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# Introduction

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#### Abstract

Studies suggest that restorative justice approaches have shown promise in terms of the positive impact on school climate, student behavior, and relationships (McPhail, 2019). The purpose of this study is to demonstrate how harmful the school to prison pipeline has zeroed in affecting academic achievement and well-being of Black female students. The study examined literature on Zero Tolerance, School Discipline Disparities, African American Female students, Intersectionality, and Restorative Justice. A qualitative case study method was used for this study, drawing from two sources: (a) face-to-face interviews and (b) observations of the Black female students who attend Middle school and participate in the talking circles. From the analysis, interview questions will be centered around themes such as talking circle protocols, self-advocacy, circle topics, coping skills attended, and relationships.

#### Introduction

Nationwide, Black girls are seven times more likely to receive the toughest forms of discipline than their white peers (Hill, 2018). Black boys and Black girls share a common racialized risk of punishment in school; however, Black girls face a statistically greater chance of suspension and expulsion compared to other students of the same gender (Smith-Evan, George, Graves, Kaufmann, & Frohlich, 2014). Under zero tolerance policies in public schools, Black girls are more likely to be referred to law enforcement agencies and arrested (Hill, 2018). These standards are especially harmful for Black girls who are victims of bullying or sexual harassment because when girls try to stand up for themselves, they are seen as aggressive and loud (Hills, 2018). The disproportionate suspension and expulsion rates for Black girls is an overlooked crisis that affects not only their chances for a better future, but also their well-being (Smith-Evan, George, et al., 2014). It is clear that these painful and highly stressful experiences can have a profound effect on behavior and learning. As a result, it is critical that educators create a space and place for Black girls to define and redefine themselves by implementing school programs such as restorative justice practices that help address the unique social-emotional and relational needs of girls before they get into trouble with the law.

Restorative Justice (RJ) shifts away from punitive and retributive concepts of justice to restorative, which offers students a chance to take responsibility for their actions, to understand the harm they have caused, give them an opportunity to redeem themselves and to discourage them from causing further harm. RJ practices have the potential to improve school climate, decrease suspensions, expulsions, and reduce disproportionality in student discipline (Skrzypek, Bascug, Ball, Kim, & Elze, 2011). Furthermore, many girls become disengaged from learning when school staff resort to zero tolerance policies. Girls often seek help from teachers and

administrators, yet staff responses are inappropriate and unsupportive which harms students' well- being (Smith-Evan, George, et al., 2014). Establishing a space for Black girls that honors their identities, intellectual talents, and cultural wisdom could create a sense of community for them (McArthur, Lane, 2018). RP meets students' developmental needs by forming a supportive learning environment, promoting positive youth development, student well-being, academic achievement, and school safety (Skrzypek, Bascug, et al., 2011).

# **Background**

The school to prison pipeline is the pattern of removing students from educational institutions, primarily through zero- tolerance policies, and putting them on the track to the juvenile and adult criminal justice system. (Miguel &Gargano, 2017). Due to the policies of zero tolerance, some schools have become pipelines to the criminal justice system for many of our youth. It has been widely documented that zero- tolerance policies disproportionately affect students of color, produce a multitude of harmful consequences for youth, costly affects families and communities (Smith-Evan, George, et al.,, 2014). There are indications that frequent police contact, even of minor nature, has a great impact on student's perceptions of the police and school's environment. If students feel targeted by school police, youth will no longer see schools as a place that nurtures their development nor feel surrounded by adults who care about their future. Students will begin to feel unsupported in school which will hinder their ability to be successful or create positive relationships with adults (American Civil Liberties Union [ACLU], 2017).

# **Purpose of the Research**

This study is significant because African American girls are mistreated within the school system which is supposed to be a safe place for them. Consequently, their well-being is being

jeopardized at the hands of educators. For example, African American girls represent 17 percent of all female students, but 31 percent of all girls referred to law enforcement and 43 percent of girls who experienced a school- related arrest. (Smith-Evan, George, et al., 2014). Educators have the legal duty to protect and respond to child abuse. Yet, create a hostile, unsafe environment for students every time they utilize zero tolerance policies. It is time to invest in the future of African American girls. The goal of this study is to demonstrate how utilizing restorative justice circles can positively impact African American student's well-being not only in academics, but in life. This study will address the following: How do African American female middle school students participating in restorative circles perceive themselves in terms of their academic performance and overall well-being?

