











Conducting Ethical, Antiracist School-Based Research

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ABSTRACT

Educational research is conducted within an oppressive educational system, steeped in White, Eurocentric norms rooted in racism. To counter this oppressive approach to research, we critically examine historically oppressive research approaches and provide strategies for conducting strong, ethical, antiracist research that exposes inequity while illustrating practices that benefit all students, especially those from racially marginalized populations.



KEYWORDS

antiracism; research; school-based research

Research is context specific in that it reflects the predominant cultural paradigms of a society (Dimmitt & Zyromski, 2023). Without a clear awareness of the historical and current systemic and institutional racism that is inherent in the U.S. education system, scholars can perpetuate racist practices and research results that are biased. These can occur through oppressive research questions, racist and biased instrumentation, or implications that go beyond the scope of the results. Therefore, the purpose of this article is to offer scholars a frame for understanding the racist environment in which educational research is often conducted, how to dismantle the culture of Whiteness in school-based research, and how to learn important foundational structures for implementing antiracist research in schools. Antiracist school-based research can help to disentangle the generation of new knowledge that results from research from the existing oppressive paradigms. Recommendations for antiracist best practices are also included.

Review of antiracism practices and research in education

Holcomb-McCoy (2021) notes “antiracism in education focuses on the dominant systems that uphold racist views and ideas, like standardized testing, curriculum, educator preparation, discipline, and other schooling policies that disproportionately impact Black and Brown communities (p. 7).” Antiracist education theoretically centers race as an important identity construct in order to expose the inequities of power, system, and practice (National Museum of African American History and Culture, 2022). Although the concept of antiracism goes back centuries to the work

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of abolitionists and civil rights leaders, the term *antiracism* has become more prominent, with applications in education, nursing, and social work (Griffin et al., 2021). Tator and Henry (1991) developed one of the earliest iterations of antiracist education, and devised nine key traits for researchers and scholars to: 1) examine the historical roots and current manifestations of racial prejudice; 2) explore the influence of race and culture; 3) identify antiracist resources; 4) develop new pedagogy using diverse learning styles; 5) counteract bias; 6) handle racial tensions; 7) identify appropriate assessments; 8) assess the hidden curriculum and make it more inclusive; and 9) ensure all policies and practices are consistent and are provided with appropriate knowledge and skills.

The conversation around antiracism in education remains contentious. The conflation of antiracism and critical race theory has caused some White¹ parents and guardians to disrupt school board meetings and threaten administrators/school faculty members out of fear of their children learning about racism; therefore, rendering many educators, including school counselors, reluctant to discuss race within the classroom (Hatton & Clemons, 2022). Despite this action, there has been an influx of antiracist research in the field of counselor education (Edirmanasinghe, Goodman-Scott, et al., 2022; Mayes & Byrd, 2022; Mayes et al., 2022; Stickl Haugen et al., 2022; Williams et al., 2021). In 2021, *Teaching and Supervision in Counseling* edited a special issue dedicated to antiracism in counselor education (Harris et al., 2021), and in the same year, the *Journal of Child and Adolescent Counseling* also edited a special issue dedicated to addressing the impacts of racism for diverse populations (Frazier, 2021), thus proving its salience. Many scholars' research on antiracism within counselor education is linked to components such as curricula, competencies, and experiential activities (Ceballos et al., 2021; Gonzalez & Cokley, 2021; Mason et al., 2021). However, there is little school-based research regarding antiracism.

Education as a system of oppression

The educational system in the United States is built upon historical inequities that are embedded in our schools. Our current educational spaces are entrenched in White, Western, class-based norms that rest upon the legacy of historical atrocities committed against Black, Asian, Latinx, and indigenous peoples in our country. The *Brown vs. The Board of Education of Topeka* ruling in 1954 promised equal and desegregated schooling in the United States; however, our schools remain some of the most unequal in the Global North (Darling-Hammond, 2001). These educational disparities are legacies of our oppressive history, including the 1974 U.S. Supreme Court decision, *San Antonio ISD v Rodriguez*, which reinforced inequitable school funding (Soltero, 2021; Sutton, 2008).

There are clear racial differences in achievement, opportunities, learning, discipline, mental health and other schooling outcomes between White students and students of color. These differences are in part due to the unequal funding, allotment of resources, and opportunities among schools and districts. Students in the U.S. are attending schools that have been increasingly resegregating over time (Orfield & Lee, 2007; Richards, 2014), with more money and resources allocated to wealthier schools and districts, which are most often comprised of White students, than to the poorest ones, which are typically majority students of color.

