An Exploratory Study on the Convergence of Black and Indigenous Educators'

Pedagogical and Political Activism: Envisioning Diradical Educational Policy

through Conversation, Resistance, and the Pursuit of Thrival

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Abstract

The aim of convening our Black and Indigenous educator activist collective was to explore how we conceptualized political, pedagogical, and convergent activism. Concurrently, we collectively envisioned educational policy structures Black, Brown, and Indigenous students need and deserve. Diradicalism, my conceptualization of political and pedagogical activism convergence, guided framing, dialogic interactions, and study interpretations. Diradicalism, or dual educational politics, was defined as the dynamic interconnectedness between Black, Brown, and Indigenous educators' resistance acts and thrival pursuit within all educational policy levels and contexts, including classroom, school, district, state, national, and global. In this study, Black and Indigenous educators conversed about their actions to engage in diradicalism and facilitate students' connection to justice-oriented political activity.

Black and Indigenous voices are continuously excluded from educational policy decision-making spaces. In contrast, this study's collective demonstrated a positionality that demands those voices to be prioritized. Black and Indigenous liberation and self-determination has continued to be repressed by the socially constructed and powerful policy actors. Again, our educator activist collective intervened through an anti-colonial and relational study design. We borrowed ancestral knowledges found in Tribal critical theory and Black critical theory to illuminate oppression, imagine beyond repressive structures, and discussed actions taken to realize our collective imaginaries.

Once the collective's envisioning, conversations, and collective sessions ended, our relationships continued. My comrades entrusted me to share our stories illuminating

our connectedness, tensions, negotiations, and Black and Indigenous educational policy visions. I used comrade checks, critical quantification, and coding processes to interpret our conversational findings. To conclude, I extended our collective project offering the *diradical educational policy infrastructure* imaginary that positions to bolster, protect, and compensate my comrades and their co-conspirators' work. Diradical educational policy infrastructure offers one path forward in our collective struggle for Black and Indigenous liberation—it will grow, hold solidarities, and continue to acknowledge the millions of past and present struggles for justice.

I dedicate this dissertation to the millions of Black Americans, Afro-Indigenous people, Pan-Africanists, Jamaicans, my family, and my African ancestors for their resolve, solidarity-building, courage, decisions, and spirit that places me at this knowledge inflection point.

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To NTC, your love for me and being able to give love to you sustained me through the dissertation writing process.

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Field of Study

Educational Studies; Program Specialization in Educational Policy

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A People's Background of Educational Politics

Although Black, Indigenous, and other marginalized groups theorize about the politics of education; the United States of America's (U.S.) systems erase, exclude, and obfuscate their knowledges (Dubois, 1903; Grant, Brown, & Brown, 2015; Simpson, 2014; Tuck et al., 2014). At their foundations, white elites created educational institutions that did not consider the prosperity of Black, Indigenous, and other people of color. In fact, many policy structures intentionally oppressed racially and ethnically marginalized groups. If conversations surrounding the modern influence of anti-Black racism, and Indigenous erasure continue to be repressed, overlooked, and avoided, the education system will perpetuate harm toward Black, Brown, and Indigenous communities. To intervene, critical educational policy scholars and actors demonstrate a collective critical consciousness capable of producing equitable educational policy structures. Further, critical educational policy scholars prioritize Black, Brown, and Indigenous knowledges. The foundational purpose of co-creating the Black and Indigenous educator activist group project centers on our ways of theorizing, studying, and resisting educational inequity—in effect, catapulting our knowledges into an educational policy cannon. We model these critical educational policy aims and collectively theorize and envision a transformed educational policy future.

I borrowed language from Paul Ortiz (2018), Roxanne Dunbar-Ortiz (2014), and Howard Zinn (2003) and start this dissertation by forwarding a *people's background of educational politics*. Educational policy was and is a tool elite, anti-Black, and settler colonial forces use to subjugate racially and ethnically marginalized people. Thus,

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critical politics of education scholarship examines process through the perspectives of those marginalized. There are many stories of Black and Indigenous resistance premising future imaginaries and efforts to realize educational equity. In *a people's background of educational politics*, I organize several historical contexts that excluded Black, Indigenous, and other marginalized communities from policy processes and repressed their ways of engaging in the politics of education. Critical historicism is a central task for justice-oriented and equity-driven educational policy scholarship. I augur why critical approaches to educational policy studies are imperative counternarratives that produce knowledges supporting the abolition of modern oppressive policy structures. This is important because the study's educator activist collective was imagined, designed, negotiated, and executed within these contextual realities.

Black and Indigenous Educational Resistance as Central Politics

The United States of America (U.S.) developed policy systems upon principles of Indigenous erasure, anti-blackness, and elitist patriarchal white supremacy (Dumas, 2016; Tuck & Gorlewski, 2016). The U.S. Constitution created, and U.S. federalism developed the violent denial of Black, Indigenous, and other people of color's political participation. U.S. systems barred Black, Indigenous, and other marginalized groups from voting in elections, participating in policymaking, and running for federal office. On stolen land, U.S. white, wealthy, Christian, heteronormative, and male colonizers constructed and disregarded the sacred humanity of Black and Indigenous people (Kendi, 2016; Woodson, 1919). Intentionally designed to continue domination, U.S. systems subjugated Black people, Indigenous people, women, and low-socioeconomic classes.

One example of an intentionally designed policy for domination is the three-fifths clause

of the U.S. Constitution. The historical context surrounding the clause was as follows:

> [The three-fifths clause] was among the provisions that codified slavery
> into law, one that revolved around how to enumerate [people who were
> enslaved] for the sake of congressional representation and direct taxation.
> If [people who were enslaved] counted toward apportioning congressional
> representation, then states with many [enslaved people] would be
> advantaged. Meanwhile, if [people who were enslaved] counted toward
> apportioning direct taxation, then states with many [people who were
> enslaved] would assume larger tax liability. This framing positioned the
> North to prefer a zero-fifths ratio for representation and a five-fifths ratio
> for taxation, whereas the South desired the opposite. A three-fifths ratio
> was middle ground between these positions, and it represented a
> compromise over sectional disagreements on the worth of [people who
> were enslaved] in relation to freepersons. (Henricks, 2018, p. 286)

Critically interrogating this piece of history highlights the intentional design of policy to

subjugate Black people. Wealthy, white men used policy to dehumanize Black people

while simultaneously resolving power disputes. White supremacists created the social

construct of racial inferiority to uphold their power. Kendi (2016) explained the three-

fifths clause and other U.S. policies, such as the use of federal troops to capture freedom-

seekers and stifle revolts, "ensured slavery's continuance" (p. 117). Dehumanizing Black

people and deeming them as unfit for politics was an intentional strategy to exclude them

from decision-making spaces. The three-fifths clause demonstrates how marginalized

groups were subjected to explicit racist, classist, or sexist policies while simultaneously

being repressed from political participation. However, oppressive policies and exclusion

could not halt Black and Indigenous communities from engaging in the politics of

education. We imagined alternatives to studying and strategized how to collectively

resist educational inequity.

Black education or teaching and learning related to the dynamic experiences of individuals ancestrally connected to the African diaspora, was tightly coupled with resistance, rebellion, and revolt. Black communal, educational, and political activity manifested in dangerous attempts to obtain English literacy. Williams (2005) described the ways African descendants strategized the creation of secret learning spaces where they taught each other to read and write. In further acts of resistance, Africans in bondage realized that literacy acquisition was not enough to end the atrocities of chattel slavery. Thus, they organized rebellions to overthrow their enslavers. During the Stono Rebellion of 1739, an organized and calculated group of twenty educated Kongolese people obtained firearms, killed their oppressors, educated and recruited more enslaved Africans, and planted the seeds of revolution (Thornton, 1991). Historian Jack Shuler (2010) described some of the abhorrent conditions that led to the uprising:

> Traffickers of human beings [European colonizers] were cannibalizing Africa, destroying families, and disrupting social networks. The trauma of surviving the machinations of such greed and selfishness must have tested the strongest wills and bodies. [People who were enslaved] suffered without fresh water, and sufficient food for weeks. Sickness and death were commonplace. Chained bodies, both living and dead, rested in excrement with little light. (p. 67)

Black people continuously challenged and, in many cases, effectively resisted enslavement. Courageously, they passed their strength, courage, political activity, and methods of resistance to generations that came after them. In refusing to accept the abhorrent conditions of colonial European chattel slavery, African descendants theorized educational resistance and engaged in political activity to disrupt European colonialism and white supremacy.

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White elites' response to the Stono Rebellion shows the link between educational policy and Black resistance. They cowered at the collective power of an educated and politically active populace of Black people, and they began to pass anti-literacy laws (Williams, 2005). 30 years before the American Civil War, Nat Turner organized and led another major rebellion. Historians acknowledge Nat Turner's strategic genius and status as a highly literate person (Harris, 1992). After Nat Turner and his allies' abolitionist acts of resistance, elites established more restrictive anti-literacy laws targeting people of African descent. Carter G. Woodson (1919) described the thought process of Southern white elites, "The majority of the south had by this time [1800-1840] come to the conclusion that, as intellectual elevation unfits men [and women] for servitude and renders it impossible to retain them in this condition, it should be interdicted" (p. 9). The criminalization of Black education, or the unequivocal use of educational policy to oppress, codified racist ideologies and white supremacy. Even with the continued white terrorist threat, Black communities engaged in the politics of educational liberation, survival, resistance, and rebellion.

In 1863, the Emancipation Proclamation abolished the system of enslavement, but it did not eliminate racist ideologies in policy processes, nor did it secure full political participation for marginalized communities. During the Reconstruction Congress (1865-1875), one of the all-white male congressmembers' tasks was to construct how the U.S. would determine citizenship. Anderson (2007) described Pennsylvania Senator Edgar Cowan's racism during U.S. citizenship policy deliberations:

Senator Cowan worried that extending birthright citizenship to native-born Chinese would ultimately transfer California from "the Indo-European race" to "the Mongolian." He opposed any legislation, particularly a constitutional amendment, that would turn California, Oregon, Colorado, or Nevada "over to an irruption of Chinese." In Cowan's view, the founding fathers opened the door of American citizenship to the Irishman, German, and the Scandinavian races of the North but not to "the barbarian races of Asia or of Africa." (p. 251)

Although there were Reconstruction congressmen who believed citizenship should be unconditional of racial classifications, the U.S.'s foundational governmental systems allowed many racist white men, such as Cowan, to significantly influence policy construction while continuing to obstruct Black and Indigenous participation. U.S. policymakers eventually codified birthright citizenship into law for African descendants, but Indigenous Americans were intentionally excluded from the birthright citizenship language of the Fourteenth Amendment (Anderson, 2007). The U.S. Congress constructed policy, in the form of a constitutional amendment, that deemed Indigenous Americans as non-citizen occupants of land stolen from them. This brings the people's history to the inseparable link between white supremacy and settler colonialism.

Since the U.S. system did not recognize Indigenous Americans' sovereignty, U.S. policymakers did not consider their educational attainment outside of the interests of settler colonialism. What transpired was the common school movement that connected white, middle-class men with access to the power associated with western education (Rury, 2005): the original proliferation of public schooling excluded Black and Indigenous people. Rury continued, "…Catholics, immigrants, Black [people] or other racial minorities, and feminists, were widely believed to be aberrant, part of the problem

that common schools were intended to resolve" (p. 69). Even when Black and

Indigenous people did participate in western and Eurocentric education, local control was

minimal, and the Eurocentric curriculum harmed Black and Indigenous students. Dr.

Carter G. Woodson (1933) described the post-Civil War curriculum as the "worst sort of

lynching" because the curriculum taught Black people to distain their blackness (p. 3).

Later historical events denote that even when citizenship applied to both Black and

Indigenous people, racist U.S. actors violently restricted equitable educational attainment

and political participation (Bell, 1995).

History tends to obfuscate the insidiousness of educational policy directed to

subjugate Indigenous people. Educational policy was a tool for Indigenous erasure or the

eradication of Indigenous rituals, ways of being, knowledge, culture, and world

paradigms. The earliest U.S. government-chartered schools intended to eradicate

Indigenous ways of living (Tuck, 2013). The Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) used

educational practices to attempt to pacify Indigenous Americans and enact violence so

the U.S. military could continue to exploit land and people. The governmental strategy to

miseducate Indigenous Americans reached a climax in 1892 when a U.S. official

popularized the phrase "kill the 'Indian' in him and save the man campaign" (Rury, 2015,

p. 108). The BIA sought to convert Native peoples to Christianity and instituted bans on

students and communities learning indigenous languages (Reyhner & Eder, 2017). U.S.

educational policy actors did not consider Indigenous people's interests; worse, they

mobilized miseducation to justified land theft, the perpetuation of settler colonialism, and

disconnect Native people from cultural ways of being and knowing.

Native acts to protect themselves from colonizer aggression were continuous, strategic, educational, and collective. Indigenous people protected their sacred spaces and engaged in resistance. Most notably, were Indigenous American women who used their strategic western literacy acquisition to resist erasure and engage in educational politics (Green, 1992). In centering American Indian women's voices, Green shared Menominee activist Ada Deer's storied matriculation into Indigenous educational resistance. Ada maneuvered her way into U.S. law school, disengaged with the western legal institution, and then used her skills to collectively obtain the power necessary to restore Menominee land to communal ownership. Almeida (1997) described how, in the 1960s and 70s, Indigenous American women organized protests and engaged in Indigenous educational resistance through participation in groups such as: American Indian Movement, Women of All Red Nations, National Indian Education Associations, and Coalitions of Indian Controlled School Boards. These Women-led Indigenous educational resistance examples demonstrate Indigenous Americans' strategic, collective, and consistent efforts to resist erasure.

The historical context demarcated above illuminates the structural protection of anti-black and settler colonial logics that manufactured Black and Indigenous voice exclusion in U.S. educational policy processes. Despite being forced to maneuver abhorrently violent spaces; Black and Indigenous people demonstrated their ancestors' resolve through survivance and resistance. This brief analysis is not meant to be a comprehensive history of educational policy in the U.S. There are multiple ways to trace educational inequity guided by racist and settler colonial policy: red-lining (Randolph &

Robinson, 2017), mass incarceration (Majd, 2011), war on drugs (Blumenson & Nilsen, 2007), reproductive rights (DiMauro & Joffe, 2009), and many other educational policy and citizen, land, or occupancy rights entanglements. Critical educational policy scholars understand policy processes as a mechanism of social reproduction perpetuating anti-Black racism, Indigenous erasure, exclusion, and patriarchal white supremacy (Diem et al., 2019). Therefore, critical scholars acknowledge, center, and bolster educational politics that operate outside of dominant gazes. With critical historicism in educational policy studies, this study's educator activist collective positioned ourselves to co-construct knowledge that transforms oppressive systems. Regardless of reactionists' ventures to devalue our knowledges, Black, Indigenous, and other marginalized communities' attempts to obtain the political power necessary to transform systems of oppression is seminal educational politics. This study continues the educational resistance legacy by exploring how modern Black and Indigenous educator activists connect to their ancestors' acts to resist oppressive educational policy, envision beyond current realities, and build new futures.

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

As the study's educator activist collective envisioned equitable educational policy, U.S. state legislatures attempted to ban justice-oriented work. This is no surprise; history holds many examples of white elite violence directed toward Black and Indigenous educational resistance. The critical hope in modern educational justice movements is that justice-oriented educator numbers increase as policy activists continue to build the next educational justice movement actor generations. This increase means there is new and continued potential to build a multigenerational, multinational, multiracial, multiethnic, and multiscalar mass movement capable of obtaining enough power to realize equitable imaginaries and build new futures. Part of this movement-building is a strategic response to resist and circumvent those policy actors who choose to or are socialized to oppress. This is the context where millions of justice-oriented educator activists demand their freedom to continue to teach abolition, liberation, justice, and equity despite white terrorism.

Black and Indigenous educators, and their co-conspirators, demonstrate liberatory work in organizing and participating in coalitions to challenge decisionmakers who obfuscate critical race theory. Tamara Anderson, a Teach Truth campaign organizer, and Jesse Hagopian, U.S. history teacher activist, exhibit Black-led educational justice and coalitional work. Anderson and Hagopian are Zinn Education Project coalition members working to illuminate how racist systems continue to manifest during the COVID-19 pandemic and during the summer of 2020. They show how Black educator activists mobilize communities to galvanize support for teaching honest histories, offer

instructional resources, and protest the gag orders. Simultaneously, Ojibwe Water

Protectors continue their 6-year-long subversion of the illegal construction of the Line 3

pipeline in Northern Minnesota.

The oil pipeline would jeopardize and devastate Ojibwe livelihood, their land, and

water resources. Their accountability to protect each other, land, and water has led to

blocking construction through tethering their bodies to demolition equipment and other

acts of resistance. Water is the foundation of life, human connection, and

interdependence. Defenders mobilize teaching and learning within acts of resistance, but

even more importantly, clean and safe water predicates all peoples' ability to engage in

educational resistance. This study's educator activist collective's knowledge contributes

to educational policy imaginaries that sustain, bolster, value, and fund Black and

Indigenous-led educational justice work. In doing so, we connect to, extend, and are in

solidarity with Black and Indigenous-led movements across the United States. We offer

our Black and Indigenous policy visions as collective contributions to the broadened

educational justice movement and these visions are located at the convergence of our

political and pedagogical activism.

Purpose Statement

Critical educational policy scholars discuss educator justice-oriented political

activism, organizing, and coalition-building in a multitude of ways, but the foundational

aspect, marginalized communities in solidarity with each other, is central to acts

transforming inequitable policy structures. Throughout history educators and their allies

used their collective political power to resist white supremacy (Walker, 2005), engage in

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community organizing (Shirley, 2009), demand living wages (Luce, 2005), challenge school choice policies (Angus, 2012), support candidates in local elections (Hartney & Flavin, 2011) and fight the deprofessionalization of teaching (Haywood-Bird & Kamei, 2019). Maloney et al. (2019) defined justice-oriented educators by forwarding their central aims. They argued justice-oriented educators center teaching and learning in interrogating systems of power that uphold racial, ethnic, social, and economic inequity. Justice-oriented educators pursue collective knowledges that critique societal oppression, and they mobilize relational knowledges to action. They position themselves as actors in educational politics and facilitators in building the educational justice movement's next generation of policy actors.

Many K-12 educators self-identify as justice and equity-oriented activists (Catone, 2014; L. Weiner, 2014). It is important to acknowledge that some politically engaged educators do not consider themselves activists due to semantical differences in understanding the term. Generally, educator activists use their knowledges, resources, and passion for justice to advocate for change in their school buildings and beyond (Picower, 2012). Educator activists focus their political activism on the pursuit of political power to transform systems that reify oppression. Black and Indigenous educators have always spearheaded efforts to capture political power for justice. During the early 20th century, Black educators organized their communities to ensure that they were equipped with the knowledges and skills to resist racism and white supremacy (Williams, 2005). Moreover, in the 1960s, one of the central components of the Black Panther Party platform was the dissemination of liberatory knowledge through

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educational pursuits (Todd-Breland, 2019). A central tenant of Black educational imagination is the deconstruction of racialized oppression; in addition, Black educators dedicate themselves to equipping the next generation of Black intellectuals with the tools to influence and control their realities (Givens, 2021; Love, 2019).

Indigenous educator activists forward important considerations illuminating the importance of decolonizing spirit and mind. Decolonizing aims demand understanding our connection to history (Sandoval et al., 2016), connections to life resources (Neeganagwedgin, 2013), sustaining cultural pluralism (Shava & Manyike, 2018), and engaging in oral traditions (Windchief, 2022). Indigenous educators and researchers sustain storytelling as intergenerational communication passing the ancestral lessons of preservation and communal knowledge (Iseke-Barnes, 2003). Through the pursuit of political power via political and pedagogical activism, modern-day Black and Indigenous educator activists claim principles of resistance, thrival pursuit, and liberatory educational politics.

Traditional educational policy continues its oppressive history; thus, modern Black and Indigenous educator activists continue the legacy of their ancestors and demand structural transformation. Kinloch (2017), and other asset-based pedagogists, argue that a central justice-oriented pedagogical purpose is a turn toward eradicating oppressive education policy. Through social justice union participation (Riley, 2015), community organizing (Maton, 2016), and critical pedagogy usage (Giroux, 2010; Love , 2019), educator activists build coalitions to capture the political power necessary to transform oppressive systems. Justice-oriented K-12 educators are central to structural

transformation because of their unique positions as policy actors, learners, and student agency facilitators.

The scope of their influence transcends the classroom through their communal relationships. For many Black and Indigenous educators, political and pedagogical activism stems from their campaigns to improve educational outcomes for students who share their experiences (Gist, 2018). Seeing ourselves in our students leads to an energy source that makes dual educational politics a deeply relational act. We want to build the type of society that we did not have. This means that our experiences align with holding knowledge about the types of educational policy structures Black, Brown, and Indigenous students deserve, want, and need. Although Black and Indigenous educators are best positioned to create educational policy, much of the literature on educator activism centers white folks' consciousness-raising (Blaisdell, 2018; Picower, 2009; E. Y. Young, 2011). Thus, this study's Black and Indigenous educator activist collective shifts the activism knowledge fulcrum to our ancestral histories, stories, and lived experiences. As we envisioned, created knowledge, and engaged in conversation together we postulated a transformed, equitable, and just educational policy system.

Problem Statement

The study's Black and Indigenous educator activist collective addressed how critical educational policy research and knowledge creation can resist the exclusion of Black and Indigenous voices in educational policy processes. The redress manifests as prioritizing knowledge from Black and Indigenous' efforts to transform oppressive systems and their capacities to teach their students to do the same. When political and

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pedagogical activism is discussed, it is often catered toward white educators (Carter Andrews et al., 2021; Odera et al., 2021). The educational research field's tendency to center white folks' experiences is evident in a field snapshot using the *Web of Science* analysis tool (see Table 1). I entered the term "social justice education" teamed with either "Black people", "white people", or "Indigenous people." Each search was conducted between the years 2000-2021. Note, this is not a comprehensive analysis because the multitude of ways scholars describe justice work in education; however, social justice education is ubiquitous in the field. Additionally, an examiner would need to look beyond the abstracts to understand the full intent of each article. After the initial search and by examining the abstracts, I conducted a refined search to see whose voices were centered and the positionality of the scholar telling the research story. The results show a disproportionate citation distribution when comparing Black and Indigenous searches with the white search. This *Web of Science* search affirms what other critical-situated scholars illuminate—educational justice research trends toward centering white folks' voices and experiences (Carter Andrews et al., 2021; Earick, 2018; Kincheloe & Steinberg, 2000; Moon & Flores, 2000; Solomon et al., 2005).

Table 1. Web of Science Search Analysis

Search Terms			
Group + Social Justice Education	Initial Search	Refined Search	Citations
Black People	39	20	100
white People	59	25	224
Indigenous People (United States)	11	3	31

Note. Numbers represent the total number of articles that meet the search criteria.

The disproportional focus on white people in social justice educational research is evident in the methodologies that are chosen to examine educational policy problems. Educational policy scholars tend to forward positivistic epistemologies coupled with quantitative methods that support harmful and decontextualized implications (Shahjahan, 2011; S. Warren, 2007). Traditional educational policy scholars, who forward positivistic generalizability promote whiteness normalization in quantitative analyses (Zuberi & Bonilla-Silva, 2008). These scholars overvalue large data sets that skew toward white people, and marginalized racial/ethnic groups are unable to influence statistical outcomes (D. Gillborn et al., 2018). This study intervenes invoking anti-colonial methodologies and methods that honor the Indigenous tradition of multiple knowledges. The Black and Indigenous educator activist collective positions knowledge-creation activities as answerable to our relationships to each other and anti-colonial aims.

Finally, there are issues relating to social repercussions for Black, Brown, and Indigenous educators who engage in justice-oriented educational politics (Stitzlein, 2015). School leaders, reactionary parents, or colleagues may flag Black and Indigenous educators as being "reverse racist" (Shah & Apantenco, 2020), give lower teacher evaluation scores (Rivera et al., 2021), force educators into human cages (Royal & Dodo Seriki, 2018), or demand them to change their critical pedagogical practices (Ramlackhan, 2020). The magnitude of the punishment for dissent is heightened for Black, Brown, and Indigenous educators (Rivera et al., 2021). Educational elites' actions against Black and Indigenous resistance and pursuit of thrival will end when we have

obtained the people participation amount required to obtain power. This study is one cog

in the analogous educational justice movement machine. The collective contributed to

resistance and thrival pursuit by co-constructing knowledge and insulating envisioning

acts. Specifically, we co-created a space where Black and Indigenous educators built

relationships, shared resources, and were equal knowledge contributors. The collective

envisioned solutions to oppressive educational policy problems by centering our Black

and Indigenous ancestral knowledge passed to us.

Research Questions

In this study, I explore the educator activist collective's conversations by asking

the following research questions:

RQ1. How does a K-12 Black and Indigenous educator activist collective theorize

the dynamic interaction between pedagogical and political activism (or, engage

in dual educational politics—diradicalism)?

RQ2. What educational policy structures do we collectively envision?

Expanding on who is consider a "teacher," I parametrize to educators who may engage in

beyond-the-state teaching and learning. Historically, and in modern educational spaces,

elders, parents/guardians, siblings, and other family members are central to communal

education (Beard, 2021; Mccarty et al., 2010; McCarty & Lee, 2014; San Pedro, 2021).

Additionally, community organizers, street medics, protestors, canvassers, water

defenders, land defenders, and leaders of grassroots organizations are all educators

(Burley, 2020; Grady-Benson & Sarathy, 2016; Mazama & Lundy, 2015; Shield et al.,

2020, C. A. Warren & Marciano, 2018). Expanding to K-12 schools, facilities staff,

intervention specialists, coaches, school volunteers, building substitutes, student teachers, bus drivers, and preservice undergraduate student observers are essential participants in the justice-oriented teaching and learning project. Their relationships underpin their collective participation in educational justice, teaching, and learning. Western, white educational constructs and state-sanctioned licenses devalue teaching and learning from non-licensed community roles. The policymaker-institutionalized devaluation creates state-sanctioned professional degrees that act as gatekeepers to who can facilitate teaching and learning (Marom, 2019; Poitras Pratt & Hanson, 2020; J. M. Weiner, 2020).

This study's educator activist collective included non-traditional educators such as: a building substitute, administrative assistant, and aspiring principal, Social Emotional Learning specialist, former educator, and instructional coach. This broadened inclusion moves state-sanctioned teaching and learning to educational justice participants in their multiple communal roles. I use the term *educator* to name the broadened teacher construct because the study's collective pushed back against stringent parametrizations and colonial framings of teachers and learners.

Secondly, we examined political and pedagogical activism convergence through our positionality as K-12 Black and Indigenous educator activists. We continued a *people's background of educational politics* legacy since our ancestral knowledge connects us to past and present Black and Indigenous educational resistance. Thus, our activism efforts were the central component in co-creating knowledge about educational politics. Our knowledge was positioned to answer the research question, but more importantly, we dreamed of building new and equitable futures. The reasons above firmly

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position this study within the critical educational policy studies field with a focus on Black and Indigenous educational justice policy actors.

From Policy Generalizability to Justice Knowledge Exchanges

Traditional education policy scholars argue policy generalizability stems from experimental and quasi-experimental research designs (Morel, 2018; Shahjahan, 2011). These experimental scholars make causal claims relating to a mythical objective reality. Their logics are positivistic because they assume that identifying and controlling for confounding variables leads to the ability to generalize across similar samples, or localities/communities/schools. In turn, the educational policy field becomes a static application of harmful structures disadvantaging marginalized communities (Johnson, 2021). Critical educational policy scholars disagree with these positivistic paradigms and draw on understandings of generalizability as "attempts to move their findings toward that which is not yet imagined, not yet in practice, not yet in sight" (Fine, 2006, p. 100). To the critical policy researcher, generalizability is the relational space where coalitions imagine collective action, share the impact of perceived failure, design equitable and contextual policy solutions, and transcend static local, state, and national boundaries. The contrasting generalizability interpretations leads to important considerations for educational policy methodologies, methods, and aims.

Justice knowledge exchanges are anti-colonial research activities, with decolonial aim, that reject traditional policy generalizability. Justice knowledge exchanges emulate the importance of educational justice movement research. In justice knowledge exchange projects, the goal is not to show how one context can be repeated in another context. The

aim is to show how one community or collective built power, connected to each other, co-constructed knowledge, and imagined equitable futures. Then, similarly situated justice-oriented policy actors can explore knowledge in a way that makes sense for their contextualized realities. Here, the justice knowledge exchange is a conversation that transcends temporal and physical boundaries and connects past, present, and future. Justice knowledge exchanges are more relational and contextualized than traditional policy generalizations.

To realize abolitionist aims and build new structures, critical educational policy scholars push research activities to explore connections among all knowledge contributors (Wemigwase & Tuck, 2019). The foundation of organizing, activism, or coalition-building is a common and relational understanding of the collective struggle (Carruthers, 2018). Collective liberation, relationship-building, and knowledge creation are tightly coupled in educational justice movements. Movement policy actors deeply consider relationships in justice knowledge exchanges. As actors connect with each other, they negotiate equitable and new futures by making connections with comrades across the movement. The relationships' strength holds major implications for movement sustainment and whether equitable futures can be realized. Justice knowledge exchanges contrast traditional generalizability because co-researchers move knowledge creation away from harmful decontextualization. Our study's collective connects to contextual justice knowledge exchanges because we asked each other to envision futures, center relationships, and contribute to movement building.

Theoretical Frameworks

The theoretical frameworks that undergird the collective's conversations are guided by our ancestors' contributions and the Black and Indigenous scholars that came before us. These theories are Critical Race Theory (CRT), Black Critical Theory (BlackCrit), and Tribal Critical Race Theory (TribalCrit). The knowledge, theories, and worldviews we pulled from were created from the imaginations of people seeking to decolonize knowledge and critique power maldistribution. Although many of the cited authors have some affiliations with western universities; they frame and interrogate their work as answerable to Black and Indigenous knowledges, not western higher education institutions (Wane, 2013). Further, the collective's conversations weaved intersectional positionalities, shared vulnerability, and ancestral histories to reject colonial individualism and knowledge ownership.

The study's Black and Indigenous educator activist collective's intersectional positionality focused theory on two extensions of critical race theory (CRT). In addition to naming how Black, Indigenous, and other people of color (BIPOC) experience U.S. educational policy, CRT illuminates the importance of analyzing racist systems' power-hording. Educational CRT supports scholars in explaining and naming the oppressive social realities of Black, Brown, and Indigenous families, educators, and students (Banks & Sleeter, 2013; Ladson-Billings, 2005; Rector-Aranda, 2016). CRT's central assumption is that race/racism played/plays a dominant role in historical and modern educational systems. Thus, educational researchers and practitioners engage in critical race analyses and illuminate institutional-level racism in holding systems accountable.

Critical educational policy scholars use CRT to trace institutional racism's manifestation in schools and district communities (Aviles de Bradley, 2015; Dutil, 2020; Powers, 2007; Sandles, 2020). Educational CRT scholars continue to respond to, modify, clarify, and add to CRT's central tenets to fit modern attempts to illuminate the dynamic and complex experiences of Black and Indigenous people.

Black Critical Theory, or BlackCrit, responds to CRT by making explicit the theoretical underpinnings of Blackness. Dumas & ross (2016) argue that "advancing BlackCrit helps us to more incisively analyze the 'more detailed ways' that blackness continues to matter" (p. 417). In other words, people of dark complexion's (or those who have been constructed as Black/ associated with Blackness) unique experiences cannot be explained solely through a critique of white supremacy. Anti-Blackness is the socially-constructed position, ideology, and policy-making that places dark-complexed people at the margins of society or at social hierarchies' lower-levels. Therefore, BlackCrit provides a "more detailed, nuanced, historicized, and embodied theorizations of [Black people's] lived racial conditions under specific formations of racial oppression" (p. 417). The specific nature of BlackCrit traces anti-Blackness in all levels of the education system.

Black students are disproportionately punished (Nasir et al., 2013), pushed out of schools (Morris, 2019), and stigmatized as academically less capable (Ford et al., 2010). Moreover, the anti-Black schooling apparatus is reinforced and perpetuated by people of color; thus, moves beyond a sole critique of white elites and white supremacy (Khalifa, 2015). BlackCrit provides analytical specificity into the dynamic and intersectional

Black American experience. Further theorizations of BlackCrit must expand to capture the unique experiences of Black people in an anti-Black world. The collective turned to our lived experiences as Black people and our visions of equitable educational policy to dismantle the anti-Black world.

TribalCrit, another response to CRT, pushes the theory to understand the coloniality of education through the specific lenses of American Indian communities. TribalCrit offers important analyses of the racist and settler colonial world project. Specifically, TribalCrit intertwines critical inquires involving race, racism, white supremacy, and settler colonialism. Brayboy (2005) explains "While CRT argues that racism is endemic in society, TribalCrit emphasizes that colonization is endemic in society while also acknowledging the role played by racism" (p. 430). TribalCrit educational scholars identify ways educational policy colonizes land, place, space, hearts, and minds to justify dispossession of resources. The most salient tenets for the study's Black and Indigenous educator activist collective are that modern educational policies are based in harmful assimilationism, Native people's visons are complex and dynamic, stories are valid sources of knowledge, and Black and Indigenous people are united in their fights for educational justice (Brayboy, 2005). TribalCrit's theoretical tenets contribute a nuanced understanding of Indigeneity and solidarity building between Black and Indigenous educators.

BlackCrit and TribalCrit extend CRT in critical educational policy studies by fueling the impetus for stories of resistance and thrival. The two theoretical frameworks premise solidarity between Black and Indigenous educator activists. Black people

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through enslavement and Indigenous folks through settler colonialism were subjected to specific forms of violence that influence modern educational policy structures that weren't made for us. We center our histories of resistance, joy, and thrival to guide transformative policy initiatives, knowledge-creations, and collective imaginaries in building futures beyond oppressive systems.

Why me? Why now? Why this?

Positionality, for a western university-based researcher, is the interrogation of the conceptual place an individual holds relating to socially constructed power dynamics of the communities' relationship with academia, the research process, publication decisions, and knowledge production (Muhammad, et al., 2015). Pursuing research aimed to challenge hegemonic and traditional educational policy tasks researchers with critical self-reflection relating to their positionality. Critical reflection means researchers pay "explicit attention to power as it relates to identity and intersectional positionality of researchers, based on gender, sexual orientation, ability, and multiple cultural, racial/ethnic, educational, and other forms of identity" (Muhammad et al., 2015). When co-researchers collectively decide to pursue political power, they simultaneously interrogate their socially constructed power and societal advantage. Patel (2015) explains a researcher must understand people's histories who have been harmed by dominant cultural frames and how the western academy is adversarial to marginalized people's ways of being. In doing so, she implores researchers to ask, "Why me?", "Why this?", "Why now?" (p. 65). *Why me?* asks researchers to interrogate what personal experiences position them to participate in knowledge creation. *Why this?* examines the

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utility of the co-constructed knowledges given its contextualized realities. *Why now?* asks researchers to forward place, space, epistemological and ontological considerations. Through critical reflection and positionality work, the answer to these questions fortifies the collective's positionality in the pursuit of educational justice.

Well-intentioned researchers, like well-intentioned teachers, reproduce colonial relationships without self-interrogation and positionality work (Bogotch, 2014; Lewis, 2012). Calderon (2014) asserts researchers must work to actively disrupt oppressive settler identities. One of the ways researchers engage in disruption is being aware of situations when the inquiry roles are not for them and abandoning extraction research methods (Tuck & Yang, 2014). Positionality work is especially important for educational policy studies. Historically, wealthy white elites used policy to subjugate marginalized communities; consequently, policy continues to be an oppressive research arena (Brockenbrough, 2013; B. D. Gillborn, 2005; Kumashiro, 2000; Liasidou, 2013; Rector-Aranda, 2016). Therefore, any researchers attempting to engage in the collective policy transformation must actively work to unlearn oppressive logics.

My Positionality

I am a Black male scholar with one parent of African descent and one parent of European descent. My positionality provides for deep explanation into the complexities of ancestral roots and the social construction of race. My entire life I have pursued the stories of my African ancestors and decentered and critiqued the experiences of my European ancestry. Individuals who have mixed ancestry often feel out of place in a society where Europeans constructed mythical racial hierarchies to justify atrocities and

exploitation (Fields & Fields, 2014).   I am not one generation removed from racist family members on my European ancestral side. If I were to explore or seek to connect with these folks; what would I find? I would find individuals who did not see me as human, may have considered me property, and constructed me a lesser than them. The potential white supremacist ancestors may have lynched my parents for their love.

