



Short Communication

Student Perceptions of Home School and Racism

Bryant, Larry¹ and Larson, Theodore^{2,*}

¹School of Urban Education, Metropolitan State University – St. Paul., ²Department of Business, University of North Texas Dallas

*Email: theodore.larson@untdallas.edu

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Abstract

This paper introduces the importance of critical race theory for home school analysis. An analysis of survey data suggests further study is needed on the context of why student perceived their own mode of schooling as being the most likely to propagate racism.

Keywords: Homeschool, Racism, Critical Theory

1 Introduction

Because education is a method of transferring knowledge, patterns, and culture, there is a moderate body of literature focused on identifying racism in the public education system. This seems to make sense, as primary school education is mandatory, and public school is often seen as the ‘normal’ mode of school attendance.

However, The Department of Education National Center for Education Statistics states that in 1999 there were approximately 850 thousand homeschooled children in the United States (US DOE, 2001). In 2003 there were approximately 1.1 million homeschooled children in the United States (US DOE, 2006). In 2012 there were approximately 1.77 million homeschooled children in the United States (US DOE, 2016). And, in 2017 (the most recent data) there were 1.8 million homeschooled children in the United States (Grady, S). It is evident that there is a consistent increase in the number of homeschooled students.

Despite the increasing relevance of homeschooling, there is a dearth of articles on racism in homeschooling. A Google Scholar search for the keyterms ‘homeschool racism’ resulted in 956 articles, 0 in the over the most recent year, whereas a Google Scholars search for the keyterms ‘education racism’ resulted in 991,000 articles, 1,060 in the last year. A quick ratio of homeschool children (US DOE, 2016) / children enrolled in US schools (US CB, 2017) (1.8 million / 77.2 million) gives a rate of 2.33%. The number of articles on ‘homeschooling racism’ / ‘education racism’ (956 / 991,000) gives a rate of 0.096%. There is poor representation of the homeschool population when compared with the general school population when it comes to academic analysis in the observation of racism in education.

2 Methods

As a result, a research study was proposed that would provide initial insights into perception of recent and non-recent high school graduates on racism in different schooling environments. A survey was developed of 6 questions: 3 demographic questions, 1 simple permutation rating question, and 2 open-ended questions.

The study intended to address three hypotheses:

- H1: There would be a statistically significant difference in the perception of racism by schooling type.
- H2: There was a statistically significantly larger perception of racism in public schools than in other schooling types.
- H3: There would be a statistically significantly smaller perception of racism in homeschooling than in other schooling types.

This, in turn, leads to

- h1a: There is no statistically significant difference in the perception of racism by school type.
- H2a: There is not a statistically significant increase in the perception of racism in public schools.
- H3a: There is not a statistically significant decrease in the perception of racism in homeschooling environments.

A sample of convenience of about 200 students was selected from the student population at a mid-sized urban university. Students were selected from both education and non-education majors to provide control and an added variable for future analysis. Approximately 33.5% of the responses (17.1% of education majors and 71.6% of non-education majors) were discarded due to illegibility, lack of response, non-submission of survey, or similar circumstances. The resulting submissions were transcribed and coded.

schooling
types.

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A follow-up study may also benefit from targeted responses, constraining responses from eight rankings to simply most or least. There is a large body of literature indicating that a reduction in response options increases accuracy by respondents (Brown, 2000, Rodriguez, 2005).

Finally, the two principle areas of interest for further research center around questioning the reasons for the perception of an increase in racism reinforcement in public schools and for the perception of a decrease in racism reinforcement in homeschooling.

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