Schools as the actualization of that oppression & the role of research

Individual school systems represent microcosms of the community, where racism and oppression are evident across hierarchical structures. For example, the 2016 Presidential election resulted in an increase in racial harassment and hate crimes, with the most common occurrences located in K-12 schools (Lenz, 2016). Students receive a collection of socialization messages, in which they learn about the role of race and ethnicity across systems, through teachers, administrators, school counselors, curricula, and peers, thereby contributing to their formation of racial biases and cultural awareness (Byrd & Hope, 2020). These messages may often be centered in Eurocentric ideals and dismiss the reality of marginalized racial and ethnic groups (Sleeter, 2011). Socialized messages reflect systemic inequities, as students and teachers of color experience differential treatment by the institution and individuals throughout the system.

Inequities and injustice within the school results in harmful impacts to both school-related and mental health outcomes, across multiple levels. Teachers of color report experiences of isolation, microaggressions, differences in leadership roles, greater attrition rates, and less individual classroom autonomy as compared to their White counterparts (Ingersoll & May, 2011; Pizarro & Kohli, 2020). Similarly, students of color may be socialized as outsiders, placed in special education settings at disproportionate rates, less likely to enroll in rigorous courses, and less likely to attend college compared with White students (Grindal et al., 2019; Huber & Cueva, 2012). Additionally, students of color are also subjected to lower expectations by educators, teachers who are less trained and have higher turnover rates, repeated microaggressions in the school setting, higher and harsher rates of discipline, fewer resources, and lower graduation rates and college matriculation rates (Banks & Dohy, 2019; Milner, 2013; G. W. Moore & Slate, 2008).

The school counselor and school-based counseling practitioner's role

These systemic inequities thereby have the potential to impact the mental health outcomes of students of color, including greater levels of depression, anxiety (Hatton & Clemons, 2022), hopelessness (Nyborg & Curry, 2003), lower levels of self-esteem (Hatton & Clemons, 2022), and self-concept (Nyborg & Curry, 2003). While school counselors are called upon to engage in anti-racism and advocacy efforts to support the academic and health outcomes of students, their position within school systems may inherently result in perpetuating inequitable practices. For example, school counselors have reported attempting to maintain order within their schools, which resulted in their support of disciplinary practices that were harmful to students of color (Hernandez et al., 2021). It is therefore recommended that school counselors explore their own biases and engage in conscious efforts to enact change (Betters-Bubon et al., 2022). Scholars have suggested the use of multi-tiered systems of support (MTSS) as an evidence based strategy for school counselors to utilize in order to promote anti-racism and engage in advocacy efforts within schools (Betters-Bubon et al., 2022; Edirmanasinghe et al., 2022; Mayes & Byrd, 2022). Additional research exploring the impact of school counselors applying self-introspection and systemic advocacy through the MTSS approach would be informative for the field.

In addition to using an MTSS approach to advance antiracist advocacy efforts in school settings, school counselors, school-based counselors, and scholars can apply a theoretical lens, such as the Advocating Student-Within Environment Theoretical

lens (ASE; Lemberger, 2010) to support minoritized and oppressed students by advocating for systemic changes while, at the same time, working to invest in building protective factors for students (Lemberger-Truelove & Bowers, 2019). Protective factors refer to experiences and environments that are integral for buffering the impact of harmful experiences and supporting healthy development of children and adolescents (Brinker & Cheruvu, 2017; Cohrdes & Mauz, 2020). External protective factors include positive relationships with adults and peers (Brown & Shillington, 2017), feeling emotionally and socially supported by others (Brinker & Cheruvu, 2017; Cheong et al., 2017), and experiencing positive school environments (Davis et al., 2019; Liu et al., 2020; K. A. Moore & Ramirez, 2016). Internal protective factors include emotional stability, resiliency, and self-efficacy (Beutel et al., 2017; Cohrdes & Mauz, 2020; Poole et al., 2017a, 2017b). School counseling scholars can explore school-based research to support the impact of school counseling and counselors in schools work to enhance protective factors (Zyromski et al., 2022).

Research serves as a tool to identify, understand, and address these racial differences. However, effective scholars are mindful of ways that minoritized populations may perceive diagnosis and treatment of mental health issues in school settings. Among other suggestions, Ratts and Greenleaf (2018) reinforced the need for prioritizing the client's worldview when building the counseling relationships and applying interventions. Scholars pursuing research in schools would do well to center cultural foundations for both diagnosis and treatment approaches in their work (Causadias et al., 2022). Scholars can also expose practices in K-12 schools that are rooted in racism through evidence-based scholarly works to create discourse on systemic change. With the mechanism to illuminate oppressive acts in schools, it is imperative that this research process does not perpetuate racial inequities.

