

Application of critical race theory to education



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First presented in the mid-1980s in American Law Schools, Critical Race Theory contends over time white supremacy and racial influence over African-Americans, institutionalizes and fosters all minorities. This fostering manifests an idea known as White Privilege, or the idea influence and supremacy perpetuates assisting the dominant race, in this case European-Americans (Taylor, Gillborn & Ladson-Billings, 2016). Critical Race Theory and White Privilege admit not all European-Americans are racist; many simply benefit from a status or class privilege. Throughout the late 1980s and early 1990s, this idea expanded into most social sciences and education (Taylor, Gillborn & Ladson-Billings, 2016). A cursory literature review illuminated several inequities where African-Americans seem to be on educational policy's short side. These articles attempt a potential discourse examining racist policies' results without addressing the root causations. The first area, new teachers are predominately white while students are largely minorities leading to a misunderstanding between the two. Second, teacher preparation programs have not adjusted practices concerning the racial disparities urban schools face and therefore education colleges are not adequately preparing teachers to face challenging classrooms. Third, curriculum designers work without considering challenges faced by minorities. Finally, like P-12 educators, colleges and universities fail confronting the race issue or discussing institutional race disparities.

Conducting this limited literature review, although quoted three times, scholars lacked studying and understanding the impact Critical Race Theory has on curriculum, instruction and assessment (Berry, 2015). The first article's authors substituted the failing to understand privilege as failed

preparation and understanding (Ares, Evans, & Harnischfeger, 2018). This ignorance leads to deficit thinking towards minority students, and then leads to lower expectations regarding achievement by minority students (Ares et al., 2018). The prevailing discussion, as Critical Race Theorists will admit, there will be “blame” placed by the privileged class on the minority classes and their issues. Numerous articles recommend teacher preparation programs be reevaluated and overhauled as these programs fail to train adequately the predominately European-American teachers on strategies effectively educating African-American students.

Overhauling teacher preparation programs has yielded little beyond discussion and even less action at the collegiate level. Oftentimes, leaving school districts to design their own programs addressing district racial disparities issues (Cross, 2003). Authors point to methodologies to address disparities between the teachers and the students, never addressing the causation. Although these suggestions effectiveness ranges, they do little to address the destructive racist’s ideals White Privilege caused African-American students and other minorities (Cross, 2003; Ares et al, 2018). Ares et al. (2018) wrote, “Our study site was a high school sophomore class in a progressive program intended to prepare future teachers, filled mostly with Black and Latinx students. Their teacher worked to help them envision democratic views of schooling and the ways “urban” schools often reproduce inequity.” Teachers understand the differences, yet push the status quo, primarily to maintain their gained status or perceived privilege.

Several articles highlight the issue racism directly presents the current curriculum. A few articles highlighting racism in the curriculum referenced <https://assignbuster.com/application-of-critical-race-theory-to-education/>

English courses lacking balance by presenting mainly Eurocentric articles, stories, and characters (Frank, 2014). English and Literature classes fair the same, providing few opportunities were students can deviate away and learn anything other than “ proper white English” (Peters, 2015). Current curricular classes offer few opportunities where students can use African-American (Ebonics) language as expressions either orally or written (Peters, 2015).

History courses, demonstrated teaching African-American history during Black History Month in February, the shortest month, while the remaining months lack a balanced Black History presentation. Although, Lackey (2017) does discuss history classes being “ whitewashed” or “ sanitized” where race may be left to the teacher’s implications or the student’s interpretation. Both interpretations form unfair and unwarranted African-American student predispositions. Today’s history classes fail discussing issues, rather teachers present the same limited narratives and the few minority personalities leaving students few controversial or race issue discussion opportunities (Lackey, 2017).

Mathematics class level or teacher quality demonstrated little effort challenging minority student thinking (Morvan, 2014). “ The OECD’s Equations and Inequalities: Making Mathematics Accessible to All report argues students with difficulties in mathematics and disadvantaged students stand to gain the most from highly qualified teachers, but unfortunately, they often are paired with the least-skilled teachers” (Morvan, 2014). Morvan (2014) admits this phenomenon does not occur only in Math. Interestingly, Morvan (2014) points out school level does not prevent or preclude discriminatory practices.

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The curriculum extends to the elementary level as Morvan's (2014) article discusses as early as elementary school racist tendencies and practices concerning course selection occur this practice occurs even when selecting group-levels inside the classroom. Morvan (2014) does concede teacher choice; experiences and prejudices may be the result of action. When a student becomes a high school student, the segregation based on race grows evidenced by the courses offered and selected; and the tracks students follow as they matriculate high school (Morvan, 2014). Morvan (2014) does concede some segregation occurs based on other factors such as socio-economics but argues race as a leading factor. Whenever racist or discriminatory practices occur, the playing field tilts negatively against African-American students (Ares et al, 2018; Cross, 2003; Morvan, 2014). The negative tilt prevents African-American students from learning on a level playing field with their European-American counterparts (Morvan, 2014).

Higher education, the college and university levels appear no better addressing racism and curriculum. The literature explicitly states multicultural education and anti-racism are not the same. Peters (2015) succinctly confirms the idea when he states, "Anti-racist education differed strongly from multicultural education, designed to eliminate the practice of classifying people according to their skin color or racial identity." Despite the advances, leaders in higher education believe they made, offering programs and courses, numerous authors countered those contentions. Peters (2015) contends professional learning presenters do not speak regarding racism and gender at professional conferences, when writing journal articles or during general class discussions. Additionally,

higher education has taken little to no action to better prepare teachers by providing curriculum-ending actions extending privilege and racist sentiments saturating the learning environment (Peters, 2015).

Failing research and extensive literature explicitly addressing the root causes racism inflicts, there are enough sources discussing the backside, the consequences, or damages the racist behaviors ingrain. The available literature indicates consistency with the tenants Critical Race Theory and White Privilege present: lacking diversified teaching, especially urban areas where African-American students make up the highest concentration. The literature extends racist tenants manifest themselves deeply penetrating current P-20 curriculum and by extension infiltrating the classrooms where the curriculum occurs. Not presenting or discussing racism's tenants, they are seen flooding teacher preparation programs through the exclusionary processes. Honestly, scholars like Peters (2015) contend higher education prepares and teaches students, as an overt privilege, thus the ways of racism seep down the curriculum. Therefore, this discussion must continue and more articles need written.

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