Letter from the Editors

Special Issue on Zip Code Induced Educational Trauma of Black Students in Urban Schools

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Black students in urban schools face a plethora of systemic challenges based on the zip code that is directly connected to their home address and school locale. While zip code is essentially a term used to describe the postal code system in the U.S., it also explicitly and implicitly communicates demographic information about people within various geographic groupings. According to Loqate (2022), zip codes can serve as a pillar for understanding demographic data more fully within a U.S. context. For example, the United States Census uses zip codes to organize demographic information, including educational attainment, household income, household size, and other population health characteristics. Therefore, the 5-digit zip and zip +4 code system can have important implications for children, their health and well-being as well as their schooling outcomes.

In this special issue-Zip Code Induced Educational Trauma of Black Students in Urban Schools we provide an in-depth analysis of zip code induced educational trauma and its impacts on Black students in K-12 urban settings. In addition, this special issue shares how educators (e.g., teachers, school counselors, social workers, school psychologists and school administrators) and other stakeholders (i.e., parents, policy makers, education leaders, law enforcement and healthcare stakeholders etc.) can actively strive to reduce and eliminate the educational disparities that Black students face solely based on the zip code of their home address. Given that the extant literature has highlighted long-standing disparities faced by Black children in urban schools, this special issue seeks to support and expand upon our existing knowledge base (Adams et al., 2020; Flowers et al., 2004; Lewis & Moore, 2008; Hancock, et al., 2021, Thompson, 2004; Williams, et al., 2020). As such, this special issue

editorial provides a short overview of each contributing article and the common themes amongst and between them. Our hope in compiling this special issue was to include diverse conceptual, qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods analyses, which in their own unique ways could depict the various impacts of zip code induced trauma. In the context of our contemporary socio-political context, these works are timely as they amplify the interrelationship between zip code, multi-pronged trauma, urban schools, and Black student lived experience and achievement.

The articles in this special issue bring forth a dynamic response to zip code induced educational trauma and the impact on Black children and youth in urban schools. A central theme that links all of the articles together is their examination of systemic and institutional racism and the use of critical and intersectional theories to more fully interrogate the impacts of zip code induced trauma on Black students, particularly in urban schools. Each article addresses critical issues and solutions in three overarching categories: a) the social contexts of educational trauma including at the neighborhood level, b) school-level educational trauma, and c) educational trauma's impact at the individual level.

The Social Contexts of Educational Trauma

Critical contributions by Aviles and Edwards, McCullough et al., and Garo and Butler's articles specifically center on the social contexts of educational trauma. First, Aviles and Edwards address one of the most basic human needs of home/shelter and the impact on the educational experiences of Black students. In their article they demonstrate the impacts of housing insecurity and the compounding effects of structural racism on the lived and educational experiences of Black youth who must travel multiple locales for their education. More specifically, the participants in their study cross multiple zip codes for housing and education. Drawing upon structural racism as a conceptual frame for understanding racial discrimination beyond the individual level, they examine formal and informal practices and policies that perpetuate inequity. Using counternarratives, the stories of Black youth are amplified, and we are able to more fully understand the complexities of homelessness and educational trauma through the eyes and voices of Black students with lived experience.

Next, McCullough et al., examine the traumatic impacts of gentrification and residential displacement on the educational experiences of Black children and families. Through the lens of Black spatial agency and the use of narrative inquiry, the lived experiences of three Black Philadelphians is highlighted as they each navigate their demographically shifting neighborhood context and the ways in which gentrification is implicated in educational trauma for Black students in urban schools. From the vantage point of a retired public-school teacher, a former teacher/current professor, and a recent high school graduate and community college student, their poignant stories illuminate how various individuals experience the changes in their communities. Using the theoretical foundations of CRT and racial capitalism, the authors explore how communities can push back against systems that seek to displace and replace Black residents and bring forth new educational resources for a

demographic that looks starkly different than the Black students currently living in rapidly gentrified zip codes.

In a similar vein, Garo and Butler explore neighborhood level trauma while similar to Walker et al, they examine the experiences, impacts, and outcomes specifically of Black boys as it relates to zip code induced traumatic encounters within their schools and communities. Garo and Butler explore what they deem "Black spaces"-where Black children and adolescents reside, and the ways in which neighborhood zip codes can assess risk for trauma. In addition, they examine the lived experiences of Black boys across zip code and block group during the COVID-19 pandemic. Such an exploration is important as the authors examine post-pandemic realities and culturally responsive solutions for supporting trauma that may be experienced by urban Black youth. They apply a mixed methodology inclusive of spatial modeling and retrospective reflection to examine zip code trauma for Black boys. Their findings indicate that even Black boys living among differing levels of block group trauma vulnerability experienced shared and potentially traumatizing challenges. The authors provide recommendations for a culturally healing-oriented approach to various forms of trauma that Black children may face in Black spaces.