Acknowledgments of critical race theory

One of the tools that scholars use to examine oppressive systems is critical race theory. Bell (1995) defines critical race theory (CRT) as “a form of law that speaks to the social and cultural contexts in which individuals live” (Holcomb-McCoy, 2021, p. 8). CRT scholars do not believe racism is an anomaly; rather, the first tenet of CRT is that racism is centrally interwoven into society and is a normal occurrence (Ladson-Billings, 2021a). CRT illuminates the fact that White supremacy is the status quo, and many White people are unhappy with both CRT and antiracism as a result. CRT and antiracism are seen as a threat to the status quo such that former President Trump issued an executive order prohibiting discussion of critical race theory and antiracism, calling these constructs “anti-American” (Griffin et al., 2021). Though critical race theory is not taught in K-12 schools, it is important to note its impact on antiracism research in education (Bell, 1995).

Holcomb-McCoy (2021) notes that while CRT is the unmasking of racism, antiracism is the action that dismantles it. Antiracist research recognizes the historical racist origins of research and seeks to dismantle them. Specifically, antiracist research seeks to strike down the myth of objectivity, which is the White supremacist double standard of White-centered perspectives and social analysis as neutral (Aldana & Richards-Schuster, 2021).

The culture of whiteness in education

The culture of Whiteness reflects this neutral perspective since it is the dominant culture in the U.S. and it is deeply-rooted in our educational system. This culture is largely due to the predominance of Whiteness in America, but it also stems from the racial demographics of the people and children in our schools. Around 80% of American public-school teachers, principals, and school counselors identify as White (National Center for Education Statistics [NCES], 2021; USDOE, National Survey, 2017-18; American School Counselor Association [ASCA], 2020); whereas over 50% of American K-12 students identify as students of color (National Center for Education Statistics [NCES], 2022). While individual White educators all play a role in Whiteness, the culture of Whiteness is ultimately about the system of Whiteness that allows for poor outcomes for students of color.

Scholars and activists of color, particularly Black writers like W.E.B. DuBois, James Baldwin, and Anna Julia Cooper, fought against the inequities embedded by the culture of Whiteness for decades; however, Whiteness often remains an “invisible veil” to White people, who fail to identify it as a culture with power and privilege (Katz, 1985). While Whiteness remains invisible to most White people, it is often hypervisible to people of color, who are forced to navigate it daily (Reddy, 1998). Helms (2017), a leading scholar in White racial identity studies, describes Whiteness as “the overt and subliminal socialization processes and practices, power structures, laws, privileges, and life experiences that favor the White racial group over all others” (p. 718). A single definition of Whiteness is lacking in multidisciplinary research; however, most scholars conceptualize Whiteness as the centralization of power, status through being White, and White identity connected to racial hierarchy (Schooley et al., 2019). Cabrera (2019) aptly describes the facets of Whiteness, “White supremacy is the structure, Whiteness normalizes this structure, and White privilege is the predictable output of the system” (p. 10).

Critical white studies & white teacher identity studies

Much of what we know about how the culture of Whiteness is enacted in educational systems stems from Critical White Studies (CWS), an offshoot of Critical Race Theory, and White Teacher Identity Studies (WTIS), a subset of CWS. Matias and Boucher (2021) remind us that “learning about whiteness has forever been connected to how Black folk experience racism, especially in the arena of education” (p. 1). Examining the culture of Whiteness cannot simply serve to recenter Whiteness but rather be used as a lens to understand the experiences of students who are racially marginalized and to dismantle the systemic barriers they face.

WTIS identifies one of the major issues in teaching and education as indivisible from White hegemony, because the system is dominated by White pre-service teachers, White teacher educators, White supervisors, White classroom teachers, White school administrators, and curriculum and pedagogy that are created by White scholars (Matias et al., 2017). If left unchecked, the culture of Whiteness in teacher education ultimately harms K-12 students of color and recycles White supremacy in teaching practices (Matias et al., 2017). Unfortunately, White educators often fail to see the culture of Whiteness as a player in educational systems, which harms students of color and places the burden of racism squarely on their shoulders.

Best practices for conducting antiracist school based research

Understanding the historical and current oppressive systems within education is imperative for conducting antiracist school-based research. Scholars are highly recommended to explore the intersection of personal conviction and professional action, which can be complex depending on the systems one is embedded in and one's adjacency to power and privilege. Nonetheless, to fully engage in this best practice, we must first evaluate and align our disposition and engage in antiracist practice throughout the research cycle. When conducting research in the school setting, students' interests and needs must be considered and incorporated throughout the process (Dimmitt & Zyromski, 2023), with an intentional focus on how to incorporate practices within the research cycle that advance antiracist efforts.