I am at peace with centering my African ancestry and do not need some blood quantum to claim them. My story adds important nuance to Blackness. Understanding my racialization as Black along with my light-complexion privilege, became an intellectual awaking of critical consciousness. It is with the strength of my Afro-Indigenous ancestors (most likely the Igbo or Akan) that I can resist oppression, tell stories, learn, and teach. The explorative theory of pedagogical and political activism convergence is the product of my lived experiences as a Black teacher and critical educational policy scholar activist. My positionality answers the questions of *Why me?* because of my intentionality behind perpetually reconnecting with my Afro-Indigeneity and solidarities with all those marginalized.

As a young Black boy, growing up in a predominately white town, I was subjected to many instances of structural violence. I remember a teacher taking a book out of my hand in 2nd grade because she thought it was "too difficult" for me to comprehend. In 3rd grade, a teacher told my mother, while I could hear their conversation, that I would "never do better than a C average." Team these types of statements with a heavy Eurocentric curriculum, it was no wonder I internalized white adults' anti-Blackness and saw myself as unintelligent (at least in the western, white

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gaze). The contributions and accomplishments of my ancestors were never expressed in

my K-12 curricula. There was no mention of my heritage rooted in the Maroons of

Jamaica who were self-liberated Africans that emancipated themselves from colonial

slavery and established their own communities. Marcus Garvey, Jamaican philosopher of

Pan-Africanism, was not given a sentence in my history textbooks describing his

accomplishments fighting global white supremacy. My answer to *Why this?* positions the

collective's work within my story and on why I entered the education profession. I want

to continue to connect Black, Brown, and Indigenous students with the teachers, services,

resources, and policies we need and deserve. My story connects with our continued

struggle for justice and equity.

An additional response to *Why this?* implores the liberation imperative. Black

and Indigenous educational liberation, or the processes of disseminating, sharing, and

receiving knowledge, is one of the major mediums that continues to connect Black and

Indigenous people with the complex and dynamic histories of our ancestors. The

freedom to self-determine teaching and learning in sustaining ways is crucial as we

collectively build new futures. Freeing our minds from coloniality and anti-Black logics

are essential for our ability to obtain political power because these efforts remove

barriers. The answer to *Why this?* makes it a priority to free our minds to dream,

imagine, and act beyond oppressive policy structures.

Finally, *Why now?* imports the cruciality of solidarity between Black, Brown, and

Indigenous-led educational justice movements. I acknowledge and value the resistance

of all racially and ethnically marginalized educators; therefore, this project shares

responsibility to learning about others' experiences and being vulnerable. No one person speaks for the experiences of shared identity groups because the manifestations of cultural, racial, and ethnic identity are infinitely dynamic and complex. Communal knowledges stem from the amalgamation of different lived experiences relating to our shared identities. These communal knowledges hold the potential to disrupt oppressive structures. Although my contributions, scholarship, and experiences are guided by my identity as a Black person, the considerations of this study promote marginalized group solidarity against the political forces of oppression. With this solidarity, the knowledges produced from this dissertation seeks to exchange knowledge with justice- oriented collectives, educators, school leaders, and students.

Our Contributions to Critical Educational Policy Studies

This study purposes to yield knowledge contributions in three ways, it: (a) offers the co-construction of diradicalism from Black and Indigenous educator activists' stories; (b) explores the dual educational politics of educators and their resistance to oppression in critical educational policy studies; (c) positions relational and anti-colonial mythologies as central to disrupting oppressive structures and envisioning equitable educational policy. In the following sections, I explain these three contributions in detail.

Black and Indigenous Diradicalism

The first study contribution relates to the theorization of diradicalism and collective efforts to prioritize the lived experiences of Black and Indigenous educators. Educational research traces the importance of social justice activity in the classroom and beyond (Picower, 2012); however, there is scant literature on educators' dual activist

efforts in resisting oppressive structures and systems. An example of educator dual

activism would be when educators participate in community organizing efforts to

transform oppressive systems or push for systemic change while also leading their

classroom and teaching their students. Educational policy studies have yet to explore

how Black, Brown, and Indigenous educators uniquely maneuver, engage in, sustain, and

celebrate dual participation in pedagogical and political activism.

The study contributes to critical educational policy studies by shifting the focus to

Black and Indigenous educator's political activity. Often, Black and Indigenous K-12

educators have a unique experiential link to the oppression students of color face. This

common experience leads to important lessons educators depart to bolster student thrival

and resistance (McKinney de Royston et al., 2021). Diradicalism purports a primary

objective and contribution in the pursuit of understanding the convergence of showing up

for students in political spaces, while simultaneously teaching students that their voice

and collective efforts can transform systems. The educator activist collective contributes

to educational justice research through the multiple, complex, and dynamic stories and

lived experiences of Black and Indigenous educator activists. Similarly situated educator

activist collectives can then access our conversations as they envision educational justice

in their contextualized spaces.

Critical Educational Policy Analysis and Critical Race Epistemologies

Educational policy literature traces the divergence between traditional and critical

approaches to policy analysis (Diem et al., 2014). In traditional approaches, educational

policy analysts sacrifice complexity for generalization and invoke positivistic

epistemologies or theories of knowledge as capturing objective truth (Tillapaugh &

Nicolazzo, 2018). In critical approaches, educational policy analysts illuminate how

objectivity is a guise for western, white, middle-class norms and imagine alternatives to

these dominant policy structures (Dumas, 2016; Tuck & Gorlewski, 2016; Tyson, 2003).

The Black and Indigenous educator activist collective connects to critical race

epistemologies, such as critical race theory (Ladson-Billings, 2005), BlackCrit (Dumas &

Ross, 2016), and TribalCrit (Brayboy, 2005), to assist in connecting to other Black and

Indigenous educator's collective theorizations of the conditions and factors associated

with dual activism. Each of these critical race lenses exemplifies deep social explanation

of the unique and dynamic experiences of different marginalized groups and solidarities

between them. Critical race epistemologies illuminate the educational conditions that

lead to educators and students' acts of resistance and thrival. As the educator activist

collective theorized our political and pedagogical activism, we contribute to these critical

bodies of literature.

Traditional approaches to educational policy treat K-12 educators as apolitical and

compliant actors (Terry, 2010). Powerbrokers situate institutions, systems, and

structures, which produce polices, codes, and statues, as extracurricular for educators and

their allies. The multiple ways Black and Indigenous K-12 educators engage in justice-

oriented political activity is not clearly theorized in educational policy studies because

traditional paradigms construct them as policy observers. This study radically repositions

educational politics as a central to justice-oriented educator dual activism. Black and

Indigenous educators understand that complacency and inaction in violent systems is a

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privileged position (Cochran-Smith, Barnatt, & Randall, 2009). In challenging dominant compliance and apolitical educator constructs, this study explores Black and Indigenous educators' unique contributions to educational policy processes.

Relational Methodologies and Co-Constructed Knowledges for Transformation

As co-researchers, teachers, students, and families participate in educational justice movement spaces, knowledge production is an interdependent process. To obtain enough power to abolish and transform oppressive structures, justice coalitions situate millions of people's lives, stories, and experiences in relation to each other. As co-researchers and community members express stories of resistance and thrival, we generate new perspectives and understandings relative to educational policy structures. We build what our ancestors imagined. Historically, these communal knowledges were excluded, obfuscated, and oppressed. In educational policy processes, powerbrokers place Black, Indigenous, and other people of color's communal knowledges as not fit for policy construction (Lingard, 2013; Shahjahan, 2011). This oppressive and exclusive act demands an equitable process of prioritizing Black and Indigenous knowledges. Prioritized Black, Indigenous, co-created, and communal knowledges are essential contributions as equitable, anti-racist, and decolonial educational policies are pursued. The educator activist collective catapults our collective and relational knowledge by prioritizing the gifts and talents passed to us from our Black and Indigenous ancestors and providing potential paths to new educational futures.

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List of Terms and Definitions

Justice- is used consistently throughout this study: Justice-oriented, justice research,

educational justice movements. Justice is a term that acknowledges the historical

and modern oppression of marginalized, dispossessed, and oppressed peoples. It

is the belief and action in demanding reparations and restitution from systems and

people that continue to benefit from theft of land, enslavement, and other

oppressive systems. Therefore, when I use justice in various contexts, I am

connecting to collective liberation ideologies and multigroup solidarity against all

forms of oppression. Critical educational policy actors emulate justice research

activities when we mobilize policy to redress inequity.

Political Activism – the participation in collective political activity related to the pursuit

of justice and equity in society.

Pedagogical Activism – pedagogy instantiation that foster student capabilities to engage

in justice-oriented political activity as present and future citizens.

Diradicalism- An exploratory theory of activism that fully embraces, imagines, and acts

at the convergence of educator political and pedagogical activism. Diradicalism

stems from the resistance and thrival of Black and Indigenous educators.

Diradicalism was not discovered, and it is not owned. Black and Indigenous folks

have engaged in this convergent work for centuries and this project illuminates

their efforts and stories.

Diradical- An educator activist who engages in diradicalism.

Comrades- I use comrade to acknowledge the collectivism and relational aspects

undergirding this study. Famous Black Panther Party leader, Huey Newton, and

other Black Panther Party members used comrade to acknowledge a collective

struggle between all sisters subjected to racist systems. Additionally, comrade

connects across dynamic experiences. My comrades are not research subjects nor

simple participants. We are egalitarian knowledge contributors to our collective

project. The Black and Indigenous educators, including myself as the dissertator,

are allies in the educational justice movement. This project is a collective

envisioning of educational policies stemming from our camaraderie.

Indigenous – some scholars may add "Indigenous" as an ambiguous adjective to describe

various types of research activities. This is problematized because of the

complexity of Indigeneity (Kovach, 2010). I use Indigenous for two specific

reasons. (a) it helps me resist settler colonial theft of my Afro-Indigeneity;

specifically, my ancestral connection to the Igbo or Akan peoples who Europeans

trafficked to Jamaican and (b) it supports framing Black and Indigenous

American solidarity in the context of the United States. Thus, Indigenous is an

attempt to (re)connect to my ancestors and center solidarity in understanding the

unique and varied experiences Black and Indigenous people have operating within

anti-Black and settler colonial systems.

Black- People within the U.S.-based African diaspora self-identified in a multitude of

ways. Some U.S.-born African descendents identify as African American, Black

American, Black, or some combination of the three. Most importantly, a person's

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self-described reasons for choosing a racial/ethnic identifier should be prioritized. In this study, I refer to myself and my African descendent comrades as Black because of Black American's reclaiming of racial identifiers. To me, Blackness and Pro-Black terminology accurately depicts the complex ways we are racialized and simultaneously illuminate the heterogeneity of Blackness.

CHAPTER 2: REVIEW OF LITERATURE

The purpose of Chapter 2 is to position the educator activist collective's knowledge contributions within critical educational policy studies literature. Figure 1 demonstrates my conceptualization of how our political activity as dispossessed, marginalized, or oppressed peoples is central to studying educational politics.

Figure 1. Positioning the Study within Critical Educational Policy Studies

Critical Educational Policy Studies

Educational Justice Movements

Educational Policy of the Oppressed
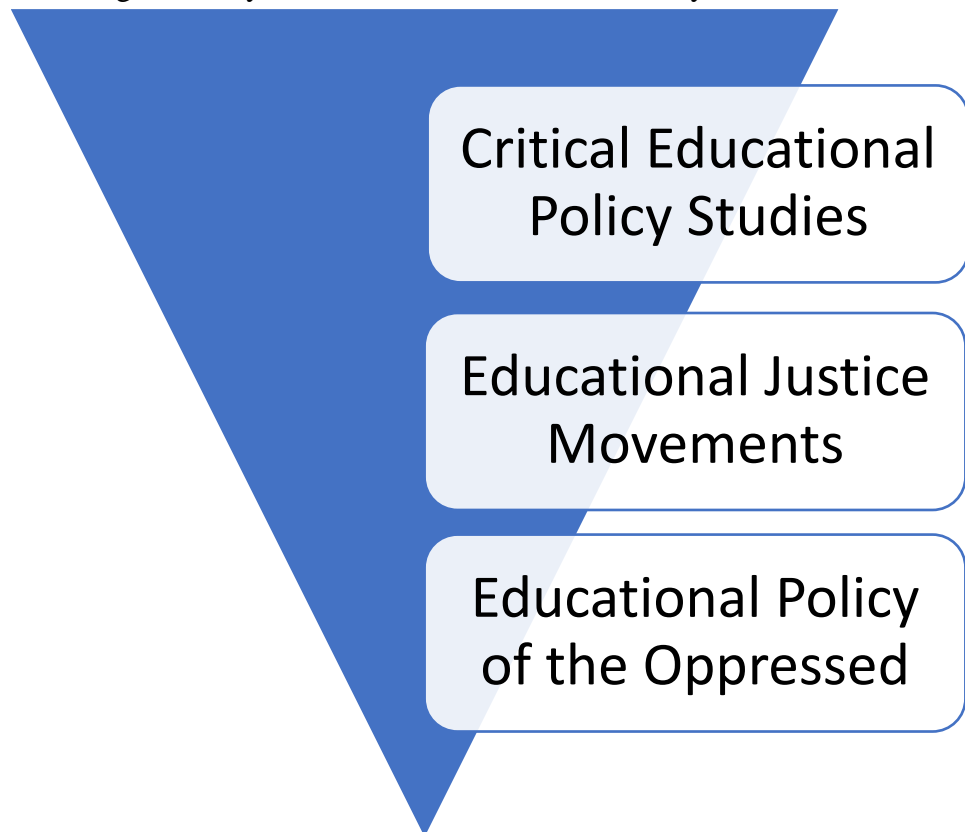
The diagram shows the macro to micro focus from broadened critical educational policy studies to a focus on educational policy of the oppressed, or as I define, the collective actions of Black, Brown, and Indigenous educators in building new and equitable educational policy structures. This literature review connects the Black and Indigenous educator activist collective's knowledge construction to similarly situated scholars, activists, educators, school leaders, justice movement policy actors, and students.

Traditional Educational Policy Studies

A clarification into how critical educational policy studies scholars diverge from traditional policy studies is merited. Traditional approaches are "typically viewed as a neutral scientific approach, carried out by rational and expert researchers who use theory-supported models that facilitate responsive and effective change" (Diem et. al., 2014, p. 1071). Within this definition, traditional approaches tend to forward positivistic research paradigms. Positivism is "the belief in absolute and objective truths that can be established through scientific inquiry" (Tillapaugh & Nicolazzo, 2018, p. 112). Rationalizing the pursuit of objective truth, traditional approaches attempt to find the most favorable and bias-free policy solution. Policy analysts obtain bias-free policy solutions through the "gold standard" of research called randomized control trials (RCT) or some form of causal inference (Strunk & Locke, 2019; Turvey, 2019). The logic is as follows: if RCT (or other quasi-experimental methods) deem a policy, intervention, or practice causal, it is perceived as a generally effective solution that is replicable in other

settings. Traditional educational policy scholars tend to rely on quantitative methods because of the knowledge gathering tool's compatibility with positivistic and causal paradigms. Under the guise of positivism, traditional approaches generally favor quantitative methods as objective evaluation tools of policy solutions (Young & Diem, 2014).

Second, traditional educational policy studies treat researchers and policy actors as rational beings. The essence of rationality is the idea that governmental actors and interest groups make policy decisions based on self-interests (Heck, 2004; Scribner & Maxcy, 2003). Bounded rationality, an extension to the rationalist tradition, critiques the sole analysis of policy processes through individual self-interest by adding structural, organizational, political, and economic components to decision-making (Jones, 2002). Even with additive systems-level and contextual components, bounded rationalists interpret policy activity as a "sequence of rational decision-making steps (or stages)" (Heck, 2004, p. 6). Educational policy analysts who invoke the rationalist tradition tend to miss the multidimensional and interconnectedness of policy processes and treat policy processes as completely manageable and sequential (Diem et al., 2014).

Finally, traditional approaches focus on ideas that effective change naturally occurs in incremental steps (Fowler, 2013). Theories of incrementalism map observations that policy changes happen slowly and there are authorized steps that actors must follow to yield change. Although the dominant perception may be that transformative change happens at a slow pace, traditional policy approaches overlook the reasons for the slow pace, the people harmed by incrementalism, power maldistribution,

and definitions of what is considered transformative. Even political theorist who attempt to provide space for significant policy shifts reduce context. Punctuated equilibrium, the idea that policy processes have stages of stasis and then are disrupted by periods of significant policy shifts (Desmarais, 2019), is seen as an alternative to incrementalism. However, during periods of significant policy shifts, less powerful actors' efforts are rendered invisible (Ferfolja, 2013). These assumptions fail to move beyond describing policy processes and large-scale, Black, Indigenous, and Brown-led justice movements. These narrow views create an educational policy arena where traditional actors dismiss equitable policy imaginaries as too radical or not feasible (Anyon, 2014). Here, critical educational policy studies scholars intervene and bend policy knowledge toward robust power and privilege analyses.

Critical Educational Policy Studies

This study's Black and Indigenous educator activist collective contributes to the always-existent, Black, Brown, and Indigenous-led critique of power and privilege in educational policy studies. Critical policy analysis (CPA), or critical educational policy studies, connects scholarly dissatisfaction with traditional positivist approaches to educational policy and aims for justice-oriented research (Diem et al., 2019). Critical race, educational, and anti-colonial scholars expose the harms of dominant policy processes (Atwood & López, 2014; Dumas, 2016; Lugg & Murphy, 2014; Mansfield et al., 2014; Tuck & Gorlewski, 2016; Tyson, 2003; Winton & Brewer, 2014). In stark contrast to the traditional approach to educational policy studies, critical approaches explore the following:

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> …policy roots and processes; how policies presented as reality are often political rhetoric; how knowledge, power, and resources are distributed inequitably; how educational programs and policies, regardless of intent, reproduce stratified social relations; how schools institutionalize those with whom they come into contact; and how individuals react (e.g., resistance or acquiescence) to such social and institutional forces. (Diem et al., 2014, p. 1073-1074)

Diem et al. exhibit how CPA is a dynamic, contested, and negotiated field. The ways in which policy moves, transforms, is created and implemented concenter on a firm understanding of power maldistribution, social reproduction, and lower-level policy actors' resistance. CPA forwards the cruciality of nuanced understanding within historical, cultural, social, and political contexts. Critical educational policy scholars inquire about how policy phenomena contribute to and reproduce oppressive systems; then, they support justice-oriented policy actor collectives' future imaginaries. CPA scholars support these imaginaries by co-constructed knowledge creation through participatory policy analyses.

CPA's central tenet is researcher positionality relating to power and privilege. Milner (2007) argued that researchers must attend to the implicit and explicit hegemonic frameworks used. Through moving beyond awareness of harmful hegemonic research, Patel (2014) asserted that interrogation of "the logics of settler colonialism frees us to counter those logics" (p. 374). Critical educational policy scholars do not seek to disconnect themselves from the people with whom they conduct research. On the contrary, co-researchers' positionality situates a relational dynamic in the pursuit of co-constructed equitable policy imaginaries. Thus, co-researchers deprioritize the meaningless pursuit of objectivity in favor of in-depth social phenomena explanations.

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CPA scholars move educational policy process conceptualizations beyond solely describing how policy processes operate in dominant systems. This means that scholars situate all justice-oriented actions within power and privilege examinations. For example, when CPA scholars reject describing slow social change as educational policy processes' natural state. Instead, they claim perceptually small policy shifts are foundational to transformative change (Tyack & Cuban, 1995). They believe small policy shifts are victories within the larger educational justice movement. Further, a CPA scholar may illuminate how policy structures, such as voter suppression, climate inaction, ethnic studies bans, and the U.S. Senate filibuster are intentionally implemented, and obstructionist strategies purposed to stifle transformation and undermine full Black, Brown, and Indigenous democratic participation. U.S. political systems hold oppressive and material mechanisms that only allow for small shifts. Therefore, treating small policy shifts as inevitable overlooks the historical and modern actions of socially constructed powerful policy actors' actions to stifle collective justice movements. Critical educational policy studies scholars offer the conceptual, theoretical, and relational space to envision beyond the traditional educational policy gaze.

Educational Policy of the Oppressed, Marginalized, and Dispossessed

Educational policy traditionalist narrowly-construct policy actors as researchers, experts, policymakers, or other socially constructed powerful individuals or entities (Fowler, 2013). In this socially constructed policy actor hierarchy, actors at the top hold most influence on what policy is put on the agenda and ultimately implemented. Actors rendered to lower tiers, such as working people, teachers, parents, historically

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marginalized people, and youth, are overlooked in inquiry. Some traditionalists may

argue that power and influence isolated at the top is the reality of educational policy

processes. However, these assertions overlook the educational justice activities of the

marginalized, dispossessed, and oppressed, and perpetuate ideologies that reinforce

power at the top.

Through explaining narrow parental policy actor conceptualizations, Shirley

(2009) describes the issue with the "this is policy reality" arguments:

> Parent involvement in schools was widely cited by scholars, but its
> colorless and ahistorical description of factors such as positive home
> conditions, volunteering, and communication scarcely seemed to convey
> the dynamic, power-laden confrontations and negotiations typical of
> community organizing. Community involvement was to be nice, civil, and
> deferential. Parents were to be consulted, not collaborated with. Schools
> had their agendas, and if parents were to be involved, their roles were to
> be supportive. (p. 230)

Scholars' policy actor analyses pacified parents as socially constructed powerful actors'

operatives, subjects, or tools. The traditionalist scholars' analytic shortfall—in

undermining parental community organizers— disposed the "this is policy reality"

argument. Parents, and their allies, do not naturally find themselves rendered to the

lower power hierarchy tiers; they are place there by systems and policy. Parental actors

have a long history of community organizing, racial justice struggle, and the pursuit of

political power (M. E. Lopez, 2003). Traditionalists' attempts to frame them as policy

observers can be attributed to a drastic power analysis neglection and contextualization

deficit. The sociopolitical and historical contexts underlying the policy actor hierarchy

are essential to examine. CPA scholars understand socially-constructed, less powerful

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actors as having unique, contextual, powerful, and sometimes contested interests in educational policy arenas.

Critical educational policy scholars broaden actors to students, families, teachers, and community members (Gutierrez & Lipman, 2016; Taylor, 2007). The expansion of actor conceptualization dismantles rigid power hierarchies. Gaventa (2006) offered a "power cube" to examine the interconnectedness of the levels of government, spaces where decision-making happens, and power typologies (p. 25). In the "spaces" dimension of the cube, he postulates social movements and community organizations claim conceptual arenas "where social actors reject hegemonic space and create spaces for themselves" (p. 27). Gaventa's power cube analysis illuminated CPA's tendency to situate less powerful actors' subversive acts as quintessential political activity in policy processes. The power cube's spaces dimension suggests lower-level policy actors, examined through their collective capabilities and centered, have major implications for educational justice movement research and critical educational policy studies.

Coalitions of educators, students, community members, activists, and organizers are crucial policy actors in their attempts to capture the power necessary to transform harmful educational policy. An excellent lower-tired actor collective example resides in the restorative justice movement. Justice-oriented coalitions launched the restorative justice movement to challenge Black and Brown students' realities of being funneled into the criminal (in)justice system through punitive school discipline practices such as zero-tolerance discipline policies, or mandatory and punitive punishments for arbitrary infractions (Warren, 2014). Restorative practices treat educational spaces as deeply

communal, and any student community standard violations are met with opportunities for restoration (Teasley, 2014). Providing opportunities to restore communal relationships is a monumental shift from Black and Brown students' criminalization (Morris, 2016). Thus, teachers, parents, and students in public urban educational settings, predominately serving Black and Brown students, advocated for discipline policy changes (Ayers et al., 2001). Due to teachers, students, community members, activists, and organizers' advocacy, policymakers legislated schools to move away from zero-tolerance and reimagine community accountability in schools (Lacoe & Steinberg, 2018; Schiff, 2018).

The victories from the restorative justice movement resulted from coalition-building, advocacy, and millions of stakeholders involved in educational and political processes. Students shared their stories of experienced injustice and organized walkouts. Parents wrote letters and joined in solidarity with teachers' advocacy efforts. Teachers organized their colleagues, raised awareness, and participated in social justice unionism to advocate for change (Warren, 2014). Critical educational policy studies explore the nuances and complexities stemming from lower-level policy actors' coalitional and collective work. Dumas (2006) accurately depicted the expanded view of policy actors, "When we—researchers, community organizers, policymakers, youth—seek to explain persistent inequities, we are, in effect theorizing the material and ideological roots of educational injustice" (p. 82). CPA scholars move policy actor conceptualizations to acknowledge collaborators in educational justice mass movements. As critical policy studies scholars continue to collectively forward power analysis-centered policy actor

conceptualizations, they theorize a more nuanced, robust, and justice-oriented analysis of educational policy processes.

This study contributed to critical educational policy studies through connecting to and theorizing educational policy of oppressed, marginalized, and dispossessed actors. The members of the study's Black and Indigenous educator activist collective are powerful policy actors. Our envisioned equitable policy solutions and theorized political and pedagogical activism convergence are central to educational politics. This contribution emulated the resistances of our ancestors as they dreamed and imagined a society that values our knowledges. The collective revealed relational research dispositioned to trace our collective power. Our positionalities, intersectional identities, and the lived experiences that stemmed from maneuvering educational policy systems, drove our examinations into our policy actor roles in educational justice movements.

Educational Justice Movements

Next, I describe how educational justice movements, the second tier in Figure 1, begats the study's collective contributions to critical educational policy studies. Scholars discuss social justice-oriented collaboration, organizing, and coalition-building in a multitude of ways, but the foundational aspect, communities in solidarity with each other, is central to educational policy transformation. I conceptualize educational justice movements as collective, interrelated, and justice-oriented teaching and learning— including policy actors' attempts to sustain these educational activities.

Throughout history, Black, Brown, and Indigenous educators used their collective political power to resist white supremacy and prepared students to do the same (Walker,

2005). Modern educational justice movement actors' collective efforts are intricately

connected to past educational justice movements (Givens. 2021; Love, 2019). Black,

Brown, and Indigenous educators' connections to historical knowledge guides the

collectivism imperative and the need for historical fluency. Maloney et al. (2019)

described social justice-oriented educators' central focus in describing social justice

teacher education:

> … educators rely on collective work as a central tenet of working towards
> and realizing transformative and liberatory change in teaching, learning,
> schooling, education, and society. Moreover, social justice education uses
> a critical and responsive approach to teaching and learning that highlights
> historical knowledge, sociopolitical contexts, causality, and systems
> thinking to demystify systems of power that maintain a social hierarchy
> that systematically disadvantages and privileges individuals based on real
> or perceived group membership. (p. 253)

Justice-oriented educators' work's central tenet is the critique of oppression, historical

fluency, and collectivism. This study's Black and Indigenous educator activist collective

extends educational justice movement collectivism by looking specifically at how justice-

oriented educators act to turn their focus toward resisting inequitable educational

structures, policies, and institutions. The educational justice movement is multifrontal,

multigenerational, multifaceted, and multiscalar. This means that one conceptualization

cannot capture the complexity and movements should be understood as constantly

shifting, negotiated, and complex. When educator activist collectives and their allies

decide to turn their attention toward transforming inequitable educational policy,

educational justice mass and collective participation is necessary.

Educational justice movement policy actors move beyond ensuring students have access to dominant cultural repertoires. When educators share aims, goals, and imaginaries, they create collaborative spaces to collectively pursue and imagine beyond dominant gazes. Culturally sustaining pedagogy (CSP) defines social justice as perpetuating and fostering "linguistic, literate, and cultural pluralism as part of schooling for positive social transformation" (Paris & Alim, 2017, p. 1). I translate CSP's definition to educational justice collectives interested in transforming educational policy. Through this lens, justice-oriented educators acknowledge the need to transform educational structures and center culturally marginalized communities' lived experiences and knowledges. In turn, educators participate in educational justice movement projects. Educational justice movements hold a conceptual place within the combination of endeavoring to transform harmful educational policy and the need for massive and collaborative justice movements to yield policy change.

The impetus for justice-oriented educators' turn toward educational policy is the harm to which current systems subject Black, Brown, and Indigenous communities. The perceived need to act comes from understanding how collectives can realize victories when millions of educational justice policy actors situate themselves in relation to each other. Kinloch (2017), a CSP scholar, argued:

> We must work to combat and eradicate oppressive, racist educational policies that advantage monoculturalism, that debase the linguistic virtuosities of communities of color, and that recode terms such as relevance and responsiveness to mark tolerance over acceptance, normalization over difference, and demonization over humanization, and hate over love. (p. 29)

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When educators collectively decide that they should direct energy toward resisting oppressive educational policy, they bring mass participation in educational justice to the forefront. In this form of collectivism, educators not only work for their immediate communities, but their efforts connect with justice movements across the U.S. and the world. Educational justice movement actors include educators' colleagues, teachers from other schools, parents, students, staff, co-researchers, policymakers, non-teacher labor coalitions, community organizers, and non-profit organizations. When these policy actors and educators understand that their struggle is aligned, coalition-building engenders an educational justice movement purposed for political power apprehension to transform inequitable structures.

Teacher Unions as Sites of Educational Justice Movements

One of the many educational justice movement aims is the pursuit of political power. Scholarship operationalizes political power as influence over policy processes and systems (Schirmer & Apple, 2016). Elites, because of their vast resources, isolate power at the top of social hierarchies, and this reality makes power shifts difficult in policy processes (Anderson & Donchik, 2016; Reckhow & Snyder, 2014). However, when educators work collectively to capture power, efforts are more successful (Van Dyke & Amos, 2017). Moe (2006) explained traditional educational policy studies scholars have treated educators solely as enactors of policy, but more contextual understandings have illuminated the political power of organized and collaborative labor. Teacher unions are one of the places educational justice movement activities takes place. Generally, teacher unions are understood as organizations where educators pursue

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political power, advocate on behalf of teachers, staff, and students, and ensure representation in policy processes (Rogers & Terriquez, 2009). Teacher unions are excellent examples of the collective efforts in the pursuit of political power. Additionally, it is important for justice-oriented policy actors to understand them as contested spaces.

In the U.S., some teacher unions show low participation and focus on workplace needs or transactional business aims such as benefits, salaries, or sick/vacation days (Burawoy, 2008). Focusing solely on labor issues is insufficient in explaining the experiences of racially or ethnically marginalized students and families. For instance, transactional teacher unions have actively worked against racial equity and justice (Lee, 2014; Perrillo, 2012; Podair, 2008). Thus, in educational policy analyses involving unions, it is vital to avoid homogenization. Instead, scholars examine the level to which the union values democratic participation, shares power, and holds a social justice orientation.

In the U.S., scholarship documents social movement teacher unionism (Peterson, 1999; Rottmann, 2012; L. Weiner, 2014). Justice-oriented policy actors drive social movement unionism's collective activities. Recent scholarship provides examples of organized educator social movement unionism and their educational justice efforts: The Chicago Teachers Union (Gunderson & Poulos, 2014), United Teachers Los Angeles (Pham & Philip, 2020), and New York Public Schools' Teachers Unite (L. Weiner, 2014). These justice-oriented unions have clear shared leadership designs, racial and

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labor justice agendas, and pursue co-created movement unionism. Justice-oriented

educator unions are examples of negotiated educational justice movement spaces.

Educational Justice Movements in Non-Union Organizations

Justice-oriented educators work together, not only in labor organizations, but with

students, community members, co-researchers, school leaders, activists, and

policymakers to dismantle oppressive systems. Thompson and Pease-Alvarez's (2018)

description of their work with Educators Advocating for Students (EAS), "a teacher

collective that is resisting and renegotiating policies of standardization," exemplified

educational justice beyond teacher unions (p. 70). EAS spawned from teacher

disgruntlement with the district-mandated elementary curriculum that did not serve their

large population of English language learners. Educational policy research documents

how monolinguistic standardized testing disadvantages non-native English speakers (de

Jong, 2016). The EAS members worked collectively to prepare for media interviews,

design public statements against district assessment policies, and use contract

negotiations to decrease the number of required English-only tests. As educators worked

together in these efforts, they negotiated their understandings of the best course of action.

EAS was eventually codified as a subcommittee in the local teacher union, but its

inception was the product of a teacher collective that operated outside union structures.

Other work details the educators' efforts working collaboratively with educational

justice-oriented grassroots organizations. Kohli et al. (2015) discussed how educators

work together in grassroots organizations to offer alternatives to traditional professional

development. In their study, they analyzed the work of The People's Education

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Movement (People's Ed), New York Collective of Radical Educators' (NYCoRE) Inquiry to Action groups, and the Institute for Teachers of Color Committed to Racial Justice (ITOC). Each of these groups forward social, racial, and economic justice aims. Within these grassroots organizational operations, educators were "working together to create spaces for learning that more closely reflect the holistic needs of their students and themselves" (p. 15). Clearly, educational justice work cannot be analyzed solely within collective educator and union spaces.

Educators engage in justice-oriented work in solidarity with parents (A. M. Ishimaru & Takahashi, 2017). Understanding educational policy of the oppressed as having foundationally aligned interests that are negotiated is essential. Shirley (2016) discussed the events that transpired after what started as a contentious relationship between the parent-led Community Collaborative to Improve District 9 Schools (CC9) and the educator-led United Federation of Teachers (UFT). However, through dialogue, teachers and parents realized their goals were common and exposed the elite's strategies to fragment teachers and parents. They collaborated to redress these political realities:

> CC9 began organizing community tours to help teachers to get to know all of the incredible cultural diversity of their neighborhoods better. CC9, the UFT, and leaders of the city's Department of Education (DOE) began holding regular meetings to discuss common challenges and opportunities. When the City Council Education Committee held open hearings in fall 2003 and a number of groups began attacking the UFT for protecting ineffective teachers, CC9 not only did not join the critics, but explicitly and publicly defended the union. (Shirley, 2016, p. 59)

The CC9 and UFT example showed the challenges and successes of inter-actor justice-oriented work. Moreover, it illuminates how contestation, nuance, and coalition-building

is a negotiated process between all justice-oriented stakeholders. Educational justice policy actors who engage in movement spaces resolve tensions and leverage reciprocal relationships to collectively advocate for justice and equity. The study's educator activist collective connects to this literature because we conversed about disagreements, tensions, and different perspectives that honor a negotiated process. Further, our collective operates in a collective and justice-oriented space outside of labor unions.

Neoliberal Educational Policy

Educational justice policy actors operate within systems that obstruct their activities. State policy actors' policies render educational justice efforts to operating "under the radar screen of dominant-policy surveillance" (e.g., Lee & McCarty, p. 63). Dissentingly, collective efforts strengthen educators' collective capabilities to emerge from the margins to transform structures that subjugate Black, Indigenous, and other marginalized communities. Many modern educational policies do not support educational justice movement activities; thus, justice-oriented educators must either find collective spaces or operate covertly (Adams & Bell, 2016, Stitzlein, 2015; Thompson & Pease-Alvarez, 2018). The educational justice movement policy actor paradox is that while being subjugated by systems, educators aim to transform it. The study's educator activist collective held space to explore literature on the educational policy mechanisms that restrict educational justice movement activities and how critical educational policy studies co-create knowledges to raise awareness and act to transform.

One of the many ways critical scholars illuminate oppressive educational policy structures is through analyzing neoliberal doctrine. Critical educational policy scholars

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document how neoliberal doctrine infiltrates educational policy and becomes dominant ideology (Au, 2016a; Gulson, Leonardo, & Gillborn, 2013). As a "moving and mutating entity," neoliberalism is broadly defined as a collection of principles that advocate for the privatization and marketization of public goods and entities (Mirowski, 2013). Educational reform policy actors manifest educational neoliberalism through productivity privatization as skill acquisition (Urciuoli, 2011), public education privatization (LaFleur, 2020), blaming educators and families for poor student performance (Pitzer, 2015), reducing teacher unions' collective bargaining power (Nygreen, 2017), treating education as a commodity instead of a right (Ayers & Ayers, 2011), teacher education deprofessionalization (Kretchmar et al., 2018) and free-market school choice designs (Buras & Apple, 2005).

The mechanisms holding educational neoliberalism together are policies based on high-stakes standardized tests (Ambrosio, 2013). Proponents of standardization argue traditional assessments provide useful data that can predict students' success once they enter college or the workplace (Suchak, 2001). Business leaders, policymakers, corporate interests, and higher education institutions use these testing-mechanisms to evaluate students' contributive worth. Consequently, education systems make high-stakes tests an evaluation component for educator effectiveness (H. Morgan, 2016). Since policymakers' tie school and district success to students' performance on tests, school leaders feel pressure to hold educators accountable to state-deemed satisfactory test scores. Proponents dismiss structural barriers, resource disparities, and historical discrimination in the neoliberal project. Neoliberal education project descriptions support

systems-level analyses in how policy structures harm Black, Brown, and Indigenous communities.

The neoliberal project tightly couples market-based educational solutions, anti-Blackness, and white supremacy. Hernández (2016), using critical discourse analysis, showed how market-based reformers coopt the civil rights movement's racial justice rhetoric. In effect, neoliberal reformers perpetuated negative racialized depictions when framing policy solutions. Hernandez argued that masking negative depictions within a racial justice narrative undermined educational policy designed to redress racial inequity. This study implicated how neoliberal policy actors' use racial narratives to undermine educational justice movements. Giroux (2003) premised this critique and claimed neoliberal racism "imagines human agency as simply a matter of individualized choices, the only obstacle to effective citizenship and agency being the lack of principled self-help and moral responsibility" (p. 194).