#### **Literature Review**

# Impact of zero tolerance on students, school, and society

In 2013, an 8- year- old girl was arrested for "acting out", and later that year a 12-year-old girl faced expulsion and criminal charges after writing "hi" on a locker room wall.

(Crenshaw, Ocen, & Nanda, 2015). African American girls are on the receiving end of zero-tolerance policies that ultimately subject them to violence, arrest, suspension, and/ or expulsion.

(Crenshaw, et al., 2015). The impacts of zero-tolerance policies have an overall negative effect on students, specifically students of color are disproportionately impacted by such policies. The most critical impacts of zero-tolerance policies include exclusion from education, criminalization of students, militarization of schools, and does not offer opportunities to build positive relationships with teachers and schools (Nicholson-Bester, 2020). As a result, students who obtain a criminal record have a challenging time accessing higher education and funding, job eligibility, access to public housing, and possible penalty enhancements if a student comes into

contact with law enforcement in the future. (ACLU, 2017). Recent study discovered San Bernardino City Unified School District, in California, makes more juvenile arrests than do community police in some of California's largest cities, most of these arrests are for misdemeanors like disorderly conduct. (ACLU,2017). Schools that continue to utilize zero tolerance policies have students criminalized for behaviors that frustrate adults but are a typical part of child development. Additionally, research has shown that police officers are more likely to arrest juveniles than adults engaging in similar behaviors, and more likely to exercise authority over perceived disrespect by juveniles (ACLU, 2017).

Zero-tolerance policies were adopted under the assumption that measures taken would discourage future misbehavior and create better learning environments for students. (ACLU, 2017) However, national studies have shown that zero-tolerance discipline, suspensions, or expulsions, and contact with law enforcement as a vital authority to school discipline can have damaging effects on students, teachers, and school environment (ACLU, 2017). Being excluded from school can create feelings of isolation and frustration in students, leading them to disengage from school and can also result in negative mental health outcomes. (Nicholson-Bester, 2020). Victor Rios investigates policing in schools and found school administrators, teachers, guidance counselors, and other members of the school community are more reliant on law enforcement for classroom management (ACLU, 2017). Yet, zero tolerance policies have shown little benefit in terms of improving school climate. When students are exposed to these policies, many of them do not feel safe at school, which affects their school attendance, academic performance, and overall well-being. A positive school climate has been linked to better attendance, decreased likelihood that children will be harassed or subject to violence, and increased student willingness to rely on adults in conflict situations (ACLU, 2017). Such an atmosphere will provide a safe,

supportive, encouraging, and inviting place for students and staff, which will allow students' academic achievement and development to evolve. In an attempt to create a positive school culture, using school policing or harsh punishments should not be considered.

For many vulnerable youth, zero tolerance policies fail to provide equal opportunities. School-to-prison pipeline and zero tolerance policies are deeply connected to our current political and social climate which is increasingly harsh and concerned in punitive punishment rather than understanding (Crenshaw, et al., 2015). Outside of schools, the National Institute of Justice found that communities policing engaged in "traditional programs under the community policing label," relying on zero-tolerance methods and failing to engage in the community in a meaningful way (ACLU, 2017). When reporting countless offenses to the judicial system, forms a condition where minor problems previously handled at the school can result in jail time and criminal records for young people (Nicholson-Bester, 2020). As a result, zero tolerance policies do not give students the opportunity to learn from their mistakes and consider our students as disposable in our society. Youth of color in particular are at increased risk for being pushed out of schools, pushed out into the streets, into the juvenile justice system, and/or into adult prisons and jails (Smith-Evans, George, et al., 2014). McPhail, 2019 found referrals in 364 elementary and middle schools which indicated that students from African American families were 2.19 and 3.78 times as likely to be referred to the office for problem behavior compared with their White peers. Community involvement is necessary in an effort to promote a healthy and open environment for all (Harris, Hockaday, & McCall, 2017). It is crucial for all stakeholders to create community support in order for students to prosper in academics and in life.