So, how can individuals conduct research through an antiracist lens? Like a typical research cycle, the antiracist research cycle begins with planning, data collection, and data access. It continues with statistical tools and appropriate data analysis and ends with the reporting and dissemination of results. With an understanding of how to dismantle racist practices throughout the research cycle, researchers can be intentional about how to engage in antiracist research. From this lens, researchers can conduct strong, ethical, and antiracist research in schools focused on improving the positive holistic outcomes for children and adolescents. In the following section, we describe antiracist practices for research within the K-12 school setting. In the following section, we first share the importance of an antiracist disposition and then highlight the key stages of the antiracist research cycle and suggest best practices that correspond with each stage.

Disposition requisites

To actively work against racism is a charge that scholars reflect in their personal and professional life as a fully integrated part of one's identity that actively acts against racism in the pursuit of equity and justice (Johnson et al., 2022). An antiracist disposition is the foundation for antiracist school-based research, and includes values, ethics, and commitments that are stated and acted on privately and publicly (Boulden & Borden, 2022; Villavicencio et al., 2022). Values are a key component of developing an antiracist disposition because they are principles which drive our behavior, interest, and life (Edirmanasinghe, Levy et. al, 2022). Values such as authenticity, compassion, fairness, love, openness, and optimism are appropriate foundations for more specific antiracist values. The organization "The AntiRacist Table" identified 10 core principles to move toward being antiracist: education, intention, courage, individuality, humanity, antiracist work, equality, empathy, allies, and love (Ivey-Colson & Turner, 2020). Along with these identified principles, a core value is believing that racism is everyone's problem and that individuals specifically can contribute to addressing the issue.

Ethically, the counseling role involves advocating for our clients, as noted in the American Counseling Association (ACA) Code of Ethics (2014) and American School Counselor Association (ASCA) Ethical Standards for School Counselors (American School Counselor Association [ASCA], 2022). More specifically, school counselors are called to support student development, which includes "actively working to eliminate systemic barriers or bias impeding student development" (A.1.c; ASCA, 2022; A.7.b.;

ACA, 2014). Additionally, within a comprehensive school counseling program, school counselors are called to “collaborate with administration, teachers, staff, and stakeholders for equitable school improvement goals” (A.3.b) and use data to assess and address needs (A.3.d; ASCA, 2022). Lastly, counselors are ethically obligated to engage in culturally sensitive practices (e.g., A.2.c, B.1.a, E.5.b), with the aims of promoting social justice and utilizing a multicultural approach (ACA, 2014), Section A.10 of the ASCA ethical standards for school counselors, focuses solely on roles with marginalized populations (ASCA, 2022).

Throughout the ethical standards, the foundation is established for school counselors’ involvement and leadership to assess, address, and eradicate equity issues on the basis of racism, discrimination, biases, prejudice, and systemic injustice. To ethically engage in antiracist work, a person must first acknowledge personal privilege and alignment with White supremacy, and systematically seek to dismantle White supremacy (Ieva et al., 2022; Mayes & Byrd, 2022). For example, a person can focus on doing inner work to increase awareness of the ways in which they benefit from White supremacy; reflective work that can be done by engaging in reflective questioning around afforded privileges and advantages, learning how to recognize and speak up against implicit and explicit racism, and engaging the work of racial-ethnic minority scholars, amongst other things (Dennis et al., 2022). Lastly, a personal and professional commitment to antiracist work is imperative; an anti-racist lens cannot be turned on and turned off, it is a way of existing, engaging, and experiencing this world.

Stage 1 of research cycle: planning phase

In the planning phase, one of the key activities is to define the study purpose and research questions. Hawn Nelson et al. (2020) identified positive practices in data planning for racial equity. The authors suggested that researchers incorporate diverse perspectives and engage community members to define problems and research questions. In schools, researchers can build partnerships not only with students but also other agents affecting students, including families and communities. For example, one equity and social justice-focused model that guides the partnership with family and community is Bryan and Henry’s School-Family-Community Partnership Process model (2012). This model is based on four principles and seven stages (Bryan, Griffin, Kim, et al., 2019). Researchers can use this model to address various topics such as college readiness and access (e.g., Bryan, Griffin, Henry, et al., 2019), educational resilience in urban schools (e.g., Bryan et al., 2020), and educational equity for Black male students (e.g., Griffin et al., 2021). Bryan et al. (2022) discussed the partnership model in relation to an antiracist perspective.

