
Education And Inequalities: Black Communities

Throughout our adolescence parents teach children the basic essentials to eat, walk and talk with the hopes of becoming self-sufficient. Our parental figures themselves instill in us the philosophies of respect, kindness and humanity. From there we are able to be provided opportunities such as education and extracurriculars. However, as we are afforded these amenities, they are faced with disparages that diminish a person, family, community and possibly an entire race.

Historically, Black communities were not allowed to engage or have any connection with academia and education. Slavery was the first system set in place that granted inequalities against the imprisoned and enslaved. Generational discrimination impacted Black minds to benefit from the wave of scholastic learning in households and schools like that of their white counterparts. As the white society used their powers of privilege and access, Blacks would gain strength in their faith-based rituals to guide them in the skills of reading and writing, which was forbidden of Blacks to master.

Reconstruction and redlining brought upon a change and continued corruption in new freedoms for Blacks who were once enslaved. Yet in still Blacks were reminded of being less than in spaces that were to be granted by birth such as human and civil rights. The inevitable impact this had on Black communities at large only attributed to the notions of that time being backed by Black Codes, segregation and the failures of the Reconstruction Era. While abandoning ministries institutions to have a place of their own worship double as a place of multipurpose gathering such as social to political events and schools. The desire of education was seen as an improvement for the Black community in preparedness for an economic marketplace, stability and political freedoms having the establishment of the Freedmen's Bureau. Soon enough the Freedmen's Bureau would so fail short of its objectives and goals set in place for the betterment for people of color. Due to these failures it challenged the legitimacy causing racial tension, violence and other measures of inherited inequalities. Plessy vs. Ferguson was an 1896 case that declared to be separate, but equal for all between whites and Blacks though segregation only violated the principle of having equal liberty.

For most Blacks, the belief was that of former slaves who were now freed people in the American society to have the rights to participate fully and equally. The outcome only displaced Blacks with having a to be ill-equipped with the tools needed to survive in a thriving world education being one of them.

Legislation would be used in order to ensure education for Blacks and enforced laws that schools both segregated and newly desegregated schools would abide by. The Brown vs. Board of Education case of 1954 was a ruling by the Supreme Court against the public schools in unconstitutional racial segregation of children that was a violation of the equal protection clause in the 14th Amendment. Granting such access to Blacks allowed them a chance to possibly be able to earn a deserving chance at academia and gaining intellect. Provisions that ascended from this new law gave Blacks the risk by retribution in the emergence of Freedom Schools and an extreme cry out for "Freedom now".

The Freedom schools were a new wave of a temporary and alternative free schooling outlet in the South. Prior to that many made bridges in the gap for providing education to all Blacks from Institute for Colored Youth founder Richard Humphreys, Frederick Douglas of the United Negro College Fund and Booker T. Washington of the Tuskegee Normal and Industrial Institute along with NAACP founder writer and educator W.E.B. DuBois. Racial desegregation of schools has been, historically, one of the more ambitious attempts to redress educational disparities. As the education for Blacks was becoming a system in (partial) place it was not until 1960's when students start entering predominately white schools in significant numbers. Inequalities remained as the rising Black consciousness efforts were producing a force that created the Civil Rights Movement and Black Power era. The average Black family was still at a great disadvantage economically when in comparison to whites by earning less income, lacking established social status or class and having inadequate education still.

Unfortunately, Black and brown communities are stereotyped as poverty stricken and low-income livelihoods due to the facing of many inequalities at socioeconomic disadvantages with education and opportunities.

An important entity of the educational system that host children prior to grades Kindergarten through Twelfth Grade is that of the Early Childhood Education. The input of the Early Childhood Education program for all children is to experience education prior to public school entrance. Many programs have made strives to readdress the educational disparities through federal and state programs including Head Start that challenge the inequalities with income differences. Most of these efforts are effective to say the least in the reduction of disparities with opportunities to the Early Childhood Education program due to societal levels. The access can be limited in quality and early efforts could possibly require continuous follow-up moving forward in schools to become beneficial to reduce what is already fully acknowledged. Childcare resources and Early Childhood Education programs alike service various goals in the support and promotion of development both in optimal and care. Early Childhood Education programs provide a goal of socialization and opportunities in learning to atone for the many limiting factors including low-income families, home and their environment.