#### African American females and their overrepresentation in school discipline

The U.S. Department of Education Office for Civil Rights reveals that one of the harshest forms of discipline out of school suspension is imposed on black girls at seven times the rate of

their white peers (Smith-Evans, George, Goss et al., 2014). Yet, the majority of research on zerotolerance policies and the School-to-Prison Pipeline focuses on the experience of Black boys. While it is certainly serious, the impact of such policies on Black girls must also be clarified and understood in relation to other documented patterns in the punitive turn in society and educational policy (Nicholson-Bester, 2020). For example, Black girls are represented disproportionately of poor school achievement, sexual objectification, including harsh school disciplinary consequences, such as suspension and expulsion when compared to their White male and White female counterparts. Under zero tolerance policies in public schools, black girls are also more likely to be referred to law enforcement agencies and arrested. A recent report from the African American Policy Forum, confirms the detrimental impacts of zero-tolerance, Black girls account for one in four juvenile arrests in the United States, and Black girls in public schools are suspended at a rate of 12%, compared to a 2% rate of suspension for their White peers (Nicholson-Bester, 2020). The disparate treatment of black girls in school is compounded by the fact that they are more likely to face physical abuse and endure more adverse childhood experiences that can lead to trauma. This research encourages a target focus on Black girls, in an effort to ensure that their voices do not continue to fall through the crack.

#### **Intersectionality**

This work contributes to a small but growing body of work on the intersectional struggles faced by Black girls within the School-to-Prison Pipeline (Nicholson-Bester, 2020). Black girls are often trapped in environments that do not fully support their personal and academic development. For example, their experiences at schools within the context of zero-tolerance policies serve to exacerbate their levels of trauma, creating school itself to become a sight of trauma and terror for young Black girls (Nicholson-Bester, 2020). The intersection of

American girls, likely due to bias in the practice of discretion by teachers and administrators (McPhail, 2019). Educators view the behavior of black girls differently than their white counterparts, and utilize disciplinary codes that include "racially stereotypical" words like, insubordinate, disrespectful, uncooperative, and uncontrollable as an attempt to describe their behavior (Hill, 2019, pg.61.) Furthermore, many teachers criticized girls for their perceived challenges to authority and thought their behavior required reform. McPhail (2019), showed how the students' race shaped adults' perceptions of their femininity, highlighting how systems in schools are targeted to cast girls in a specific model of womanhood (pg. 24). Similarly, in another ethnographic study concerning race, class, and gender, adults at the school tended to view the behaviors of African American girls as not "ladylike" and attempted to discipline them into dress and manners considered more gender-appropriate (McPhail, 2019, pg. 24) These findings demonstrate the need to create a caring, competent, and restorative community to ensure Black girls are given the opportunity to thrive in schools.

#### **Research on Restorative Justice**

Restorative Justice offers students a chance to take responsibility for their actions, to understand the harm they have caused, give them an opportunity to redeem themselves and to discourage them from causing further harm. The framework was offered as a way for victims to participate in individuals' punishments by verbalizing how they were impacted by a crime and what they needed to feel or see for justice to be served (McPhail, 2019). Restorative Practices Circles help students solve problems without violence and help them learn about their behavior. Early studies indicate that RP holds significant promise; however, proponents of RP in the field have identified that theoretical and evidence-based research is falling behind practice (McPhail,

2019). There is a need for rigorous research on restorative justice practices. Findings suggest the benefits of Restorative Practices Circles included promoting communication, expressing thoughts and feelings, perspective taking, and opportunity for learning (Skrzypek, Bascug, et al., 2011). RP has three main goals: (a) accountability; (b) community safety; and (c) competency development (McPhail, 2019).

- Accountability. Restorative justice approaches provide opportunities for offenders to be accountable to those they have harmed and allow them to repair the harm (McPhail, 2019, pg. 26).
- Community safety. Restorative justice recognizes the need to keep the community safe through strategies that build relationships. (McPhail, 2019, pg. 26)
- Competency development. Restorative justice seeks to increase the social skills of those who have harmed others, tackles the underlying issues that causes youth to engage in criminal behavior, and builds on student's strengths. (McPhail, 2019, pg. 26)

Restorative practices used in schools, such as circles, mediation counseling, and peer juries, have been found to produce restorative school cultures that seek to provide a space for the reparation of harm (McPhail, 2019). Research suggests restorative justice strategies have demonstrated a positive increase in the impact of school climate, student behavior, and relationship (McPhail, 2019). For example, talking circles not only positively affect Black female students' lives but also might be able to help identify support and students' needs (McPhail, 2019). These programs have been found to be applicable intervention strategies for student and staff conflict, negative youth behaviors in class, and other problems that may require parent involvement (McPhail, 2019). The goal is to create disciplinary practices that foster safe,

inclusive, and positive learning environments while keeping students in school (Smith-Evans, George, et al., 2014).

