

White Racial Framing Related to Public School Financing

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ABSTRACT

In the 21st century, U.S. Blacks in public schools experience disenfranchisement, as did their ancestral predecessors in the 19th and 20th centuries.¹ This research utilizes the "White Racial Frame," which essentially encompasses the cognitive racialized false stereotypes and beliefs Whites hold regarding people of color (Feagin, 2010). These stereotypes, beliefs, and values cause Whites to subconsciously and /or consciously marginalize people of color. This Frame will be discussed regarding the rationale for not justly addressing the issue of racial inequities within public school funding apportionment systems. This approach spotlights the historical and contemporary systemic targeting of U.S. Black students.² Results of this study indicate that public school funding allotments are both historical and contemporary examples of systemic racial subjugation. This article extends earlier papers (Halcoussis, Ng, & Virts, 2009; Ng & Halcoussis, 2003) by both examining racially-based school funding diversions and mechanisms, and demonstrating that the historical extensions of systemic racism exist within the foundation of public education and continue to impede the education of Blacks. Overall, the contention of this article is to illustrate fiscal disparities related to race. This paper illustrates the disparities between predominantly White and Black school districts in the selected states of Illinois, Alabama, Mississippi, South Carolina and Georgia.

INTRODUCTION

Nineteenth Century American realist William Dean Howells observed, "Inequality is as dear to the American heart as liberty itself." Researchers have made the argument that the quintessential nature of inequality is distinct within the foundation of one of the country's oldest civic institutions—public education (Bell, 2004; Darling-Hammond, 2010; Fitzgerald, 2009; Kozol, 2012; McCarthy, 1990; Wiggan, 2007). In a 2014 "Dear Colleague" letter, The U.S. Department of Education Office of Civil Rights (OCR) highlighted racial inequalities that continue to persist in public education. The letter reminds readers that enacted federal legislation alone is not enough to ensure financial equity for students of color in public education. Reliance upon laws that are not fully enforced is argued to be an unacceptable practice. The letter goes on to state the negative outcomes for Black students resulting from funding inequities. In addition the letter noted the, "Intradistrict and interdistrict funding disparities often mirror differences in the racial and socioeconomic demographics of schools, particularly when adjusted to take into consideration regional wage variations and extra costs often associated with educating low-income children, English language learners, and students with disabilities. These disparities are often a result of funding systems that allocate less state and local funds to high-poverty schools that frequently have more students of color, which can often be traced to a reliance on property tax revenue for school funding" (OCR, 2013, p.5). Finally, the letter advocated for public schools to seek an end to unlawful financial discrimination practices in racially diverse school systems.

It can be contended that the historical landscape of public education is awash with inequality related to race, class, and gender. *Blacks in the United States have had a complicated and extensive history with issues of education inequality as evidenced by the Jim Crow era (1876–1965). Throughout this period, legal segregation denied Black school-age children equal access to public schools attended by White children. Spirited legal actions addressing the matter did not begin until the U.S. Supreme Court unanimously ruled

¹ Within this article, the term "Black" applies to all African Americans in the United States.

² This issue has dramatic effects on other marginalized students of color, but for this article, only Black students will be discussed.

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for dismantling “de jure” segregation in *Brown v. Board of Education of Topeka* (1954). Importantly, at the time, Chief Justice Earl Warren noted that, “...In these days, it is doubtful that any child may reasonably be expected to succeed in life if he is denied the opportunity of an education. Such an opportunity, where the state has undertaken to provide it, is a right which must be made available to all on equal terms.”³ Notwithstanding the landmark decision, standards for educational rights were limited.⁴ Further, *Brown* has not been interpreted as including protections for U.S. citizens regarding educational funding inequalities. This issue has adversely and persistently affected Black students since the 20th century.

Prominent race and legal scholars, such as Derrick Bell (1980), Joe Feagin (2001, 2010), and Albert Memmi (1965), would undoubtedly maintain that the overall stance of the courts, as noted in *Brown*, is impossible to achieve. Each has demonstrated that U.S. systems and institutions are fundamentally designed to only benefit the majority (Whites), while simultaneously denying opportunities and resources to those occupying “inferior positions” within a majority constructed and maintained racial hierarchy. Feagin’s (2001, 2010) explanation of the White Racial Frame explains not only why, but also how, these institutions were created and maintained.