Best practices: critical consciousness & strength-based planning

Research planning must be based on the understanding of how racism is deeply rooted in the educational system and influences students. For example, with antiracist school counseling, school counselors and school counselor researchers need to cultivate critical consciousness (Mayes & Byrd, 2022). Critical Race Theory (Ladson-Billings & Tate, 1995) and Ecological Theory (Bronfenbrenner, 2005; Bronfenbrenner & Morris, 2006) provide a good theoretical lens to develop critical consciousness (Mayes & Byrd, 2022). When addressing racism, antiracist researchers avoid deficit-based frameworks that illustrate outcomes and use strengths-based models that aim for the improvement of outcomes (Hawn Nelson et al.,

2020). If research on students who have been marginalized fails to benefit them, it is if they have been taken advantage of by researchers to benefit their scholarly careers (Galán et al., 2021).

To further illustrate this, Henry and Bryan (2021) conducted a study to examine the effects of school-family-community partnership on promoting protective factors and assets in an urban elementary school where more than 85% of students identified as Black. They used a partnership process model (Bryan & Henry, 2012) that highlighted equity and strengths and aligned with antiracism (Bryan et al., 2022) and collaborated with a church, school staff, and parents to implement the programs. The initial stage of the model involves identifying and challenging personal stereotypes and beliefs (Bryan et al., 2020). They engaged elementary school students using photo elicitation and employed different methods such as reflectivity journals and member checking to decrease the bias and increase the trustworthiness of the research (Henry & Bryan, 2021).

Stage 2 of research cycle: data collection and access

In data collection, gathering diverse samples to represent student populations is foundational to the work (Dimmitt & Zyromski, 2023). Moreover, the process of data collection centers collaboration with school partners and other stakeholders. Galán et al. (2021) provided guidelines for applying a racial justice lens to scholarship. When gathering data, researchers need to be flexible and creative in recruitment to allow the participation of people who may not have access to transportation or who work full-time, be mindful of people who meet the participants and collect the data, and compensate for their time and effort (Galán et al., 2021). For instance, researchers may need to translate documents to different languages, build relationships with cultural brokers to reach diverse families, find places near participants' communities, provide services like childcare and transportation, and schedule meetings outside the normal working hours.

To demonstrate the importance of considering equity in compensation, Galán et al. (2021) illustrated how requiring social security numbers (SSN) for compensation can limit the engagement of participants who do not have a SSN. It may be helpful to monitor why people decline to provide data and to utilize their feedback in the future (Hawn Nelson et al., 2020). When considering data access, publicly available data on race can be used to awaken awareness and improve inequities (University of Minnesota Libraries, 2022). The issue of data access is complicated because both open access and restricting access can raise equity issues (Hawn Nelson et al., 2020). Weighing risks and benefits of open access to school-based data, including legal issues, are important steps in the process.

There are several considerations in choosing measures and methodology. First, it is important to examine whether the measures were validated across different racial groups, are culturally sensitive, and are strengths-based (Galán et al., 2021). Measuring contextual factors in addition to individual factors (Galán et al., 2021) can help researchers focus on improving conditions for students. One way to conduct antiracist research in schools is to use methods that ensure the engagement of students (e.g., Youth Participatory Action Research). For instance, researchers can measure school climate (see Kohl et al., 2013; Wang & Degol, 2016) or cultural competence of schools (e.g., Bustamante et al., 2009) to examine and improve the environment rather than focusing on changing individuals.

Best practices: intentional engagement

Scholars might have a wonderful research idea that can help inform the work with children and adolescents. To best achieve this work, researchers need to develop relationships with educational stakeholders that honor their time commitment and be prepared to show how their research can benefit their students and the community (Dimmitt & Zyromski, 2023). How can school-based researchers involve school partners transparently from the initial phases of research and how can the students be active partners in the research process? QuantCrit (see Suzuki et al., 2021), Critical Qualitative Research (see Levitt et al., 2021), Youth Participatory Research (YPAR; see Brion-Meisels & Alter, 2018; Cook & Krueger-Henney, 2017; Cook et al., 2020; N. A. Edirmanasinghe et al., 2022; Kornbluh et al., 2021) and Participatory Action Research (PAR) involves direct engagement with the community and/or students to dismantle the power imbalance between researchers and the school (Grant et al., 2008; Kornbluh et al., 2021). As an illustration, YPAR is an approach where youth become experts and take the initiative to develop action-oriented solutions to social problems they experience in their lives (Edirmanasinghe, Levy et al., 2022). Cook and Krueger-Henney (2017) have presented the group work processes of YPAR, which has been applied to various school-based group research projects such as Hip-hop based therapy (e.g., I. Levy & Travis, 2020; Levy et al., 2018) and a group focused on building self-efficacy in math and science (Edirmanasinghe, 2020). It takes such intentionality to shift to antiracist scholarship in schools.

