

## Journal of Research on Educational Effectiveness (JREE)

### Call for Special Issue on Critical Quantitative Approaches for Anti-Racist Transformation in Education

#### Guest Editors

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#### Overview

JREE publishes research on the effectiveness of programs, policies, or practices aimed at improving educational success, and methodological studies that improve our ability to conduct effectiveness research. Historically, JREE has focused primarily on *effectiveness* research (after all, it's in the journal title) – typically using quantitative methods that support causal inference, with occasional descriptive research.

In a 2019 article published in JREE, however, Judy Singer highlights some limitations of this causal focus stating, “I ask us to question whether our laser focus on causal inference—which will remain crucially important—has crowded out other methods for studying equally important—yet not necessarily causal—questions.” (Singer, 2019, p. 570). Specifically, a focus on causal inference may limit JREEs ability to attract research on racial equity and anti-racism in education.

Lashawn Richburg-Hayes (SREE President, 2021), in a [letter to the SREE community](#), reminded us that “we have the opportunity to reflect on how we can further add nuance to our work through mixed methods that seek to identify and codify context from multiple perspectives; through identifying policies that are either racialized or have racial implications; and to think deeply about recommendations and next steps that move toward joint solutions (rather than ones that act upon communities of color without their input).”

In this special issue we seek papers with a particular focus on (re)imagining, (re)visioning, or (re)presenting effectiveness research in ways that attend to racial (in)justice in education. The call rests on three interconnected questions:

1. What methodological possibilities exist that expand ways to address racism through effectiveness research?
2. What does effectiveness research have to offer, as a theory of action, toward racial justice in education?
3. How might we (re)imagine, (re)vision, or (re)present effectiveness research in ways that center and humanize BIPOC communities?

#### Critical Quantitative Approaches & Racism

In 2018, *Race Ethnicity and Education* published a special issue *QuantCrit: Rectifying Quantitative Methods Through Critical Race Theory* edited by Nichole M. Garcia, Nancy López & Verónica N. Vélez. This issue sought to engage scholars in a dialogue between Critical Race Theory and quantitative methods to make inroads towards racial justice (Garcia et al., 2018). Nearly five years later, educational research is still at the early stages of collectively addressing racism through the use of critical quantitative methods. Yet, the call is louder than ever. The

ongoing simultaneous pandemics of racism, COVID-19, and racial capitalism have prompted universities, education organizations, and journals to seriously reflect on how structural racism is operationalized in educational spaces.

This special issue seeks to use critical quantitative methods to contribute to the understanding, disruption, and transformation of racism in education. Drawing on Garcíá et al. (2018), we understand *critical quantitative methods* as the joint application of critical theories and quantitative methods to interrogate the “historical, social, political, and economic structures and power relations (p.150). Critical quantitative methods also require self-reflexivity and move beyond the exercise of knowledge “production” to the creation of a more just society. Examples of critical quantitative methods frameworks include QuantCrit (Gillborn et al., 2018) and Critical Race Quantitative Intersectionality (Covarrubias & Vélez, 2013); though there are many other scholars that use critical quantitative inquiry without naming it as such. We are particularly focused on the ways that race is socially constructed to create hierarchical categories to justify the oppression and subjugation of BIPOC communities. Drawing from the work of Eve Tuck and K. Wayne Yang, we are interested in papers that move beyond documenting damage or empirically substantiating the oppression and pain of Native communities, urban communities, and other disenfranchised communities (2014, p. 226-227).

### Areas of Focus

We invite empirical and conceptual paper submissions that do any of the following:

- **Apply critical theoretical and conceptual frameworks** such as Critical Race Theory, QuantCrit, Critical Race Quantitative Intersectionality, Chicana Feminist Epistemology, Endarkened Feminist Epistemology, and Queer theory to advance racial justice in education in deep and meaningful ways.
- **Interrogate the focus on effectiveness research:** How has the focus on effectiveness research impacted the scholarship JREE has promoted, in terms of racial equity in education? Are there implications of JREE’s epistemological preferences, with respect to improving racial equity in education? When we critique our practice through a racial equity-focused lens, what do we see as needing change or improvement? What new or different tools do we need for conducting effectiveness research when focusing on racial equity in education? Effectiveness research has limitations – are there unique additional limitations when it comes to addressing racial equity in education? As we consider these questions, are there aspects of JREE’s focus we must be sure not to lose?
- **(Re)imagine and (re)vision the ideological assumptions** behind effectiveness research that are often rooted in white supremacist logics, center white, middle-class cultural values, all while claiming scientific objectivity. Submissions in this area of focus should interrogate seemingly objective assumptions in effectiveness research on racial equity in education. For reference, please see two SREE-sponsored webinars on [Critical Perspectives in Quantitative Methods](#) – Slides for [Webinar 1](#) and Slides for [Webinar 2](#).
- **Critique the process of research and policy-making more broadly:** How do interventions get designed? How do we select the ones that eventually get formally evaluated? How does funding impact research generation? Who is at the table at each stage of research? Who are the audiences of the produced work? How does this impact

the evidence that gets generated? We seek commentary on the overall pipeline of research, from genesis forward.

- **Interrogate the use of causal inference approaches in answering questions most pressing in education regarding racial equity.** For example, does examining intervention effects by race reinforce deficit thinking and implicit bias more than any value it may offer? What can effectiveness research, and associated methodologies, bring to issues of systemic racism? We seek articles that tackle these sorts of questions, ideally with specific examples and, in the case of critique, offering identified alternatives.
- **Apply or introduce new and innovative methodological tools for research that humanize communities of color.**

Overall, we are interested in submissions that [disrupt white logics and methods](#) in efforts to consider a racially just future and the humanization of dark bodies (Zuberi & Bonilla-Silva, 2008). We embrace explicit academic refusals (Simpson, 2004; Grand, 2018) as a way to decolonize the use of quantitative methods and invite scholars to employ not just their minds, but their bodymindspirits into their proposals (Tuck & Yang, 2014; Lara, 2002).

### **Proposal Submission**

Initial submission should be a structured abstract (up to 1000 words) summarizing the following aspects of the proposed submission:

- Background/Context
- Research Question
- Theoretical framework
- Data and Methodology (if relevant)
- Results (if relevant)
- Conclusions/Implications/Significance

**Submissions should be emailed to [danialfrancis@umb.edu](mailto:danialfrancis@umb.edu) with the subject title “JREE Special Issue.”**

### **Anticipated Timeline**

Recognizing that some contributors may be prepared to submit an abstract quickly and would benefit from more time between the invitation to submit a complete manuscript and the full manuscript submission deadline, we will conduct two rounds of abstract reviews – an early round and a final round. All proposal submissions will be given equal consideration regardless of submission date.

- First round abstract submission deadline: Aug 1, 2022
- First round invitations sent to authors to submit complete manuscripts: Aug 15, 2022
- Final round abstract submission deadline: Sept 2, 2022
- Final round invitations sent to authors to submit complete manuscripts: Sept 16, 2022
- Manuscripts due for peer review: Feb 3, 2023

## References

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