The “Frame” is comprised of the justification of principles rooted within U.S. slavery and colonial expansion, and the succeeding effects experienced by people of color, who have been historically exposed to racism and institutional oppression. Feagin argues the development of a “Master Frame” has endured since the 17th century. It serves as an embodiment of racialized information that functions to interpret and influence perceptions regarding marginalized people of color. Whites subconsciously take on shared racialized perceptions of Blacks that create false realities that ultimately benefit themselves. White Racial Frame theorists suggest that the American forefathers constructed the Frame in order to maintain the ability of Whites to advance dominance and authority over marginalized peoples. Therefore, people marginalized and deceptively deemed as subhuman have been hindered or expressly barred from gaining access to privilege and resources allocated solely to Whites.

Additionally, the White Racial Frame draws attention to the set of systematized *racialized* ideas and categorizations (e.g., racial stereotypes) that prompt strong emotions in non-Blacks. Thus, these internally generated emotions not only have the ability to impel engagement in both overt and covert forms of racial discrimination (e.g., policies and procedures), but also serve to ignite physical and emotional acts of extremism.

Importantly, the White Racial Frame maintains that all people, in particular non-Blacks, exist with internal “transgenerational” stereotypes and racialized perceptions regarding people of color. When non-Blacks are visually, auditorily, or physically in contact with Blacks, stereotypes and perceptions are evident through acts of discrimination and marginalization. Julius Lester has argued that, “When a group idealizes itself as the apotheosis of humanity, it automatically creates an Other, a Them” (Lester, 2000, p. 107).

Arguably, through the lens of the White Racial Frame, systems and institutional policies enacted to address issues of inequality fundamentally avoid reaching “true” justice. Addressing the topic of injustice within public school finance is argued by the majority to be prejudicial.

It is important to note that the premise of the Frame argues that not only is the issue of race and racism a defining characteristic of all facets of American society, but it also has the ability to potentially promote an

*See: “The Return of School Segregation in Eight Charts,” by James Wexler, 2014, <http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/page/frontline/education/separate-and-inequal>

³ *Brown v. Board of Education*, 347 U.S. 483, 483 (1954), 493.

⁴ The federal government is limited to protecting citizens from violations to the 14th Amendment equal protection clause. The ruling does not impose legal authority over states regarding providing education.

array of elicited forms of subordination within traditional institutions, processes, and policies regarding race, gender, class, and sexuality. Therefore, through the analysis of racism both through a historical and contemporary standpoint, the White Racial Frame allows for an examination regarding the seemingly race-neutral system within the current public education finance apportionment systems.

In agreement, others scholars maintain that gains achieved through *Brown*, “were offered to the extent that they were not seen (or exacted) as a major disruption to a ‘normal’ way of life for the majority of Whites (DeCuir & Dixon, 2004).” Specifically, Bell (1980) postulated that White initiatives only seek racial justice as long as the course of action serves the interests of Whites (economic, social, and etc.).⁵ Overall, many critical race scholars like Bell concede that White power and privilege, in addition to the existence of racial barriers confronted by people of color, are both maintained through constitutional protections and laws. These are further reflected in the outcomes of a historical and contemporary critique of public school financial apportionment mechanisms.

CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

In 1963, the United Nations International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination sought to dismantle the “dissemination of ideas of racial superiority and organizations that promote racial discrimination” (Feagin, 2010, p.196). In 1994, 31 years later, the United States finally ratified the amendment. By signing the declaration, the United States agreed to, alongside other nations, to take “all necessary measures for speedily eliminating racial discrimination in all its forms and manifestations” (Hellenic Resources Institute, 1995).