Stage 3 of research cycle: data analysis

In the data analysis process, researchers focus on exploring the available data to develop findings, interpretations, and conclusions. Researchers often rely on one-dimensional isolated data, like student test scores or behavior referrals. This approach to analysis limits the understanding of other factors impacting those data points, like school culture and student experiences (Hawn Nelson et al., 2020). Even qualitative approaches, which often attempt to bring participant voice into the study, may involve racist inquiry and structures. Collins and Cannella (2021) suggest that ethnographic research can sometimes continue intellectual forms of colonization and has the potential to maintain the power the research holds, especially if the participants involved have been historically oppressed. From an antiracist lens, engaging in multiple research modalities, including the use of quantitative and qualitative data can help uncover a narrative that may not be highlighted by the numerical data. For example, how does a singular test score, or even a longitudinal collection of test scores, honor the lived experiences of the students within the sample?

Whether it be simple descriptive analysis or complex regressions and predictive models, an antiracist lens is required at this stage to ensure racial equity. Hawn Nelson et al. (2020) strongly recommend careful consideration during the analytic process, because solely relying on statistical analysis and outputs will not always lead to significant insights. By analyzing all participant samples as one group, we are ignoring potential individual or community-based differences. To offset this approach, researchers can disaggregate the data to analyze intersectional experiences (Hawn Nelson et al., 2020). Disaggregating and analyzing data is especially important as we consider the racial inequities in schools related to behavior and discipline (Shores et al., 2020).

Engaging communities impacted by research throughout the entire research process, not just during the data collection, aids in dismantling historically hierarchical and exploitative practices within research. Similar to Clemons and Cokley (2022), who question the implications of trying to serve Black communities while having a lack of experiential knowledge, we must also ensure that we engage in research methods that do not harm or exploit students and their communities. An example of the type of research where community and student needs are centered with reciprocal knowledge making to minimize hierarchical and exploitative practices can be seen with I. P. Levy and Adjapong's (2020) research in an urban high school that used the co-construction of a hip-hop studio as a researched group intervention. This research utilized YPAR methodology to provide lasting resources for participants and the school.

Best practices: context-place and outcome

An overarching principle throughout the research cycle is to have the voices of students, families, and communities at the forefront. This engagement practice will allow antiracist education to disentangle from the culture of Whiteness and build a new system (Mayes & Byrd, 2022). For instance, Bowers and Lemberger (2016) applied a person-centered humanistic perspective to school-based mental health research. They suggested that school counseling research focus on building relationships with community members. Additionally, the authors highlighted the importance of contextual interpretations of results and maintaining objectivity. Since research is inevitably influenced by subjectivity, research outcomes should contain subjective details and be interpreted as possibilities under certain contexts (Bowers & Lemberger, 2016). Scholars can explicitly describe the school population, details of programs, training, and limitations (Bowers & Lemberger, 2016). Integrating member checking when methodologically possible and conducting peer debriefing to challenge bias of researchers can be helpful (O'Hara et al., 2016) to ensure that underrepresented voices are heard.

Best practices: accounting for lived experiences

School-based antiracism research that is based on the lived experiences of students who have been marginalized intentionally accounts for those lived experiences and informs others of those experiences without re-traumatizing the participants. The benefits of lived experience research include making underrepresented individuals' voices heard, refuting the homogeneity and promoting understanding of diverse experiences within a specific group that has been marginalized, and making research results more accessible and relational (Tresh & Atewologun, 2020). For instance, in school-based mental health practice outcome research, including a diverse group of students' perception of the intervention and its usefulness (Ceballos et al., 2021) can inform the field about students' lived experiences. In research centering the lived experiences of Black girls, Rosario et al. (2021) did more than just account for Black girls as a numerical demographic, but also accounted for their lived experiences, listening to their voices and perspectives. There is no preferred type of methodology (e.g., quantitative, qualitative, or mixed-methods) for antiracist research, but researchers wanting to conduct antiracist research in PK-12 schools apply methodologies that best supports the students and community instead of analyzing data that may conveniently already exist within schools.

