?
- How has Black historical excellence helped to shape pedagogies in schools today?
- How have the Black liberatory practices helped to impact Black teachers’ perceptions and practices in the PK-12 classroom or within teacher education?
- What policies and practices have advanced or prohibited any of the Black liberatory practices in schools and classrooms?
- What scholarship helps to support and show evidence of Black liberatory practices?
- How do we assess and measure success for Black children from a Black liberatory perspective?

We are excited for pieces that are field initiated and practice-oriented in nature. We are especially keen to see submissions that stretch the bounds of what we’ve outlined - creative pieces and co-authorships with Black youth and educators that raise important considerations.

SUBMISSION GUIDELINES:
Please submit your manuscript (6,000-8,000 words) to http://mc.manuscriptcentral.com/eee by April 25, 2023.
Instructions for authors can be found on the website.

Be sure to indicate that this submission is for the Black Liberatory Practices in Education special issue.

Address questions to the Guest Editor (Gholnecsr (Gholsy) Muhammad) at gmuham2@uic.edu.

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