Neoliberal actors design solutions with an underlying assumption that historical racism, anti-Blackness, and discrimination have no connection to modern Black, Brown, and Indigenous students' poor performance on traditional student achievement measures. Thus, they indicate that systemic racism is nonexistent, and Black, Brown, and Indigenous communities are to blame for their societal disadvantages (Au, 2016a). School leaders, teachers, teacher preparation programs, and teacher unions adopt, or policymakers coerce them to adopt neoliberal and racist ideologies through standardized testing policy. This volatile environment is the educational policy arena our Black and Indigenous educator activist collective maneuvered.

Collaboration Mandates Obstructing Collective Educational Justice

Another logic our collective was forced to maneuver related to an insidious collective space cooptation. Neoliberal educational policy actors construct collectivism as a tool to reinforce neoliberal and racist educational policy doctrines and these structures hinder educational justice movements. Neoliberal ideologues' obstructionist tendencies coopt educator collaboration to meet standardization goals. Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA), neoliberal and federal educational policy (Reeb-Reascos & Serniuk, 2018), requires state governments to submit a plan to improve struggling schools. Federal-deemed standardized test scores define whether a school is struggling. Thus, policymakers initiate standardized collaboration mandates as central components to school improvement plans. Collaboration mandates are professional requirements instructing teachers to spend time working together to improve student academic performance on high-stakes tests. States solely focus these plans on math and reading standards and neglect other aspects of teaching and learning (Leistyna, 2007). Generally, the mandates take top-down approaches in determining the logistics, accountability measures, and design (G. Gates & Robinson, 2009; G. S. Gates & Watkins, 2010).

In a study evaluating Ohio's collaboration mandate, urban Ohio administrators shared that the collaboration mandate was redundant, and teachers were unsure why the state required additional compliance documents (Lier, 2009). The redundancy suggested that the state did not provide educators adequate opportunity to participate in policy design. Especially with urban educators, scholarship concludes the importance of democratic participation in the design of policies (Bryk & Rollow, 1992). In a study

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working with two urban schools, Gates and Robinson (2009) described the disconnect between local stakeholders and policymakers:

> The problems in schools may be obvious for federal politicians and state officers, but at the levels of the district, school, classroom, and student, such problems can appear erroneous or ethereal. The lack of contextual sensitivity of mandates for local decision making contributed to a grasping at straws kind of approach evident in teacher collaboration. (p. 161)

Disconnected problem definitions between federal/state policy actors and educators exemplifies educational policy's neoliberal logic. Top-down policies force educators to prioritize and dedicate time to federal/state-constructed goals. Through democratic participation erosion, powerful policy actors restrict educator autonomy and narrowly scope educator collectivism to improve test scores. The collaboration mandates' antidemocratic operationalization extends the educational justice policy actor paradox. As justice-oriented educators advocate and create collective resistance spaces, oppressive, dominant, and neoliberal educational policy coopts collectivism.

Top-down policies are especially restrictive for educators serving vulnerable and historically marginalized student populations. For experienced urban educators, and other educators who serve predominately Black, brown, or economically disadvantaged students, it is well known that the profession demands extra time in working collaboratively to support students in maneuvering anti-Blackness, racism, colonialism, and monoculturalism (Bristol & Martin-Fernandez, 2019; McKinney de Royston et al., 2021; Walkley & Cox, 2013). Marginalized student populations experience harm and trauma because of these oppressive logics (Baumle, 2018; Mosley et al., 2020). Educators are audacious in their attempts to mediate structural oppression's harmful

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effects. The efforts to support students manifests as centering liberatory parent partnerships, completing student recommendations for services, designing sustaining curriculum, organizing affinity/support groups, reimagining accountability, challenging racist school/district policies, or counseling a distressed student. These extra-service acts are essential for student health and success. A student cannot prioritize their education if the education system does not address social, political, economic, and historical barriers (A. Morgan et al., 2015). Justice-oriented educators are saturated with providing students and families with holistic support services.

In schools serving marginalized communities, teachers lack human resources to support their students. In the U.S., the average ratio of students per social worker is 2106 to 1, students per school psychologists is 1526 to 1, and students per nurse is 936 to 1 (Whitaker et al., 2019). These ratios are immensely exasperated when disaggregated to Black, Brown, Indigenous and low-income student serving schools (Schaefer et al., 2016). Without adequate human resources educators become comprehensive support systems for their students, or they are tasked with instructing students who have not received the support needed to thrive in schooling spaces. Educational policy forces urban educators to balance standardized neoliberal instructional responsibilities while fulfilling duties traditionally associated with social workers, school psychologists, nurses, and school counselors (Shernoff et al., 2011). As justice-oriented educators undertake additional roles, and decide to deprioritize standardized tests, top-down collaboration mandates obstruct them from participation in collective educational justice— another perceived commitment among being inundated and overwhelmed with current

responsibilities. The study's educator activist collective felt these time restraints and attempted to move past them. Unfortunately, time restraints are not the only barriers justice-oriented educators face.

Educational Policy as a Barrier to Educational Justice Movements

Neoliberal educational policy obstructs educational justice movements through establishing laws, codes, or statutes that make collective action more difficult. Specifically, policymakers use poor educator quality and meritocratic rhetoric to justify reduction in opportunities for educators to participate in educational justice. Groundwater-Smith & Mockler (2009) described the neoliberal world project as audit culture. They define audit culture as a globalized project that attempts to standardize teaching and learning, establish managerial styles of education, and eradicate educator professional autonomy. These three pillars of audit logic establish compliance culture where educators are held accountable for dissenting actions, professional judgment decisions, and school-level issues stemming from societal inequity (Connell, 2013; Power, 2003).

Neoliberal compliance projects obstruct educational justice movements in three ways. First, neoliberal policy actors use traditional student achievement measures to create discourses they use to explain district, school, and educator quality, justify managerial style reforms, and blame educators and unions. The products of these discourses are educational policies that undermine educator autonomy and professional judgment. I previously described how standardized tests, high-stakes tests, or traditional achievement measures are mechanized at the foundation of neoliberal educational policy.

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Critically-situated scholars explain how standardized tests are biased based on race, gender, and class (Au, 2016b; Kearns, 2011). Thus, successful scores on standardized tests do not measure objective level of intelligence; they assess students' aptitude to dominant white, middle-class norms (Marmol, 2016). Consequently, Black, Brown, Indigenous, and low-income students generally perform poorly on these dominant-normed tests. Scholars argue that poor performance cannot be attributed to any deficit in intelligence because policy structures subject them to institutionalized disadvantage (Viesca, 2013). The only standardized test deficit is the tests' ineptitudes in capturing the dynamic knowledges of Black, Brown, and Indigenous students.

Despite comprehensive critical policy analyses illuminating standardized testing inadequacies, federal, state, and local governments continue to rely solely on tests for evaluating educators (Conwell & Ispa-Landa, 2020; Sutherland, 2020). Neoliberal educational policy actors design teacher preparation programs, assign professional development, and direct school resources toward equipping teachers with best practices to improve faulty achievement measures (Wallace, 2009). The culmination of top-down testing accountability and test improvement obsession results in educational justice movement obstruction. By the time educators establish routine mastery and procedure planning, formative and summative assessments, content delivery, lesson/unit planning, standard unpacking, objective creating, differentiated instruction, trauma-informed care, grading, and test-prepping, educators perceive their educational justice capacities as beyond possibility.

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Second, there are restrictive educational policies that erode educational justice

engagement opportunities. One erosion method resides in banning the work of justice-

oriented collectives of teachers.   In 2010, Arizona policymakers developed a law that

targeted a collectively constructed Mexican American studies program. The program

focused on Mexican descendants' contributions to society, artwork, music, philosophy,

and politics. AZ House Bill 2281 prohibited courses that:

> promote the overthrow of the United States government; promote
> resentment toward a race or class of people; are designed primarily for
> pupils of a particular ethnic group; advocate ethnic solidarity instead of
> the treatment of pupils as individuals. (lines 12-16)

In targeting the Mexican American studies program, policymakers halted other courses

centering the experiences of all marginalized ethnic and racial groups. Here, educational

policy actors restricted the collective work to decenter dominant white norms in Arizona

schools (Acosta, 2014). Eleven years after the Arizona ethnic studies ban, U.S. state

legislators are attempting to pass educational gag orders that restrict teaching about their

country's anti-Black, patriarchal, and settler colonial history. The states with pending

gag order legislation, as of February 2022, include Alabama, Arizona, Colorado, Florida,

Georgia, Idaho, Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kansas, Kentucky, Maryland, Michigan,

Minnesota, Mississippi, Missouri, Nebraska, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New Mexico,

New York, North Carolina, Ohio, Oklahoma, Pennsylvania, South Carolina, South

Dakota, Tennessee, Virginia, Washington, West Virginia, Wisconsin, Wyoming. While

political support for the gag orders varies, the important point is that there are multiple

socially-constructed, powerful policy actors seeking to obstruct educational justice efforts.

The second erosion method is federal and state-led labor rights reductions. Although labor unions span from reactionary organizations to social movement spaces, their contested nature provides space for educators to participate in the mass educational justice movement (McAlevey, 2015; L. Weiner, 2014). In 2018, the U.S. Supreme Court ruled that unions cannot collect nonmember dues for activities of which nonmembers would benefit. This decision fits a policy trend to obstruct organized labor's financial capital, including teacher unions (Marianno & Strunk, 2018). Neoliberal policy actors use anti-union legislation to restrict collective bargaining powers and prohibit strikes (Lyon, 2020; Winkler et al., 2012). If decisionmakers construct policy to deter educators from collective spaces, then collaboration and aim negotiation cannot occur. Therefore, federal and state anti-union policy reduces the number of educators able to participate in educational justice movement activities.

The final obstruction method is codified school/district competition and the rise of nonunion charter schools via school choice policies. School choice is a market-based set of policies that promote privatized solutions under the guise of educational access (Buras & Apple, 2005). School choice policies erode collectivist and communal understandings of educational equity. For instance, voucher programs teamed with charter schools, redirect funding away from state-neglected and disadvantaged public schools, and bolster social stratification (Lenhoff, 2020; Stein, 2015). At the same time, only a small portion of charter schools are unionized (Stuit & Smith, 2012). An increase in privately

controlled charter schools leads to a decrease in unionized educators. School choice

educational policy initiatives leads to the reduction of educators in educational justice

movement spaces.

Unequivocally, this literature demarcates the educational policy realities our

activist collective must maneuver. I forward these barriers not to forward ideologies of

hopelessness, but to show justice-oriented policy actors resolve. The resolve that was

passed to us from our Black and Indigenous ancestors. Despite continued and evolved

oppressive educational policy structures, justice-oriented policy actors continue to

imagine and build new futures. Barrier acknowledgement serves as an important

component in collective strategizing. Our collective was able to wield barrier

acknowledgement in our envisioning beyond current educational policy realities.

Educational Policy Designed to Sustain Educational Justice Movements

The educator activist collective sought to create knowledge to sustain the educational

justice movement. Shown above, some educational policy mechanisms establish a reality

where educators are structurally discouraged from seeing themselves as part of large-

scale educational justice movements. Worse, policy structures reduce justice-oriented

efforts to operating covertly and in isolation because if educators resist openly, there are

sanctions and consequences. It is an insidious project that obstructs collective and

communal capacities. However, the study's Black and Indigenous educator activist

collective countered these neoliberal projects.

Millions of justice-oriented educator activists continue to co-create counter

knowledges. One critical counter-knowledge effort is the continued rejection of

neoliberal ideologues' dismissal of systemic racism and wealth inequality's influence on school, educator, and student success and failure. Coalitions have collectively worked to dispel the misconception that problematizes racism on an individual rather than a systems level (E. Y. Young, 2011). Other efforts challenge neoliberal logics that conclude marginalized communities are to blame for their social conditions (Bobo, 2004). Collective and educational justice efforts have worked to dismantle U.S. settler-colonial project's monolingual educational policies (Iyengar, 2014). No matter the barriers, educator collectives continue to illuminate oppressive educational policy manifestations while simultaneously centering educational justice action. This study's educator activist collective connects to counter knowledge production by mobilizing knowledge co-creation to envision educational policy infrastructure that protects, bolsters, and encourages participation in educational justice movements.

Educational Justice Movement Research

Justice-oriented educators collectively resist oppressive forces with educational justice knowledge creation. Educational justice movement research plays a vital role in solidifying counter logics, counter-narratives, counterhegemonic policy solutions, and rhetorical strategies (Lipman, 1997, 1998; Miller et al., 2020; Milner & Howard, 2013; Ravitch, 2014). Justice-oriented educators frequently participate in these knowledge creation activities or research efforts. Journey for Justice Alliance (J4J), a nonprofit organization made up of educators, parents, community organizers, and students exemplifies counterhegemonic and educator-involved research collectives. In 2014, J4J collectively produced a report detailing how "education systems in [Black and Brown]

communities are dying. More accurately, they are being killed by an alliance of misguided, paternalistic 'reformers,' education profiteers, and those who seek to dismantle the institution of public education" (Journey for Justice Alliance, 2014). The knowledge creation collective provided extensive evidence in the form of figures, graphs, tables, cited studies, and literature reviews. J4J collected and analyzed educators' lived experiences to create the equity report, and educators were central to a research-based argument illuminating how the education system disadvantages predominately Black and Brown schools. Their research aimed to clarify the commonly experienced harms relating to the neglect of and divestment from public education.

Another example educational and collective justice knowledge mobilization, The Education for Liberation Network (EdLib), an educator coalition of teacher, community activists, researchers, youth, and parents, declares one of their aims as building a "community in which members are prepared to challenge ourselves and each other to figure out the most effective methods of reaching our goals. We encourage an active dialogue between on-the-ground experience and analytical research" (The Education for Liberation Network Mission and Vision, 2020, para. 4). In 2019, EdLib offered social justice educators a resource to incorporate the Black Lives Matter movement's principles into their classrooms (Aryee-Price et al., 2019). This resource included guiding questions with citations to articles that explained or extended the concepts and content within the questions. In a final example of educator-involved research, the Trinational Coalition to Defend Public Education, a multinational coalition-building organization, includes educator networks such as the Canadian Teachers' Federation, Ontario Secondary School

Teachers Federation, the British Columbia Teacher's Federation, National Education

Association, and unions from Mexican universities (Leahy, 2010). In the Transnational

Coalition, cross-national educational research activities produced reports asserting the

protection of labor, environmental, and human rights via policy advocacy (Bocking,

2020). These educator-involved efforts are collective, justice-oriented, and research-

driven. Unequivocally, educator-involved coalitions utilize co-constructed research to

support them in raising critical consciousness, support pedagogical decisions, and obtain

political power.

Research and knowledge creation alone does not capture political power;

however, educator-involved coalitions understand research as one of the many tools to

support educational justice movement activities. Gutierrez & Lipman (2016) argued:

> To counter dominant agendas, grassroots organizations need empirical
> data, systematic syntheses of parent/teacher/community perspectives,
> research into corporate and political actors behind dominant policies,
> historical analyses, investigations of political–economic connections
> between education policies and corporate strategies for the city. (p. 1243)

These multiple knowledge entry points allow coalitions to tailor their message to be most

effective in the evidence-based educational policy hegemony (Turvey, 2019). Shahjahan

(2011) described evidence-based educational policy hegemony as a colonial project

operating via three mechanisms: "(1) the discourse of civilizing the profession of

education, (2) the promotion of hierarchies of knowledge and monocultures of the mind,

and (3) the interconnection between neoliberal educational policies and global

colonialism" (p. 182). S. Warren (2007) described evidence-based educational policy

actors' tendency to produce policy solutions that perpetuate social advantages for white,

wealthy people. Knowledge co-creation is an essential tool in countering colonial and white supremacist educational policy research paradigms.

Educational justice movement participants are flexible in their research strategies and goals (Gutierrez & Lipman, 2016). This flexibility stemmed from their accountability to justice-oriented aims (Iño Daza, 2016).   Jolivette (2015) offered the term "research justice" to describe inquiry that "examines the relationships and intersections between research knowledge construction, and political power/ legitimacy in society" (p. 5). Research justice solidifies a turn toward engaging in knowledge co-creation with unapologetic collective liberation aims. Educational justice movement research supports efforts to obtain political power and continues to challenge the evidence-based policy hegemony.

Justice-oriented educators share their experiences and advocate for equity through their knowledge creation activities. Their knowledge builds collective political power pursuit. Kretchmar (2014) reconceptualized 300 teachers, parents, students, alumni, and administrators' public testimony as valuable, prioritized, and essential community research in educational policy processes. In 2010, the mayor directed New York City (NYC) public schools to close some of their neighborhood schools and dissolve their locally elected school boards. According to Kretchmar (2014), in the public hearings, the Department of Education used research, mostly statistics on "graduation rates, test scores, and school evaluation," to justify school closures (p. 15). However, educators, and their allies, engaged in their own counterhegemonic justice research activities. They criticized the lack of transparency in the analysis and data construction, drew attention to the fact

there was unaddressed structural inequity causing schools' poor performance, and argued that NYC's plan to build charter schools was not an effective solution. Ultimately, the mayor-appointed Panel of Educational Policy (PEP) voted to close the schools. Although this attempt to mobilize co-constructed knowledge to obtain political power did not successfully keep schools open; local, state and national educational justice coalitions learned from the efforts of NYC community members and educators. Since the NYC educational justice coalitions' communal research activities, scholars have conducted robust research interrogating the inequity stemming from school closure policies (Tieken & Auldridge-Reveles, 2019). Justice-oriented educators and other educational justice policy actors mobilize research to bolster justice-oriented arguments and inspire new knowledge considerations.

Critical educational policy scholars continue to reject knowledge valuation gatekeeping. Apple (2008) contended that university-based scholars can redefine what counts as research to center the knowledges of "those groups of people and social movements who are now engaged in challenging existing relations of unequal power" (p. 108). Methodological considerations, or what knowledge is prioritized, should be centered as critical educational policy scholarship continues to bolster educational justice movements and educator-involved coalitions' attempts to obtain political power. Additionally, critical educational policy scholars interrogate their role as potential knowledge value gatekeepers and use their privileged positions to preference communal and relational knowledges. Power dynamics, historical exclusion, and critical social explanations must be central to inquiry (Anyon, 2008). The study's educator activist

collective is the product of my own knowledge gatekeeping interrogation. We co-created and prioritize policy knowledge in partnerships with and relation to people dispossessed, marginalized, and oppressed by educational systems.

There are additional considerations relating to justice-oriented collectives and knowledge co-creations. Critical educational policy scholars demand a comprehensive analysis into the connection between collective resistance, societal inequity awareness, and educational policy shifts. In their study's conclusion defining a social justice-oriented educator, Maloney et al. (2019) posed the idea of examining educator networks and their capacity to transform systems of oppression. Merging educational justice movement research with educator networks, offers critical educational policy scholars an opportunity to co-produce knowledge that may contribute to educational equity and justice.

This study's Black and Indigenous educator activist collective answered the call to explore justice-oriented policy actors' attempts to transform educational policy. We did this by engaging in educational justice movement research at its relational, anti-colonial, and liberatory foundations. Co-researcher collectives continue to expose anti-Black, racist, and settler colonial forces. Now, we must collectively participate in knowledge mobilization and envision how transformation might look—this knowledge mobilization cannot take place in western-university siloes. Knowledge mobilization's pursuit undergirds the study's educator activist collective's educational policy envisioning. It is our hope that our communal knowledge can contribute to solutions that

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sustain Black and Indigenous educators' political and pedagogical activism convergence—diradicalism.

Black and Indigenous Diradicalism

To honor Black and Indigenous educational resistance, I offer the term *diradicalism* to place educator activists' dual educational politics in conversation. "I offer" does not symbolize theory ownership. Diradicalism emerges from ancestral knowledge, learning, my experience teaching middle school science, and relationships with other Black educator activists. In organic chemistry, a "diradical" is a highly reactive molecule or compound. Consequently, chemists frequently observe diradicals bonded with other molecules or compounds. Analogously, diradical educators are highly reactive in resisting oppression through teaching and learning. They center their bonds in building relationships and connecting with students, colleagues, school leaders, and all educational justice policy actors. Diradical educator activists celebrate their identity's radical aspects that placed them as policy actors who center languages, knowledges, ideologies, and pedagogies of the oppressed.

Diradicalism, carried out by diradicals, describes educators' activities at the convergence of 1) *Political Activism*— participation in collective political activity related to the pursuit of justice and equity in broadened societal arenas at their school building and beyond 2) *Pedagogical Activism*—instructional, faciliatory, and curriculum instantiations that foster student capabilities to engage in justice-oriented political activity as present and future citizens. Diradicalism provides a useful conceptualization in understanding educators' hopes and realities engaging in collective, liberatory, and

transformative teaching, learning, and political activity. A diradical educator activist works to collectively obtain political power because of collective potential to transform, abolish, and eradicate educational inequity.

Not all politically active educators self-identify as activists. Educator hesitancy to claim the activist label may be traced to gatekeeping, differences in activist definitions, activists' ties to being too radical, or feelings of inadequate engagement. No matter the reasoning for hesitancy, the activist label is limited in nomenclature. This limitation is why I position diradicalism to further explore educator activists' nuanced dual educational politics. Diradicalism's political and pedagogical dimensions are more specific in naming the types of actions in which justice-oriented educators participate. The two-dimensional structure incorporates different governmental level activity, systemic barriers, pause, rest, and convergence in defining an educator activist. The exploratory theory of diradicalism promotes a critical examination into educator activists' intentional turn toward political engagement in all educational policy levels and the acts to invite future generations of justice-oriented policy actors. To be clear, diradicalism is deeply connected to Black and Indigenous ancestral knowledges. Specifically, Black and Indigenous-led educational resistance efforts that challenged anti-Blackness and settler colonialism— *a people's background of **dual** educational politics*— while simultaneously passing liberatory knowledge to future generations.

Our Relationship to Blackness and Indigeneity

There are several important points to make about this study's relationship to Indigenous knowledges and resistance. Chapter 1 described my identity as a Black

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American and Afro-Indigenous descendent—keeping in mind how western, white violence made attempts to separate me from my Afro-Indigeneity. Black Americans and other African Diasporans, who were trafficked during chattel enslavement, were not only stolen from their homelands, but their Indigenous ways of knowing and being were stripped from them (Radburn, 2021). This history demonstrates important distinctions and similarities between Blackness and Indigenous essentialism, or racialized group homogenization. I attempted to avoid Black and Indigenous homogenization by specifying my comrade and I's relationship to Blackness and Indigeneity.

First, the collective's relationship to Indigenous knowledge is three-fold. I wrote on the ancestral and contemporary Native lands of Shawnee, Potawatomi, Delaware, Miami, Peoria, Seneca, Wyandotte, Ojibwe, and Cherokee peoples. This means there is a potentially underrealized connection to land, water, and air that vitalized the collective's ability to engage in conversation. We acknowledge our benefit from stolen land and dedicate our knowledge co-creation to envision futures beyond the settler colonial project. Second, our educator activist collective forwards anti-colonial knowledge creation aims. Our anti-colonial efforts interrogate settler colonial logics in knowledge creation activities and center our relationships to each other. We positioned our co-created knowledge as communal and connected to all educator activist collectives' justice-oriented efforts and acknowledge that we must continue to illuminate and act against settler colonial knowledge creation logics.

Finally, we built solidarities across Indigenous American educational resistance, a unique, complex, and dynamic subversive act of teaching and learning, and Black

educational resistance. At our ancestral origins, Indigenous Americans and Black

Americans share a keen and powerful understanding of teaching and learning that centers

collectivism, justice, land, air, water, and relationships. The collective built solidarities

between and among educator activists who are experiencing anti-Blackness and

Indigenous erasure in modern educational political arenas.

The Red Nation's (2021) *The Red Deal: Indigenous Action to Save Our Earth*

offered a poignant Native and Black solidarity-building example. The co-authors, a

revolutionist, anti-imperialist, queer, feminist, and Indigenous collective, weaved

Indigenous, Indigenous American, and Black liberation into one policy-focused project

called *The Red Deal*. *The Red Deal's* first pillar, "Divest: End the Occupation",

discussed the importance of situating actions to save our planet within collective

struggles to redistribute wealth to oppressed and disposed communities.   Their

redistributive action demands specified Black-led movements to abolish anti-Black

policing and incarceration. The Red Nation connect to, extended, bolstered, and stood in

written solidarity with justice movements to protect Black lives. They saw Indigenous

liberation as fundamentally aligned with Black liberation. Our collective's connection to

Blackness and Indigeneity builds on modern justice movements' continued solidarity-

building between Black American and Indigenous American-led political activity.

My comrades' conversations, our ancestors' knowledge, and my interpretations of

collective contributions constructed the theory of diradicalism. Foundationally, political

activism taps Black and Indigenous educators' acts to engage in educational politics at

their schools and beyond. Pedagogical activism demonstrates how Black and Indigenous

educators pass on acts of resistance to future generations. These two dimensions stem

from Black and Indigenous collective knowledge ownership, and communal connection

that transcends racialized categories, societal homogenization, and history.

Diradicalism's Two Dimensions

In the sections below I clarify and provide educator activist-engaged political and

pedagogical activism examples. Note, the examples are not all Black or Indigenous-led

because of scant research focused on Black and Indigenous political activity in

educational policy studies. This review captures all educators' activities to premise the

study's firm grounding in Black and Indigenous knowledge. Then, the educator activist

collective forwards strong arguments on why educational justice movement research and

diradicalism must be Black and Indigenous-focused and centered.

Political Activism

Diradicalism's political activism dimension specifies educator activists' justice-

oriented political activities that resist oppression beyond the classroom-level. Resisting

oppression beyond the classroom may involve their students, but the political activism

dimension is focused on efforts educators lead, organize, and initiate. One political

activism example is supporting justice-oriented political campaigns or running for elected

positions themselves. In 2018, a network of Oklahoma educators organized a walkout to

protest the massive funding cuts for the Oklahoma public school system (Krutka et al.,

2018). Research shows that underfunded and under-resourced school systems

disproportionately impact Black, Brown, and Indigenous students (Losen & Orfield,

2002), make it difficult for schools to support student trauma (Haynes, 2002), and force

teachers into financially difficult situations (Allegretto & Lawrence, 2018).   Oklahoma

educator networks and coalitions were aware of the political mechanisms that tasked

elected officials with funding allocation. Thus, in illuminating the legislative

incumbents' actions to deprioritize educational funding, Oklahoma educators decided to

run for various elected positions to advocate for themselves, students, and families

(Bailey, 2018). This is defined as political activism because the educational policy level

location of the act took place beyond the classroom—this means that involvement in

educational politics did not directly foster student critical consciousness.

In addition to running for elected offices, educators engaged in political activism

by canvassing, making phone calls, signing petitions, volunteering, writing blogs, and

endorsing candidates that pledged to prioritize funding for public education. Again,

Oklahoma educators' acts took place beyond their classrooms and may have included

students; but facilitating student critical consciousness was not the main consideration in

the actions and demonstrations. Diradicalism's political activism dimension describes an

educator activist's efforts to engage in justice-oriented educational politics within broader

educational policy arenas.

In another example of political activism, Maton's (2018) work with a teacher-led

social justice collective showed how educator activists challenged their union to critically

analyze structural racism as the root cause of massive wealth maldistribution. The

educators organized a book club, an inquiry group, a racial justice committee, and a

Black Lives Matter week of action to merge race and class analyses. Educator activists

identified a theoretical hole in how their teacher union interpreted educational inequity

solely based on class. They believed that firmly grasping how socially-constructed

disadvantages compound, based on students racialized identity and socioeconomic status,

would position their union to create effective solutions. Maton and the teacher-led social

justice collective's work is important because it extends one of diradicalism's cruxes.

Diradicalism's political activism dimension describes how educator activists emulate the

democratic participation and societal critique in which they hope to see their students

engage.

Diradicalism's political activism dimension is evident in the connection between

past and present, Black-led educational justice spaces. In the 1960s and 1970s, Black

Chicagoan educators fought for equity and justice. They demanded millions of dollars in

aid, worked to elect progressive school board members, and built community organizing

relationships with parents, policymakers, teachers, community activists, and community

members (Todd-Breland, 2019). More recently in Chi Town, the Chicago Teacher Union

(CTU) engaged in an 11-day strike where teachers and their allies advocated for

prioritized funding for vulnerable populations of students, decreased class sizes,

increased pay for non-faculty staff wages, and demanded more affordable housing for

teachers and students. Although the district and city did not meet all their demands,

union leaders claimed that district leaders perceiving their demands as too radical led to a

victory (Campbell, 2019). CTU continues to collectively resist harmful local educational

politics. Intergenerational Black Chicagoan educators' collective resistance demonstrates

how the political activism dimension holds connections between past and present

educational justice activities.

Educators participate in political activism when they hold collective spaces accountable to educational justice aims. Maton (2016) described how Philadelphia educators organized "beyond the auspices of their U.S. teachers' unions" by creating an educator-led organization called The Caucus of Working Educators (WE) (p. 5). One of the goals of the grassroots organization was to put pressure on the Philadelphia Federation of Teachers (PFT) to take more progressive stances. The superintendent of Philadelphia Public Schools touted relationships with PFT in neoliberal reform efforts. This relationship led to a weakened and pacified industrial/transactional style teacher union (Bulkley, 2007). Fast-forward to the formation of WE, educators organized to establish union infrastructure to directly challenge the district and PFT's neoliberal complicity. Educator activists founded WE one year after the Philadelphia School District superintendent-initiated plans to close twenty-four schools in predominately Black and brown neighborhoods. WEs' critical dialogue, fostered by book clubs and organized meetings, led to their pursuit of political power:

> [WE] members hosted numerous fundraising house parties with the intention of raising funds to support such campaigns and broadening their membership base. They ran t-shirt campaigns, regular interviews on local media outlets, engaged in mass flyer distribution and targeted one-on-ones with union members across the district, and employed numerous other techniques for raising awareness of key political issues, and building an election support base. (Maton, 2016, p. 299)

Diradicalism's political activism dimension describes justice-oriented educators' navigation of professional responsibilities and political activity. Justice-oriented educators may navigate political activism through organizing outside of state or district jurisdictions, and push union spaces, when needed, to be more tactically adversarial.

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Educator activist's political activism navigation beyond their classrooms occurs in justice-oriented nonprofits and community organizations. *Rethinking Schools*, a K-12 teacher-founded and edited journal, demonstrates the community organizing method of political activism. In a comprehensive history of *Rethinking Schools'* involvement in fights for educational justice, (Levine & Au, 2013) traced the nonprofit journal as "a focal point for teachers interested in challenging inequality in their classrooms, schools, and communities, and organizing tool for teacher and citizen activists, and an educational resource for education professors hoping to shape the practices of future teachers" (p. 74). In 2011, *Rethinking Schools*-affiliated educators, university professors, and community members protested Wisconsin Governor's anti-union and antidemocratic agenda. Outside the state jurisdictional purview, the nonprofit organization offered justice-oriented educators the infrastructure and network to engage in resistance collectively and more safely. Educator activists engaging in political activism may seek educational justice spaces outside their school-buildings and districts because of state or district obstruction.

Finally, a salient concept to explore relating to diradicalism's political activism dimension is political education, sometimes described as civic education. The political activism dimension frames involvement in political activity as essential for building collective capabilities to transform oppressive educational systems. Political education scholars may overlook social justice-oriented political organizing for power obtainment (Snir & Eylon, 2017). They may pacify action to volunteering for political campaigns, informed voting, and U.S. governmental structure awareness. The educators connecting

to diradicalism's political activism dimension move educational politics activity definitions to building capacities for eventual and current student participation in community organizing and social movement spaces. Thus, volunteering for political campaigns becomes holding self-proclaimed equity-driven politicians accountable, informed voting becomes critiquing and dismantling voter-suppression, and content mastery of U.S. governmental structures becomes imagining a deepened democracy. In these examples, political education is a strategic, imagined, action-oriented, power-analyzed, and connected to the next diradicalism dimension—pedagogical activism.

Pedagogical Activism

Simultaneously while justice-oriented educators engage in political activism, they participate in pedagogical activism. Diradicalism's political activity disassembly into political and pedagogical categories should not obfuscate the two activism dimensions' coevality. Classroom pedagogical considerations and decisions will always be laced with the educators' positionality, politics, lenses, lived experiences, and perspectives. Plainly, pedagogical activism is a political act (Freire, 1970, 2000). Diradicalism's two-dimensioned structure focuses on the educational policy levels within which educator actions operate and how they interpret their capacities to act within the various levels. Pedagogical activism conceptualized as a separate dimension from political activism does not mean that pedagogical decisions are apolitical. On the contrary, diradicalism offers a useful frame to analyze pedagogical and political activism interconnectedness.

Diradicalism's pedagogical dimension describes educator activists' efforts to facilitate student critical consciousness. Peterson (2013) demonstrated pedagogical

activism when he shared his dissatisfaction with math curriculum and its tendency to obfuscate historical oppression. In a political act, he (re)visioned his mathematics classroom and supported students in their Eurocentric curriculum critique. The summative project tasked students with writing letters to the math textbook publishing company and inquire about why the company omitted the U.S. founding fathers' support of chattel enslavement from the text.

In another example of pedagogical activism, A. E. Lopez (2011) co-constructed a creative space with her 12th grade English students as they wrote and performed poetry and spoken word. Her students were asked to interrogate their thoughts and feelings about societal oppression. Buffington & Day (2018) showed how pedagogical activism centers instructional decision on the experiences, truths, and realities of marginalized groups. In their HipHop pedagogy lesson, her students used Black female and non-binary artists' work to illuminate "the fact that the dominant (White) cultures in the United States have benefitted from appropriation in myriad ways, often commodifying and commercializing other cultures" (p. 9). These poignant examples show how educators' justice-oriented pedagogical activism established a learning space where students develop their capacities to critique oppressive systems. Diradicalism's pedagogical activism dimension descriptions reposition teaching and learning as praxis to raise student critical consciousness and build capacities to collectively act to dismantle oppression.

Diradicalism's pedagogical activism dimension involves classroom instructional decisions that promote action. Picower (2012) exemplified an educator engaged in the

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pedagogical activism dimension. Rose, a study knowledge contributor and elementary teacher, designed and executed a unit with an embedded student action component. Rose first taught students about school-level budget cut decisions, then helped them organize rallies to amplify student voice. She intentionally designed her classroom so that students could interrogate oppression and then plan an action to address the lack of community voice in decision-making spaces. Rose demonstrated the pedagogical disposition that connected her with community, raised student consciousness, and worked to ensure policymakers heard her students' and families' voices.

McKinney de Royston et al. (2021) connected to Rose's story through sharing the ways Black educators are aware of sociopolitical realities Black students maneuver. Thus, they act to protect students by preparing them in the classroom to resist the anti-Black world outside of the classroom. These classroom preparations involved co-creating restorative school accountability and Black-led youth affinity groups. Although McKinney et al. and Rose's educational politics is framed as a pedagogical activism example, their work blurs static and disconnected interpretations of the pedagogical and political diradicalism dimensions. Educator activists participate in and facilitate dual political activity at the classroom level and beyond. Rose's and other justice-oriented educators' stories of dual educational politics construct diradicalism's theoretical foundations—political and pedagogical activism convergence.

Political and Pedagogical Activism Convergence

The study's conceptual focus and central research question examines how Black and Indigenous educator activist theorize the interactions between political and

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pedagogical activism. I call this interaction, "convergence"," and this coevality founds

diradicalism. Paulo Freire's (1970) conceptualization of critical pedagogy helps scholars

understand the dynamic interaction between diradicalism's political and pedagogical

dimensions. Critical pedagogists explore the ways educator political activism translates

to and influences students (Greene, 2020; Stitzlein, 2015). Critical pedagogy's central

component is that teaching and learning is a two-way interaction (Freire, 2000).

Educators learn from students' ways of reading the world because they position students

as knowledge-producers instead of solely knowledge-receivers. Then, educators and

students collectively become consciousness-raising facilitators.

Collective social critiques and two-way teaching and learning leads to a lead-by-

example phenomenon. The social phenomenon demonstrates an educators attempt to

translate their broadened political engagement to student educational justice invitation

and participation. Giroux (2010) explained Freire's stance:

> For Freire, pedagogy is not a method or an a priori technique to be imposed
> on all students but a political and moral practice that provides the
> knowledge, skills, and social relations that enable students to explore the
> possibilities of what it means to be critical citizens while expanding and
> deepening their participation in the promise of a substantive democracy.
> (p. 716)

Giroux's interpretation of Freire solidified diradicalism as inculcation avoidant. It would

be antithetical for a diradical educator activist to coerce students to comply to educators'

own ways of reading the world. Instead, diradicals position their educational politics as a

method to connect students with their already existent promise to examine oppressive

societal structures and build new futures. Diradicalism describes the student invitations

to the contested, negotiated, and dynamic educational justice movement while offering tools for student full participation. Diradical educators' transformative power is the transmission of the knowledges and skills to students, who are encouraged, supported, and educated, to build their capacity to demand and participate in a collectively-imagined equitable future. Diradicals, Black and Indigenous educator activists who engage in political and pedagogical activism convergence, prepare students for educational justice as they engage in educational justice themselves. Diradicalism's many manifestations, complexities, capacities, and transformative potential is our collective examination's key conceptual focus.