# Methodology

The purpose of this study was to demonstrate how utilizing restorative justice circles can positively impact African American student's well-being not only in academics, but in life. This study will address the following: How do African American female middle school students participating in restorative circles perceive themselves in terms of their academic performance and overall well-being?

A narrative approach was used to explore the implementation of restorative circles applied by middle school African American girls and identify how talking circles can improve students overall academic performance and mental health. In terms of methodology, Narrative study was used to explore Black Female students experiences of the implementation of restorative circles which allows students to tell their stories. Narrative research is conducted to increase understanding of significant issues related to teaching and learning through the telling and retelling of students' stories (Mills &Gay, 2019, pg.352).

I used qualitative research study design to understand the social activities within student's real-life environment. This study will be conducted at a middle school located in the south region of the Los Angeles Unified School District. The data of my study will come from two resources:

(a) face- to face interviewers with approximately 12 Black female students and (b) observations of the Black female students who attend school and participate in the talking circles. The interviews will be semi- structured questions aimed to obtain deeper information on the Black female students' experience at the middle school. Observations of the talking circles were

conducted to record the interactions between the circle facilitator and students as well as students and their peers (McPhail, 2019).

#### **District and School Context setting**

The research will be conducted at a Middle School level located in the south region of the Los Angeles Unified School District. Second largest in the nation, the Los Angeles Unified School District enrolls more than 600,000 students in kindergarten through 12th grade. Out of 235 schools in LAUSD with at least 20 African American students enrolled, 166 have poor academic ratings for African American students (Soria, 2018). According to LAUSD school experience survey results, more than half of African American students do not consider their school to be a supportive and inviting place to learn. While LAUSD schools have decreased their suspension rates over the past few years from 7% in 2011-12 to 3%, LAUSD continues to be the second highest rate of suspensions of Black students (Soria, 2018). With 50,557 African American students in LAUSD that make up one of the largest student populations in the state, are being let down by schools and poorly prepared for college and career (Soria, 2018).

Bret Harte Preparatory Middle, the home of the "Brave, Benevolent, and Brilliant Saints, where all students have dignity and respect" affirmed by the Principle, will be where I will begin my study. Bret Harte Preparatory Middle student population includes a total of 452 students enrolled with 112 African American students. According to an annual survey conducted by LAUSD, 50% of students do not feel safe at the school. For example, 24% of African American students attending this school have been suspended at least once during 2019-202 school year. Furthermore, as of 2019, Bret Harte Preparatory Middle school is performing below average in chronic absenteeism, suspension rate, English Language Arts, and Mathematics. While district

plans included Restorative Justice practice, Bret Harte Preparatory Middle school continues to utilize Zero Tolerance policies.

# **Selection of Population**

The qualitative sampling strategy will be purposely sampling. Purposive sampling is used to select information for the most effective use of limited resources (McPhail, 2019). In purposeful sampling, the researcher is able to choose from one that can learn a great deal about the issues which will be the purpose of the research (Glesne, 2010). Participants will be recruited from administrative referrals (purposive) and from staff (purposive). Participants who will meet the criteria for participation in the study must identify as a Black female, are at risk for failing 4 classes, and must be enrolled at the middle school. Before the study begins, I will meet with the principal to provide an overview of the study. I also will work closely with the middle school counselor, who arranged the girls' schedules to allow them to participate in the talking circle (McPhail, 2019).

#### **Recruitment Strategies**

Introduction to best practices must begin with establishing rapport and relationships with diverse stakeholders which include getting to know them and allow them to get to know me, attending staff meetings, and schoolwide celebrations/ events. Based on conversations I will have, I will engage the principle in collaborating the need of support, communication and advocating for the vision of the implementation of restorative justice circles. It is important to have the support of administrators because without their support, it will be challenging to conduct this study. After approval from the principal, I will create a presentation for all stakeholders informing them about the execution of restorative justice practices. I will begin with

identifying the problem/ goal, introduce restorative justice practices, data from other schools who have been successful, and identify key stakeholders. I want to include stakeholders to assist with identifying female students who are at risk for failing and who have been suspended at least once this school year. In an effort to increase buy-in, I will encourage feedback from stakeholders. If the school is worried about the cost, California districts are receiving federal Safe and Supportive Schools funding which are being encouraged to use their grants to implement RP, which can improve the school climate and reduce dependence on punitive responses to student misbehavior (McPhail, 2019).