Regardless of the public commitment to eradicate racial discrimination, systems and institutions in the United States are currently in place that facilitate the existence of discrimination. Clearly overt racial segregation is not commonplace compared to previous generations, but racial discrimination and oppression exist to this day through covert practices in spaces such as public education (Fitzgerald, 2009). Today, many Americans publicly cast-off and diminish arguments pertaining to racism. But many scholars argue that traditional and easily identifiable forms of oppression have been interchanged for newer systems of covert and institutionally systemic forms of oppression (Bonilla-Silva, 2003; Feagin, 2001). The rationale for the discriminatory oppressive treatment of Blacks can be quantified in sociologist Joe Feagin’s model—the “White Racial Frame.” Utilization of the model allows for the manifestation of deeper racial patterns of exclusion that have historically prevailed and avoided scrutiny at any level. This theoretical approach is relevant and runs contrary to the notion the United States currently exists in a post-racial framework due to the 2008 election of the nation’s first U.S. Black president.

FUNDING POLICIES & MECHANISMS

Prior to applying the relevant theoretical framework needed to contextualize the argument, basic distributional mechanisms and legislative policies must be understood. Further, the allocation of funds to public schools is complex. For the purpose of this article, the use of local taxation will be primarily discussed. Within this reliance on local tax revenue, it is essential to understand that each state has a constitution that not only establishes a structure for public schools, but also charges their respective state legislature with the duty to provide funding. The language within funding mandates varies between states, and thus each state has created and operates a separate financially functioning system (Sciarra, 2009). Consequently, each state’s legislature has authorization and control over its public schools. Under state funding formulas, funds to schools are conveyed by way of both state and local revenues. Since the 1930s, all U.S. states have provided between 17% and 50% of funds to local school district budgets. States also vary in terms of physical maintenance and programmatic development costs for individual elementary and

⁵ This theory is noted as the interest convergence theory.

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secondary schools. Consequently, it is notable that school districts with more money are able to provide for consultants responsible for administering new curriculum models and rigorous academic instruction. Districts in poor states are subsequently unable to provide the same resources and academic opportunities.

It is important to recognize that, historically, the process for establishing common schools was linked to the acceptance of local property taxation by voters. Cubberley (1919) noted that the utilization of property tax was the only method for securing a reliable system to support state schools. But this system created inequality throughout the 20th and 21st centuries. In northern states, local taxation and property tax revenue systems “came to be crucial for maintaining racial inequality when other more direct political forms of operating racially unequal schools could no longer be used” (Barnhouse, 2001, p.40). Regardless, due to the current variables of stress on local property taxes and state-level sales taxes, scholars have conjectured that public schools will continue to experience a decline in state and local financing (Rice, 2009).

In general, local property taxes collected from commercial and residential properties support a large number of public school needs. Wealthier properties are able to provide more to their local school districts, while impoverished areas with large numbers of economically challenged people and businesses are unable to match resources and allocations for the schools in their districts. This of course generates disparate education opportunities and services. During 2009–10, property tax revenues from all states accounted for approximately 169 million dollars (Dixon, 2012). Moreover, many wealthier areas are able to gain private donations that may play a significant role in supplementing district funding. This difference in available funding can allow for affluent districts to pay for specialists, additional teaching staff, and services for special education students. For example, the Texas Civil Rights Project in 2012 reported such inequitable funding within Austin Independent School District (AISD). Further, “AISD allows and supports the private subsidization of higher-income (or “higher-equity”) schools, sometimes by as much as \$1,000/student more than the amount of funds that support students in lower-income (or “lower-equity”) schools” (Texas Civil Rights Project, 2012, p.1). In consequence, funds that are essential to serve the needs of underprivileged children in poorly financed schools are unavailable. Schools that house poor Black and Latino students receive basic level funds, while high SES schools are able to raise monies unavailable to poor communities (Texas Civil Rights Project, 2012).

According to Andrew Jonas (1998), school-busing initiatives prompted after *Brown* incited not only White flight, racial isolation, and economic hardship in urban settings, but also had a disparate effect on property values. As urban settings became less populated with higher-income Whites, and suburban areas gained more students, urban schools that housed predominately minority students began to rely more heavily upon federal and state allocations in order to fill the financial gap (Gibson, 2013). This is illustrated through the effects of White flight on urban communities between the years of 1960 to 2000.