Review Conclusion

This literature review situates the Black and Indigenous educator activist collective's knowledge creation activities within critical educational policy studies and educational justice movement research with a focus on Black and Indigenous educational justice policy actors' pedagogical and political activism. This study's positioning premises answers to the central research questions through examining Black and Indigenous educators' diradicalism. This literature helped me select the methodological considerations and knowledge gathering tools that honor ancestral knowledge, lived experience, justice-oriented aims, and my positionality.

CHAPTER 3: METHOLDOLGIES, METHODS, AND RESEARCH DESIGN

This study's central research questions created a space for collective educational policy envisioning and future-imagining. This knowledge creation intervened in dominant and western extractive methods. The educator activist collective engaged in reflexivity that borrows from humanizing and anti-colonial knowledge creation. I interpreted the collective's co-constructed knowledge with comrades' permission and feedback. If any of my comrades were to write their own interpretation about our many conversations, then their lived experiences would be evident in their interpretations. I say this to highlight the beauty of anti-colonial and relational work. Knowledge creation is infinitely complex, contextual, temporal, historical, relational, communal, collective, and positioned to be transformative. The lenses through which we observe relational data shift, change, and modify interpretations. Our complex knowledge conceptualizations positioned our individual experiences as holding commonalities, contradictions, affirmations, and extensions, and then through dialogue and conversations, we posited theories capable of leading to our collective freedom pursuit.

It is with these understandings of research, knowledge co-creation, and collectivism that I ask:

RQ1. How does a K-12 Black and Indigenous educator activist collective theorize the dynamic interaction between pedagogical and political activism (or, engage in dual educational politics—diradicalism)?

RQ2. What educational policy structures do we collectively envision?

Methodologies, Theoretical Frames, & Methods

Separating theoretical frameworks, methodology, and methods is crucial to illuminating oppressive research activities and processes. Forwarding the methodology, methods, and theoretical framework distinctions has allowed critical educational policy scholars, and other educational justice movement actors to evaluate knowledge-creating projects' contributions. Brayboy et al. (2012) explained the hegemonic process of convoluting theory, methods, and methodologies. Convolution takes place when researchers look for objective truth, causal links, or claim knowledge ownership. These convolutions are rooted in colonial epistemologies because scholars treat knowledge as something to be extracted, refined, and owned. On the other hand, knowledge creation in movement spaces may strategically use quantification to circumvent rigid research hierarchies; but this work is deeply contextualized within sociopolitical and historical realities (Gutierrez & Lipman, 2016; Nygreen, 2017). Educational justice movement policy actors are clear about the purpose of using quantification—to dismantle oppressive hierarchies. Radical transparency promotes critical analyses assessing to whom the knowledge is answerable.

Co-researchers in an anti-colonial project are transparent through forwarding the theories, epistemologies, and methods used for exploration and knowledge co-creation. Table 2 shows the various research components I used in partnership with the educator activist collective. Figure 2 shows a diagram of how I conceptualized relational research. Radical research transparency is the act of openly naming aims, epistemologies, purposes, methods, and theories so educational justice policy actors can more effectively

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hold knowledge creation processes accountable and evaluate potential contributions to

educational justice. Relational research paradigms undergird all our collective's

knowledge creation process because each aspect involves the educator activist

collective's connection to each other.

Figure 2. Radical Research Transparency Diagram
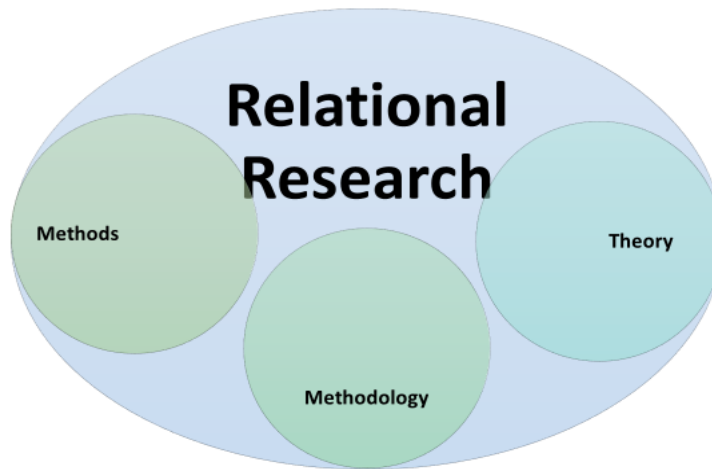
Table 2. Radical Research Transparency Continued

Theoretical Framework	Methodological Framework	Methods
• BlackCrit & TribalCrit (Borrowed from our ancestors)	• Anti-Colonial Research • Co-Constructed Knowledge Creation	• Zoom • One-on-One Conversations • Collective Sessions/ Dialogic Circles • Envisioning • Thematic Analysis • Cluster Analysis in NVivo • Comrade Feedback

Relational Research

Historically white colleges and universities, steeped in western frames, perpetuate colonial-like relationships with historically marginalized communities (Patel, 2015). Critical educational policy scholars trace harmful ways interactions between university-based researchers and communities perpetuate ideologies that treat communities as inferior. Eve Tuck (2009) explained these racist and colonial logics as damaged-based research. Damaged-based research occurs when western researchers extract marginalized peoples' stories, framing them as broken and in need of fixing, to secure resources for their own self-promotion. Tuck stated that Native and urban communities have "troubled relations with research and researchers. The trouble comes from the historical exploitation and mistreatment of people and material. It also comes from feelings of being over-researched yet, ironically, made invisible" (p. 411). I imagined the educator activist collective in opposition to these oppressive forces through acknowledging our stories and conversations as prioritized educational policy knowledge contributions. Once I invited my comrades to our space, we situated our relationships to each other juxtaposed to the theoretical, methodological, and methods considerations.

The entire collective members were direct and egalitarian participants in the knowledge creation project. Crucial relational research components are the centering and sharing of stories and lived experiences. San Pedro (2013) described the process of re-centering live experience exchanges as the dialogic spiral where both researchers and co-researchers are asked "to take risks, to be vulnerable, and to develop trust and understanding" (Grande et al., 2015, p. 113). Our educator activist collective built trust,

centered relationships, and mutually engaged in vulnerability. Our stories of demanding justice and challenging oppression united us in creating knowledge. Our relationships to each other insulated us against colonial research paradigms, centered Black and Indigenous knowledges, and envisioned equitable educational policy.

The educator activist collective's relational focus stems from similarly situated justice-oriented knowledge creation projects. Gorlewski and Tuck (2018a) challenged Schools of Education and exemplified the type of relational work demanded in critical educational policy studies. Their New York-based teacher educator-led group sought to collectively offer an alternative to EdTPA—a performance-based teacher certification tool. Critical scholarship documents how EdTPA lacks the capability to capture how anti-Blackness and settler colonialism operates in teacher education and has its roots in neoliberal reform (Au, 2013; Gorlewski & Tuck, 2018b; Tuck & Gorlewski, 2016). Thus, the teacher educator group organized and co-created an alternative to EdTPA that was more contextualized. Each project phase included an intentional turn toward centering relationships between all co-investigators and knowledge contributors. Genuine relationships led to co-created educational policy that moved to more nuanced understandings valuing liberatory educator praxis. My comrades and I's relational study design fosters collective imagination to connect us with our capacities to participate in educational justice movements and envision equitable educational policy.

Our co-created educational policy knowledge projects' aims should be further interrogated. Cruz (2008) advocates that "the struggle for decolonizing knowledge needs to go beyond developing research projects from and with the historically marginalized to

actually elaborate theory based on the reflections people make about social life" (p. 656).

She argued lived experiences as knowledge production should center on anti-colonial and

justice-oriented research; meaning Black and Indigenous knowledges must be valued and

prioritized in academic spaces. Hill et al. (2010) demonstrated a prioritization method

when they interrogated a personality assessment in partnership with 13 American Indian

folks from Eastern Woodlands Nations in Oklahoma.   Indigenous knowledge

contributors and their university-based allies challenged traditional scale validation

processes and prioritized meaning from Indigenous knowledge applications to their lived

experiences. The personality assessment study's implications discussed the importance

and demanded Indigenous self-determination in psychological assessment. This study's

Indigenous knowledge prioritization is the type of anti-colonial work to which our Black

and Indigenous collective connected because this work fuels equitable future realization.

The realization mechanism is located within the prioritization of relational Black and

Indigenous knowledge.

This study's educator activist collective centered the relational considerations in

all radical research transparency aspects. This position highlighted how we are

answerable to our relationships to people, ancestors, self, land, and water as we engage in

educational justice research. Relational research appeared in the theoretical frames

through making firm connections to the collective's Black or Indigenous ancestors.

Relational considerations appeared in the methodologies by showing our common

struggle for liberation from oppressive systems and collective attempts to prioritize our

knowledge-creation processes. Human connection showed up in the study's methods

through research tool selection capable of deeply contextualizing the collective's stories and conversations in the sociopolitical and historical realities—conversational methods, answerability, and willingness to shift aims (Margaret Kovach, 2010; L. Patel, 2015; L. L. Patel, 2014; Solórzano & Yosso, 2002).

In the design stages, I asked myself the extent to which the selected research methods allowed for hegemonic contestation through the negotiation of relational connectedness. Black, queer, radical, and feminist activist, Charlene Carruthers (2018), wrote, "People and their relationships are—and must be—at the core of long-term transformative change" (p. 91). Relational, justice-oriented, and equitable educational policy research necessitates transformative research methods and methodologies. Our educator activist collective unapologetically centered research activities on relationships because of human connections' potential to co-create knowledge that strengthens educational justice movements and transforms systems. Relational research's conceptualization is anti-colonial, and this framing helped me situate educational policy research, in partnership with Black and Indigenous educator activists, as disruptive to oppressive hegemonic research paradigms and policies.

Methodologies

In this section, I situate this study within anti-colonial paradigms through explaining how we diverge from western, white, and colonial logics.

Anti-colonial Research with Decolonizing Aims

Critical educational policy scholars have argued the importance of disrupting the ways knowledge is valued. What type of knowledge is valued is an epistemological

consideration. Epistemological considerations fall under research methodological

discussions. Therefore, I chose anti-colonial methodologies to explain my

epistemological positions for three reasons: anti-colonial epistemologies acknowledge:

(a) contributions, resistances, counterstorying, and joys of Black and Indigenous

knowledge (b) Black and Indigenous people's shared struggle for liberation and (c)

knowledge as collectively owned, non-hierarchal, co-created, and intergenerational.

Each anti-colonial alignment provided the epistemological frame necessary to disrupt

coloniality.

 It is important to discuss a distinction between anti-colonial and decolonial

research to acknowledge critical scholars' attempts to use both terms more effectively

(Andreotti, 2014; Patel, 2014). For me, this means reflecting on perspectives that

highlight how resisting coloniality involves continuous positionality, reflexivity, and

reimagination processes. Decolonial aims, or the complete abolition of the settler

colonial project, is complexified when the various institutions that colonize give

university-based researchers security and validation. Anti-colonial methodologies

solidify a nuanced understanding of how being part of western universities means

perpetuating colonial logics to some extent. An anti-colonial stance demands that

university-based researchers interrogate the ways they may perpetuate settler colonial

logics. Critical scholars consider anti-colonial research as a first step in decolonial, and

abolitionist aims. As I engage in reflexivity throughout the knowledge-creation process, I

continuously consider my forwarded anti-colonial position. The anti-colonial position

materializes through radical research transparency interrogation and the selected

relational research methods. Anti-colonial methodologies coupled with the educator

activist collective's knowledge situates a potential space capable of envisioning and

realizing decolonial aims to build new futures.

Critical educational policy scholars, whose work is guided by anti-colonial

methodologies, forward robust knowledge co-construction considerations. One of these

considerations abolishes the rigid, sometimes arbitrary, and positivistic requirements for

sample sizes. From a positivistic research lens, the more participants a researcher has,

the more valuable the knowledge is to generalized policy considerations. However,

positivistic, or post-positivist research paradigms avoid answerability to Black and

Indigenous knowledge—their accountability comes from the myth of objectivity in

studying social phenomena. There is a contradiction in western, positivist models that

devalue projects with small numbers of participants. The contradiction resides in

misunderstanding or excluding the stories, experiences, contexts, and emotions that stem

from knowledge contributors' relationships to each other.

My comrades and I held conversations for an upwards of 12 hours, yielding

hundreds of transcripts, notes, memos, codes, and feedback pages. This deeply

contextualized knowledge is what I used to interpret our findings. In Figure 3, I show the

relational web from the educator activist collective's anti-colonial educational policy

project. It would be a disservice to ancestral knowledge to fail to acknowledge their

contributions to our lives. As a human being, we are products of two parents, 4

grandparents, 8 great-grandparents, 16 second great-grandparents, 32 third great-

grandparents, 64 fourth great-grandparents,128 fifth great-grandparents, 256 sixth great-

grandparents, 512 seventh great-grandparents, 1,024 eighth great-grandparents, and 2,048 ninth great-grandparents. A person's ten generations of ancestral knowledge come from around 4,096 ancestors and their stories, struggles, love, dreams, contributions, lived experiences, and survivance. The largest bubble in Figure 3's relational web represents the collective's 24,576 ancestors and their knowledge. Each participant brought their ancestors' knowledges with them because ancestral knowledge continues in our spirit and being. Boundlessly, those 24,567 people, or 10-generations of ancestors, add their own ancestral trees and this connection repeats. As a result, there are infinite instances of love, courage, and imagination that contribute to our educator activist collective's knowledge creation project. Framing the project in ancestral totality honors the knowledge and acts that placed us in relation to each other. The point of this explanation demonstrates this study's centering of anti-colonial research methodologies. The study's activist collective unapologetically connected with our relationships to ancestral knowledge and this supported our reflection on anti-colonial methodological considerations.

Figure 3. The Collective's Relational Web

Our ancestral trees and the relational web are only part of the total knowledge contributor numbers because anti-colonial frames helped us include those we cite in our conversations and stories. The relational web shows the various people, past and present, that our educator activist collective verbally cited during our time together. In addition, the web acknowledges the folks who contributed to the collective members' ability to be in community but were not verbally cited in conversation. Knowledge contributor numbers quickly grew to include many people's ideas, imaginaries, and connections. Anti-coloniality supported the collective's acknowledgement of peoples whose knowledges placed us in relation to each other within a specific temporal and historical location. The relational web captures how our ancestral acknowledgement radiated the enormity and interconnectedness in knowledge co-creation.

Saturation is a popular qualitative research term that scholars have used to evaluate research quality (O'Reilly & Parker, 2013). Since we situated the project as accountable to relationships; saturation comes from the relational and ancestral knowledge we bring to our conversations and stories. The relational web is conceptually infinite and saturated with the knowledge that contributed to our bodies' soul construction. The educator activist collective's conversations illuminated knowledge passed to us by scholars, students, activists, colleagues, and our family members—who are creations of their own ancestral knowledge connections. I displayed the educator activist collective's relational web to help visualize the ancestral depth in knowledge co-creation. These considerations, situated historically, socially, and politically, reifies this anti-colonial projects' knowledge creation space.

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Traditional educational policy scholars may problematize anti-colonial saturation

frames. These dubious critiques are forwarded by arguments claiming that evidence-

based educational policy must stem from certain types of research designs. For example,

Chapter 2 discussed how powerful policy actors, under the data-driven guise, tell Black

and Indigenous teachers that their ways of knowing are not valid (Morel, 2018;

Shahjahan, 2011). These oppressive mechanisms are perpetuated in modern educational

policy and lead to Black and Indigenous knowledge devaluation. These powerful actors

argue anecdotal, storied, and conversational knowledge is not generalizable and leads to a

research process where there is poor knowledge quality. Policy actors, who forward the

poor-quality rhetoric, argue that having no quality control mechanisms to reduce bias will

lead to manipulated outcomes and implications.

Quality control-obsessed policy actors miss a crucial societal aspect. Evidence

interpretation, lived experiences, and knowledge are not and cannot be objective (Buras

& Apple, 2005; Campbell-Montalvo, 2020; D. Gillborn et al., 2018; Lingard, 2013;

Lloyd, 1995; Shahjahan, 2011). Instead of mythical objectivity pursuit, anti-colonial

scholars acknowledge their biases, lenses, intersectional positionalities, research aims,

and relationships in research activities (Drawson et al., 2017; Fast & Kovach, 2019;

Lloyd, 1995; San Pedro, 2018; Tuhiwai Smith, 2012). Anti-colonial scholars

enthusiastically accept and prioritize knowledge situation in relation to comrades,

ancestors, and neighbors. This study's educator activist collective's accountability rests

in the relationships we build for educational justice. We are accountable to the

educational justice movement policy actors seeking to organize against anti-Black

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racism, settler colonialism, and other forms of oppression. Anti-colonial methodology

supported these justice-oriented knowledge creation aims.

Co-constructed Knowledge

I strived to make knowledge co-construction a central component in the invitation

to and co-creation of the educator activist collective. This research component

established a space for the collective to contribute to conversation direction, agenda

setting, checking data interpretations, and relationship building (Small & Uttal, 2005). It

was important for me to consider where my imagined project could diverge from

knowledge co-creation. Maloney et al. (2019) profoundly explained one overlooked

aspect of co-constructed research design, they state, "concepts like 'co-construction,' and

'co-creation,' suggest building something; whereas, we also need to consider what must

be deconstructed" (p. 270). The divergence related to my position as a low-resourced

university-based graduate student who was subjected to structural constraints in order to

secure the western degree. Thus, a true participatory and co-authored project would have

meant potentially contentious situations with The Ohio State University. I did my best to

balance these realities, stay true to myself, and honor my comrades' contributions.

Black and Indigenous educational justice policy actors, the peoples to which I am

answerable, will have valid critiques of the extent to which this project was co-created. I

am the sole author and study designer, but I am not the sole owner or contributor. This

critical reflection is an example of the cyclical and simultaneous nature of anti-colonial

knowledge creation projects. While I attempted to co-construct research activities, I

simultaneously worked to contest coloniality and be guided by relationship centrality.

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Knowledge co-construction took place when my comrades introduced

discussions, shared feedback, and selected topics throughout the collective sessions. All

comrades participated in a final feedback session where they shared their thoughts on the

ways I interpreted our conversations of resistance and pursuit of thrival. This final check

was not purposed for western validation, or the attempt to assess the quality of the

thematic analysis. Our knowledge is valid without western endorsement; in fact, we

expected western-trained scholars to feel a disturbance in knowledge value paradigms.

My research agenda was frequently paused to respond to, support and sustain the

feelings, emotions, and ideas of the educator activist collective. There were several

occasions where my comrades where yearning to share recent experiences with all

collective members. Sometimes these conversations would take up a significant amount

of our 1-hour session. I was enthusiastic about this conversation shift and it demonstrates

my commitment to relationship prioritization over my own study agenda.

Most importantly, I reconciled sole-authorship and co-construction by frequently

asking for permission to tell my interpretation of our collective story. I argue this

reconciliation is knowledge co-construction because my comrades trusted and had

confidence in me to interpret and tell one version of our collective story. I shared with

them that their own interpretations, even if they never reach an audience beyond our

collective, are equally important in our educational justice work. The only difference is

that I was required to cater to the university-sanctioned dissertation format because it is

what will secure my livelihood so that our collective work is bolster, protected, and

funded. Moreover, I am dedicated to supporting my comrades if they were to decide to

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share their interpretations. Our knowledge co-construction will continue beyond this project and I look froward to my continuous contestation and reflexivity.

Methods and Knowledge Gathering Tools

The important distinction between methodologies and methods demanded an explanation of the knowledge gathering tools I selected to address the central research questions and method alignment with anti-colonial methodologies. Table 3 lists the methods used in our educator activist collective and a brief explanation on their alignment with anti-colonial research methodologies.

Table 3. Knowledge Gathering Tools and Anti-Colonial Alignment

Research Method(s)	Anti-Colonial Alignment
Constant interaction with data throughout project	Constant feedback from comrades and topic shifting
Line-by-line Coding	Provided a process to interpret discourse within an idea-based process.
In-depth conversations (one-on-one and collective)	Built relationships with comrades, shared stories, and held two-way vulnerability
Dialogic Circles	Situated my comrades and I's stories in relation to each other through live discussion, negotiation, interrogation, and clarification.
Counting References, Cluster Analysis, and Quantifying Coding Relationships	Allowed me to connect with my ancestral gift of quantitative pattern identification and helps me tell research stories.
Visualized relationships between coding, nodes, and references	Supported justice knowledge exchanges by portraying knowledge in different ways.

Envisioning	Supported our imagination beyond the current world system.
Radical Caribbean Thought	Provided a poignant reasoning process that traces social science within it sociopolitcal and historical contexts. Additionally, it connects me to my Jamaican ancestry.

<div align="right">continued</div>

The study's knowledge gathering tools were borrowed from a combination of

conversational methods, coding processes, and quantification. The methods were: (a)

well aligned with anti-colonial methodologies; (b) promoted constant interaction with

data and comrade's knowledge contributions; and (c) supported a space to share our lived

experiences in relation to our dual educational politics. It was important for me to select

methods that supported a dynamic process where themes fructify from the educator

activist collectives' conversations. I imagined and co-created a dynamic knowledge

creation process by engaging in reciprocal critical storying and listening (Kinloch &

Pedro, 2014; San Pedro & Kinloch, 2017). Critical storying and listening recognizes

stories and lived experiences' importance in knowledge creation processes. The educator

activist collective engaged in storying and listening through conversations (Kovach,

2010). Kovach described conversational methods as deeply relational because dialogue

is purposed to affirm and support all knowledge contributors. Honoring the Indigenous

oral tradition of conversation to transmit knowledge upholds anti-colonial research aims.

I am transparent about how my experiences as a Black educator activist led to the study's central research questions. This convolutes traditional understandings of inductive vs. deductive research processes. Inductive reasoning is social explanation construction from a set of experiences, observances, or research processes. Scholars use inductive reasoning to allow their views, theories, and lenses to shift from iterative and in-depth data analysis. Inductive scholars construct theories or themes from data interpretations to answer broad and flexible research questions. However, a researchers' sole use of inductive reasoning is convoluted when the researchers' positionality, identity, and experience places them as a member of the studied group. The convolution takes place when scholars argue that themes simply emerge from data. Themes do not naturally emerge from data. They are products of the researcher or authors' positionality. Charmaz's (2014) challenged these assumptions relating to arguments that an inductive researcher must be a "neutral observer and value free-expert" (p. 13). She forwarded concerns for participant-researchers' attempts to hide their preconceptions, theories, stories, and experiences from research processes. Inductive reasoning does offer important methodological considerations but is problematized in this study when I designed the theory of diradicalism in relation to my lived experiences as a Black educator activist— the population of knowledge contributors I invited to the study. Thus, like all comrades in the study, I am a participant and a knowledge contributor who enters the space with a theory rooted in my lived experiences.

Although inductive reasoning does offer imperative considerations, it is limited in describing my role in the knowledge creation project. However, I do not frame our study

within the alternative deductive reasoning process or formulating and checking hypotheses with data interpretation activities. Diradicalism is not something that requires deduction to be valued because validation comes from ancestral knowledge, relationships, and educational justice aims. This means the inductive and deductive binary is not helpful in understanding this study's knowledge gathering tools. I attempted to intersect the long-existent, Black and Indigenous, pedagogical and political activism convergence, I call diradicalism, with my similarly-situated comrades' engagement in dual educational politics. The combination between my role as an equal knowledge contributor and the rejection of deductive theory-checking illuminates another study circumvention of western research binaries.

As a response to some of the criticism of the inductive and deductive binary, scholars offer abductive reasoning as a potential solution (Feilzer, 2010). Researchers and co-researchers use abductive projects to draw imaginative conclusions from the interaction of their lived experiences. Thus, abductive research designs can place all participants in constant dialogue with each other's' thoughts, ideas, and understandings of the study's foci. Furthermore, abduction permits tentative and creative inferential evidence based on research processes. Abductive reasoning poses to offer an alternative to the inductive vs deductive binary, but still may hold western, white, and colonial logics. I must interrogate the abductive reasoning method within the extent it holds western, white, and settler colonial research logics.

In Aaron Kamugisha's (2019), *Beyond Coloniality: Citizenship and Freedom in the Caribbean Intellectual Tradition*, he wrote an unapologetic critique of knowledge

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creation situated within settler colonial and neoliberal logics. The book's purpose was to engage in a complex and radical Caribbean thought that names modern coloniality and supports collective efforts to imagine beyond Caribbean colonized realities. Kamugisha synthesized how Europeans mobilized abductive reasoning to abduce justification for racial pseudoscience, genocide, labor theft, land theft, resource theft, and anti-Black violence. Literally, the term abduction describes abhorrent European-initiated theft of Africans from their native lands. European enslavers *abducted* Afro-Indigenous peoples from their ancestral homes and then used *abductive* reasoning, disguised as deductive or inductive reasoning, to produce hardened pseudoscientific evidence framing African peoples as inferior (Chetty, 2021). Imagining social scientific reasoning methods beyond coloniality demands a radical Caribbean epistemology that situates inductive, deductive, and abductive processes within their historical use by European colonizers to justify anti-Blackness and anti-Indigeneity. Anti-colonial knowledge gathering demands analyzing research method modern use, language origins, and historical context.

Later, Kamugisha (2019) explained that abduction while it may signal coloniality it simultaneously demonstrates "marronage, insurrection, rebellion, revolution, and fugitive escape" (cited from Thomas, 2001, p. 200). I used my Jamaican, ancestrally gifted, Caribbean resistance and reasoning as method to guide my interpretations of our Black and Indigenous collective's interactions, conversations, and dialogue. I engaged in this reasoning approach because it attended to Caribbean radical thought, forwarded deeply contextualized histories, centered the collective's relationships to each other,

countered colonial research methods, and imagined anti-oppressive, anti-colonial, and anti-racist educational policy structures.

Conversational Methods to Share in Critical Storying and Listening

Conversational methods stem from the contributions of Indigenous people's engagement in storying, listening, and remembering to gather knowledge (Kovach, 2010). As educational policy research continues to move toward the production of transformative knowledge, relational and humanizing research continues to guide inquiry. Anti-colonial knowledge creation projects hold mechanisms that position co-researchers' stories in reciprocal conversational spaces (San Pedro & Kinloch, 2017). Projects in Humanization (PiH) (San Pedro & Kinloch, 2017) synthesized the relational work by connecting the intellectual contributions of critical Indigenous methodologies (Brayboy et al., 2012) and humanizing research (Irizzary & Brown, 2014). PiH situates knowledge creation in a collective inquiry space that center relationships, knowledge's communal ownership, ancestral knowledge, lived experiences, dialogic activities, and justice knowledge exchanges. The study's educator activist collective used one-on-one and collective conversations between all knowledge contributors to create a relational and conversational space. Conversational methods, centered on critical storying and listening, radically repositioned our project outside of dominant colonial educational policy research paradigms.

The study's central unit of analysis, at the individual level, are coding interpretations relating to the exchange of stories and knowledge through Black and Indigenous educator activist conversations. The stories and conversations indicated

shared experiences, tension, hope, joy, pain, connection, and love. San Pedro and Kinloch (2017) wrote, "Stories carry the histories of how people from marginalized communities of color have worked against having their voices silenced or re-storied by researchers who hypervisualize pain as hopelessness and ignore the transformative power that exists within the communities they work" (p. 375S). San Pedro and Kinloch explained the impact relational knowledge co-creation has on its knowledge contributors. Our engagement in storying through conversation unlocks understandings of collective struggle that engenders transformative possibilities. We situated our collective as a space to reject the silencing and exclusionary efforts of the anti-Black and settler colonial project.

The educator activist collective extended Black and Indigenous knowledge creation that disrupts oppression. We connected to Richardson's (2019) work when she partnered with Black mothers and their children to co-construct narratives that disrupted the white capitalist heteropatriarchal structure. In narrative co-construction Richardson engaged directly in critical storying. She stated, "I undertook this endeavor to contribute to my own healing and growth as a Black woman with a legacy of Black girlhood" (p. 25). Through exchanging personal stories and engaging in conversation, Richardson showed vulnerability and moved beyond an objective researcher position.

Our educator activist collective connected to vulnerable and unapologetic positionings as Black and Indigenous educational justice policy actors. The knowledges produced from our intersectional positionalities helped us decide if the project's knowledge should turn to dismantle systems of oppression. In Richardson's study, Black

mother and daughter co-researchers turned their efforts toward the deconstruction of patriarchal reproductive politics. In our collective, we examined oppressive educational policy disruption through our engagement in dual educational politics. Unequivocally, conversational methods hold the potential to lead to efforts to resist, transform, and reimagine oppressive educational policy. For the above reasons, the educator activist collective used conversational methods at the foundation of knowledge gathering activities.

Quantified Pattern Recognition

There is a long history of Black and Indigenous people who used mathematical and quantitative patterns to construct knowledge and tell stories. For instance, the Moors of North Africa were the originators of modern algebra. The number symbols used in modern mathematics stem from the Moors' Arabic symbols (Boyer, 1944; Lumpkin, 1997). This means that the foundational symbols are African diasporic contributions. Concurrently, critical Indigenous methodologists show how the western quantitative and qualitative binary oversimplifies complex weaving of quantified Indigenous knowledges, live experience, and oral traditions. Blackstock (2009) shared the history surrounding how Indigenous knowledges have always weaved storying, context, and relationships with physics, mathematics, quantifies pattern recognition, and communal research aims. She argued that there is an important role for quantification as long as its guided buy Indigenous epistemologies and ontologies.

Given the dominance of evidence-based policy constructs (Lingard, 2013), research collectives may invoke strategies to resist the use of deficit-oriented quantitative

methods (Nygreen, 2017) to gain the favor of those in power (Gutierrez & Lipman, 2016). Quantification's strategic use is one example of why it is important to collectively interrogate what research activities must be contested. Interrogation is important because there is a risk of knowledge creation being catered to ingenuine and reactionary policy actors. I supported this interrogation through selecting quantification methods that weaved my interpretations with contextualized knowledge and bolstered my storytelling.

Walter & Suina (2019) shared stories from an Indigenous quantification project that turned toward more contextual and specific public health data science. The Albuquerque Area Southwest Tribal Epidemiology Centre (AASTEC) worked to "provide high quality, culturally-congruent epidemiology/surveillance, capacity development, program evaluation, and health promotion/disease prevention services" to American Indian and Alaska natives (p. 238). AASTEC's mission was rooted in tribal sovereignty and collaborative designs for meaningful quantified knowledge. Walter and Suina argued that AASTEC must work to circumvent western constructs of mental, physical, and spiritual health. In April 2017, AASTEC convened a respected Native think tank to imagine and enact a more intentional use of Indigenous quantitative methodologies. The think tank's three recommendations showed the relational components merging quantification, Indigenous Sovereignty, Indigenous self-determination, and negotiated relational knowledge. The Indigenous-led think tank's work indicated the complex dynamic between stories, conversations, quantification, data, and connection.

I aligned with my African ancestors and moved away from the western

qualitative/quantitative binary. Instead, my efforts to explore educator activists' political

and pedagogical activism convergence was contextualized in our histories, lived

experiences, and conversations. Then, I weave quantified patterns to support my

interpreted commonalities in these contextualized spaces. Chapter 4 will hold tables and

graphs that helped visualize quantified patterns in my coding process. This quantification

is an egalitarian method of data analysis because it is non-hierarchal. I used an

intertwined paradigm to amplify my comrades' live experience descriptions in Black and

Indigenous educational justice research storytelling. Gifted to me by my brilliant African

ancestors, pattern quantification and organizing data into tables, graphs, or equations

helped me share the collective's conversations and stories.

Envisioning as Anti-Colonial Method

This study's educator activist collective spent intentional time envisioning and

conversing about how we act to build equitable visions. Our collective did not attempt to

connect our knowledge-creation to reductive and reactionary practicality frames.

Critically situated, Black, and Indigenous co-created knowledge gets disproportionally

criticized for impracticality (see critical race praxis in Stovall, 2014). These critiques are

rooted in reactionary ideologies and elite's fear of massive power redistribution (Tuck,

2013). Western elites have fearmongered, labeled liberation as too radical, or claimed

impracticality. Then, they frame their impracticality claims as genuine engagement with

transformative policy solution possibilities. These claims are obstructionist,

distractionary, and obfuscation. The educator activist collective was prepared to

withstand these unoriginal critiques. Our resolve resided in our accountability to Black

and Indigenous communities, ancestral knowledges, and justice-oriented aims. Critical

Indigenous research methodologists have argued that envisioning, imagining, and

dreaming connects people, encourages building futures beyond current oppressive

realities, establishes new aims, strategizes solutions, prioritizes mental health, and

catalyzes transformation (Cajete, 2020; Smith, 2012). Our educator activist collective

unapologetically dreamed of equitable educational policy.

When considering action, it is important to examine co-researchers' positionality

to act, resource distribution, potential outcomes, participation levels, mental health

capacities, energy driving action, collectivism, similarly situated efforts, relationships,

voices included, shared leadership, rest, joy, and many other considerations. The

educator activist collective spoke about potential next steps. However, these next steps

were situated within our various contexts. The collective's envisioning was central to our

potential future actions, and we were content with our envisioning-focus given our

capabilities as a collective. One of the collective's agreed upon guidelines was "expect

and understand non-closure." This meant that we were not going to be able to create

solutions, solve, or finish conversations around future-building in our one-hour sessions.

Our "work-is-not-done" community guideline positioned our knowledge creation and

relationship building beyond this study's boundaries. We understood and remained

enthusiastic about how our envisioning, dreaming, and future constructing premised more

participatory research methods in the future.

Collective Members as Comrades

Following anti-colonial methodological frames, the Black and Indigenous educators who joined me in this project are not research subjects. They are my comrades. Comrade was agreed upon by all collective members after I shared my connection to the mission of Huey Newton and his use of the term. The term acknowledges a foundational alignment in our pursuit of knowledge creation for educational justice. My comrades were equal knowledge contributors. I ensured an egalitarian relationship by (a) providing compensation for their labor, time, and knowledge contributions (b) building relationships outside of the research activities (c) allowing comrades to guide discussion, and (d) creating space for my comrades to contribute to data interpretation throughout the project.

First, my comrades were compensated for their labor and knowledge contributions because of how difficult it is for educators to be available to participate in knowledge creation projects. These difficulties come from the realities that educators are overworked and underpaid. Pandemic policies worsened the political neglect. Second, my comrades and I engaged in several virtual and in person activities that took place outside of the regular research activities. We supported each other through resource sharing throughout our time together and community-building. Third, I came to our collective sessions with topics that I thought would be beneficial based off our individual conversations; however, these points shifted based on what the collective wanted to discuss. Conversations frequently shifted to explore and unpack urgent and recent

experiences relating to justice and equity. Finally, my comrades provided feedback and affirmed data interpretations through interactive processes throughout the project.

Black and Indigenous K-12 Educator Activists

The educator activists invited to this project were exclusively: (a) Black, Brown, or Indigenous (b) self-described activists and (c) educators working in U.S. K-12 schools. I focused on Black, Brown, and Indigenous educator activists to shift dominant educational policy studies to the collective actions of voices excluded from processes. Not all dual politically engaged educators describe themselves as activists; however, I deemed that using the label would connect me with folks who similarly situate themselves within educational justice movements. This decision helped with recruitment and started the project from an energized place. The decision to focus on K-12 connects with literature on political and pedagogical activism convergence at the classroom, school, district, state, or national level.

Recruitment

To identify and invite Black, Brown, and Indigenous comrades to the activist collective, I connected with educator-involved and justice-oriented educational movement networks. These justice movement networks organize for racial/ethnic justice; thus, the organizations' members were likely to identify as educator activists or organizers and participate in dual political activities. These organizations included: Abolitionist Teaching Network, Social Equity Educators, New York Collective of Radical Educators, Teacher Action Group, People's Ed, Caucus of Working Educators, Black Male Educators, Qualitative Research in Education, Ohio State's Black Caucus,

Racial Justice Philly, Social Justice Resource Exchange, personal contacts, and other

social media-based groups. The format I used to make first contact was email, Twitter,

Facebook, or Instagram (see Appendix A). When communicating with each

organizational membership and leaders, I included information about the proposed

project, a QR code survey to capture contact information, and IRB documentation. I

wanted to be transparent about my positionality in connection to the research collectives'

imagined co-construction. Recruitment materials (see Appendices B & C) included

aspects of my personal educator activist experience so potential comrades were aware of

my objectives, passions, and hopes for the educator activist collective.