Stage 4 of research cycle: reporting and disseminating

The final stage of the research cycle, reporting and disseminating, involves communicating the results of the data to others in the most effective way (Hawn Nelson et al., 2020). In a systematic review of interventions reported through What Works Clearinghouse (WWC), only 16 interventions that examined student behavior met the WWC Standards With and Without Reservations (Graves et al., 2020). Those interventions resulted in 48 published articles. In a further examination of those articles, four of those studies did not include Black children in the sample and fifteen other studies did not mention the race of the children participating in the intervention (Graves et al., 2020), which could perpetuate racist research.

Researchers need to be intentional about reporting their participant sample demographics to allow their readers to make an informed decision about its effectiveness to their school-based target population. Naming is an important part of the reporting process. Kornbluh et al. (2021) recommended being explicit about naming, which includes racial and ethnic groups. For example, using the acronym BIPOC to be culturally inclusive may not be appropriate if the sample does not include indigenous people (Kornbluh et al., 2021). Researchers also need to report if cultural modifications or adaptations were made as adjustments throughout the intervention (Graves et al., 2020). School-based researchers can determine if cultural adaptations are needed by determining (a) if the intervention and evaluation approaches have been formed and normed with diverse populations, (b) if the intervention is being conducted from a deficit lens, (c) if the interventions focuses on individuals without addressing the systemic issues creating challenges for minoritized populations, and (d) has the intervention been “tailored to match the prices characteristics of a client” (Graves et al., 2020, p. 1029). Finally, researchers need to acknowledge structural racism or other harms to communities that might be embedded in the data (Hawn Nelson et al., 2020).

When thinking about how to disseminate results, researchers often report and publish findings in scholarly journals in hopes that practitioners will implement the knowledge from the study to inform their practice. However, with many publishers requiring membership or payment, the results of the research may not be accessible to the target audience. Because not everyone has a background in statistical analysis, it is important to report results in a way that is accessible, readable, and available in languages that are most applicable to the school-based community where the research has taken place (Hawn Nelson et al., 2020). Additionally, inclusive outreach and dissemination means sharing results using accessible methods, which may include public lectures and alternative media (Atalay et al., 2019; Quintana & Heathers, 2021). Potential methods for alternative media may include podcasts, zines, flyers, social media posts, and visual representations.

Best practices: inclusive citation practice

Citation practices can be biased by social identities including race and gender (Ray et al., 2022). Citing fewer articles by scholars of color reinforces systems of oppression and privilege and harms scholarship in the field (Ray, 2018). School-based researchers examine their own citation patterns and try to practice inclusive citation. For example, a Citation Diversity Statement can be included before the reference section to highlight how authors deal with equity and diversity issues in their citations and their commitment to inclusive

citation practice (Ray et al., 2022). Intentional strategies include reading author information, diversifying information sources, following scholars' work whose identities are less represented in one's citations, and prioritizing reading their work (Rowan University Libraries, 2022).

Best practices: community or informed experts

When engaging in school-based research, researchers need to be aware of who the community experts are and how they might support scholarly work. Ladson-Billings (2021b) calls for us to promote parent and community engagement that supports and promotes students' culture. Researchers often enter schools to conduct research and then leave once the data has been collected without working with school partners who have roots in the community and its students. When working with community partners and agencies, researchers can help to advocate for city officials to push for policy and social change for the students based on the results of the study (Kornbluh et al., 2021). It is also important to present practical implications for multiculturally competent counseling practices (O'Hara et al., 2016).

Conclusion of research cycle

Antiracist research for school-based settings is an intentional lens from which all researchers can approach their work in schools, and this lens informs the research cycle from start to finish. Researchers applying this lens to the research cycle begin with critical self-reflection and strength-based planning, continues with intentional engagement in the data collection and analysis process, and ends with inclusive reporting and accessible disseminating of results. It is not enough to add antiracism as a tag-on to the implications section or for future research considerations. Throughout the entire research cycle, researchers approaching school-based work ask, "does this work mitigate, worsen, or ignore existing disparities?" (Hawn Nelson et al., 2020, p. 31). Traditionally, school-based research has been conducted from a White, Eurocentric lens. It is imperative that researchers working with schools apply a theoretical lens to control for their own bias and to center the cultural values of the populations with which they work. It is vital to prioritize intentional steps to advance an antiracist approach to research in schools that results in advancing the holistic success of children and adolescents within PK-12 education.

Implications

Researchers have a responsibility to ensure that the generation of new knowledge results from research paradigms and activities do not perpetuate existing oppressive systems. Although antiracist educational practices have existed for decades across multiple fields (Griffin et al., 2021), scholars continue to struggle with ensuring their actions do not uphold racist norms. As counselor education programs produce scholars that wish to work with schools, it is imperative that systems that uphold White supremacy in the preparation of researchers also be discussed and dismantled (Bell et al., 2020). Without this critical analysis of our preparation programs, it is likely that our scholars are being developed with identities that will only reinforce White normativity (Bertrand, 2021). Counselor education programs

must actively teach ways to dismantle racism and Whiteness in school-based research while instilling foundational structures for implementing antiracist research paradigms.