Too, throughout the country, relative low spending has affected special education services and programs. Some U.S. states have gone so far as to seek federal and state permission, or waivers, to cut special education funding from their state budgets (Samuels, 2010). Iowa and Kansas have received such permission due to the federal escape clause embedded within IDEA.⁶ In differentiated classrooms for students with disabilities, Black students overwhelmingly outnumber White students (Fitzgerald, 2009). Thus, the effects of financial disparities within public education, in combination with states’ lack of regard for funding special education services, disproportionately affect Black students (Department of Education, 2001; Pressman, 1993).

⁶ The clause notes escape from funding within “exceptional or uncontrollable circumstances” such as natural disasters and unforeseen financial needs of a particular state.

CONTEXT OF RACE AND FISCAL INEQUALITY

In order to contextualize the White Racial Frame and the current public education finance apportionment systems, it is important to discuss the historical framework related to oppression and the education of Blacks. Evidence for Feagin's position related to the advancement of White dominance, is evidenced in the historically White obstruction to Black education. The discussed evidence has implications for school financing issues observed in the 21st century. Through a White Racial Frame lens, the evidence suggest that the same functioning structure that supported historical racism and subjugation regarding the treatment of Blacks throughout public education, has contemporary context in relations to school finance.

From its initial stages through today, education has served as an elaborate component that continues to drive the progress in the nation (Tyack, Anderson, Cuban, Kaestle, Ravitch, Bernard, Mondale, & Streep, 2002). Before and after the U.S. colonies broke free from Britain and became a nation of their own, formal education was only available to the elite Whites. Forefathers of education such Horace Mann, John Dewey, Thomas Jefferson, and Benjamin Rush were commonly rooted in a philosophy that viewed education as a social tool that not only assisted with the maintenance of fundamental aspects of primarily a White Protestant culture, but also was an instrument to halt newly freed Blacks and incoming immigrants (Italians, Irish, and etc.) from acquiring authentic access to the rights of power and privilege (Spring, 2007). The supporters of the common school movement designed the system to safeguard democratic principles and culture. During the early stages of the country, public schools were used to introduce themes of racial and cultural superiority over Blacks and Native Americans to newly introduced groups (e.g., Irish, non-Protestants, Asians, and Latinos).

Discussed historical illustrations have led to the construction and maintenance of social and education modes of control which target Blacks. For example, the construction of legal mechanisms that banned enslaved people from the acts of reading and writing (Daniels, 2002; Williams, 2007). Historians have contended that other laws regarding education (specifically math skills) were passed solely to benefit White slave owners and their mercantile interests (Bell, 1980; Williams, 2007). But in general, the education of Blacks was seen as a dangerous affair. Further, in 1832, a Virginia House of Delegates representative argued, "We have as far as possible closed every avenue by which light may enter their minds. If we could extinguish the capacity to see the light, our work would be completed; they would then be on the level with the beast of the field and we would be safe" (Sunderland, 1836, p.148).

During the post antebellum period, most Blacks attended schools that were clearly unequal in resources and funding compared to White schools. Halcoussi, Ng, & Virts (2009) contend that race undeniably was an important influence on public school funding mechanisms. Funds were historically diverted from Black schools to White schools. Wealthy White landowners controlled their burden to fund public education in two manners. They either reduced funding allocations or they diverted funds from Black to White-only schools. Whites redirected additional funds "when the pool of funds and the per capita gain per white student was large" (p.138).

SYSTEMIC INEQUALITY

Therefore, historical oppression was witnessed in public education throughout the 20th century. The condition continues today. First, the trend of diverting funds from school facilities that house Black students endures. Walters (2001) argues that historical mechanisms of control regarding Black education have been maintained and modified through the means of distribution and access to state social goods. She argues that public school fiscal policies not only create inequality, but also maintain it in a manner that halts any form of egalitarian social and racial reform. Therefore, the argument exemplifies the rationale for the lack of substantial changes directed toward the inequities in public school apportionment systems. This contention is illustrated today in the actions of wealthy and middle-class citizens in East Baton Rouge Parish, Louisiana