It is a known fact that the Early Childhood Education program and its respective distinctions from preschool to prekindergarten programs provide a service, however there are existing racial and ethnic disparities in privileges to Early Childhood Education programs. The existence due to administrative factors including funding mechanisms even governmental authority assigned responsibility for the that Early Childhood Education programs honor.

Voices for Illinois Children, an organization focused on the advancement in academia for all children in Illinois, researched, the disparities in Early Childhood Education closely related to family resources and access. Lisa Christensen Gee and Larry Joseph, authors of "Disparities in Access to Preschool in Illinois: Overview of Key Findings," report, "preschool enrollment varies significantly by family income and parental education, with children of affluent, well-educated parents being the most likely to be enrolled in preschool programs" (4). The informational research gathered exposed a traditional marginalization towards communities of color through inequalities in educational access based on family financial status and levels of education. Children from more affluent families and children who are white are more likely to be enrolled in these more general Early Childhood Education programs and less likely to be involved in Early Childhood Education programs that targets child or family interventions, relative to ethnic and racial minority families (Barnett, 2011).

Early Childhood Education programs that target low-income children are primarily publicly funded oppose to non-low-income children. It is done disproportionately through private funding considered to be not-for-profit or profit-making programs at large. Working poor families that do not qualify for publicly funded programs may considered a privately funded for-profit programs. Publicly funded Early Childhood Education programs have a higher eligibility rate for children from low-income families compared to families that are of higher income levels even when proclaimed to be open to all or universal. Constraints can limit enrollment from low-income families due to finances which can be assisted by vouchers, but even as low-income families are provided a service it does not guarantee engagement with a program of high quality.

Lisa Christensen Gee and Larry Joseph, authors of “Disparities in Access to Preschool in Illinois: Overview of Key Findings,” further explain, “Preschool enrollment varies significantly by family income and parental education, with children of affluent, well-educated parents being the most likely to be enrolled in preschool programs” (4). The value of inequalities is perceived both in cycles of being underprivileged and living in poverty. Gee and Joseph had discovered, “Based on data from the National Household Education Survey, 87 percent of 4-year-old children whose mothers had a college degree were enrolled in a preschool program, compared with 63 percent of children whose mothers had only a high school degree. Possible reasons for these disparities include different levels of purchasing power and different valuations of formal early learning opportunities. Parental education can often serve as a proxy for a family’s economic ability to provide early education opportunities for their children. Parental education may also reflect beliefs about formal learning experiences, with more highly educated parents valuing similar experiences for their children” (4/5). As situations could be considered outliers it is known that children whose parents are well-educated supply a superiority in contrast with children whose parents are not well-educated. Parents that are educated have an advantage along with children who live in a two-parent household. It has been known that when unfortunate situations occur in the household such as a single parent household, single to low income or having a parent not highly educated can prepare a student for a disinterest in surpassing inequalities. Two parent homes are able to establish a solidarity in schedule and position throughout the week having balance plus a thriving two-person income providing for than enough for their family. Oppose to single parent homes that more than likely have the mother as the head of household. Among the mother being a single parent, she is more than likely unable to further pursue (personal) goals to finish their education or unable to afford a suitable livelihood. Most single parent homes are unable to provide full stability and self-sufficiency having financial to personal educational struggles of the parent. The family structure has a huge part in the enrollment for center-base care and as it also is relevant to their location. Families at this level reside in dwelling places publicly supported by and administered to developmental plans in housing for low income families. The insurance for having a shelter in place and proper housing that necessarily houses Black bodies for a housing incentive and not opportunities of betterment in academia. Imagine if local, state and federal entities in government were able to efficiently execute a plan in action for legislation that ceases the ideals of aiding people of color with housing without the urgency for equipping them with excellent educational and economic access like those who are not living in supported housing projects or single parent homes.