The first invitation point was an initial interest survey (see Appendix D). Nine

potential BIPOC comrades indicated on the interest survey that they wanted to be

contacted to schedule a one-on-one conversation. I sent the post-screening email to them

that officially invited them to our collective (see Appendix E). Of the nine, five

scheduled a one-on-one conversation and contributed to the educator activist collective

sessions. Two of the educators who decided not to participate articulated via email that

they were at max capacity because of justice work brought on by the pandemic. This was

expected because of the more-than-one conversation commitment invitation that asked

comrades to contribute to multiple meetings across multiple weeks. Two of the folks

who completed the initial survey noted that they could do the one-on-one; but would be

unable to attend the bi-monthly collective sessions. Justice-oriented educators are

saturated even without COVID pandemic policy burden; thus, commitment to the project

required flexibility. Although I proposed to have two meetings every month, my five comrades collectively decided that once-a-month was more viable.

Several reflections on the ways educators engaged with the initial recruitment survey made me consider relational research aspects. First, educators were excited to have the opportunity to participate in a project that could contribute to equitable educational aims for Black, Brown, and Indigenous communities. Second, the educators who stated that they were interested were united in their purpose of fighting for justice. These pre-project relational research aspects led to a committed, connected, and affirming collective throughout the study.

Although I began recruitment parametrized on K-12 classroom teachers (in all recruitment materials), my survey respondents illuminated an issue with excluding other types of facilitators of teaching and learning. A K-12 public school classroom teacher must hold a state-sanctioned professional degree and license. Thus, if I narrowed my scope to K-12 classroom teachers then I would make a decision that results in the exclusion of non-state-sanctioned teachers who pursue educational justice and equity. Many folks who pass on teaching and learning to younger generations have no state-sanctioned degree or licensed (Whitcomb, 2009). Many Black and Indigenous educators are intentional about a refusal to pursue a state-sanctioned license because of state-led obstructive aims in relation to communal knowledge. K-12 schooling, referring to U.S. public school structures, was not created for Black and Indigenous people. In this study, all the educators worked within the confines of the U.S. K-12 education system but were not all state-sanctioned classroom teachers (see Table 4 for collective demographics).

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Table 4. Collective Demographics

Black Educators	Indigenous Educators	Urban Setting	Suburban Setting
5	1	5	1
Charter	**Public**	**Traditional Classroom Teachers**	**Broadened Educators**
3	3	3	3

My research question language shifted to capture coalitions of folks working toward justice and equity. The broadened educator definition promoted collective theorizations on strategies to contribute to movement base-building through highlighting the need for justice movement analyses across all stakeholders. Also, a broadened educator definition promoted examining connections and differences across Black and Indigenous experiences in U.S. K-12 education systems. Broadened conceptualizations of teaching and learning included Black and Indigenous movement spaces that intentionally circumvent gatekeeping from the state-sanctioned frame of K-12 classroom teacher. As a result, my initial intention to focus on "classroom teachers" shifted to "K-12 educators" that included aspiring school leaders, administrative assistants, teacher coaches, SEL intervention specialists, researchers, and former classroom teachers. We offer our *Educator Activist Profiles* in Appendix F and images in our likeness in Appendix G that help the reader visualize how we connected throughout the knowledge creation process.

Study Design

The educator activist collective study design was initiated in two phases. Phase I included an in-depth interview with each comrade. Phase II placed all six comrades in a collective virtual space. Below, I explain the two-phase study in more detail.

Phase I

The first phase of the study gave significant time to exchange stories and learn about what brought each educator activist to their work engaging in dual educational politics.

One-on-One Conversations.

Each educator activist participated in a 90-minute one-on-one conversation. I modeled vulnerability and invited my comrades into the knowledge-producing space. The educator activists shared their lived experiences, project interests, activism theories, and hopes for our educator activist collective. Reciprocally, I told stories rooted in my experiences as a Black educator and activist. The dialogue centered on critical listening and stories of resistance and pursuit of thrival. However, fluid conversation flowed throughout the two-way interview. Just as I began to learn about my new comrades' experiences, they learned from my stories. Appendix H displays the interview protocol I used to help collect my own thoughts as I engaged with the educator activists.

Notably and by design, we loosely followed the protocol depending on the flow of the conversation. As soon as our conversations concluded, I wrote down my immediate thoughts about my connection to my comrades and any other major interests to incorporate into future inquiries. Each conversation was recorded, transcribed by Zoom,

and coded. The purpose of one-on-one conversation coding was to interpret

commonalities and help guide the collective session conversations in Phase II. A

synopsis of the conversations and my notes were sent to all comrades, and they had an

opportunity to provide feedback in preparation for the collective sessions.

Zoom Virtual Space.

Given challenges brought on by the 2020-21 COVID pandemic, I used Zoom as

the virtual medium to create a conversational space. Zoom allowed for conversations to

take place in a safe virtual space. Moreover, this allowed for the inclusion of educator

activists from across the United States. We transcended state boundaries by exchanging

knowledge across various settings and educational environments. An additional

advantage to Zoom is the free and automated transcription service. The transcriptions

were crosschecked, and the transcription service helped with time efficiency. Time

efficiency was important because of the 4-week window between sessions to transcribe,

crosscheck, interpret comrades' feedback, and pull conversational themes and future

directions.

Phase II

The second phase of the study co-created a space for Black and Indigenous

educator activists to share, learn, envision, and build relationships.

Monthly Collective Meetings.

The educator activist collectives' main objectives were to forward understandings

of dual educator activism within educational policy discussions, establish relationships

across our various experiences, build community, and make our understandings,

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knowledges, and positionality, known. In Phase II, we placed our perspectives, understandings, and knowledges in conversation with each other, our ancestors, and other Black and Indigenous educators. The collective participated in several negotiations before the first collective session. The first major negotiation involved my request for comrades to plan and lead an entire session. We quickly identified that it would be difficult given their full-time schedules. The collective trusted me in project facilitation because I did not have a full-time position in K-12. Not having a K-12 full-time position meant that I had more time to dedicated to formulating agenda and planning conversational activities. Secondly, we negotiated collective session frequency. The collective thought a once-a-month schedule was going to be easier for attendance. Third, we negotiated collective meeting topics at the end of our sessions and via email (see table 5). These negotiations led to full engagement and demonstrated my commitment to educators' concerns that they were at maximum capacity.

The collective was in conversation for four total virtual sessions. Zoom mechanisms recorded and transcribed the conversations. Then, I crosschecked transcripts with audio recordings and coded them. After the first and last session I asked comrades to submit a brief reflection, via Google Forms, on how our stories and conversations connected us to each other. During the last session, the educator activist collective reflected on previous sessions to envision educational policy structures. We co-constructed a mind map that crystalized our Black and Indigenous educational policy visions, themes, and ideas undergirding our dual educational politics. We hope our co-

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constructed knowledge creation leads to an extended invitation to other justice-oriented

educator activists.

Table 5. Monthly Session Description

Collective Session #	Planned Topic	Collective Negotiation	Date (2021)
1	Discuss collective aims and hopes for project	Changed from bi-monthly sessions to once a month Shifted from collective member facilitation	February 25th
2	Collective action in partnership with students and families	PD facilitators that claim to forward equitable aims, but their actions do not emulate equity.	March 25th
3	Educational policy that bolsters justice-oriented efforts	Black and Indigenous Healing and Joy	April 29th
4	Envisioning and imagining what structures we must have to ensure equity in education for our Black and Brown students	Co-created space to unpack a collective member's recent experience with someone defining racism solely on an individual level	May 27th

The two-phase study design promoted a co-created virtual space where we

connected to commonalities through storying and listening about Black, Indigenous

educator activism. We constantly intersected our lived experiences in relation to each

other's theorizations, conceptualizations, and knowledge. The collective design acted as

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the starting point in co-creating knowledge naming and describing pedagogical and

political activism convergence. Throughout the knowledge creation process the study

design changed, was added to, shifted in relation to the articulated hopes of the collective.

This Black and Indigenous space identified new directions, collective ideas, hopes, and

educator activism's future imaginaries.

<div align="center">**Data Analysis Process**</div>

In this section, I explain how I interpreted the textual data and weaved quantified pattern

recognition with contextualized conversations data.

Answerable to Comrade Relationships

The most important data analysis process was my attempts to share data

interpretations with the collective. I purposed the various checks to ensure that there was

accurate assessing and interpreting of our one-on-one and collective conversations. The

checks manifested in several ways throughout the study. The first check was an email

sent before our first collective session. Attached to this email was an interpreted synopsis

of the specific comrade's questions from our one-on-one conversation. Comrades then

offered clarifications, extensions, or modifications based on the synopsis document.

Second, I provided an option for comrades to document and reflect on our collective

conversations in the first and last session through a feedback survey. Third, I did

informal checks and clarifications during the virtual collective sessions. These checks

were formative and related to a clarification from previous sessions. Finally, and most

importantly, the final check asked my comrades to provide feedback on my 6-month long

data analysis process. This process invited comrades to a final virtual session where I

shared my final interpretations and explained how I arrived at my interpretation of our

collective knowledge. The final feedback session took place approximately a year from

the first one-on-one conversation. I took notes on all feedback, knowledge, and

adjustments suggested by the collective members. Moreover, these sessions provided

comrades an opportunity to see how I used their direct quotes in the knowledge narrative.

My comrades offered suggestions on how to use their words, what to keep between the

collective, and what contexts were important to premise their words. The educator

activists' shared information and checks held me accountable to our collective

knowledges.

Initial Coding

There was an average of four weeks before each collective session. This

timeframe gave me enough time to crosscheck transcripts and engage with the

conversational data before a subsequent session. I focused on identifying discussions that

could guide future conversations, use further explanation, or would benefit the collective

members. This method gave me iterative information to support the educator activist

collectives' aims. The one-on-one conversation transcriptions followed a similar process.

I had around four weeks between the last one-on-one and the first collective session to

transcribe the conversations. Thus, I used a specific transcript preparation process for all

five 90-minute one-on-ones before the first collective session. The process involved

downloading and converting files, transcription crosschecking, timestamping,

highlighting, labeling, and uploading to NVivo project.

The process to prepare the transcripts started with downloading the Zoom files. The Zoom files included a video recording, an audio file, and a .vtt transcript. The .vtt transcript needed to be converted to a Microsoft WORD document for easier modification; consequently, I used a free online resource that converted the files. The next step in transcript preparation was to listen to the audio file while following along on the transcribed WORD document. The WORD document was not timestamped; however, I added timestamps at places where I needed clarity and where the conversations resonated with political and pedagogical activism convergence. The most important transcript preparation aspect was ensuring the words of my comrades were accurately transcribed. Moreover, textual data does not capture tone, intent, earnestness, emotion, or joy. Thus, the transcript preparation process allowed me to add the emotional contexts to our conversations. These process protocols supported me in imagining and facilitating future conversation topics, identify knowledge capable of addressing the research question, clarify emotion, and crosscheck Zoom's transcription service. Once transcript preparation was complete, the files were uploaded to the NVivo project file.

My initial coding process commenced after the conclusion of the final collective session. Appendix I displays the finalized coding structure I used after conceptual shifts and my interpretation of comrade's added themes. I conducted the analysis line-by-line and indicated each new thought, idea, or knowledge contribution within my coding structure. *New* did not mean that the idea had never been discussed in the transcript. *New* meant a change in topic or change in the ideas being discussed. For instance,

imagine one of my comrades discussing their intersectional identity. Then, their next

sentence talked about how their intersectional identity impacts how they build

relationships with their students. This hypothetical textual data holds two separate ideas.

Later in the transcript, comrades could mention their intersectional identity again, and

this would be coded as another reference under the same intersectional identity node.

NVivo uses the language *node* to describe the group of references that are coded to the

same category, idea, or coding concept. A *reference* is the number of instances a node

category is coded. In the hypothetical example above, I would code the text into two

node categories. There would be two references coded under the intersectional identity

node and one reference coded to the student relationships node. The initial coding

process sets the foundation for how I made meaning of the educator activist collectives'

conversations.

Additional Nodes & Final Coding

Additional nodes surfaced from my iterative reflections on the collectives'

conversations, my commitment to my comrades' knowledges, and central research

question understandings. I added a node category if the idea or thought was not captured

by the initial coding structure or if comrades discussed something I did not think about

before engaging in the initial coding process (see Appendix I). Additionally, I went

through several node name labels to best represent my comrades' ideas and thoughts. For

instance, I changed the node labelled "*enlisting the next generation*" to "*inviting the next*

generation." This change more accurately acknowledged the nuances behind our

collective efforts to build educational justice movements through our dual educational politics.

Since there were multiple evolutions and additions throughout the data analysis process, I engaged in a final coding process to ensure that additional themes were analyzed throughout all NVivo files. The final coding process took place after the line-by-line coding process concluded. The final process was more targeted and specific to the added nodes; however, I still added references to textual data that indicated the initial coding structure. Final coding added complexity, nuance, and accuracy to the data analysis and prompted robust interpretation of the collective's knowledge creation via memo-writing.

Memo-writing

Memo-writing, or the written synthesis of relationships between node categories and references, helped me initiate interpreted themes throughout the data analysis process. As I wrote memos, I expressed initial thoughts and interpretations about my comrades and I's conversations. Each comrade had a specific memo created to capture their knowledge contributions among the various file types. This memo-writing process supported my integration of comrades' thoughts and ideas into my own interpretations. As I wrote the findings section, I returned to my memos for inspiration, guidance, and connections.

Cluster Analysis from Deeply Critical and Contextual Educational Research

This study moved away from the qualitative/quantitative binary and the obfuscation of methods and methodologies/epistemologies in educational policy studies.

My efforts to explore educator activists' political activities were contextualized in our histories, experiences, and conversations. Cluster analysis was a useful tool to organize and quantify patterns within the research collectives' conversations. The study's findings show tables and graphs that helped visualize quantified knowledge-bolstered storying. This quantification was an egalitarian data analysis method. Data analysis was egalitarian because I used quantification to bolster the already powerful qualitative storying and conversations, not to validate it. Validation comes from answerability to comrades, our relationships, and our ancestral knowledges. My African ancestors passed the gift of quantified pattern analysis to me; thus, I find organizing data into tables, visuals, graphs, or equations helped me tell one interpretation of our collective story.

I used NVivo's cluster analysis and Jaccard's coefficient to quantify the similarities between the coding structure. Jaccard's coefficient tells researchers how similar two nodes are from 0 to 1, a value of 1 being the most similar. Researchers calculate the similarity value through taking the intersection between two node references over the union of those same two files' references based on their coding within project files. In other words, NVivo software calculates the value by comparing two nodes across all project files. Jaccard's coefficient is useful because it can compute a positive value that can be interpreted as a percent. For instance, a 0.60 value would mean that the two nodes under analysis were similarly coded at 60%. Written differently, a 0.60 value would mean that when I coded two comparison nodes—60% of the time—I coded the comparison nodes to the same files. Node comparisons that show high levels of similarity were then identified for deeper contextualization in the educator activist

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collectives' conversations. Finally, NVivo cluster analyses produced dendrograms that

visualize the connections across the coding structure. I used this data analysis process as

a first step to initiate the interrogation of my central research question that explored

pedagogical and political activism convergence.

Taking Pieces of Our Stories to Understand Intersections

The strategy to parcel and then connect stories and conversation in co-creating

knowledge has advantages and disadvantages. The advantage is in identifying

commonalities across experiences that form relational connections. The disadvantage is

story parceling. However, story parceling was mediated by the collective's justice-

oriented and liberatory aims. Stories may have been fragmented through coding, but they

were fragmented in a way to make-meaning and forward a contextualized collective

narrative. Then, this collective narrative can be assessed, added to, and modified by

individuals whose stories contributed to the collective narrative and their allies. Lal et al.

(2012) offered a robust analysis on the combination of different types of methods. They

explained that one of major differences between various methods is the treatment of

stories. The authors' analysis suggested that researchers can effectively engage in the

storying and coding. Some methods use stories in search of commonalities, and other

methods keep stories intact. My study does fragment our conversations and stories via

line-by-line coding; however, the purpose is to forward understandings of story

exchanges and connections. It is storying exchanges, common struggle identification,

and relationship building that fuel educational justice movements. The data analysis

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process above provided the analytical space to show how our stories, connect to, challenge, and support each other in our pedagogical and political activism.

Initial Cluster Analysis

To initiate understandings about Black and Indigenous educator activists political and pedagogical activism convergence, I first ran an initial cluster analysis with just the nodes from the political and pedagogical dimensions. I left out any node that had fewer references than twenty because it skewed the dendrogram. Exclusion justification resides in there not being enough evidence or time to suggest strong connections to that specific node. The purpose of the initial cluster analysis was to visualize how the node categories under political and pedagogical activism were similar. NVivo's dendrogram creation supported visualizing patterns to interpret themes and show various relationships in the data (Guest & McLellan, 2003). The dendrogram used spatial geometry to structure more similar data as clustered closer together. I used the results in an exploratory manner.

Final Cluster Analysis

I added the nodes from the *convergence* dimension in the final cluster analysis. The final cluster analysis created a second dendrogram. With the initial and final clustered dendrograms, I interpreted the differences and analyzed the nodes that indicated a convergence of political and pedagogical activism. Highlighted color-coding assisted my analysis of which node categories were coded under the pedagogical, political, or convergence dimension. I provide the number of references for each node category in the final cluster analysis. The number of references allowed a reader to evaluate the number

of times each node was referenced in the project. A higher number of references meant that there was more coding activity for that node. More coding activity signals the need to turn to more contextualized data for explanation. Finally, I used NVivo matrix coding function to show textual evidence that I coded to the same node category. I pulled this textual data to write the knowledge creation story in Chapter 4 in tandem with the final cluster analysis data.

African Geometry and Similarity Indices

NVivo software follows the popular nomenclature for the "Jaccard" coefficient to signal Paul Jaccard's knowledge ownership. However, historians' question whether individual ownership of similarity indices is warranted. Similarity geometry is a subsection of Euclidean geometry. Euclidean geometry stems from the works of Euclid of Alexandria, Egypt. From 323-283 BCE, Euclid was the most influential mathematician of the era. His *History of Mathematics* textbook and pedagogical theories dominated the field for 2000 years (Lumpkin, 1987). There is historical evidence that Euclid lived and worked in Northern Africa and there is no evidence that he migrated from anywhere else (Izmirli, 2011). Nonetheless, Eurocentric scholars portray him as having Greek-European features with almost no melanin. Furthermore, a lack of unequivocal evidence has some scholars making claims that Euclid was a team of mathematicians—this theorized team would then have lived and worked in Northern Africa (Frankenstein & Powell, 1994). Even if Euclid was not a darker-complexed African mathematician, he would have benefited from African land, labor, water, and other resources. I share this historicism to point out quantified knowledge's collective

ownership, rooted in African people's contributions. In many academic disciplines, such as medical sciences, astrology, agriculture, and philosophy, African contributions are obfuscated, erased, and diminished (Raju, 2007). Too often, lack of historical evidence skews toward Eurocentrism, or the western, white world claiming knowledge ownership. Unequivocally, African resources were essential to the infrastructure in a potential collective creation and application of the mathematical theories behind NVivo's similarity indices. From this point on, I do not call the index it is popular name. Instead, I honor African contributions in referring to the similarity index as a product of Northern African knowledge contributors and infrastructure.

I analyzed NVivo's similarity values for each node comparison under the dimensions of political activism, pedagogical activism, and convergence. This produced 352 node pairings with values from 0.50 to 1.00. Values greater than 0.80 were retained for further exploration. A 0.80 coefficient indicates that when I coded two comparison nodes, 80% of the time I coded the nodes to the same project files. I used 0.80 as a cutoff value for a couple of reasons. First, I made comparisons to machine learning's use of the similarity index's equation—intersection over union. A computer may use the following value criterion to identify the similarity between two images: .4034 is poor, .7330 is good, .9264 is excellent (Rosebrock, 2016). These value criteria may be arbitrary and depend on the implications of accurately identifying the image. For instance, the privacy implications relating to a smart phone's ability to accurately identify the owner's face would need a stricter value criterion. The 73% cutoff as "good" would not be sufficient in protecting the phone owners' privacy because two people with machine-detected 73%

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similar facial features would be able to access the owner's smart phone. I chose a cutoff

value of 0.80 because I am interested in no-risk exploratory analyses and 80% similarity

is significant enough to detect a consistent coding relationship. Second, one researcher

analyzing 352 pairings is inefficient and impractical. To be clear, the pairings that did

not make the cut are also significant because my brain spent cognitive capacity to

categorize them. However, the node pairings greater than 0.80 indicated that my brain's

coding processes detected a similarity among the comparison nodes at a heightened

consistency rate. This provides evidence of potentially strong similarity between those

nodes and a possible relationship to further explore and contextualize in textual data.

The 0.80 cutoff reduced the node paring numbers from 352 to 121. Then, I color-

coded the coefficient tables to indicate whether the node was under the category: Political

Activism (red), Pedagogical Activism (blue), or Convergence (purple) (see Appendix J).

This color-coding allowed for similarity strength visualization in unison with potential

intersections between pedagogical and political activism. Additionally, the process

allowed me to produce a table comparing the pairing type frequency between dimensions:

Convergence to Convergence, Political to Political, Pedagogical to Pedagogical,

Convergence to Political, Convergence to Pedagogical, and Pedagogical to Political. The

central focus is pedagogical and political activism convergence; thus, I removed the

"Pedagogical to Pedagogical" and "Political to Political" categories from the 121

strongest similarity values. The coding similarity strength between nodes under the same

dimension is outside the scope of the research question. The reduction process took the

final coding comparison number to 93. The initial-final cluster data analysis procedures

provided 93 strong and similarly coded node pairings. With strong-evidenced node

pairing similarity, I returned to my comrades and I's stories of resistance and our pursuit

of thrival to deeply contextualize political and pedagogical activism's convergence.

CHAPTER 4: CO-FINDING DIRADICALISM

RQ1. How does a K-12 Black and Indigenous educator activist collective theorize the dynamic interaction between pedagogical and political activism (or, engage in dual educational politics—diradicalism)?

RQ2. What educational policy structures do we collectively envision?

To answer the study's research questions, I analyzed the conversations, dialogue, knowledge, and storytelling among the research collective. The knowledge created through my comrades and I's research activities are organized based on the coding structure I forward in Chapter 3. To understand the convergence of pedagogical and political activism, it is crucial to understand how Black and Indigenous educator activists theorize about the action dimensions separately and then synthesize and interpret the interactions between them.

Black and Indigenous educator activists engage in instances of resistance and thrival pursuit at the convergence of their political and pedagogical activism. Resistance meaning the methods of naming and acting to dismantle, abolish, and collectively struggle against oppressive systems. The thrival pursuit meaning the act of pulling energy from the sustaining fuels of Black and Indigenous love, victory, and joy despite anti-Black and settler colonial systemic oppression. These two types of conversations are related; however, it is helpful to organize findings separately and then at their convergence. This strategy illuminates a distinction between pedagogical and political activism that premises the collective's convergent lived experiences. I begin by offering two imperative considerations that premise my findings. Then, I explain how resistance

and thrival pursuit manifested within my comrades' pedagogical activism. Secondly, I

show how political activism discussions tapped resistance and thrival pursuit. As I

describe my findings, I offer my interpretation, contextualized within my positionality, of

the collective's many conversations. My comrades and I connect, extend, and are in

conversation with our diradical ancestors.

BlackCrit, TribalCrit, and The Dynamisms of Blackness and Indigeneity

One of the seminal premises to these findings is an understanding of the complex

and dynamic ways Black and Indigenous people identify. Although our project stems

from ancestral connections and our shared experiences as Black and Indigenous people,

we do not claim to be monoliths. In fact, our collective held tensions, disagreements, and

different perspectives throughout the project. This evidences that even with six Black

and Indigenous educator activists we emulated the variety of Blackness and Indigeneity.

BlackCrit and TribalCrit provide useful theoretical discussion to support the

interpretation of the educator activist collectives' knowledge creation. These theories

interrogate a fully anti-essentialist perspective when the disdain of Blackness and the

erasure of Indigeneity is still heavily pervasive in society. The concern is that a

completely anti-essentialist view would detach us from the nuanced and specific

experience of being Black and Indigenous in the United States. European chattel slavers

and settler colonizers attempted to systematically erase, remove, murder, and exploit

Black and Indigenous people. These atrocities influence the policies, structures, and

hierarchies that continue to oppress in modern social policy arenas. Therefore, claiming

a related, unique, and common struggle for those of Indigenous American and African

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ancestry does not treat the groups as a monolith. It acknowledges connectedness while simultaneously providing space to share lived experiences. In turn, we ask others to reflect on their own lived experiences juxtaposed to our shared stories. Given the demographic of our collective and my positionality, I write from the perspective of my relationship to Blackness and my lens as a critical policy scholar. I welcome the reader to intersecting their own positionality and experiences as they engage with the collective's findings.

How is Black and Indigenous Educator Political and Pedagogical Activism Educational Policy?

Critical educational policy studies are situated within the activities of socially-constructed, lower-level policy actors. Oppressive systems work intentionally and unintentionally to suppress the activities of Black and Indigenous educators. Even more insidiously, socially-constructed, upper-level policy actors implement educational policies that devalue lower-level actors' knowledge through compliance-based policy. Compliance and managerial educational policy make it difficult for us to see ourselves as powerful actors. A theme I interpreted from this study was that the collective was emboldened by our relationships to each other's stories. We began to see justice work not in silos, but in juxtaposition to the millions of justice-oriented movement participants across the U.S. I refer to this relational illumination as *policy actor critical consciousness*. Aligned with Freire's (1970) *conscientização*, policy actor critical consciousness examines how lower-level educational policy actors liberate themselves and support their students' deconstruction of oppressive frames. This liberation leads to a

heightened systems-level power analyses illuminating how transformation demands a deepened collectivism. Collectivism and understandings of collective power is central educational policy and justice research. In fact, reactionary educational policy actors cower from multiscalar, multiethnic, multigenerational movements, because of their potential to yield power redistribution in favor of equity and justice. Black and Indigenous educators' actions, dreams, stories, collective strategies, and imaginaries are central educational policy.

Pedagogical Activism Conversations

As I coded and memoed within the pedagogical activism dimension, the educator activist collective discussed several important considerations. I coded pedagogical activism into resistance acts and thrival pursuit. Pedagogical activism took place in the classroom and school-level.

Pedagogical Resistance "just about everything that's here, we invented"

The educator activist collective discussed pedagogical resistance as separate, but deeply connected to political resistance. This demarcation manifested at the various levels of policy analysis—classroom, school, district, local, state, and national. Pedagogical resistance takes place at the school and classroom level, while political resistance takes place at the school, district, local, state, or national-level. These distinctions help explain how I theorize pedagogical and political resistance. Specifically, my comrades' discussions of pedagogical activism took place at the school or classroom-level. School-level considerations fell within pedagogical and political activism because the collective connected school-level discussions of racism and settler

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colonialism to district, local, state, and national-level oppression. My comrades' system-level analyses illuminating school and classrooms as social reproduction sites that perpetuate oppressive norms place school-level discussions under both resistance typologies. Moreover, political activity in my comrades' school building involved advocating for policies that support their efforts to facilitate student critical consciousness. School-level political activity discussions signaled potential pedagogical and political activism convergence. When the educator activist collective identified issues at our schools, that reduced our pedagogical activism, we engaged in political activism to change it. These conversations undergird how my comrades' and I discussed systems-level awareness, resistance, and dual political activity.

Our educator activist collective discussed pedagogical resistance when we identified how racism, anti-Blackness, and settler colonialism manifests in their classrooms and schools. Additionally, pedagogical resistance manifested from our efforts to challenge oppressive systems. We discussed punitive student accountability systems, antidemocratic school governance, our colleagues' lack of cultural competence, white supremacist ideologies, Black and Indigenous representation, the myth of the apolitical educator, contradictory school-level policies, educator deprofessionalization, racism in standardized assessments, racist tracking systems, racist uniform policies, Eurocentric curriculum, double standards, student activism, and schools repressing family involvement. All these discussions demonstrated a complex and nuanced oppression awareness and how we facilitated student resistance in our schools and classrooms.

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In a masterful demonstration of nuanced policy awareness, Love described exclusive college credit plus courses in our one-on-one conversation:

> You can have something [policy] on paper. But, if you don't delve into how those things [policies] play out and really affect kids at the level that they receive information… those things are two different things. I can have a piece of paper that says what our policy is, "Oh, we don't bar [kids], he is from AP we don't bar kids from taking college level courses," but if I send an email only to certain kids, I have barred them. I have selected who can be a part of AP and who can't. So, we talked about policies, I think policies are one thing on paper. But, what is our practice? What is the reality of our practice? and a lot of times that's the level at which Black and Brown kids get left out. When you take that policy to practice, policies look great but how was this practiced? Did policies only allow certain kids to be privy to AP course information? And that becomes an extremely important consideration in schools where kids can be easily marginalized if you have a [decision-maker] that only cares about what's on paper.

Love's policy actor critical awareness astutely articulated how the college credit program policies look good "on paper" because it attempts to improve college access for Black and Brown students, but the practical application of the policy was exclusive. The practical application only offered courses to certain already advantaged students. She quickly evaluated, analyzed, and critiqued policies at her school that operate under the guise of equity. Finally, Love demonstrated a connection between how school-level policies exclude student participation in her school and classroom. Thus, policy actor critical consciousness stemmed from her deep connection to a justice-oriented pedagogical philosophy. The whole collective echoed this type of nuanced and complex critique through the entire project. I coded 118 oppression awareness references across the entire collective files.

The educator activist collective agreed policy actor awareness is the beginning but not the end of Black and Indigenous educators' pedagogical resistance. A seminal study finding described how the research collective mobilized awareness to action. Specifically, actions taken in their schools and classrooms to foster student capabilities to engage in justice-oriented political activity as present and future citizens. Every educator activist described examples of actions to connect students with their capacities to resist oppression or actions to co-create an environment for such justice-oriented student facilitation. These conversations manifested through educator-facilitated spaces such as: "NoCap" forums, social justice seminars, counternarrative-field trips, and justice-oriented space creation. Two comrades from similar districts, Love and Malcolm, described their "NoCap forums" where students had a safe and open space to address current events, express their feelings, and build healthy relationships with educators and students. During our research collective meeting on April 29th, Malcolm specified how his colleagues created space for students to process the police murder of their classmate, Ma'Khia Bryant:

> I was telling Love that our youth forum was heavy. But, there was a part of joy in there and so one of the kid, ninth grader, she said, "what happened before slavery?" And I was like… I didn't know what to do with that question…I mean, I knew but it's like "how far can I go?" and so I went in. I told her about the seven medieval kingdoms of Africa. You know, Mansa Musa. I told her about how the first skyscraper was in Ethiopia. I could see it in their eyes, they were shaking their head and I was like "wow," you know and that just dropped me joy. To talk about that, like Sundiata. [Malian 13th Century], the first coins were made in Africa. Then, we shifted to America, and I said just about everything that's here we [Black people] invented…I realized that talking about history just brought me joy because it was like, "I'm going to tell you, who you are

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[and where we come from] and [students] were just listening. That was the other joyous part, they were listening. I'm like wow, I guess, and all of a sudden, I want to just stop the forum and just talk about African contributions…the kids really brought it. And that brought me joy to know oppressive systems are cracking in our students' minds.

Conversing about the historical contributions of Africans was premised by a collective dialogue about anti-Black police violence. In this forum, students had space to explore the significance of Ma'Khia's murder, but the conversation took a powerful turn toward illuminating Black historical contributions. Malcolm used his joy of Black history and ancestral knowledge to connect students with the antiquity of Black intellectual thought. The action to create a dialogic space and then move to counter the heaviness of anti-Black violence is quintessential Black pedagogical resistance. I coded 257 pedagogical resistance node references across the NVivo files.

Pedagogical Thrival "I really wanted to give my class the opportunity of seeing joy as resistance"

The educator activist collective illuminated pedagogical thrival in how we described our strong relationships with Black, Brown, and Indigenous students. Most importantly, it was our strong relationships teamed with facilitating student critical consciousness that led to centering Black and Indigenous love and joy. Akiea, described one of her lessons where students shared food stories, connected food to activism, and shared ancestral knowledge:

I really wanted to give my class the opportunity of seeing joy as resistance. And so, "what does that look like, for us?" and so we centered our conversation around food. I'm from [home region] so nothing brings me more joy than eating. So, it was just amazing just how engaged they are every week for all of our topics. My kids have great questions for eight

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and nine-year-olds, but this one in particular kind of got them thinking about their families, we did a read aloud called, "Freedom Soup." The story is about this Haitian soup that celebrates Haitian Independence. And we tied it into how certain traditions are connected to activism, but then how they are passed down from generation to generation. I asked, "What are some things that are passed down, you know within your [students'] family?" and so like one of my babies [students] is Puerto Rican and so she's giving us all of these fantastic recipes that her family eats. I've got babies from Mexico, a baby from Somalia and so everyone was able to give like these great comments about eating and its communal aspect.

Akiea's pedagogical thrival act illuminated educator activists' feelings of joy as a direct result of sharing Black liberation stories with students while simultaneously connecting students with liberatory knowledge. Further, this story takes place within the historical context of violent colonization. The story of Haitian Independence emulates collective and anti-colonial efforts. Freedom soups' revolutionary significance stems from French colonizers' ban on enslaved Africans eating soup because colonizers reserved it for themselves. On January 1st, 1804, Jean-Jacques Dessalines declared victory over the French colonizers and Haiti became the first country established by Black freedom-seekers and revolutionaries. The consumption of freedom soup became a symbol of Haitian liberation and enslavement abolition. Introducing this historical victory for Black people via the act of storytelling, then promoting cultural pluralism through exchanging food stories from Puerto Rican, Mexican, and Somali origins, exemplifies pedagogical thrival. Pedagogical thrival is the invocation of joy to fuel our educational justice efforts. The educator activist collectives' pedagogical thrival manifested as joy felt from connecting students with their capacities to see themselves within movement spaces.

Our educator activist collective conversed about pedagogical thrival when I shared my own experiences bolstering my students' efforts to center Black women's stories in historically white spaces. I shared a Program Oral Interpretation piece one of my Black high school speech students pieced together and performed. My student's performance fit within our earlier session conversations about the importance of giving students the space to connect with their capacities to resist oppression. My student interpreted the text *The Hate You Give* in her performance. She addresses race, racism, colorism, gender inequality, and police violence. At the end of my student's performance, I said:

> [My student] came to me and was like, 'this is the type of material, I want to perform' because of the marginalization that she's experienced and that her mother has talked to her about… and you know, I think that is where, that's where our [educators] power resides. It is in how we build power with our students… I'm just so proud of her.

Love deeply resonated with the performance and shared how there are so many other students who want to express themselves in more critically situated ways:

> That girl has it. And you know how many more kids just like her we have? She's not the only one. There are schools full of kids just like her, that don't have a clue about speech and debate. But that girl, to know that she feels that way, just like [how I felt] when I was her age.

Malcolm agreed and forwarded feelings of pride for my student. He was at a loss of words by the power with which she spoke:

> Yeah, I was proud of her, She, She, She got it, that is it, she has it, she, she has it, that's…that was…yeah.

Black and Indigenous educators' pedagogical thrival pursuit acts were rooted in the ways

we connect students with their capacities to resist, and our observance of their connected

agency. Joyous feeling stemmed from perceiving students recognizing their power.

Prideful and joyous feelings were the impetus for doing more than just surviving in

harmful K-12 systems, Black and Indigenous educators supported student thrival, in turn,

centering their own actions, making it a truly reciprocal relationship. I coded 351

pedagogical thrival references across the NVivo files.

Political Activism Conversations

As I coded and memoed within the political activism dimension, the educator

activist collective discussed several important considerations. Like pedagogical activism,

I coded political activism into resistance acts and thrival pursuit. All educator political

activism took place at the school-level and beyond.

Political Resistance "I choose to act, to be an activist differently"

Political activism's resistance coding category captured educators' actions to

challenge inequitable and oppressive educational policy structures. The difference

between pedagogical and political resistance is the conceptual and practical place where

resistance moves to action. Pedagogical resistance take place in classroom and school-

level spaces and political resistance happens at the school level and beyond. Educators

engage in political resistance when they demonstrate the justice-oriented activities about

which they teach their students. The educator activist collective connected to political

resistance in a multitude of acts. The collective engaged in political resistance by

showing Black Lives Matter and Pride flags, engaging in electoral politics, challenging

harmful beliefs on social media, writing poetry, joining book clubs, individual reading,

attending protests, participating in equity and justice learning communities, designing

district-level policies, identifying white supremacy in professional development spaces,

participating in union activities, joining justice-oriented grassroots organizations, leading

afterschool programs, donating money to racial justice organizations, holding self-

proclaimed allies accountable, participating in efforts to remove school resource officers,

challenging punitive discipline policies, refusing to be silenced, supporting student

activism in securing access to public transit, writing justice and equity statements,

participating in task-forces, inviting justice-oriented speakers to their schools, organizing

collectives of justice-oriented stakeholders, engaging in mutual aid with families, and

collectively envisioning new educational policy structures. These actions are not an

exhaustive list of educator political resistance, but the listing demonstrates how our

specific educator activist collective engaged in the political resistance.