#### Instrument

Qualitative research study requires methods for gathering information, interviewing, observations (McPhail, 2019) In this research, I will conduct individual interviews with the students, observe students during talking circles, and take notes. Before the interview process, I request consent from each girl's parent/ guardian. Ultimately, participants would be chosen based on fulfilling the consent form requirement. The interview part of the study will be questions about students' perception of talking circles and academic performance. Interviews will be about 20-30 minutes. Questions will be semi- structured in an effort to address research questions and observe students during talking circles. Observation is a vital tool for collecting data in a qualitative study (McPhail, 2019). For this study, observation of the talking circles will be used to notice the interaction between circle facilitator and students, also student/ peer relationship (McPhail, 2019). Watching and listening to the participants' interaction will assist me in capturing information and deeper understanding of each student's perception. (McPhail, 2019).

In the talking circle, students will be sitting in a circle to ensure that everyone can see every face. When facilitating the talking circle session, it will be organized into four parts, including checking in members will briefly share how they are feeling, share concerns or problems, discussion topics, and closing activities which will include a journal prompt or performing a breathing exercise (McPhail, 2019). Participants are offered a chance to speak by going counterclockwise. A person can choose to pass if she does not want to share their thoughts. However, when everyone has spoken then the people who passed are invited to once again to share their ideas. It is important for everyone to hear each other in a talking circle because if one person speaks at a time, there will be no cross conversations.

# Researchers positionality

Prior to the study, I had developed trust and rapport with students and staff at the study site, which are ideal characteristics (McPhail, 2019). I have been a Teacher's Assistant for Los Angeles Unified School District in South Central Los Angeles for nearly 5 years, which has helped me understand how, the Los Angeles Unified School District has not met the needs of mental health professionals, counselors, and social workers and has rather shown up with a 400-person police department (Radio, 2020). When I was first hired, I was assigned to be a teacher assistant. However, my position was suddenly changed from a one on one to an African American young girl. This six-year-old girl would experience randomly triggered fits and episodes of rage creating chaos in an otherwise well-functioning first grade classroom. Her inability to control her anger would cause her to destroy the classroom and behave violently towards both her peers and adults. The school's administration staff were apprehensive to handle her. Before I started working with her, I was told the school police arrested her in an effort to stop her from destroying school property. It became abundantly clear to me that this school did

not take the proper protocols to assist this child. Having police presence on school campuses is harmful to the learning experience, especially for Black students. There is no evidence that states having police present improves school safety. Police are trained to detain, handcuff, and arrest which has increased suspensions, expulsions, and arrest especially in students of color. Police criminalized conflict and disrupted behaviors. Students deserve care, not cops. This emotionally disturbed student in particular opened my eyes to the fact that children with emotional and behavioral impairments, their parents, and their teachers require guidance and support in order to help these children evolve not only academic, but life success.

# **Analysis**

To generate data relevant to the research question, narrative study methodology will be used to begin analyzing the data, responses to the interview questions, observations, and documents. In research, collecting information from multiple data sources for each student may allow for data triangulation to create an in- depth understanding of the research question (Creswell, 2013). Qualitative research utilizes many methods of gathering information, interviews, and observations (McPhail, 2019). In this study, I will conduct face - to face interviews with students, observe the students in the circles, and take field notes (McPhail, 2019). Interview questions will be centered around themes such as talking circle protocols, self-awareness, coping skills, and relationships.

# **Talking Circle Protocols**

The research question addressed in the study was: How do African American female middle school students participating in restorative circles perceive themselves in terms of their academic performance and overall well-being? The first major theme will be provided by

students' experiences involving talking circle procedures. When gathering this information, I would know whether or not students understood what the expectation was in terms of being a part of a talking circle. For example, in a similar study conducted by McPhail (2019) noticed participants felt that there was no level of respect or cooperation in the talking circles due to lack of circle procedures. Therefore, it is important to ask students' perspectives on circle procedures to be able to understand their experience during a talking circle session. Then, I would add any observation I see during the sessions. The goal is for students to fully participate and create a space where they feel comfortable to share their thoughts, ideas, and feelings in a respectful manner.