The profession also has a responsibility to examine what is being taught in counselor education programming around antiracist school based research. Future research could explore the degree to which our preparation programs cover antiracist school-based research tenets, research in schools in general, and the ways this pedagogical content aligns with CACREP core curricular and program areas required for program accreditation. It may be that our national accrediting body and national curricular leaders are not demanding this content strongly enough. Counselor education programs can include the existing antiracist research approaches and foci while providing direction for future scholars in new arenas yet to be explored to the benefit of our students in schools.

Future research could also explore the identity of the scholars conducting school-based research as well. If there are challenges or resistance to teaching and/or conducting antiracist school-based research, it is vital the profession illuminate this growth area. Evaluation of pedagogical approaches to ensure effective development of antiracist scholars would also prove insightful. Finally, research could examine the impact of the development of perceptions and skills of counselor educators and scholars-in-training on the implementation of antiracist research practices in schools and the corresponding benefits to students in school settings.

Conclusion

The culture of Whiteness is deeply rooted in all aspects of our educational system, often resulting in poor outcomes for students of color. It is vital that counseling scholars move beyond the invisible veil (Katz, 1985) to adopt antiracist dispositions where antiracist values, ethics, and commitments are lived out privately and publicly, including in school-based research (Boulden & Borden, 2022; Johnson et al., 2022; Villavicencio et al., 2022). In addition to these foundational dispositions, antiracist scholars conducting school-based research must acknowledge that White supremacy is the status quo. The very work of unmasking and dismantling racist systems is antiracist scholarship and this research benefits all students.

As school-based antiracist research aims to challenge and dismantle systemic racism and promote equity, it creates a safer and supportive educational environment for students of color. Changes in the educational environment can positively impact their mental health by reducing experiences of discrimination, harassment, and microaggression, which Hatton and Clemons (2022) note are associated with negative mental health outcomes such as depression, anxiety, and low self-esteem.

Furthermore, antiracist school-based research encourages educators, school counselors, and mental health professionals to adopt culturally responsive and inclusive practices that acknowledge and value the diversity of students' racial, ethnic, and cultural backgrounds (Causadias et al., 2022). This approach can promote a sense of belonging and identity affirmation, which are protective factors for students' mental health (Pendergast et al., 2018). Antiracist research can also provide opportunities for students to learn about social justice issues and engage in activism, fostering a sense of agency and empowerment. A sense of agency and feelings of empowerment can contribute to students' mental health by promoting a sense of purpose, self-efficacy, and community belonging.

An antiracist researcher that applies their dispositions and values to their work also thoughtfully applies this focus across all phases of their school-based research. The planning

phase, including the methods and measures chosen, the data collection and analysis phases, and the ways that results are reported and disseminated must all be conducted through an intentional antiracist lens. Many scholars (e.g., Galán et al., 2021; Hawn Nelson et al., 2020) have provided useful suggestions and guidelines for ensuring equity throughout the many steps of a research project. Ignoring these only perpetuates the oppressive racist system in which our students live and grow.

If the primary goal is to ensure antiracist school-based research practices, then researchers can center participants' voices in their contexts and outcomes, account for the lived experiences of students who have been marginalized with which they are working, intentionally engage the surrounding community and include experts from the community to help inform the research goals, and, finally, work to practice inclusive citation practices, ensuring their citations are representative of the diverse resource of scholars that contribute in the field. This transformed practice must be taught in counselor education programs and reinforced by scholarship that unpacks, examines, and dismantles the inherent post-colonial structure of higher education that creates and perpetuates potentially oppressive, harmful research in schools that perpetuates and sustains racist systems.

Note

1. There is much discourse about whether to capitalize "White". We follow the suggestion of the prominent Black writer and scholar, Eve L. Ewing (2020) on the importance of capitalizing White: "Whiteness is not only an absence. It's not a hole in the map of America's racial landscape. Rather, it is a specific social category that confers identifiable and measurable social benefits" (para. 5).


Citation diversity statement

We are committed to promoting and modeling intellectual and social diversity in school-based research and scholarship. We internalized this commitment through our own research team as we researched and wrote this article. We also sought to ensure our references reflected the diversity within our field. All references included are relevant and appropriate while also representing diversity of gender, age, and ethnicity. Our citations have been chosen only for scholarly purposes and we give credit to those that have built this knowledge base.

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