The educator activist collective's understandings of political resistance's plurality

were unequivocal, and we intersected activism plurality with a dynamic interpretation of

culture and identity. In other words, the way in which the collective discussed political

activism acknowledged the heterogeneity in the ways a person's positionality impacts

their activism. Rosa and I spoke about activism plurality in our one-on-one conversation,

and she offered a profound statement:

> I have been an activist since high school. Activism does not necessarily
> mean I am holding a sign and I'm walking down the street and chanting.
> Activism looks so different. Activism means that you're standing up for
> something that you believe in something that is being short changed. And

that could be race, that can be sexuality, that could be intellectual capability. I have been protesting since forever. I don't have to go out on the streets. I choose to act, to be an activist differently.

Rosa's statement articulated a broadened definition of political resistance that involves taking our voices to the streets *and* other methods of advocating for justice and equity. She challenged activism hierarchies and advocated for the position that all forms of activism are crucial to collective efforts.

Malcolm extended notions of activism plurality through the ideological and political differences between like-minded educators. The strategic differences between ideologically similar educators surfaced from conversations like Malcolm and I's discussion about electoral politics. I asked him to describe what he meant when he said educators can "get in trouble" for going "too far" in discussing politics:

> Too far as going against Biden…I would see people on my timeline talking about his record, things he's done some of his concerning policies he has supported and voted on. Policies he has written that were very problematic. If I speak on that, it would go too far in a sense that people would feel that I'm splitting the vote to where it's like, "well, we got to get Trump out of here. Why are you, you know bashing Biden?" And so that's an example of speaking the truth with an intention of swaying people to vote a certain way. That, in my opinion. Once again, I'm more strategic so I'm thinking as bad as whoever is, Biden. There's a bigger picture, you know, we have Betsy Divos, who's done nothing and we have to get her out of there and a new administration would at least get someone else in, so it's, it's all strategy.

Malcolm talked about justice-oriented educators' ideological complexities and their different strategies to resist oppression. He acknowledged and valued critiques of President Joe Biden's record. Malcolm was aware that Biden supported mass incarceration policies, compromised with segregationists, and took for granted the

overwhelming support of Black voters. However, he positioned his vote and advocacy in

electoral politics as harm reduction. The entire research collective did not engage much

in federal electoral politics; however, Malcolm's reflections and Rosa's knowledge of

activism plurality provides evidence that the collective understood political resistance as

multifaceted with many entry points for educator activism.

Finally, the research collective's political resistance conversation had a natural

bend toward justice and equity for Black, Brown, and Indigenous communities. We

forwarded the importance of intersectional analyses in our discussions. It was our stories

as Black, Indigenous, queer, and feminist educators that fueled our collective bend

toward Black, Brown, and Indigenous justice. Serena illuminated this idea as we

engaged in storying about what brought her to educational justice work. I had just

finished sharing my story with her and then she shared how our stories were related:

> Similarly to you, I started taking classes at the [University/College] and
> they call it American Indians/ Native American Studies and I finally felt
> seen and understood and I just wanted more information and I feel like I
> don't know, like growing up, I just saw so many images of Natives, where
> it was something of the past [K-12 experience] it was traumatic, all these
> things. And I finally got to college. "Oh, there are authors and movies and
> books that celebrate Native culture(s) and it's not seen as this thing of just
> like, oh, there was genocide. I was taught that, but at the same time there
> are still Native people today and we should celebrate our culture.

Serena's connection with her Native ancestry was the impetus for her pursuit of

becoming an educator. She realized that the education she received was heavily

Eurocentric and did not center the experiences of her ancestors. Once she was taught the

history of people who share her experiences by people who taught from Native lenses;

she was dedicated to doing the same for future generations. Every single educator

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activist in this study shared aspects of Serena's story. Our collective's bend toward

educational justice and equity for Black and Indigenous communities stemmed from our

common experiences as Black and Indigenous people who resist white, western norms.

We collectively and individually articulated that this political resistance stems from

gaining ancestral knowledge and then seeking ways to pass knowledge and lessons to

future generations.

The educator activist collective centered intersectional lenses in conversations.

Akiea and I discussed how her intersectional identity influenced her resistance in our

one-on-one conversation. Akiea shared a story about one of her colleagues who brought

her questions about a transgender student in her class:

> Akiea: For the Social Justice seminars, in one of the fourth-grade classes, they had a student who was on the zoom call and changed their virtual background to the pansexual flag. And the teacher. Obviously, I love my coworker, but, you know, a [person who is very cis heteronormative]. And [she was] like, "oh, it's a pretty flag."

> Akiea: And I think that she knew that it was significant within the queer community but didn't necessarily have the language to know how to engage with this student and then the student went on. I think they were discussing *Bridge to Terabithia*; they were doing a novel study. And the student mentioned being transgender. So, it was kind of brought to me. I joke that I'm kind of like the resident social justice person here on campus.

> Nate: They just go to you for everything. (Both laugh)

> Akiea: (in jest) We're already, they are like, "well, If it's just, if it's just a Black issue. We got it. If you know, like a feminist issue we have that too." You, you kind of dabble in this other stuff. (Both laugh)

> Akiea: So, they [Akiea's colleagues] were like, "how should we talked to them. Should we tell their parents?" And I was like, "Oh, um, okay. So, we're not going to out them to their parents because we don't know what the situation is. So that could do more harm." But, I will give credit to my

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colleagues in knowing that this is the conversation that they want to have because it could have been played out, it really could have gone in a terrible way.

Akiea's story showed that the work of some Black and Indigenous educators takes place at the intersections of our additional marginalized identities. Our resistance is foundationally aligned with collective liberation pursuit across all marginalized groups— we are not free until we are all free. In Akiea's example she was asked to advocate for a transgender student by supporting her colleagues in what supportive actions could look like. It was her positionality as a Black person who was fluent in social justice frameworks that led to her colleagues reaching out to her for support. Moreover, the entire collective held common experiences of frequently being asked to offer advice to help colleagues unpack anti-Black racism, sexism, ableism, and cisheteronormativity. Political resistance was varied and intersectional across the collective, and these components showed up in 918 coded references across the collective's discussions.

Political Thrival "…that's a PhD right there, in being Black. You don't even have to write the dissertation"

I coded the educator activist collective's connections to political thrival from our Black and Indigenous identities and their intersections. Much like the ways pedagogical thrival manifested in our conversations, political thrival stemmed from a nuanced understanding of our identities and joyous feelings. Specific to political thrival, these feelings had more to do with our victories, growth, and unique talents and less about student relationships and activist capacities. Love described how Black educators have unique gifts that make us brilliant:

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Love Harris: Who will we be talking to? It's like that subject speaker audience consideration, who are we talking to? What do they mean? Are they telling me the truth? Do I need to consider this? Do I need to consider that? We are constantly in a mode of shifting our perspectives, which to me, kind of makes us [Black educators] brilliant.

In another example Love shared her pride for Black educators' unique gifts in knowing what Black children need deserve to thrive. She problematized the current system that places university-based degrees above lived experience:

Love Harris: I think that's a PhD right there, in being Black. You don't even have to write the dissertation.

Nate Stewart: (heavy laughter)

Love's knowledge contributions demonstrate a deep pride for the work of Black educators and our unique talents. First, our ability to constantly evaluate, interpret, and question. Generally, the collective tied this to learning how to maneuver anti-Black educational systems ourselves. We thought this positionality allowed us to equip our Black students with tools that help them reject any deficits that could be placed on them, see themselves as intellectuals, and thrive in modern schooling spaces. Love dismissed western degrees that claim to know what Black students need because a degree does not make a policy actor an expert in what Black students need and deserve. She cleverly and unapologetically centered her vast knowledge in how she can collectively contribute to policies that support Black students.

The collective talked about our efforts to create the structures we require to ensure that our students thrive, explore who they are, and be comfortable in their intersectional identities. These victories involved sharing our own triumphs despite oppression, protest

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victories, being in community, electoral victories, improving representation, justice-oriented curriculum demands, sharing length of time in the education profession, critical conversation facilitation, and our immediate families' triumphs. In each victory we shared how joy was tied to our resolve, strength, and courage. There were 179 political thrival references across the NVivo files. Political thrival's essence was in our conversations naming the survival environment we had to maneuver and our actions to ensure future Black, Brown, and Indigenous generations can thrive.

Evidence of Pedagogical and Political Activism Convergence

The educator activist collective's conversations of resistance and thrival pursuit suggested that pedagogical and political activism are tightly coupled. The central research question further examined the convergence of these two activism typologies. Black and Indigenous educator activists may find themselves participating in a delicate balance between positionality, risk assessment, facilitating student critical consciousness, and engagement in educational justice politics. In the succeeding sections, I contextualize pedagogical and political activism convergence within the educator activist collective's stories and conversations of thrival pursuit and resistance. Simultaneously, I use my ancestral gift of quantitative pattern identification to initiate and guide the thematic and conversational analyses.

Initial Cluster Analysis

I used NVivo's exploratory mechanism, cluster analysis, to inform the initial coding reference exploration. In the study's NVivo project file there are almost 4,526 total references created from my initial and final coding processes. These references,

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across the 12 NVivo project files, are the data imputed into the cluster analyses

algorithm. NVivo programmers designed the algorithm to compare nodes through

research-selected imputation. I selected all nodes (with more than 20 references) under

the political and pedagogical activism dimensions for the initial cluster analysis. A

dendrogram of the initial cluster analysis results are depicted in Figure 4.

Figure 4. Initial Cluster Dendrogram
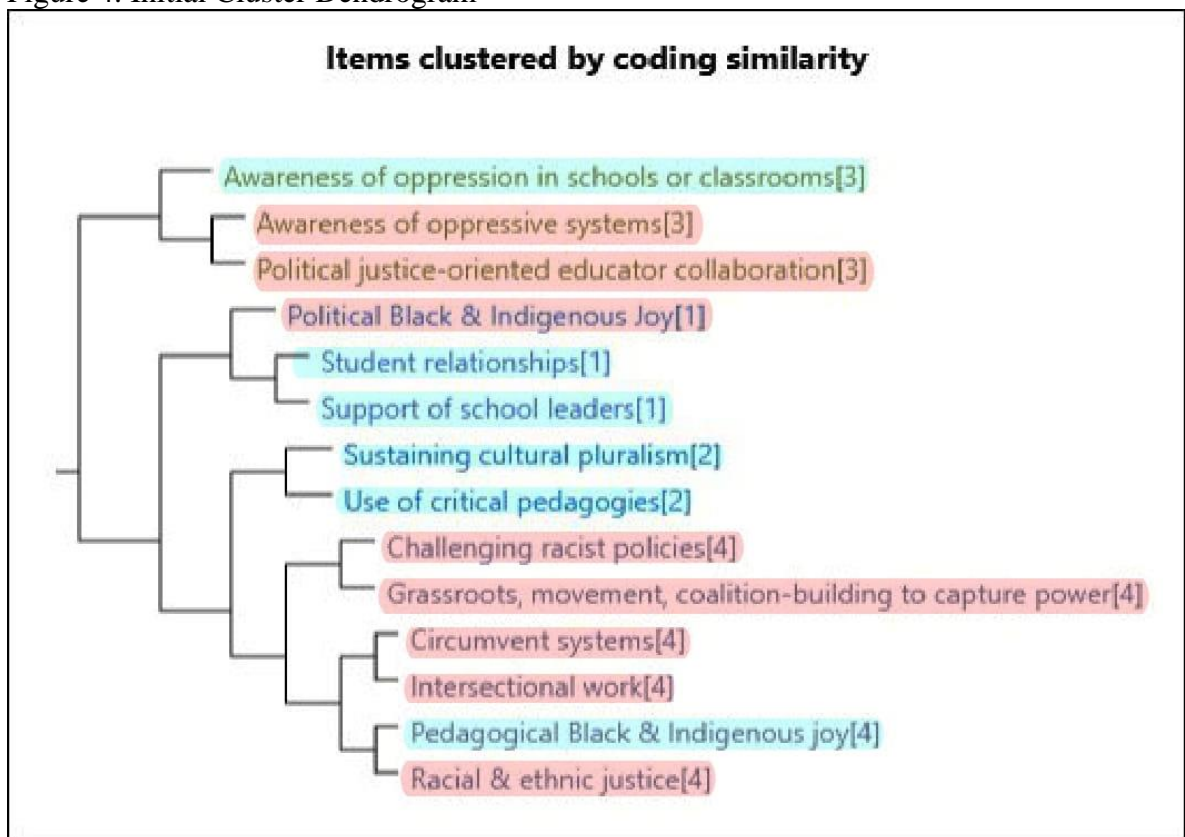
Strikingly, the dendrogram showed a four-dimensioned structure formed by a

combination of political and pedagogical activism codes. If the dendrogram produced an

image where all the red and blue nodes were clustered within the same numbers, then I

would have concluded that my coding processes consistently and disparately categorized

pedagogical and political activism. On the contrary, the dendrogram results illuminated

consistency in coding an intersection between pedagogical and political activism—

evident in Figure 4's mixture between red and blue highlighted nodes. Clusters one and

three indicated consistent coding between a mix of pedagogical and political nodes.

Cluster four demonstrated a consistent coding relationship between *Pedagogical Black &*

Indigenous Joy, and four political activism nodes. The initial cluster analysis results

suggested there may be important convergent coding relationships in need of

contextualization. Next, I add coding references from instances where the collective

directly spoke to political and pedagogical activism's convergence.

Final Cluster Analysis

The *convergence of political and pedagogical activism, or convergence,*

dimension attempted to capture the theoretical space where political and pedagogical

activism intersect. Whenever I interpreted the collective's conversations as holding

elements from both activism typologies, I coded the text under one of the convergent

nodes. I ran a final cluster analysis and included the convergence coding nodes to further

interrogate the initial analysis. This initial-to-final cluster analysis process allowed for

comparisons that informed data interpretations and theme identification. Figure 5 shows

the dendrogram for the final cluster analysis.

Figure 5. Final Cluster Dendrogram

Items clustered by coding similarity

- Awareness of oppression in schools or classrooms[1]
  - Barriers to overcome[1]
  - Black and Indigenous educators not having the luxury[1]
  - Awareness of oppressive systems[1]
  - Political justice-oriented educator collaboration[1]
- Challenging racist policies[3]
- Grassroots, movement, coalition-building to capture power[3]
- New structures, systems, & policies[3]
  - Circumvent systems[3]
  - Intersectional work[3]
- Intersection between one's identity & justice-oriented activism[2]
- Student relationships[2]
- Political Black & Indigenous Joy[2]
- Support of school leaders[2]
- Pushing & challenging colleagues[4]
  - Inviting the next generation of justice movement participants[4]
  - Pedagogical Black & Indigenous joy[4]
  - Push and pull[4]
  - Racial & ethnic justice[4]
- Sustaining cultural pluralism[4]
- Use of critical pedagogies[4]

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I identified convergent nodes in Figure 5 by highlighting them in purple. Convergent nodes were peppered throughout the entire final cluster dendrogram. The spatial visual unequivocally depicted my coding processes as consistently identifying connections, convergences, and intersections between pedagogical and political activism. Specifically, NVivo showed final cluster two created from the following nodes: *Intersection between one's identity and justice-oriented activism, student relationships, Political Black & Indigenous joy, and Support of school leaders*. Final cluster two presented a node from each of the three dimensions—political, pedagogical, and convergence. These results provided useful information to return to the educator activist collectives' conversations highlighting the ways political and pedagogical activism converge. The final cluster analysis helped examine the conversational coding interpretations driving the clustered data.

Secondly, I compared results from the final cluster analysis node cluster to the similar cluster in the initial analysis. Clusters were similar in both analyses; however, interesting changes demanded further exploration. Initial cluster one yielded the addition of the *Intersection between one's identity and justice-oriented activism* node in final cluster two. When I compared initial cluster three to final cluster one, *Barriers to overcome* and *Black and Indigenous educators not having the luxury* were added. A third initial-to-final cluster comparison showed nodes shifting in the initial clusters two and four juxtaposed to final cluster four. Lastly, the final cluster dendrogram showed the convergent node, *New structures, systems, policies,* consistently coded with four political activism nodes in cluster three. The final cluster analysis, and its comparison to the

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initial, provided spatially constructed and visualized node relationships. These

visualizations are found in Appendix K.   The initial-to-final cluster comparisons

illuminated a commonality between each of the four final clusters. Each final cluster had

either, (a) one convergent node (all clusters) or (b) one of each node dimension (all but

final cluster three). I considered this information before the deep contextualization

within the collectives' conversations and stories.

NVivo's similarity index option provided me more quantified patterned

information beyond spatial data. The index values provided a quantified mechanism to

measure node pairings' similarity strength. I analyzed the similarity values to identify the

most similar node pairings defined by a score > 0.80. Then, I used the same dendrogram

color-coding key to count the frequency of pairings in each possible combination (see

Table 6).

Table 6. Node Dimension Intersection Frequency

Node Dimension Intersection	Color-Coding		Frequency
Purple to Purple			14
Red to Red			19
Blue to Blue			9
Red to Blue			18
Purple to Blue			20
Purple to Red			41

Out of the 121 strongest similar nodes, 93/121, or 76.2%, yielded intersections

between pedagogical and political activism. Comparing this percentage to the within

node dimension strong pairings (23.8%) my coding processes illuminated a convergence even when I had the opportunity to code within node dimensions. The similarity index analysis showed more than half of all the strongest coding similarities are convergence adjacent references. Plainly, the cluster analyses and supplemental quantified similarity index provided clear evidence that my coding processes consistently found educator activists' stories of resistance and thrival at the convergence of pedagogical and political activism. The consistent results were expected because the guiding research question centered on convergence. These convergences supported similarly and spatially convergent thematic interpretations.

Finally, I had the opportunity to code textual data into all three node dimensions. Relatively, I coded each of three dimensions equally when I analyzed the number of references across the nodes—political (1019), pedagogical (570), and convergence (923). This equal coding across the data signals an indiscriminate coding process. With the findings from the cluster analyses, I was better positioned to tell the research story deeply contextualized in the educator activist collectives' conversations and stories.

Interpreted Convergent and Thematic Findings: Evidence of Diradicalism

The evidenced relationships manifested from the cluster analyses cannot be interpreted without the conversational, sociopolitical, and historical contexts that led to my interpretation of the educator activist collective's discussions. Thus, I situated my comrades' connections to diradicalism through our interconnectedness, relationships, and aims for Black and Indigenous educational liberation. A diradical educator activist is a person who engages in teaching, learning, and justice-oriented educational politics at the

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classroom, school, district, state, national, and global levels. The ways in which

educators embody diradicalism may depend on their positionality, school environment,

number of years in the profession, and perceived capacities. Below, I answer RQ1 and

RQ2 through I weaving excerpts from our conversations and stories with the cluster

analyses results. In entirety, the results provide contextualized knowledge from my

interpretations and connections to my comrades' dual educational politics. I organized

the next data analysis phase by final analysis clusters and my attempts to explain the

initial-to-final comparison changes and additions. Each identified final cluster is

described as a *convergent theme* because this nomenclature taglines the mechanisms

explaining how political and pedagogical activism intersect.

Convergent Theme 1: Barriers to Diradicalism

The first convergent theme was titled *Barriers to Diradicalism* because the

educator activist collective's conversations centered on understanding connections

between societal oppression, school and classroom oppression, our unique experiences as

Black and Indigenous justice-oriented educators, and efforts to participate in the

educational justice movement. Conceptualizing convergent theme 1 within a barrier

frame acknowledged our collective's transformation imperative. We believed nothing

short of a mass movement for educational justice will transform oppressive structures. I

frame convergent theme 1 to acknowledge this reality and explain how the educator

activist collective discussed circumventing barriers to our work.

Pedagogical and political activism converged in this theme as we shared about

decision-making spaces where socially constructed powerful policy actors did not

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represent the Black and Brown students they served. Appendix L shows the clustered

nodes creating convergent theme 1. The coding cluster indicated that the collective

frequently demonstrated our awareness of oppression at the classroom, school, district,

local, state, national, and global policy levels. Love exemplified this awareness in her

description of decisionmaker representation disparities. She shared a story about a time

when she was, in her words, "surprised" about being invited to a meeting made up of

powerful policy actors in the district:

> Love: [From the meeting], I learned that it's important to know who's at the table. I said, "who's at the table and who's not at the table?" and I said, "as I look around the room, I only see white women." They were like, "Oh no she didn't."
>
> Nate: Good, I'm glad you told'um.
>
> Love: And I'm thinking, "Oh yes, I did." because talking about decisions, we are going to be making decisions and we are going to be looking at policies. I said, "but we need to look around this room…all of you are directors, and this and that, and important people, but there are so many people left out… this room is too homogenous!" I said, "how are we going to teach kids to believe in themselves when who serves them doesn't even look like them?"

Love's story holds two major findings relating to diradicalism and RQ1. First, her story

showed how her district-level oppressional awareness led to resistance acts. Second, she

illuminated a major barrier to Black and Indigenous diradicalism. The barrier is Black

and Indigenous exclusion from decision-making spaces. In the district policy actor

meeting, participants planned to design curriculum, suggest staff professional

development, and improve Black and Brown student support systems. However, there

were very few Black, Brown, or Indigenous lower-level policy actors within the decision-

making space. Love's experience founded one pedagogical and political activism

convergence example. Her diradical convergence resided in her decision-making space

participation and named concerns—political activism—and her identified reality

explaining how representation impacts Black, Brown, and Indigenous students—

pedagogical activism. Love's lived experiences and storying illuminated a convergence

in her activism and showed how exclusion from decision making spaces may hinder

diradicalism.

Even when Black and Indigenous diradicals obtain increased amounts of power,

there are still barriers to their work. Akiea disclosed that she sometimes feels like the

"resident social justice person" in the above political resistance section. In Akiea's case,

the heightened expectations stemmed from her positionality and clear mission to reduce

the harm to which her marginalized students are subjected. Akiea's diradicalism resided

in her simultaneous willingness to support colleagues' consciousness-raising to protect

marginalized students.

There were more harmful examples of Black and Indigenous educators' actions

being measured by a different standard. Collective members explained that the double

standard manifested as contribution devaluation. Malcolm shared about the careful

balance he must engage in to ensure his Black experiences and knowledge contributions

are based in evidence:

> Due to who I am, because of my racial identity. I have to live in data
> because I'm not going to make this a 'you and me thing'… if you have a
> problem with public facts, you have a problem with history, you have a
> problem with that, not with me. So, in that, I do a lot with data and, you

know, try not to manipulate it…just take it for what it is, and we can move from there.

In Malcolm's specific case, he used his intellect and ancestral gift of pattern identification and synthesis to ensure that any response from reactionary actors would direct their angst toward historical oppression as opposed to his personal perspectives. Providing data was a strategic response to the potential disproval if his argument was not rooted in knowledge that the actors valued.

Sensing double standards was a uniform experience across the educator activist collective's conversations. Love described the idea that Black educators don't get to hide their politics because doing so harms Black students. Specifically, we discussed how forwarding deficit ideologies or apoliticism does a disservice to Black students. Treating students as broken and in need of fixing or staying neutral when observing oppression perpetuates harm. Love told me that apoliticism is something "that white people get to enjoy." The general group sense was that white folks can be apolitical because they do not experience the structural oppression that their Black students and colleagues experience. As we discussed maneuvering political and pedagogical convergence, we shared the unique experience relating to our identities as Black and Indigenous educators. When our Black and Indigenous knowledges are counter to, subversive of, and decenter western and white paradigms, reactionary policy actors construct and observe our critiques as discordant. Thus, the collective discussed the necessity of protecting each other in justice work and strategically working covertly to resist oppression. Generally,

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we did not have the luxury of immediate knowledge acceptance from socially constructed

power policy actors, and this observation influenced the extent to which we could act.

I interpreted the *Barriers to Diradicalism* convergent theme from the collective's

conversations about experienced difficulties while simultaneously engaging in political

and pedagogical activism. However, the political activism node, *justice-oriented*

educator collaboration, provided critical hope in sharing Black and Indigenous educator

activists' understandings of our collective power. My coding process found strong levels

of similarity comparing the *Political justice-oriented educator collaboration* node to the

Barriers to overcome and *Black and Indigenous educators not having the luxury* nodes.

Similarity index values suggested that I coded the compared nodes at a 91.7% similarity

rate. Plainly, in 91.7% of files, when I coded collective conversations under the *Political*

justice-oriented collaboration node, I also coded *Barriers to overcome* and *Black and*

Indigenous educators not having the luxury. Akiea's knowledge contributions

contextualize these results in describing the "why" behind being energized to participate

in this study:

> I think that was the most empowering thing for me… finding community.
> So, when I ran across Nate's dissertation for this collective, it was exciting,
> because this idea of building community with like-minded folks is so
> valuable because I know there are teachers in schools, right now, who
> started in another place of having to convince school leaders that this
> [justice work] is right, or this is something that they should be doing.

Akiea felt energy, motivation, and hope for the co-creation of our space because of scant

educational justice opportunities for educators. Additionally, she acknowledged that

there are other Black and Indigenous educators across the U.S. who engage in

pedagogical and political activism convergence. Akiea and the rest of the collective's

awareness of siloed justice environments and the contrast to our collective showed

critical hope in the potential to increase the number of these educational justice spaces.

We found that connecting, sharing, and future building with similarly situated educator

activists can mediate diradical activism's barriers. Collective participation in educational

justice movement activities and future building as a potential solution to barriers is

evidenced through the educator activist collectives' conversations and coding similarities

among the *Barriers to Diradicalism* theme nodes.

Convergent Theme 2: Diradical Intergenerational Knowledge Exchange

The second convergent theme, *Black and Indigenous Intergenerational*

Knowledge Exchange, established diradicalism's foundational tenet. Appendix M shows

the clustered nodes creating convergent theme 2. This collective's Black and Indigenous

educator activists engaged in dual educational politics because our experiences as Black

and Indigenous people are similar to our Black and Indigenous students' experiences.

Our unique ability to see, observe, and critique the world through similar lenses as our

students usher our attempts to build relationships capable of co-creating joy, resistance,

and thrival. This phenomenon is a legacy continuation of teaching and learning passed to

educators from our Black and Indigenous ancestors; in turn, we pass to future

generations. The educator activist collective crystalized the *Black and Indigenous*

Intergeneration Knowledge Exchange convergent theme in our storying exchanges

during one-on-one conversations. Each of us connected our intersectional identities with

our efforts to protect Black and Indigenous students from violent K-12 systems and

facilitate student critical consciousness. Below, I share a direct quote from each

collective member because it demonstrates how our stories were connected and guide our

diradicalism:

> Rosa: Yeah, it is close to home. I had a student in [school name]...but the schools are very punitive on kids for being Brown. And that's what started my involvement in restorative circles. So, I serve on the [region] which is the area I'm from, so just being able to support because the school-to-prison pipeline affects the Black and Brown community. So, any effort helping kids, the kids that are often shortchanged academically or racially. That's my sweet spot.
>
> Love: I had all Black teachers and in a Black neighborhood. You can't tell me kids… 'you don't think [Black] kids can learn?' [in disgust]. I would bet that almost half the words I've learned and still know now I learned in elementary school. Because of the way my teachers taught. Kids in fifth grade reading John F. Kennedy's *Profiles in Courage* and these massive texts. Yes, fifth grade.
>
> Nate: In my K-12 experience, I didn't value my intelligence. I didn't see myself in the folks who were in the intellectual positions in my community. No teacher took me under their wing and was like, "I'm gonna make sure that Nate values his intelligence" but luckily enough, I was street smart enough to get good grades and get my work turned in, do the bare minimum, and then I got into college. I went to a small school in Kentucky, Berea college, which helps low-income students. It was the best decision I ever made there, I was immersed surrounded by Black people who had common experiences to me, I had mentors who looked like me.
>
> Akiea: My grandmother was a teacher and so growing up as a teacher's kid, teaching was probably the last thing that I wanted to do. And my undergraduate major was anthropology and African American Studies…And then, I did a summer program my junior year through AmeriCorps, and it was an after-school program in [region]. And I think at that point. I'm saying, 'Okay, well, I think there's something to you know to this calling of teaching.'
>
> Serena: I feel like um yeah it's just one of those things where I took me a long time to be where I am… my identity as Native, and I didn't really, I didn't expect the amount of pushback that I got from people, and both

people of color and then white people are just like "why? I just don't understand."

Malcolm: I don't have that luxury as an African American when I step in, I'm being challenged on everything. I know you know. I'm being looked at, talked down to. So, I have to come into the door flawless, or at least close to it and the thing for me is I like information. I like to learn… I'm just learning all these different historical topics. Because I know who I am in the context of where I'm going.

Each of the above excerpts connect through tracing the link between our identities as Black or Indigenous people and students' experiences as Black, Brown, and Indigenous people. Rosa discussed her "sweet spot" in her justice-orientation related to serving students that grew up in the community in which her guardians raised her. Love shared her understanding of Black students' immense intellectual capacities despite having access to less opportunity. I traced the origins of my pedagogical and political activism through sharing about my eventual connection to being taught my African ancestral history by people who shared my racial identity. Akiea explained how her grandmother, elder and educator, influenced her pursuit of teaching even if she was hesitant at first. Serena described how her Native identity development took time and hinted that current confidence in herself supports her students' identity development. Malcolm demonstrated how his ancestral love for learning insulates him from educational stakeholder's attempts to devalue his contributions; accordingly, he can pass that gift to his students. The likeness and uniqueness across these excerpts showed how the collective found the *Diradical Intergenerational Knowledge Exchange.* Our conversations demonstrated that diradicalism is fueled by Black and Indigenous educator

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activist's experiences in relation to their students' experiences and our positionality to pass our ancestral knowledge.

The nodes clustered to support the contextualized convergent theme 2 were: *Intersection between one's identity & justice-oriented activism, Student relationships, Political Black & Indigenous joy, and Support of School Leaders.* The *Intersection between one's identity & justice-oriented activism* node held some important relational characteristics. First, it was one of the few nodes coded across all NVivo project files and it was an added node in initial-to-final cluster analyses. Plainly, this means I coded this convergent node in every one-on-one conversation and collective session. Secondly, its addition to the final clustered group signals a link between how the collective situated their identities in relation to their students' experiences. These associated characteristics bolster the collectives' stories and conversations about our connection to students as a central diradicalism tenet.

Finally, the similarity index comparing *Support of school leaders* and *Political Black & Indigenous joy* premised an argument for school leader's role in educator activists' joy stemming from an environment conducive to diradicalism. In files where I coded conversations within the *Support of school leaders* node, I also coded *Political Black & Indigenous joy* at a strong similarity rate of 90%. The research collective discussed school leadership on a spectrum from supportive to obstructionary. On the obstruction end, educator activists discussed school leaders lack of ability to engage in critical conversations about anti-Black racism and other forms of oppression. On the supportive end of the spectrum, we discussed how school leaders shared some of our

identities which led to a level of mutual understandings and feelings of affirmation. The

collective articulated an important role for school leaders in constructing a space where

educator activists can engage in diradicalism.

Convergent Theme 3: Diradical Envisioning & Building New Futures

I interpreted convergent theme 3, *Diradical Envisioning & Building New Futures*, from a

combination of justice-oriented space creation, ancestral knowledge, and future

imaginaries. Appendix N lists the clustered nodes creating convergent theme 3. Our

space was co-created to insulate ourselves from anti-Black and settler colonial attacks. In

our first collective session, I energetically shared my specific hopes for our educator

activist collective space and invited my comrades to share their hopes:

> I want to start with a collective brainstorm about what we want to do when
> our collective time together has concluded. Part of this project is to make
> sure that we are centering reciprocity. Yes, this is my dissertation work,
> but I also want it to be, I want the knowledge that we co-create, to be
> meaningful and valuable for your practice. Whether that's in your schools
> or your classroom or, state and local educational policy spaces. And so, I
> propose we do a quick brainstorm and see what you all think.

I intentionally designed the project, despite western pressure to make dissertations sole-

authored and individual work, to center reciprocity, knowledge co-creation, and

relationships. Thus, all of educator activists held relational bonds to each other that

transcended western research paradigms. The anti-colonial and relational project was

evident in our affirmations, collective consciousness-raising, storying connections,

clarifications, questions, theories, and efforts to reconcile disagreements. In fact, two of

the largest coded nodes were titled *Comrades' affirmations (241)* and *Comrade*

relationship building (195). The *Diradical Envisioning & Building New Futures*

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convergent theme's central tenet was the collective members' relationships to each other. This was originally imagined by me, but upon accepting the invitation, we co-created the environment necessary for radical Black and Indigenous envisioning.

The educator activist collective found diradicalism in convergent theme 3 through conversing in the fourth and final collective session. I interpreted the theme from our conversations about the types of structures and policies we want in place that centers on and fights for justice for Black, Brown, Indigenous, and other marginalized students. I posed this question to the collective based on our previous session conversations. Throughout the entire conversational project, the research collective discussed structures, policies, laws, and systems that could increase student and educator capacities to join the educational justice movement and engage in diradicalism. Our final session solidified these ideas in a mind map brainstorm (see Figure 6).

Figure 6. Envisioning Educational Policy for Black, Brown, and Indigenous Students
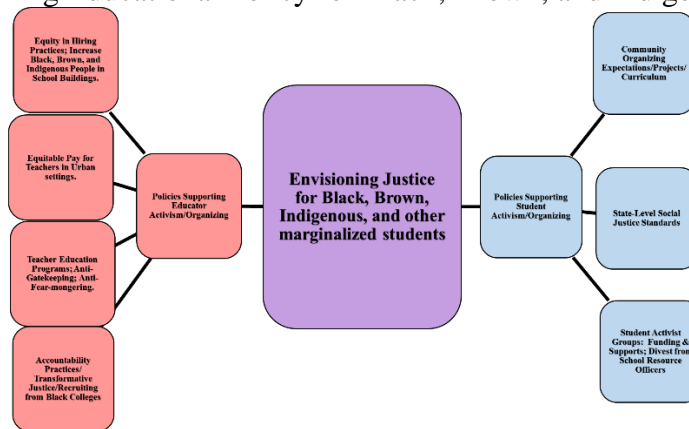
I found that the collective theorized diradical envisioning at political and pedagogical activism's convergence from an educational policy lens. More specifically, a critical educational policy lens centered on increasing, protecting, and bolstering Black and Indigenous resistance and thrival pursuit. Educational policy visions bolstering educator activism included solutions that address educator hiring practices, teacher education programs, and educator compensation. Educational policy visions supporting student activism included social justice groups, equitable funding redistribution, and student activism instructional resources. These Black and Indigenous educational policy visons stemmed from an imaginary where we are free to fully participate in co-creating structures that dictate our livelihoods. The collective theorized that we must create policy solutions to bolster educator-led activism; however, simultaneously important is creating solutions supporting how educators intersect their political activism with facilitating student activism. The collective found that diradicalism involved Black and Indigenous educators' actions to demand an educational policy environment conducive to political and pedagogical activism convergence.

Our educator activist collective re-epiphanized that convergence is hindered or strengthened by system-level considerations—educational policy processes. Akiea illustrated how educational policy processes may dictate the extent to which we can engage in diradicalism:

> …we should have a policy where educators should be socially justice oriented if you're going to be in a classroom. So that educators don't get in

front of kids and have these really, deficit-oriented ways of interacting with children that kind of stops their student activism before it even starts.

Akiea hinted at a connection between educators' justice orientation and students' development as justice-oriented and politically engaged citizens. Her point was that teacher policy, or educational process that prepare classroom-based educators, does not adequately prepare or foster justice-orientation in the profession. In providing a brief example connecting educators' justice-oriented political activity to student activism facilitation, Akiea materialized diradicalism. She extended the link between the influential power of being socially constructed as a full participant in policy creation and an ability to promote or obstruct student activism. She goes on to share that she encountered new and experienced teachers forwarding harmful deficit ideologies that restricted student activism. In contrast, when diradicals collectively decide to pursue power, we are not only acting to dictate our own livelihoods and challenge oppression. We fight to ensure educational policy processes are accountable to the future generations of justice movement participants.

Just as reactionary educators can restrict student activism, the collective discussed how diradicals bolster student activism. Serena shared how educator activists may resist so that their students can do the same. In sharing her resistance to racist school-level policies, she stated:

> I was like, "this is stupid." At the time, I didn't have the frame to be like this is inherently racist. But I knew that it needed to be stopped. I took stand. I'm not sending my students to, what we called the reset room, I'm not sending them to this room if their hair is not like this, so they would stay in my class, and I would fight for them. I'd say it's my fault.