School Level Educational Trauma

Walker et al.'s conceptual paper utilizes a framework for race-related trauma and applies it to the educational experiences of Black boys. In response to the disproportionate suspension and expulsion rates of Black boys, their article's explicit focus on administrators and school resource officers draw larger implications for educational leaders and law enforcement more broadly. In essence, their work draws poignant attention to the impacts of systemic racism and how it manifests within the experiences of Black boys through racial discrimination, racial harassment, and racial invalidation and omission. Ultimately they offer recommendations that support combating trauma experienced by Black boys in urban schools.

Similar to Walker et al.'s exploration of the impacts and trauma of discipline policies and practices, so too does Williams et al. explore school discipline outcomes including suspensions, expulsion, referrals to law enforcement, and arrests on Black children. Their research addresses a much needed and timely gap in our understanding concerning the influence that school-level factors and school discipline outcomes contribute to Black students' adverse behavior outcomes and in particular the relationship between these factors and suicide outcomes (suicide ideation, planning, and attempts). Their work expands our understanding of the school-to prison pipeline into the realm of the deeply problematic school discipline-to-suicide-pipeline. Their findings hold critically important implications for stakeholders calling for an urgent response to uplift the social and emotional assets of Black children, while also fiercely protecting them from the ills of educational trauma that may in fact cost Black children their very lives.

On the other end of the spectrum of the overrepresentation of Black students for disciplinary infractions is the egregious underrepresentation of Black students in gifted and talented programs (GATE) and Advanced Placement classes. Hines, et al. amplify this juxtaposition of under-referral, over-referral, and over-policing, and the

ways in which these encounters can often cause psychological dissonance and emotional trauma for Black students. Their interrogation of school-based racialized injustices is represented in four vignettes of GATE Black students who themselves have experienced traumatic experiences in schools. Their stories highlight the urgent need for anti-racist policies and practices in the identification and placement of Black students in to GATE and rigorous college preparatory coursework.

Hancock and Richardson provide a nice complement to the articles that have examined school-level outcomes as they explore the curriculum's traumatic impact on Black students. They assert that curriculum-induced trauma (CIT) results from school socioracial adverse school experiences and traumatic stressors that may in fact be induced by curriculum supremacy towards whiteness, biased school policies, and culturally insensitive pedagogical practices. They apply trauma-informed models to interrogate school and curriculum induced trauma for Black students and propose innovative solutions that have the potential to create trauma-free school ecologies.

Educational Trauma's Impact on the Individual

As the previous works have explored neighborhood/community level trauma, school-based/ and school-level trauma, Burrell-Craft's article provides an important examination of the impacts of educational trauma on an individual's identity formation. Using CRT and Racial Space Theory (RSP) she provides a powerful exploration of the experiences of eleven Hampton Roads, Virginia teachers who attended urban K-12 schools in the district in which they now currently teach. As these educators' identity development is explored within the context of their K-12 educational contexts, Burrell-Craft provides solutions for stakeholders of the implications of identity-conscious trauma research and race-conscious support for Black youth who have been exposed to and experienced various traumas.

Ultimately, the articles in this special issue and their application of critical frameworks and justice-centered methods seek to disrupt status quo examinations of the complexities that Black students face in urban schools. As each article draws upon the strengths and assets of Black children and families, they negate settled perceptions of Black students as instigators or passive recipients of the various traumas that plague their communities and educational contexts. The timely recommendations provided in this special issue support teachers, school counselors/ social workers, administrators, parents, policymakers, law enforcement agencies, and healthcare providers in their pursuit of trauma-informed education for Black students. From the authors' individual and collective vantage points, this special issue provides important pathways forward to combat zip code induced racialized trauma and perpetual inequities that most impact Black students in urban schools.

We extend our sincere gratitude to the contributing authors who worked diligently throughout the publication process to share their inspiring and impactful papers. In addition, we are grateful for the editorial board who granted us the opportunity to create this special issue and provided much support along the way.

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