# **Self- Advocacy/ Self Awareness**

During the interview part of the study, participants will share their thoughts on self-advocacy and self- awareness. This theme is important because students will be able to reflect on their ability to do new things or to do things better than before, and to be able to communicate their needs and wants effectively. Statements by participants may highlight their self-awareness or self-advocacy when interacting with their peers in the talking circles. A benefit of being involved in a talking group, students will be able to reflect on their own actions and the actions of others while also getting to know others on a deeper level which will help students develop positive relationships with others and with themselves (McPhail, 2019). Also, this theme may highlight each participant's discussion of what they considered to be the most helpful topic addressed in the talking circle, including behavior, likes and dislikes, academic goals, and mental health (McPhail, 2019). With this information, I would get a better understanding of students' overall academic performance and well- being. Students will have the opportunity to discuss goals they have created for themselves in an effort to improve academically and mentally.

# **Coping Skills Attend**

For this theme, my questions will be centered around talking circles as a way to let things out/cope. For example, participants would describe the talking circles as an opportunity to let things out, talk about how they are feeling, what was on their mind, or what was frustrating them (McPhail, 2019). I would also observe students during a talking circle session to see if students are able to share their experiences without feeling judged. It is important for students to feel heard and be a part of a group that gives them a voice because it will help encourage safe and productive learning experiences (McPhail, 2019).

# Relationships

Several studies have demonstrated that Restorative Justice approaches have promise in terms of their impact on the school climate, student behavior, and relationships among students and staff (McPhail, 2019). Therefore, I would like to center my questions around relationships students have been able to form to see if participants are able to establish positive relationships with their peers or school staff. I hope students will be able to learn to trust and learn from each other. For example, talking circles can teach students about empathy. Schumacher (2014) found that talking circles provided a safe space for peers to learn from each other, with girls improving their listening, anger management, and empathic skills.

# **Conclusions**

# **Summary**

This study will explore Black middle school girl's perception of restorative circles with a view of improving their academic performance and mental health. Providing Black female

students the opportunity to share their views could help inform schools about the implementation of Restorative Practices, also including the types of support these students need (McPhail, 2019). In a similar study conducted by McPhail (2019), findings indicated that talking circles showed evidence of shaping girls' lives, also students were able to recognize aspects about themselves, express themselves, and build relationships. By conducting interviews with students, questions will be centered around these themes: talking circles procedures, self-awareness/ self- awareness, coping skills, and relationships. In addition, observation of students' interactions during talking circles will be conducted during sessions between facilitators and students as well as between students and their peers (McPhail, 2019).

#### Limitations

Limitations are aspects of a study that are outside the researcher's control and may negatively affect the results or ability to generalize (McPhail, 2019). For example, students may not be honest and hold information that prevents them from studying further. Parents may also have their students withdraw from the study. While the purpose of a narrative study allows students to share their story, all students participating in this study came from one school district, meaning that the results may not be transferable to other geographic areas or socioeconomic groups (McPhail, 2019). In qualitative studies, data often collected from a few individuals, as a consequence, findings cannot be generalized to the larger population (McPhail, 2019). My biases may show up during this study, which may be considered a limitation as it may have affected students' responses.

# **Implications**

This study will support mandatory professional development in the basics of RP and teach staff how to run circles, as well as professional development resources and other materials on Restorative Practices (McPhail, 2019). Teachers should also be trained on gender-specific needs to be able to create an equitable environment for all. Black female students' voices are valuable assets for RP planning, and will address the needs of these students which can help identify specific supplemental programs related to socioemotional, anger management, character building, conflict resolution, and empathy (McPhail, 2019). Furthermore, by utilizing circles in connection to real life situations, students can bring their own experiences to circles to encourage learning and relationship building (Skrzypek, Bascug, et al., 2020). For future research, a longitudinal design is suggested in order to strengthen RP research and present changes in students' experience over time (Skrzypek, Bascug, et al., 2020). It is recommended that students' feel comfortable during talking circles in order to share valuable information about their experiences and about actions that could be taken to improve the circles, increasing facilitators' understanding as to improve RP and training on the intersectionality of Black girls (McPhail, 2019).

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