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Whether the student had intentionally come to school that day with her hair in a school-unauthorized style, is irrelevant. Serena described to me how educational systems harass Black girls for their natural hair, or in wearing various styles to express themselves. Accordingly, Serena's act to refuse to follow school policy and protect her student, specifically, her students' act of resistance via hairstyle choice, displayed cunningly magnificent diradicalism. She resisted to ensure her student could thrive and as a result her student observed the act and felt comfort in her own resistance to oppression.

The *Diradical Envisioning & Building New Futures* convergent theme stemmed from my coding processes that involved the interplay between Black and Indigenous educator activist envisioning and then our acts to realize those dreams. The collective shared many stories about Black and Indigenous policy visions and our attempts to build them. The *New structures, systems, and policies* node yielded at least an 80% similarity rate for all the political activism dimension nodes in convergent theme 3. This showed that my coding process consistently and strongly coded the nodes together across the project files. The *New structures, systems, and policies* node represents conversations I interpreted as envisioning and the four political dimension nodes represent actions to build those futures.

Convergent Theme 4: Sustaining Diradicalism

Convergent theme 4, Sustaining Diradicalism, emerged from my interpretations of our collective's descriptions of the fuel that will sustain our efforts to engage in diradicalism now and in the future. Appendix O lists the node combination creating convergent theme 4. I interpreted convergent theme 4 at diradicalism's foundation of

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sustaining educational justice movements via Black and Indigenous joy. The educator activist collective conversed about the various strategies we employed to ensure joy guides resistance and the pursuit of thrival. Moreover, the collective discussed our hopes and joy in extending movement invitations to school leaders, colleagues, families, students, and all policy actors. Although *Political Black & Indigenous joy* and *Pedagogical Black & Indigenous joy* had separate node categories and ended up in different convergence clusters, the two nodes' coding comparison yielded an 80% similarity rate. I originally theorized that there would be pedagogical (classrooms and schools) and political (beyond the classroom) instances that separately yielded joy. But, as I coded our conversations, the interlinkage of the two joy nodes was clear. This showed the collective's contextual understandings of pedagogical and political joys' interconnectedness in the *Sustaining Diradicalism* convergent theme.

One comrade described joy as "helping students in this educational endeavor and help kids realize the joy from understanding that, I'm not nobody." She wanted students to understand that they have power and connect them with their agency to transform systems. She shared her understandings of joy telling a story about a student-led and educator-activist-facilitated effort to secure free student public transportation. The educator-activist-facilitated student joy through pedagogical decisions in the classroom and school. This story found that diradicalism is not only acting to create spaces where political and pedagogical activism can operate, but helping students see the joy in collective struggles for justice. Students in the district needed public transportation to support the prioritization of their education and work to support themselves. Although

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there were setback and victories, diradicalism involved helping students see the joy in their educational justice work. In almost all the 41 coding references to political and pedagogical joy, the collective discussed interconnectedness. This indicates that sustaining diradicalism involves Black and Indigenous joy in all convergent levels.

I further evidenced the *Sustaining Diradicalism* convergent theme by sharing in collective vulnerability and exhaustion the educator activists' felt after a Columbus police officer murdered Ma'Khia Bryant, a brilliant, talented, and loved Black high school student. The collective did not need the results of an investigation to conclude that the police officer's four shots at Ma'Khia was another anti-Blackness example in policing systems. The instance of anti-Black violence garnered national attention, but more importantly, some collective members had personal connections to the tragedy. Our third collective session had been scheduled for 2 days after police murdered Ma'Khia, so I sent an email to the collective (Appendix P). I was honest about my exhaustion and posed the idea of using our third session to imagine collective healing. I shared about my own tendency to be consumed by rage due to constant anti-Black violence and the neglect of Black life. My hope was to invite my comrades to a space with the potential, but not a requirement, to heal and center joy. This attempt at healing and joyous-focused collective session three is where the collective found the *Sustaining Diradicalism* convergent theme. Session three held the most coding references to joy (69). The collective's turn to support each other is another example of how Black and Indigenous educators may sustain our efforts to build new futures beyond anti-Black and settler colonial systems.

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The educator activist collective described how connecting our students with their

capacity to act fuels our joy sustainment. Impeccably, 100% of the time I coded the

node, *Pedagogical Black & Indigenous joy*, I also coded *Inviting the next generation of*

justice movement participants. This stipulated a strong relationship between joy and

student movement invitations. Additionally, the *Sustaining cultural pluralism* and *Use of*

critical pedagogies nodes inclusion signaled student-centered instructional practices in

convergent theme 4. Malcolm shared a story about a digital marketing project that

encouraged students to resist harmful stigmas placed on their communities. These

projects facilitated student creativity by inviting students to take pictures and videos that

represent their neighborhoods. Malcolm reflected on the student activist media project

when he contemplated "that's the ultimate goal, Black joy, you know, for us to

experience that, maybe that's part of that process as well." Love responded:

> You know, Malcolm, I agree…there has to be a balance of making sure
> kids are aware. And that they have the opportunity to just synthesize all
> that's going on. But then I think the joy can come in, when we empower
> them.

Love and Malcolm's brief exchange demonstrated the collective's agreement that our

efforts to connect students with resistance and thrival pursuit capacities fuels our feelings

of joy. Diradicalism is showed to be rooted in joyous feelings like Love and Malcolm's

discussion. Our collective experience joy when our educational justice movement

invitations connect students with their agency; in turn, better positioning student and

educator coalitions in their collective and justice-oriented actions. *Sustaining*

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Diradicalism's convergent characteristic is evident in the association between student

educational justice movement invitations, and joyous feelings.

I found the association between joy and inviting colleagues to the educational

justice movement to be low. However, the educator activist collective conversed about

the importance of holding colleagues accountable and inviting them to justice work. The

collective member's efforts to engage colleagues in being more justice-oriented showed

connections to sustentation because educational justice movements demand

accountability and mass participation. The collective described their actions of naming,

challenging, and holding accountable colleagues' harmful acts impacting marginalized

communities and students. One comrade shared an instance where a colleague forwarded

anti-Black ideologies and attempted to justify violence against one of their Black

students. She confronted the colleague and said, "you know, you don't love my people,

and if you don't love my people than you don't love me, and if you don't love me, you

don't love the kids." The collective members' spoke extensively about the balance

between holding colleagues accountable and inviting them to join educational justice

movements. Although we found ourselves positioned to unapologetically challenge harm;

we also understood that colleagues may change perspectives. Ultimately, the collective

described a peace-protecting balance of naming harm and inviting colleagues to justice

participation.

The educator activist collective conversed about mass participation and

movement-building activities in convergent theme 4. Building educational justice

movements included efforts directed at students and colleagues. Serena reflected on her

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theories of how policies transform in an instance where her school held racist and classist uniform policies:

> I felt building relationships with students was the biggest way to try to push back on uniform policies, and now looking at it. I feel like we really should have done more as educators, because we do have pull and we do have more power to try to change some of these policies.

Serena alluded to the idea that relying solely on student activism may not be the most effective strategy to reduce harm and transform racist policies. There is untapped power in organizing and inviting colleagues in struggles for educational justice. The collectives' conversations about colleagues, whether the colleague was an ally or obstructionist, illuminated a turn toward finding ways to increase the number of justice-oriented educators. The hope was that this increase would lead to improved capacities to capture the power necessary to transform oppressive policies. The collective found that sustaining diradicalism involved efforts to galvanizing enough support to realize equitable imaginaries.

Findings Synopsis

The educator activist collective's conversational data was clear in forwarding important distinctions between political and pedagogical activism. I interpreted differences in the policy levels in which educator activism takes place. Pedagogical activism happens inside the classroom and school building. Political activism resides in the school building and beyond. The relationships between actions educators take within each organizational level and the shared school building locality premised diradicalism— political and pedagogical activism convergence. Initial and final cluster analyses and

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their corresponding similarity index values indicated associations among node categories. The final cluster analyses showed four distinct groups that I organized into convergent themes— *Barriers to Diradicalism, Diradical Intergenerational Knowledge Exchange, Diradical Envisioning & Building New Futures*, and *Sustaining Diradicalism*. The cluster analyses supported the most important meaning making phase that contextualized quantified and visual evidence within the collective's stories and conversations. I weaved and prioritized our conversational data as I told a research story about our experiences as Black and Indigenous educator activists. These findings evidence diradicalism, but they are not absent my own forwarded positionality, the contributions of Black and Indigenous educators and activists that came before us, and the relationships my comrades and I built over the course of the project. We cofound a unique perspective to which other educator activists may connect (RQ1), then collectively imagined educational policy infrastructure to support our acts (RQ2).

CHAPTER 5: CONCLUSION & IMPLICATIONS

This chapter focuses on the concluding comments with respect to the study findings and possible implications of those findings. I organize implications into traditional stages of educational policy— problem definition, agenda setting, solution creation, implementation, and evaluation. This decision makes explicit my position that while critical educational policy scholars counter traditional frames, we may use them to show how Black and Indigenous activism is central to educational policy studies.

Diradical Educational Policy Infrastructure

The educator activist collective's knowledge contributions declare the cruciality of diradical educational policy structure establishment and implementation. The diradical educational policy infrastructure frame is how I interpret our collective knowledge that answers the study's central research questions:

RQ1. *How does a K-12 Black and Indigenous educator activist collective theorize the dynamic interaction between pedagogical and political activism (or, engage in dual educational politics—diradicalism)?*

RQ2. What educational policy structures do we collectively envision?

The diradical educational policy imaginary answers RQ1 through naming the dual educational politics in which our collective engages. RQ2 is answered through naming the educational infrastructure demanded to bolster diradicalism. Our Black and Indigenous collective shows how educator activists demand to have the freedom to engage in critiques, envision equitable policy, and act to realize equitable imaginaries in classrooms and beyond. Diradical educational policy infrastructure includes laws,

statues, and legislation that codify Black and Indigenous liberation, pursuit of thrival, and self-determination. The infrastructure involves continued reconciliation related to Black and Indigenous operation within oppressive systems. A reconciliatory process all K-12 Black and Indigenous educators maneuver is the reality of working within education systems that were not made for us. Thus, diradical educational policy infrastructure involves deepened reflectivity and dreamed space. The educational policy imaginary promotes envisioning equitable futures beyond the settler colonial, anti-Black, patriarchal, capitalistic world system.

The study's Black and Indigenous educator activist collective dual educational politics that must be bolstered, supported, connected, protected, and valued in educational policy. I interpreted and organized our knowledge contributions into 4 convergent themes—*Barriers to Diradicalism, Diradical Intergenerational Knowledge Exchange, Diradical Envisioning & Building New Futures*, and *Sustaining Diradicalism*. Each convergent theme holds major policy considerations that contribute to increasing educational justice policy actor numbers, connect us with our capacities to realize equitable futures, and connect our students to their justice-oriented political activity. The implications purport the relational power of Black and Indigenous envisioning and anti-colonial aims in what I call the diradical educational policy structure.

Each diradical educational policy infrastructure implication section is organized juxtaposed to its concurrent and convergent theme—*Remove Diradicalism's Barriers, Bolster Diradical Intergenerational Knowledge Exchanges, Increase Diradical Envisioning and Co-creating New Futures, and Sustain Diradicalism Beyond Our*

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Collective. I discuss answers to RQ1 by displaying how the collective operated within dual educational politics. RQ2's answer resides in the implications by naming the policy structures, laws, codes, statutes, and processes that need to be in place to support Black and Indigenous diradicalism. The diradical educational policy infrastructure is one set of infinitely and collectively imagined policy recommendations that I interpreted from the study's Black and Indigenous educator activist collective's conversations, resistance, and thrival pursuit.

Remove Diradicalism's Barriers

One important educator activist collective illumination was the barriers Black and Indigenous people experience when engaging in pedagogical and political activism. Love's story demonstrating her oppression awareness in decision-making spaces implicates a demand for increased representation. Chapters 1 and 2 described how Black and Indigenous voices continue to be excluded from educational policy process and traces critical educational policy literature asserting that our voices should be prioritized given the historical and modern exclusion. Love's diradical story illuminates a unique contribution to what specific oppressive structures must be removed. Diradicals act to challenge oppression while simultaneously advocating for an environment where Black, Brown, and Indigenous students connect with their capacities to act. Love told me, "How are we going to teach kids to believe in themselves when who serves them doesn't even look like them." She understood her engagement in political activity influences the environment in which her students must similarly engage. Educators' advocating for student political activity, through firm understandings about how our similar experiences

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connect us, is a powerful tool for justice. These are the types of Black and Indigenous contributions that educational policy must buttress.

Educational policy infrastructure can and should be designed to free Black and Indigenous educator activists to dismantle exclusive decision-making spaces while simultaneously advocating for student-involved political activity. McKinney et al., (2021) specify the types of protective institutional structures that Black educators demand to create the environment for Black students' thrival. In their study Black educators designed programs supporting healthy manifestations of Black masculinity, organized, Black-focused science fairs, and collectively reimagined school safety and shifted school policies on accountability for community harm. McKinney et al's study discussion section briefly acknowledges obstructionist and reactionary policy as barriers to Black-led actions to support Black students. Our collective's knowledge co-creation extends this contribution by calling for infrastructure that bolsters these already existent diradical efforts. Simultaneously, educational justice movement policy actors engage in protection, circumvention, and turn attention toward establishing the educational policy infrastructure to support Black and Indigenous liberation. The combination of our collective's contributions to critical educational policy studies and the current thriving educational justice movement is a fruitful partnership dispositioned to bolster collective educational justice efforts.

The second *Barriers to Diradicalism* finding illuminates a double standard placed on Black and Indigenous diradicals. School leaders, colleagues, and policy actors see diradicals as exemplary in their justice-orientation and this places a heavy burden to

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create school-based solutions to reduce harm to which marginalized students are subjected. These efforts can be burdensome because of the lack of compensation diradicals get for their additional labor. On the other hand, Malcolm described his feelings on having to back up his justice-oriented arguments and lived-experience with unrealistic empirical evidence standards—something Black and Indigenous educators' similarly-situated peers do not have to maneuver. The double standard analysis premises diradical educational policy infrastructure that dismantles how K-12 education systems underappreciate the unique contributions of Black and Indigenous educator activists.

Diradical educational policy infrastructure would create and establish laws, codes, and statues that adequately compensate Black and Indigenous educator activists for their unique skills and contributions. In turn, their expertise becomes highly valued and decision-making spaces would be recreated to prioritize and yearn for Black and Indigenous knowledges. There are many practical avenues for adequate compensation and prioritization. First, educational institutions may equitably pay justice-oriented Black and Indigenous educators for the socially constructed intangible contributions we make to schools, districts, and communities. This means supporting justice-oriented evaluations in hiring practices and redistributing funds to Black and Indigenous educator salaries. Second, policy actors and school leaders may establish expectations that diversity, equity, justice, inclusion, belonging, liberation work is not solely on Black and Indigenous folks. We are not responsible to teach white folks how to be more justice oriented. If leaders identify white educators in need of ideology disruption, then they may redistribute resources to the justice-oriented folks that are compensated for their labor. Diradical

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educational policy infrastructure solidifies equity, justice, and liberation work as continuous, communal, comprehensive, and Black, Brown, and Indigenous voice prioritized.

Finally, school leaders and policy actors may legislate freedom for Black and Indigenous educators to spend a majority of their time protecting, supporting, and bolstering our students' capacities to engage in educational justice. These policies may include reimagining the time students spend in school, redesigning curriculum, securing school transportation, offering extracurricular activities, modifying assessment, intentionally-designed staff/faculty meetings, shared school leadership models, bolstering schools' communal relationships, communal accountability, designing alternative school safety models, guaranteed housing, universalized healthcare, broadening state-sanctioned teacher licenses, increasing mental health support, and improving educational justice movement space creation. The sheer number of changes that could and need to be made may provide evidence for the complete deconstruction of the oppressive components of K-12 education. The argument for abolition resides in the historical reality that modern systems were not made for Black and Indigenous teachers and students. When our educational justice movement obtains enough power to transform the education system, then our collective's knowledge will be one imagined future to replace the old system. Our collective's diradical educational policy infrastructure imaginary is a proponent of building a new educational system founded on collectivism, liberation, justice, and equity.

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Although I named convergent theme 1 within a barrier-based nomenclature, the educator activist collective's conversations were saturated with resistance to diradicalism's barriers. The 91.7% similarity index value comparing the *Political justice-oriented educator collaboration* node to the *Barriers to overcome* demonstrates a strong connection between identifying barriers and collaborative political engagement. Implicatively, the educator activist collective built solidarity which mobilized our justice-oriented envisioning despite structural disadvantage. When the collective discussed siloed justice-oriented work, we acknowledged an individualized action imperative but agreed that siloed efforts cannot transform structural oppression. Transforming oppressive systems and structures demands stances rooted in collective struggle, bold imagination, and mass-movement participation. Juxtaposed to collectivism, siloed justice-oriented work is exhausting and susceptible to burnout, frustration, and hopelessness. Note, this does not imply that educators must continuously engage in dominant definitions of activist efforts. Collectivist and communal ideologies strengthen movement spaces through mutual interdependence where rest, pause, and mental health prioritization become an essential mechanism to sustain justice-oriented efforts. Educational justice-demanded interdependence operates by supporting all ways of being an activist—including Black and Indigenous joy and rest as resistance (discussed in a latter section). The implications for the resistance-to-barriers knowledge contributions demands diradical educational policy infrastructure that frees Black and Indigenous educator activists to engage in the critical conversations that lead to knowledge exchanges.

Diradical Educational Policy Implication #1.

The educational policy level in which barrier removal extends is within the problem definition and agenda setting stages. Black and Indigenous educator activists must have the freedom to engage in dual educational politics. In turn, we will define policy problems and set the agenda that has the potential to lead to transformation.

Bolster Diradical Intergenerational Knowledge Exchanges

Diradical educational policy infrastructure strengthens teaching and learning rooted in ancestral knowledge and historical Black and Indigenous educational resistance fluency. Convergent theme 2 forwards diradicalism's foundational tenet—Black and Indigenous educator activists engage in dual educational politics through a deep connection to our Black, Brown, and Indigenous students' experiences. I include "Brown" because convergent theme 2 conversations demonstrated multiracial solidarity. We showed racialized oppression awareness beyond our own racial identities and acted to support all racially marginalized students and families. Nonetheless, our conversations did have a Black and Indigenous student focus. This stemmed from my recruitment materials and the collective's heightened and first-hand experience with anti-Black and settler colonial subjugation.

Our students who maneuver the world as Black or Indigenous people, remind us of the struggles we endured to become educators. The connected remembrance, or educators' relational projection onto student experiences and stories, fueled the collective's diradicalism. The imagined diradical educational policy infrastructure

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bolsters knowledge exchanges and prioritizations that stem from connected remembrance.

Bolstering diradical intergenerational knowledge exchanges and connected remembrance may mean moving beyond U.S. schooling systems. Beyond means a genuine and intentional dismantling and reconstruction. I read powerful connected remembrance within Alayna, Michael, and Timothy's conversation about their new visions and directions for *Equity & Excellent in Education (EEE)* (Eagle Shield et al., 2021). As I read, I obtained similar goosebumps the co-authors experienced from their collective storying, listening, and learning. This relational feeling stemmed from their deep positioning at the intersections of Black and Indigenous liberation and self-determination. They shared how education, via movement spaces, reclaims teaching and learning as a healing and relational practice. My interpreted and imagined diradical educational policy infrastructure connects to EEE's dreams and bolsters "educational justice movements in the everyday" (p. 39). Student and educator participation in movement spaces, such as Black Lives Matter and Water is Life, is valued and prioritized in the imagined diradical educational policy infrastructure. School leaders and policy actors may incorporate justice movements into curriculum, remove punishment for students' decision to leave schooling to participate in movement education, credit movement education as valued teaching and learning in K-12, or find ways to engage in movement learning themselves.

The educator activist collective's conversations suggest that the essential policy actors, who command efforts to strengthen diradicalism, are school leaders. For instance,

my coding processes showed a high similarity index value (90%) for the *Support of school leaders* and *Political Black & Indigenous joy* nodes. This high similarity index supports arguments that Black and Indigenous educator activists' feelings of joy have a strong association with their relationship to their school leaders' justice-orientation. Conversational evidence supported two school leader typologies— supportive of to obstructionary to diradicalism. The supportive to obstructionist school leader typology indicates the central role of school leaders in creating a diradical-supportive school culture and climate. Extending these contributions, the collective's conversations add to school leader environment creation scholarship (Capper, 2018; A. Ishimaru, 2013; Kretchmar, 2014). The extension resides in, not only the school leaders' role in supporting school-based and classroom-based pedagogical activism but their support of beyond the classroom-based pedagogical activism. This implication demonstrates school leaders' centrality in bolstering educators' reconciliatory activities within the pedagogical and political activism frames.

Diradical Educational Policy Implication #2.

Intergeneration knowledge exchanges hold implications on educational policy in several traditional policy stages. First, connected remembrance identifies the peoples whose voices should be prioritized in issue definition, agenda setting, and solution creation processes. Second, school leaders as crucial actors to bolstering intergenerational knowledge exchanges.

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Increase Diradical Envisioning and Space to Build New Futures

The diradical educational policy infrastructure implications for convergent theme 3, *Diradical Envisioning & Building New Futures,* holds much potential. First, the convergent theme premises the relational research considerations required to engage in anti-colonial and justice-oriented research. In order to abolish, dismantle, and transform oppressive structures, justice-oriented policy actors must have the freedom to continue to engage in collective envisioning, dreaming, and imagining activities. Justice-oriented policy actors should facilitate this freedom by shifting resources to support relational spaces. Organizations like, Black Teacher Project, Black Teacher Collaborative, Surge Institute, Abolitionist Educator Network, Water is Life, The Red Nation, education for liberation network, and many others, currently engage in this educational justice work. Further, these liberatory organizations contribute directly to the increase in the number of educational justice movement actors through relational organizing. An increase in movement participants means an increase in the possibility of policy infrastructure that bolsters transformation. Black and Indigenous educator activists' relational educational justice would benefit from educational policy infrastructure that supports the envisioning-to-power-to-action process.

Second, the collective's knowledge demonstrates the need for diradical policy structures that sustain us in efforts to build new futures. Building new futures involves boldly imagining policy processes beyond the settler colonial, neoliberal, and anti-Black projects. Our collective conversations explored an important policy paradox. Modern educational policy structures were intentionally made to perpetuate oppression; at the

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same time, we demand a diradical educational policy infrastructure that frees our efforts

to realize our bold imaginations. In other words, Black and Indigenous educators

frequently demand transformation from an institution that holds processes that make it

difficult to even just illuminate its oppressive mechanisms, let alone transform them.

Despite these realities, our collective found hope and possibility in mass movements for

educational justice. We did not discuss any specific plans on what this would looks like

on a national level, but in our localities, we began to dream about educational justice

movement actor mobilization.

Policy processes supporting bold Black and Indigenous imagination means

codifying envisioning as action. Much like rest and pause as resistance, envisioning,

dreaming, and imagining is action. This answerability comes from Black and Indigenous

anti-colonial project paradigms. Our collective demonstrates a pluralistic understanding

of activism situated within its nuances. Chapter 2 and the collective's conversations

illuminate real-world barriers to engaging in various forms of activism. The anti-Black,

neoliberal, and setter colonial world project makes the most visible forms of activism

more difficult for educators. Our collective contributes a potential path forward. As we

transform systems, we turn toward the sustaining forms of activism as fuel. These

include centering our relationships to similarly situated comrades, resting, loving, and

pursuing joy.

Diradical Educational Policy Implication #3.

The implications for convergent theme 3 reside in the Black radical tradition of

freedom dreaming and the Indigenous dreaming. This is a solution creation process

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within the traditional policy stages frame. Black and Indigenous educator activists have

always held solutions created from ancestral knowledge, anti-colonial paradigms, and

self-determined policy. The reasons they do not move to traditional implementation

stages has to do with an intentional suppression of Black and Indigenous voices in

educational policy. Thus, convergent theme 3 demands that we dream, value

imagination, understand the barriers, and continue to build a movement capable of

obtaining enough power to ensure our solution creation moves to implementation stages.

Sustain Diradicalism Beyond Our Collective

Convergent theme 4's implications explain how diradical educational policy

infrastructure must be sustained in modern and future systems. The collective's

convergent theme 4 knowledge explicates our theorizations about what currently fuels

our pedagogical and political activism convergence and what is needed to sustain it. The

collective's sustaining conversations surrounded student critical consciousness and action

facilitation, difficult healing relating to our intense emotional responses to anti-Black

violence, educational justice movement invitations, and Black and Indigenous joy.

Black and Indigenous survivance is one of the most powerful social phenomena.

Despite unconscionable and abhorrent anti-Black European colonizer violence, ancestral

knowledge was passed from generation to generation. Black, Indigenous, strategic, and

brilliant teaching and learning survived European crimes of human trafficking for chattel

slavery, sexual brutality, exploitation of labor, land theft, and the violence that upheld

these acts. Modern (re)connection with our ancestral knowledges is a continuous process

and there is no one way to center reconnection. However, Black and Indigenous

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survivance demonstrated the power of co-created knowledge, knowledge passed to future generations, and placed modern justice movements in conversation with antiquitous Black and Indigenous knowledges. Our educator activist collective continued this legacy by connecting to and borrowing the power passed to us from our ancestors. This powerful social phenomenon has the potential to sustain diradicalism beyond our collective.

Convergent theme 4 took place during collective session three and after a Columbus police officer murdered Ma'Khia Bryant. The anti-Black violence wounds were fresh during collective session three. The police officer's murder of Ma'Khia happened tens of minutes after the judge read the jury's verdict in the police officer's murder of George Floyd. I felt the exhaustion from these concurrent anti-Black police acts. The exhaustion reached a point where I thought about rescheduling or cancelling the third session. I ultimately decided on sending an email inquiring about how the collective felt about shifting session three's purpose. The session shift stemmed from my recent readings of adrienne marie brown's *Pleasure Activism* and mental health prioritization. Rage has an important role in movements spaces, but I was vulnerable with the collective about interrogating rage's potential to sustain. Granted, this was from my own exploration into my relationship to rage; thus, I wanted to make sure the collective knew that my stance was not that no one should feel rage in this moment. Instead, I inquired about the collective's interest in exploring healing and joy as potential, not the only, additions to sustaining each other. The entire educator activist indicated their interest in joining me in this explorative exercise. This vulnerable, collective, and

relational knowledge creation consideration led to this study's collective imagination and discussions about what will sustain our diradicalism.

The first source of diradical sustainment was our ability to connect our students with their capacities to act and the implications reside in diradical educational policy infrastructure capable of distributing resources to these efforts. The collective discussed student activist projects, student visual arts projects, and educational justice movement base-building with students and colleagues as efforts that yielded joy. An imagined diradical educational policy infrastructure would set resources to be redirected toward student activist facilitated by diradical educators. In the aftermath of increased funding for schools to address challenges that stemmed from the COVID-19 pandemic, districts have opened project proposal opportunities. The funding may be directed to compensate educators for facilitating and evaluating the impact of the project. This is an excellent example of how funding decisions may meet diradical aims. Our collective discussed some challenges to these proposal programs because of grant funding's sometimes equivocal standards. However, district actors using a diradical educational policy infrastructure grant funding frame to evaluate educators' proposals would base acceptance on student opportunities to engage in activism and the level of joy experienced by educator facilitators.

I acknowledge that socially constructed powerful actors may perceive the diradical educational policy infrastructure as impossible, too radical, or impractical. Luckily, our educator activist collective and the millions of educational justice movement policy actors are not accountable to powerful actors. The educational justice movements'

answerability comes from a source more powerful than any authority granted by settler

colonial and anti-Black systems. Our power stems from our relationship to each other,

our ancestors' dreams, and a commitment to collectively building a new future. A just

and equitable future that centers cultural pluralism, communal knowledge, deepened

democratic participation, restorative accountability for communal harm, anti-violent

community safety, and liberatory education. Thus, my comrades, essential diradical

educational policy infrastructure revolutionaries, help us move beyond oppressive

structures by removing barriers, centering intergenerational exchanges, building new

futures, and acting to sustain ourselves and each other.

Diradical Educational Policy Implication #4.

Convergent theme 4 holds implications for every traditional educational policy

stage because sustainment is crucial to move our collective knowledges through each

phase. Reactionary policy actors' suppressive acts can demoralize educational justice

work. However, the collective's convergent theme 4 knowledge considers the relational,

joyous, and healing practices that remind educational justice actors of our collective

purpose. Concurrently, we unapologetically prioritize our mental health through strategic

rest, joy, and healing as resistance acts.

Quantifying Diradicalism

Now that I have explored the quantified similarity patterns based on the coding

processes forwarded from my understandings of diradicalism, I will contribute to efforts

to build more diradical conversational spaces. I will invite future educator activist

collectives to imagine a survey instrument to measure the extent to which educator

activists feel free to engage in their dual educational politics and their diradical actions.

The educator activist compass will attempt to measure the level to which educators feel

free to engage in and act upon diradicalism's two dimensions of pedagogical and political

activism. This compass will be accountable to the stories and lived experiences through

requiring conversation and storying upon completing the instrument. Naming common

experiences in our educational justice activities as educational justice policy actors

creates engagement, relationship-building, and solidarity and may galvanize enough

support in the movement to transform oppressive educational policy systems.

Figure 7. Educator Activist Compass
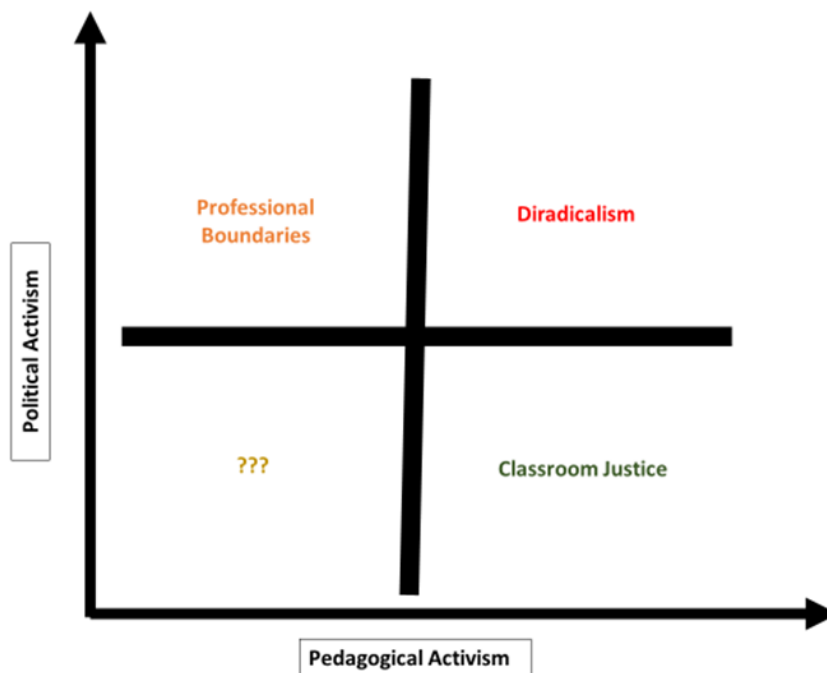
In the draft Educator Activist Compass graphical representation, there are four quadrants. In the first quadrant (top right), educators strongly connect with pedagogical and political activism. The second quadrant (top left), educators strongly connect with political activism but not pedagogical activism. I tentatively call the top left quadrant the "professional boundaries" quadrant because educator activists may hold stances that separate educator political activity from student political activity. In the third quadrant (bottom left), I leave this open to future co-constructed knowledge. The primary reason for not naming this quadrant is that I want to avoid the logic of being conceptually placed opposite diradicalism and implying something negative. There are structural barriers for educators' ability to pursue political and pedagogical activism (for example, gag orders on teaching about race and racism, or obstructionist school leaders). This is not only one of the compass's limitations, but something I will reconcile with future projects' comrades. Finally, the fourth quadrant (bottom right) places educators in the conceptual location of what I call classroom justice or the connection with pedagogical activism but not necessarily political activism. The imagined and co-constructed Educator Activist Compass project is educational justice research that will support the diradical educational policy infrastructure.

Discussion

In an education system that perpetuates anti-Black racism, Indigenous erasure, and erodes democratic mechanisms, increasing the number of diradical educator activists becomes an imperative to justice-oriented educational policy efforts. One path forward is the diradical educational policy infrastructure concurrent with other justice-oriented

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efforts. The crux of the implications of the study's activist collective's knowledge relates to educational policy through two connections. First, educational justice policy actors may need to turn our attention to efforts to establish policy structures that sustain our work. Second, we must ensure that similarly situated educator activists are prepared, supported, and equipped with the tools to maneuver diradicalism and unapologetically join the educational justice movement.

Black and Indigenous educators know establishing policy structures that sustain our work is difficult meaning we should look beyond current realities. Gag orders on teaching and learning about the racist, anti-Black, settler colonial, and patriarchal foundations represent an "assault on radical imagination" (Giroux, 2014, p.11). Reactionary and socially constructed power policy actors mobilize educational legislation to control diradicals' acts to invite the next generations of movement participants and build equitable futures. The current volatile educational policy arena means it is not enough for educational policy scholars to simply trace Black and Indigenous educators' actions. Critical educational policy scholars must partner with diradical educators to bolster Black and Indigenous envisioning beyond current realties.

Schools of education must prioritize the production of diradical educator activists in teacher education programs and school leader programs. Diradical preparation means preparing educators to see themselves within and maneuver their participation in educational justice. Diradical preparation happens through P-20 teaching and learning. University faculty foster and facilitate educators' journeys maneuvering diradicalism. Then, diradical educators proliferate the field and connect to each other's work. A

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diradical school leader co-creates school-level educational policy with diradical teachers. This school leader-teacher partnership leads to collective involvement in political and pedagogical activism. Specifically, school leaders implement diradical educational policy infrastructure that support their teachers' capacities to fully participate and teach to participate in educational justice movements. The dynamic partnerships between diradical university faculty, school leaders, teachers, and students contribute to building the mass participation required to realize the diradical educational policy infrastructure agenda.

This study's implications stem from diradicalism conceptualizations from which I forward my lived experiences as a Black educator activist and reconnection with my African ancestral knowledges. This was my lens my comrades trusted me to use in interpreting, sharing, and translating findings. At the same time, I merge my comrades' voices, stories, and experiences with my thematic interpretations. Then, checked my findings with my comrades. I acknowledge that this is not enough, and our collective's work is not over. Indigenous mothers and Dr. San Pedro (2021), in a co-authored book about Indigenous motherhood, wrote about the how educational projects perpetually welcome additions to stories. Dr. San Pedro wrote, "our stories continue to be drafted well beyond the confines of this collection of written words" (p.8). I connect with the Indigenous mothers and Dr. San Pedro's knowledge in being comfortable with leaving knowledge open for future modification. Therefore, I do not conclude with the traditional summative paragraph. Instead, I want to write a letter to my comrades that continues our

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work together, connects to other diradicals, shares how this project has impacted me, and

offers a promise.

Dear Comrades,

In the time we had together, and probably with some overambition on my part, we did not get to a point to take the knowledge we co-created and move it to implementation policy stages. With that said, my participation in our conversations helped shift my understandings of activism. You all helped me understand our work as truly multifaceted. I learned not every activist effort must immediately move to practicality and rest and joy is the ultimate fuel. Thank you for helping me think about the nuanced considerations needed before we think about action.

Further, our envisioning and imagining supported my understandings of the policy structures we must build for our work to continue. As I move into my next role, you will catch me using my leverage to disrupt oppression so that our collective work can continue. Your labor, time, and energy not only contributed to the knowledge produced from this study, but you contributed to my envisioning related to the types of future projects in which I will engage. I promise to use my future position to do everything to participate in collective efforts to obtain the power needed to shift educational policy to increase Black and Indigenous people in school buildings, fight for equitable pay, address concern in educator preparation, build curriculum that facilitates student activism, and abolish racist standardized assessments. I know we have much more work to do beyond the aforementioned structures and I look forward to a continued connection with you beyond this dissertation.

Finally, your trust in me to share this project's knowledge will always be one of my greatest honors. Our connection to each other is now engrained in the spirit of this document and beyond, connected to people we invite to the movement, and our continued relationship.

In solidarity,

Nate

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Appendix A: Recruitment Email

Initial Social Media Recruitment Message/Email

Subject Line: Educational Policy Study Opportunity- Calling BIPOC Teacher Activists

Hello,

My name is Nate Stewart; I am a doctoral candidate at The Ohio State University studying educational policy. I am currently looking for Black, Indigenous, and other people of color (BIPOC), who are teacher activists or organizers, to invite to a study. As an educator and Black man of Jamaican ancestry, this study attempts to redefine policy research as liberatory and relational. In this study teacher activists and I will collectively engage in critical dialogue about how we imagine anti-racist, anti-colonial, and anti-oppressive educational policy structures; then share our efforts to build the necessary collective power to realize them in the classroom and beyond.

The purpose of this message to ask if you would be willing to help me amplify my study opportunity. I am open to any support your organization feels is appropriate. I have a flyer that can be shared (attached), or I can attend any meetings to briefly describe the project. If you scan the QR code on the flyer, you will find more details about the project. Additionally, I am open to scheduling a time to chat via Zoom or phone. (A line that is specific to the organization's mission and discusses why I selected them). The total time investment amounts to about 14 hours broken up across 6 months with compensation for study participants. My hope is to co-create a space where we center our

intellectual contributions dominant educational policy silences, excludes, represses, and

obfuscates. I look forward to connecting with BIPOC teachers in your organization.

In solidarity,

Nate Stewart

Appendix B: Recruitment Flyer

Appendix C: Recruitment Q/A

Q: Why focus on pedagogical and political activism?

A: Teacher activists and organizers frequently find themselves in positions where they are simultaneously working collectively in justice-oriented movement spaces and teaching their students to do the same. This project purposes to explain the interaction this theorized dual political activity.

Q: What are the objectives of the research collective?

A: The study has two main objectives. First, collectively imagine equitable policy structures. Second, discuss and crystalize methods, strategies, and efforts to capture the political power necessary to realize them. Although in this dissertation research project we are not taking any specific actions, we are building the capacities for others to join us. 1) Collectively imagine the types of educational systems, institutions, and policies we hope to build together.

2) Co-create a theory of teacher activism/organizing to which other BIPOC teachers can connect. As a result, we center our lived experiences in the struggle for justice.

Q: Why focus specifically on Black, Indigenous, and other people of color?

A: I acknowledge and value the resistance of all racially and ethnically marginalized teachers; therefore, I position this work as sharing responsibility to learning about others' experiences and being vulnerable. No one person speaks for the experiences of shared

identity groups because the manifestations of cultural, racial, and ethnic identity are

infinitely dynamic and complex. Communal knowledges stem from the amalgamation of

different lived experiences relating to our shared identities. These communal knowledges

hold the potential to disrupt oppressive structures. Although my contributions,

scholarship, and experiences are guided by my identity as a Black person, the

considerations of this study promote marginalized group solidarity against the political

forces of oppression. With this solidarity, the knowledges produced from this

dissertation will benefit communities, teachers, and students.

Q: How is this research?

To me, research is knowledge construction. Throughout history powerbrokers excluded

Black, Indigenous, and other people of colors' ways of constructing knowledge. This

study challenges western and colonial understanding of research, the "data" or units of

analysis are our interactions with each other via interviews and research collective

sessions. It will be our task to make meaning of our interactions, stories, dialogue, and

writings.

Q: What is the time commitment?

A: There are two major parts of the study:

1) A 60 to 90-minute virtual interview/casual conversation where we get to better
   know each other in preparation for part 2 of the study.
2) Up to 10 one-hour bi-monthly (2 per month) virtual sessions taking place from
   late January-early July.

These research collective dates will be solidified once all teacher activists select days/times that work best for them. Total time commitment adds up to no more 14 hours across 6 months.

Q: What specifically am I being asked to do?

A: Through conversations with me and the other teacher activists, I ask you to reflect on your efforts to realize a more equitable education system and society. Moreover, I hope to connect across the stories we are invited to tell. In addition to participating in conversations during the interview and research collective sessions, I ask you to submit a brief reflection after each research collective session. Finally, I will invite each teacher to convene their own session that is rooted in their lived experiences. The convener may decide to lead an activity, create guided questions for discussion, have all activists read a small excerpt, or share you experiences. We will discuss this during the one-on-one interview.

Q: When will participants receive compensation?

A: Some educational policy structures establish a reality where teachers are overworked and underappreciated. Additionally, the global pandemic has placed a larger burden on teachers. To help mediate these realities, I am offering $200 of compensation for study participation. If a participant does not wish to continue participation, then they will be compensated proportional to the time they already offered to the study ($20 per session).

Opportunity for BIPOC Teacher Activists to Join Educational Policy Study

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Q2

Thank you for your interest in studying teacher activism and organizing in the educational policy arena!

As an educator, scholar-activist, and educational policy researcher, I am interested in understanding how Black, Indigenous, and other people of color, who are K-12 teacher activists, engage in dual political activity for justice. Dual political activity is the combination of political and pedagogical activism. Political activism— participation in collective political activity related to the pursuit of justice and equity in society; pedagogical activism—instantiation of pedagogies that foster student capabilities to engage in justice-oriented political activity as present and future citizens.

In this study, we will create a research collective of BIPOC teacher activists and organizers that will forward understandings of teacher activism within educational policy discussions, establish relationships across our various experiences, build community, and make our understandings, knowledges, and positionality relative to educational policy,

known. In Spring 2021, we will hold 10 bi-monthly virtual sessions to exchange our

stories of activism, learn from each other, and forward theories of teacher

activism. There will also be an initial one-on-one interview for you to share your

experiences, interests, and hopes for our co-created space.

Amid the dual crises of COVID-19 and the recent illumination of long-existent racism,

K-12 teachers are being asked to shift entire in-person curricula to remote learning,

monitor students' virtual progress, support student and family access to essential

resources, participate in multiple trainings, and develop safety procedures. To show how

much I value your time, I am compensating teacher activists $200 for participating and

completing bi-monthly research collective session.

 For more information, check out this document: Study Opportunity Q/A

 The purpose of this survey is to collect information for folks interested in participating in

this project. By filling out this survey, you acknowledge that you are interested in being

contacted about scheduling an interview.

Note, filling out this survey does not mean you are committed to the study. Additionally,

due to study design/funding constraints, there are 12 spots available. The survey will

close December 30th, 2020 (11:59pm) and invitations will be sent on a rolling basis until

the end of January.

.

○ I am interested in being contacted for an interview (1)

Q15 Do you identify, or does society construct you as Black, Indigenous, or a person of color?

○ Yes (1)

○ No (2)

Skip To: Q16 If Do you identify, or does society construct you as Black, Indigenous, or a person of color? = Yes

Skip To: End of Survey If Do you identify, or does society construct you as Black, Indigenous, or a person of color? = No

Q16 Do you consider yourself a teacher activist and/or organizer?

○ Definitely yes (1)

○ Probably yes (2)

○ Might or might not (3)

○ Probably not (4)

○ Definitely not (5)

Q22 Briefly describe what being a "teacher activist or organizer" means to you?

(optional)

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Q25 List any educational justice, social justice, racial/ethnic justice, or other forms of justice organization(s) you follow, are involved in, have thought about being involved in, or organized.

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Q1 What is your preferred name (first & last)?

_____

Q4 Preferred email

_____

Q5 Phone number (optional)

_____

Q3 What is your preferred method of communication? (contact information is only used to communicate throughout the duration of the study)

☐ Email (1)

☐ Phone (2)

☐ Text (3)

Q16 Choose one or more racial/ethnic identities you consider yourself to be and notice the option to write-in your ethnic heritage. (For instance, although I identify as Black, I have Jamaican ancestry):

☐　　Black or African American (2)
_____

☐　　American Indian, Alaska Native, or non-U.S. Indigenous (3)
_____

☐　　Asian (4) _____

☐　　Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander (5)
_____

☐　　Latinx or Hispanic (6)
_____

☐　　White (1) _____

☐　　My racial/ethnic identity is not listed (please add) (7)
_____

☐　　I identify as... (8)
_____

Q18 Gender Identity (select all that apply)

- ☐ Man (1)

- ☐ Woman (2)

- ☐ Non-binary/non-conforming (3)

- ☐ Transgender (4)

- ☐ prefer not to respond (5)

Q17 What grade(s) do you teach?

☐   PRE-K (1)

☐   K (2)

☐   1 (3)

☐   2 (4)

☐   3 (5)

☐   4 (6)

☐   5 (7)

☐   6 (8)

☐   7 (9)

☐   8 (10)

☐   9 (11)

☐   10 (12)

☐   11 (13)

☐   12 (14)

☐   Not listed (15)

Q18 What content(s) do you teach? (If you teach multiple content areas, list them all)

_____

Q26 What is your birth year?

_____

Q27 How many total years have you been a full-time K-12 educator?

_____

Q29 What is the highest level of schooling you have completed/ are completing?

○ High school graduate, diploma or the equivalent (for example: GED) (4)

○ Some college credit, no degree (5)

○ Trade/technical/vocational training (6)

○ Associate degree (7)

○ Bachelor's degree (8)

○ Master's degree (9)

○ Professional degree (10)

○ Doctorate degree (11)

End of Block: BIPOC teachers

Start of Block: Capacity to participate

Q19 Would you be able to participate in 10 one-hour bi-monthly sessions starting January and ending in May?

○ Extremely likely (7)

○ Somewhat likely (8)

○ Neither likely nor unlikely (9)

○ Somewhat unlikely (10)

○ Extremely unlikely (11)

Q20 In January 2021, would you be able to participate in a 90-min one-on-one interview?

○ Extremely likely (7)

○ Somewhat likely (8)

○ Neither likely nor unlikely (9)

○ Somewhat unlikely (10)

○ Extremely unlikely (11)

Q21 Do you foresee any challenges or barriers to your potential study participation?

(Your answer does not exclude you from participation. Given the multiple tasks and responsibilities of teachers, I want to make sure I am supporting you throughout this process).

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Q23 Any comments, questions, or concerns for me to consider as I prepare to invite

BIPOC teachers to this co-created and justice-oriented space?

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Appendix E: Initial Invitation to One-on-one Conversation

Post-Screening Survey Email

Invitation to One-on-One Interview:

Greetings _____,

Thank you for your interest in participating in my (now our) study examining teacher activism. This email is your official welcome to the research collective. I am looking forward to co-creating a space that leads to liberatory knowledge.

The first phase of the study is to schedule a 90 minute one-on-one meeting. Please, use the following link to schedule a time that fits in your schedule:

https://calendly.com/nastewart22

Attached to this email is the Consent Form. Please review this document and we will discuss any of your questions or concerns during our conversation.

I look forward to sharing, learning, and co-creating with you.

We still have a couple of spots open; thus, feel free to share this information with anyone else you think would be interested.

Best,

Nate Stewart

Appendix F: Educator Activist Profiles

	Malcolm	**Akiea**	**Love**
Position:	SEL Instructional Coach	K-12 Classroom Teacher	Instructional/Curriculum Coach; Former Dean of Students
School Type:	Urban Public School	Urban Charter School	Urban Public School
Defining Our Collective Work:	I am a licensed school counselor working as a teacher on special assignment to coach teachers on social emotional learning, trauma, equity and restorative justice practices. I help teachers incorporate topics of race in the classroom and also invite them to discover more about what matters to their students from a cultural lens. I also bring attention to social issues to other	This phrase encompasses both aspects of what I do as an educator. My role involves more than just delivering content to 3rd grade students. I am committed I actively working to dismantle systems that oppress my students, my own two children, and our families.	This means that I work to raise questions, dialogues, and changes about inequities in hiring practices of teachers and staff, pedagogy, curriculum content, school culture, extended contract opportunities, racism and bias in the school workplace, racism and bias in the teacher to student relationships etc.

	Rosa	Serena	Nate
	educators in the district.		
Position:	Administrative Assistant; Aspiring School Leader	K-12 Classroom Teacher	Former K-12 Teacher
School Type:	Suburban Public School	Urban Charter School	Urban Charter School
Defining Our Collective Work:	Being socially competent and active in gaining knowledge of current injustices surrounding education to be capable of teaching others.	To me, a teacher activist is someone who uses their work inside the classroom to spark the minds and hearts of children to seek change. I use the resources I have such as lessons, stories, and discussions to build empathy in kids, so they can change the oppression they see in the world.	As an educator, scholar-activist, and educational policy researcher, I am interested in understanding how Black, Indigenous, and other people of color, who are K-12 teacher activists, engage in dual political activity for justice.

	Rosa	Serena	Nate

Appendix G: The Collective's Avatars
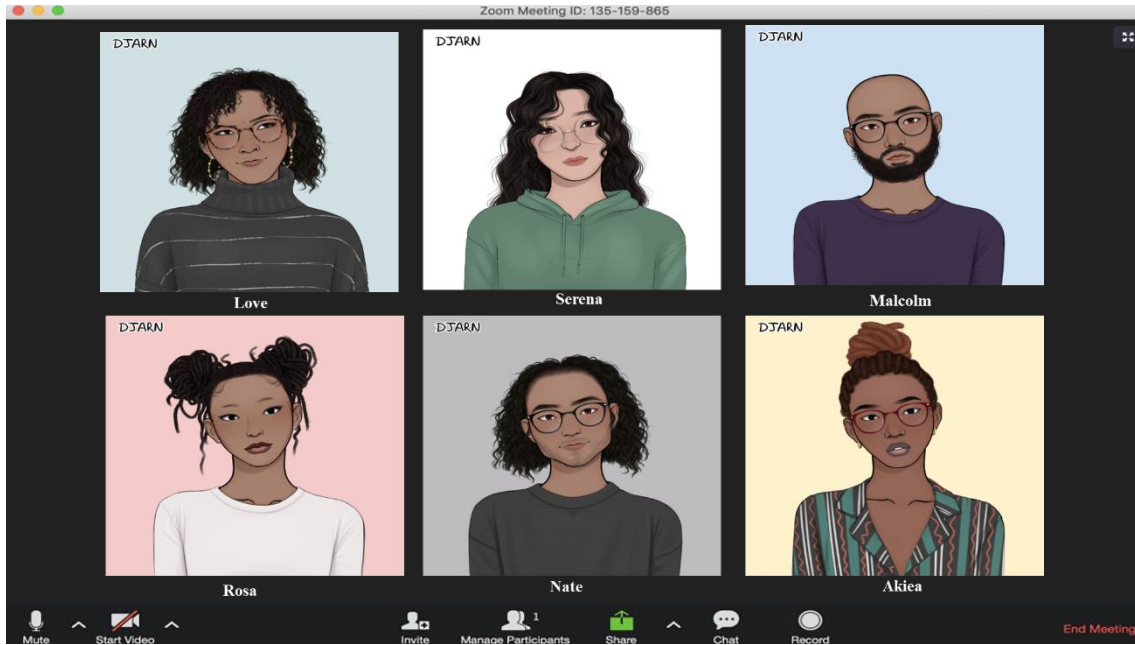
Appendix: H: One-on-one Conversation Protocol

I.   One-on-One Interview Protocol:

Educator's Background:

1. What type of schools did you go to in your K-12 experience? How did these experiences influence your activism? In particular, talk a little bit about level of diversity and demographics of your classmates and teachers. What about the neighborhoods you moved through?

2. Where did you receive your teaching certification? What teaching experience did you have before graduating from undergrad? What was the demographic of students you taught? How did you get into teaching?

3. During your teacher education program, how did your courses or field experiences address language, disability, and race education? What teaching experiences have you had that relate to race or racism in education?

4. How did you come to be at the school you are currently teaching at?

5. How would you describe your school district in comparison to others? In particular, what are your students and families' reputations and performance? Are there differences between how you perceive your school community and how others perceive your school community? Do you live in the district that you teach in, or the neighborhood? How have you learned about the areas around the school?

6. How does your racial identity impact your teaching?

7. How does policy impact your teaching?

Research Question:

Political Activism (efforts teachers lead, organize, and initiate relating to educational

justice):

1. Outside of the classroom, describe how you engage is social justice or activism?

2. Given your experiences with activism, how would you guide other teachers interested in doing the same?

3. Beyond the classroom, how have you participated in resisting inequitable educational policy? Describe these efforts.

4. How have you participated in efforts to build political power for racial justice

Pedagogical Activism (Teaching and learning as praxis to raise student critical

consciousness and build capacities to collectively act to dismantle oppression):

5. What do you hope students gain from your teaching? How do you position your teaching to meet these aims?

6. Describe your thoughts on the potential for your teaching practices to build power to challenge injustice.

7. Describe some of your most radical lessons. What types of spaces were you attempting to create with your students?

8. How do students and families react to your pedagogical decisions?

9. Describe school leaders' support for your pedagogical activism.

Dual Political Activity (Teacher discussion on the relationship between their political and

pedagogical activism.)

10. How does your background/ identity inform and guide your various forms of activism?
11. How do you prioritize activism beyond the classroom vs. activism within the classroom? Are there tensions you see between these forms of activism?
12. Describe the extent to which you discuss your political activities with students? Are there barriers to these discussions?
13. Describe what your hopes are for the future generations of organizers and activists? What about hope for teacher organizers and activists?

Research Collective:

14. What would you like to see in/what do you hope for our co-collected research collective? What brought you to this interview?

15. What concerns do you have as we move forward with this research collective?
16. What topic, idea, or sharing would you do for your convener week?

Final Coding Structure

Theory of Diradical Educator Activism	
Node Name	*Node Description*
Political Activism	Efforts that educators particate in, lead, organize, and initiate relating to educational justice beyond the classroom**.**
• **Conversations of Resistance**	Educators' experiences and stories of resisting inequitable educational policy.
• Awareness of oppressive systems	Educators conversing about how oppressive systems, policies, or structures operate.
• Challenging racist policies	Educators' acts of resisting racism in educational policy or society.
• Circumvent systems	Educators discussing how they act to resist systems beyond the classroom.
• Racial & ethnic justice	Those educator experiences that build power for racial/ethnic justice.
• Grassroots, movement, coalition-building to capture power	General activities to capture political power for transformation.
• Community relationships	Conversations relating to community stakeholders & allies.
• Living wages & working conditions	Educators' discussing educator labour rights issues.
• Political justice-oriented educator collaboration	Collective work to transform structural oppression with colleagues.
• with students' families	Collective work with..
• with researchers	Collective work with..
• with students	Collective work with..
• with grassroots organizations	Collective work with..
• **Conversations of Thrival**	Educators' political acts to insulate and protect themselves and their students from harmful and oppressive educational policy.

• Movements against neoliberalism & privatization	Efforts to thrive despite the neoliberal and privatized educational project.
• Working against top-down educational policy	Efforts to thrive in compliance-based educational policy
• Intersectional work	Educators describe the intersections of race and other forms of oppression and acts to center on intersectional theory.
• Political Black & Indigenous Joy	Instances of pride, happiness, and fulfilment stemming from political activism.
Pedagogical Activism	Teaching and learning as praxis to raise student critical consciousness and build capacities to collectively act to dismantle oppression in the classroom and school-level.
• **Conversations of Resistance**	Educators' classroom or school-level experiences of resisting oppressive dominant norms
• Awareness of oppression in schools or classrooms	Educators conversing about how oppressive systems, policies, or structures operate in their schools or classrooms.
• Sustaining cultural pluralism	Educators' efforts to resist monoculturalism in the classroom.
• Pedagogical justice-oriented educator collaboration	Collective work to transform structural oppression in their classroom or school.
• Support of school leaders	Educator discussions on school leader support.
• **Conversations of Thrival**	Educator experiences of decentering white, middle class norms in classroom spaces.
• Pedagogical Black & Indigenous Joy	Instances of pride, happiness, and fulfilment in the outcomes of instructional practices.
• Under the preview of state surveillance	The efforts of educators to act against state policies and do justice work despite the state's efforts to restrict.
• Use of critical pedagogies	Educators discuss their chosen pedagogical decisions.

• Student relationships	Discussion on how educators work against norms that harm students and build relationships with students.
Convergence of Pedagogical and Political Activism	Educator discussion on the relationship between their political and pedagogical activism.
• Intersection between one's identity and justice-oriented activism	How educators' background led them to activism.
• Barriers to overcome	Discussions of barriers to being engaged in political and pedagogical activism.
• Black and Indigenous educators not having the luxury	When educators sense that there are double-standards or heighten scrutiny for their justice work.
• Push and pull	Educators discussing engagement and reconciliation in the triad of teaching, learning, and political activity
• New structures, systems, policies	Black and Indigenous educators envision equitable futures beyond our current realities.
• Teacher preparation programs	Educators' experience with teacher preparation for activism.
• Practice what you teach	Educators discussing modelling what they teach students.
• Challenging the myth of the apolitical educator	Discussion on arguments for neutral or non-biased educators.
• Pushing/Challenging Colleagues	Educator discussions relating to confronting, naming, or identifying the ways colleagues

	may harm marginalized groups.
• Educator preparation programs	Educators' experience in educator preparation for activism.
• Critical race epistemologies	
• TribalCrit	Educator discusses tenets of TribalCrit
• BlackCrit	Educator discusses tenets of BlackCrit
• Inviting the next generation of justice movement participants	Educators discussing interest in providing the next generation of activists with tools to collectively capture power
Additional Nodes	I interpreted these categories from educator activists' conversations and were not part of the initial coding structure.
• Unapologetic	Instances when educators described a refusal to temper their passion for justice, equity, and liberation
• Policy Actor Critical Consciousness	The process of educators learning from each other and becoming more aware of strategies to participate in educational justice movements.
• Facilitating Challenge but Not Demanding Compliance	Instances where educators discussed the balance between inviting students to the movement and being sure not to demand that students see the world

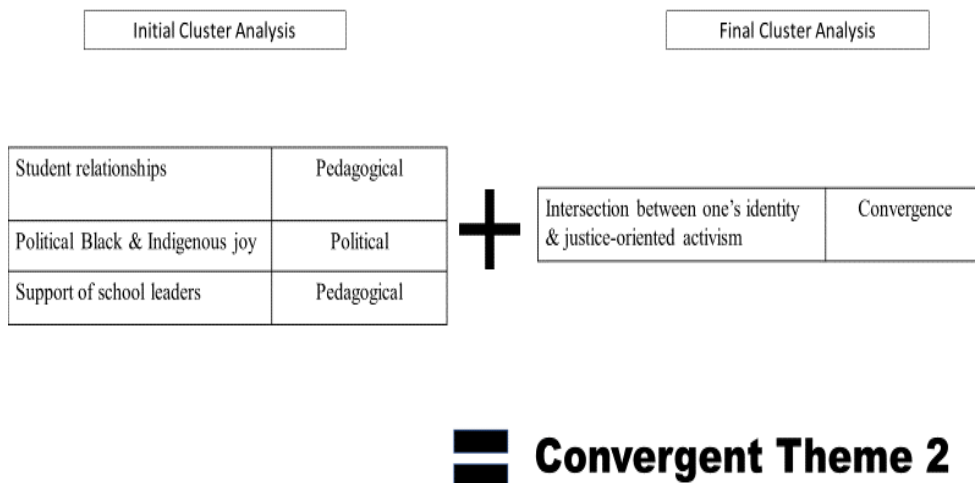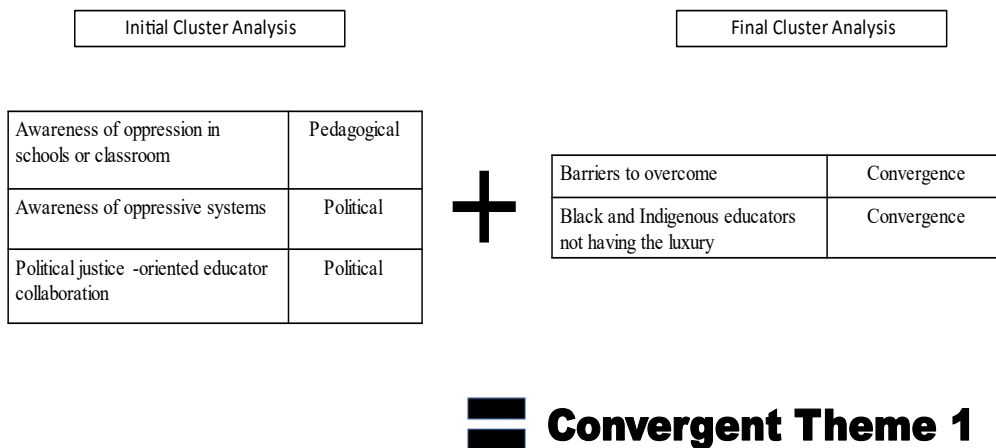|	just as they do.

Appendix J: Color-coded Node Pairing Categories

Node A	Node B	COEFF
Black and Indigenous Educators Not Having the Luxury	Barriers to Overcome	1
Intersectional work	Circumvent systems	1
Pedagogical Black_Brown_Indigenous Joy	ng the next generation of justice movement partic	1
Push and pull	ng the next generation of justice movement partic	1
Push and pull	Pedagogical Black_Brown_Indigenous Joy	1
Racial_ethnic justice	ng the next generation of justice movement partic	1
Racial_ethnic justice	Pedagogical Black_Brown_Indigenous Joy	1
Racial_ethnic justice	Push and pull	1
Political Justice -Oriented Educator collab	Awareness of Oppressive Systems	0.916667
Political Justice -Oriented Educator collab	Barriers to Overcome	0.916667
Political Justice -Oriented Educator collab	ck and Indigenous Educators Not Having the Lux	0.916667
Student relationships	ction between one's identity and justice-oriented a	0.916667
Political Justice -Oriented Educator collab	Challenging racist policies	0.909091
Political Justice -Oriented Educator collab	Circumvent systems	0.909091
Political Justice -Oriented Educator collab	Intersectional work	0.909091
Pushing_Challenging Colleagues	Political Justice -Oriented Educator collab	0.909091
Support of administrators	Student relationships	0.909091
nlisting the next generation of justice movement participan	Circumvent systems	0.9
Grassroots_Movement_Coalition-building to capture powe	Challenging racist policies	0.9
Grassroots_Movement_Coalition-building to capture powe	Circumvent systems	0.9
Intersectional work	ng the next generation of justice movement partic	0.9
Intersectional work	sroots_Movement_Coalition-building to capture p	0.9
New Structures, Systems, Policies	Circumvent systems	0.9
New Structures, Systems, Policies	Intersectional work	0.9
Pedagogical Black_Brown_Indigenous Joy	Circumvent systems	0.9
Pedagogical Black_Brown_Indigenous Joy	Intersectional work	0.9
Push and pull	Circumvent systems	0.9
Push and pull	Intersectional work	0.9
Pushing_Challenging Colleagues	ng the next generation of justice movement partic	0.9
Pushing_Challenging Colleagues	Pedagogical Black_Brown_Indigenous Joy	0.9
Pushing_Challenging Colleagues	Push and pull	0.9
Racial_ethnic justice	Circumvent systems	0.9
Racial_ethnic justice	Intersectional work	0.9
Racial_ethnic justice	Pushing_Challenging Colleagues	0.9
Support of administrators	ng the next generation of justice movement partic	0.9
Support of administrators	Pedagogical Black_Brown_Indigenous Joy	0.9
Support of administrators	Political Black_Brown_Indigenous Joy	0.9
Support of administrators	Push and pull	0.9
Support of administrators	Racial_ethnic justice	0.9
Sustaining cultural pluralism	Support of administrators	0.9
Practice what you teach	ng the next generation of justice movement partic	0.888889
Practice what you teach	Pedagogical Black_Brown_Indigenous Joy	0.888889
Push and pull	Practice what you teach	0.888889
Racial_ethnic justice	Practice what you teach	0.888889
Working against top-down educational policy	Practice what you teach	0.875
Barriers to Overcome	Awareness of Oppressive Systems	0.846154

Black and Indigenous Educators Not Having the Luxury	Awareness of Oppressive Systems	0.846154
ersection between one's identity and justice-oriented activi	Awareness of Oppressive Systems	0.846154
ersection between one's identity and justice-oriented activi	Barriers to Overcome	0.846154
ersection between one's identity and justice-oriented activi	ck and Indigenous Educators Not Having the Lux	0.846154
Challenging racist policies	Awareness of Oppressive Systems	0.833333
Challenging racist policies	Barriers to Overcome	0.833333
Challenging racist policies	ck and Indigenous Educators Not Having the Lux	0.833333
Circumvent systems	Awareness of Oppressive Systems	0.833333
Circumvent systems	Barriers to Overcome	0.833333
Circumvent systems	ck and Indigenous Educators Not Having the Lux	0.833333
ersection between one's identity and justice-oriented activi	Circumvent systems	0.833333
Intersectional work	Awareness of Oppressive Systems	0.833333
Intersectional work	Barriers to Overcome	0.833333
Intersectional work	ck and Indigenous Educators Not Having the Lux	0.833333
Intersectional work	ction between one's identity and justice-oriented a	0.833333
Pushing_Challenging Colleagues	Awareness of Oppressive Systems	0.833333
Pushing_Challenging Colleagues	Barriers to Overcome	0.833333
Pushing_Challenging Colleagues	ck and Indigenous Educators Not Having the Lux	0.833333
Support of administrators	Barriers to Overcome	0.833333
Support of administrators	ck and Indigenous Educators Not Having the Lux	0.833333
Support of administrators	ction between one's identity and justice-oriented a	0.833333
Circumvent systems	Challenging racist policies	0.818182
Intersectional work	Challenging racist policies	0.818182
Political Justice -Oriented Educator collab	awareness of oppressionin schools or classrooms	0.818182
Political Justice -Oriented Educator collab	ng the next generation of justice movement partic	0.818182
Political Justice -Oriented Educator collab	sroots_Movement_Coalition-building to capture p	0.818182
Political Justice -Oriented Educator collab	New Structures, Systems, Policies	0.818182
Political Justice -Oriented Educator collab	Pedagogical Black_Brown_Indigenous Joy	0.818182
Push and pull	Political Justice -Oriented Educator collab	0.818182
Pushing_Challenging Colleagues	Challenging racist policies	0.818182
Pushing_Challenging Colleagues	Circumvent systems	0.818182
Pushing_Challenging Colleagues	Intersectional work	0.818182
Racial_ethnic justice	Political Justice -Oriented Educator collab	0.818182
Student relationships	ng the next generation of justice movement partic	0.818182
Student relationships	Pedagogical Black_Brown_Indigenous Joy	0.818182
Student relationships	Political Black_Brown_Indigenous Joy	0.818182
Student relationships	Push and pull	0.818182
Student relationships	Racial_ethnic justice	0.818182
Support of administrators	Circumvent systems	0.818182
Support of administrators	Intersectional work	0.818182
Support of administrators	Pushing_Challenging Colleagues	0.818182
Sustaining cultural pluralism	Student relationships	0.818182
Use of critical pedagogies	Student relationships	0.818182
Challenging the myth of the apolitical educator	Challenging racist policies	0.8
Grassroots_Movement_Coalition-building to capture powe	ng the next generation of justice movement partic	0.8
New Structures, Systems, Policies	awareness of oppressionin schools or classrooms	0.8
New Structures, Systems, Policies	ng the next generation of justice movement partic	0.8

New Structures, Systems, Policies	sroots_Movement_Coalition-building to capture p	0.8
Pedagogical Black_Brown_Indigenous Joy	sroots_Movement_Coalition-building to capture p	0.8
Pedagogical Black_Brown_Indigenous Joy	New Structures, Systems, Policies	0.8
Political Black_Brown_Indigenous Joy	ng the next generation of justice movement partic	0.8
Political Black_Brown_Indigenous Joy	Pedagogical Black_Brown_Indigenous Joy	0.8
Practice what you teach	Circumvent systems	0.8
Practice what you teach	Intersectional work	0.8
Push and pull	sroots_Movement_Coalition-building to capture p	0.8
Push and pull	New Structures, Systems, Policies	0.8
Push and pull	Political Black_Brown_Indigenous Joy	0.8
Pushing_Challenging Colleagues	Challenging the myth of the apolitical educator	0.8
Pushing_Challenging Colleagues	Practice what you teach	0.8
Racial_ethnic justice	sroots_Movement_Coalition-building to capture p	0.8
Racial_ethnic justice	New Structures, Systems, Policies	0.8
Racial_ethnic justice	Political Black_Brown_Indigenous Joy	0.8
Support of administrators	Practice what you teach	0.8
Sustaining cultural pluralism	ng the next generation of justice movement partic	0.8
Sustaining cultural pluralism	sroots_Movement_Coalition-building to capture p	0.8
Sustaining cultural pluralism	Pedagogical Black_Brown_Indigenous Joy	0.8
Sustaining cultural pluralism	Political Black_Brown_Indigenous Joy	0.8
Sustaining cultural pluralism	Push and pull	0.8
Sustaining cultural pluralism	Racial_ethnic justice	0.8
Use of critical pedagogies	ng the next generation of justice movement partic	0.8
Use of critical pedagogies	sroots_Movement_Coalition-building to capture p	0.8
Use of critical pedagogies	Pedagogical Black_Brown_Indigenous Joy	0.8
Use of critical pedagogies	Push and pull	0.8
Use of critical pedagogies	Racial_ethnic justice	0.8
Use of critical pedagogies	Sustaining cultural pluralism	0.8

Appendix K: All Four Cluster Comparisons

Initial Cluster Analysis

Final Cluster Analysis

Awareness of oppression in schools or classroom	Pedagogical
Awareness of oppressive systems	Political
Political justice -oriented educator collaboration	Political

+

Barriers to overcome	Convergence
Black and Indigenous educators not having the luxury	Convergence

= Convergent Theme 1

Initial Cluster Analysis

Final Cluster Analysis

Student relationships	Pedagogical
Political Black & Indigenous joy	Political
Support of school leaders	Pedagogical

+

Intersection between one's identity & justice-oriented activism	Convergence

= Convergent Theme 2

Initial Cluster Analysis		Final Cluster Analysis

Challenging racist policies	Political
Grassroots, movement, coalition-building to capture power	Political
Circumvent systems	Political
Intersectional work	Political

+

New structures, systems, and policies	Convergence

= **Convergent Theme 3**

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Pedagogical Black & Indigenous joy	Pedagogical
Racial & ethnic justice	Political
Sustaining cultural pluralism	Pedagogical
Use of critical pedagogies	Pedagogical

+

Pushing & challenging colleagues	Convergence
Inviting the next generation of justice movement participants	Convergence
Push and pull	Convergence

═ Convergent Theme 4

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Appendix L: Convergent Theme 1 Clustered Nodes

Convergent Theme 1: Barriers to Diradicalism		
Node Name	**Node Dimension**	**# of Coding References**
Awareness of oppression in schools or classroom	Pedagogical	118
Barriers to overcome	Convergence	256
Black and Indigenous educators not having the luxury	Convergence	156
Awareness of oppressive systems	Political	343
Political justice-oriented educator collaboration	Political	154
		Total: 1027

Appendix M: Convergent Theme 2 Clustered Nodes

Convergent Theme 2: Diradical Intergenerational Knowledge Exchange		
Node Name	**Node Dimension**	**# of Coding References**
Intersection between one's identity & justice-oriented activism	Convergence	167
Student relationships	Pedagogical	158
Political Black & Indigenous joy	Political	84
Support of school leaders	Pedagogical	67
		Total: 476

Appendix N: Convergent Theme 3 Clustered Nodes

Convergent Theme 3: Diradical Envisioning and Building New Futures		
Node Name	**Node Dimension**	**# of Coding References**
Challenging racist policies	Political	124
Grassroots, movement, coalition-building to capture power	Political	57
New structures, systems, and policies	Convergence	93
Circumvent systems	Political	100
Intersectional work	Political	46
		Total: 420

Appendix O: Convergent Theme 4 Clustered Nodes

Convergent Theme 4: Sustaining Diradicalism		
Node Name	**Node Dimension**	**# of Coding References**
Pushing & challenging colleagues	Convergence	133
Inviting the next generation of justice movement participants	Convergence	88
Pedagogical Black & Indigenous joy	Pedagogical	83
Push and pull	Convergence	30
Racial & ethnic justice	Political	111
Sustaining cultural pluralism	Pedagogical	34
Use of critical pedagogies	Pedagogical	98
		Total: 577

Appendix P: Request to Collective Explore Healing and Joy

Hello Comrades,

I know it has been a heavy and devastating last couple of weeks (and year) and I have drafted and redrafted a couple of messages to you all as we continue to resist, fight, and advocate for our students, children, and community. To be 100% transparent with you all, I have always been the type of activist who channels my anger at the oppressive system (going to protests and yelling profanities at cops, facilitating intense seminars with my undergraduate students, and always wanting a space to condemn, dismantle, and historicize violence against Black and Brown people).

Recently, I read adrienne maree brown's *Pleasure Activism*. She writes, "Pleasure activism is the work we do to reclaim our whole, happy, and satisfiable selves from the impacts, delusions, and limitations of oppression and/or supremacy." To me, this means that anger is justified and even necessary; however, we must also do the work to "reclaim" our whole selves from an oppressive system that exploits us (and our mental health). Black and Brown joy and healing are equally important in our collective struggle for justice. This is the foundation of resistance (https://www.washingtonpost.com/lifestyle/2020/06/19/my-daughters-dancing-rain-reminded-me-power-black-joy/.) Thus, I want to propose an idea for our session on Thursday.

Would you all be open to centering our session #3 on Black and Brown joy and healing? This does not mean that recent events cannot be brought up; in fact, that would be antithetical to pleasure activism. I propose we engage in a discussion on what Joy and Healing mean to us and what that has looked like in our communities. How do we find Joy amidst so much pain and what does it mean for finding Joy as an act of rebellion?

Please, let me know what you think.

Sending love,
Nate