who are seeking to separate and secede from schools attended by Blacks and economically disadvantaged children in neighboring communities (Newkirk, 2014). The intention is to create a separate school district that will be funded by their unshared wealthy property taxes. Similar initiatives have been undertaken in other states such as Tennessee, Texas, Alabama, and Georgia. This approach is not unique in the history of American education. For example, after the enactments of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965, White southern middle and upper socioeconomic opponents of integration abandoned public education and sought to establish private White schools (Nevin & Bills, 1976). Many of these schools were connected to specific local churches and religions. In northern states, racially like-minded parents followed suit by sending their children to private schools as well. Schools are evidently becoming increasingly segregated in the 21st century. Blacks are currently more racially isolated and segregated than 40 years ago (Rothstein, 2013). In fact, Rothstein (2013) argues that the current focus of politicians, educators, and outside interests groups on the academic gap between Whites and Blacks serves as a red herring and ignores such issues as segregation. In fact, said parties would best serve the prospective of Black students by addressing the academic ramifications of racially segregated schools. In addition, the issue of housing, violence in low-income neighborhoods, employment opportunities, and the socioeconomic condition of low-income Black students must be addressed.

The White Racial Frame in conjunction with mentioned historical illustrations strongly supports the argument that, regardless of *Brown v. Board of Education of Topeka* (1954), segregation, or the intent to segregate, continues. By example, only two years after *Brown*, the Oakland California School Board, alongside those who voted in favor of a \$40 million bond election, sought to construct a new high school with a two-mile wide, ten-mile long attendance boundary. The construction of the attendance boundary “effectively excluded almost every black and Latino student in the city” (Epstein, 2006, p. 28). Today, due to the factors of race, poverty, and language status, areas such as southern California have been found to show overwhelming substantiation of segregation in public schools (Orfield, Siegel-Hawley, & Kucsera, 2011).

It is important to understand that support system for public schools were set up by our founders to seek “distinctions and advantages to be given by birth to those who simply declare themselves by decree to be best” (Memmi, 1997, p.19). This legacy is arguably continuing. Therefore, the case can be made that current financial disparity among public schools are in place to continue, by some measure, the historical racial and socioeconomic hierarchy. For example, in the state of Louisiana during 2010-2011, St. Tammany Parish had a Black and White student population estimated at 19 and 75 percent respectively.⁷ State per-pupil revenue for St. Tammany Parish was \$5,555 with an additional \$5,191 from local sources. On the other hand, the City of Baker School District with a Black and White population of 92 and 5 percent respectively had state per-pupil revenue of \$6,286 and local revenue totaling only \$2,892. This form of financial inequality occurs where local per-pupil outlays in Black majority districts are drastically less compared to White districts and state revenue are unable to bridge. Through an analysis of such places as Illinois, Alabama, Mississippi, South Carolina, and Georgia, the overall assertion is maintained. But due to the breath and varying complexity of funding formulas throughout the U.S., this paper will extensively focus on Illinois in order to illustrate the stated assertion. The Illinois allocation of public school funds is exceptional in both inequitable and racially insensitive operational practices.

FISCAL ANALYSIS: ILLINOIS

Illinois ranks near the bottom in percentage of state funding allocated to public schools (Fortino, 2014). Unlike most other states, Illinois depends mainly on local funds to support public education (Baker &

⁷ All data concerning per-pupil revenue was retrieved from: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Common Core of Data (CCD), "Local Education Agency (School District) Universe Survey." <http://nces.ed.gov/ccd/elsi/expressTables.aspx>

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Corcoran, 2012; Black, 2011). The state is ranked by the Center for American Progress as second worst in per-pupil expenditure disparities in the United States (Baker & Corcoran, 2012). In addition, 60–65% of local contributions are derived from local property taxes. “Another 15.6 percent is from parent governments of fiscally dependent school districts, although much—if not most—of this revenue also originates from property taxes, which is instead levied by a county or city government” (Baker & Corcoran, 2012, p. 61). The remaining local contribution is derived from fees (meals, activities, and etc.), miscellaneous revenues, inter-district tuition arrangement fees, property transactions, fines, and interests on district investments.

Overall, in this system of local funding, wealthy and mostly predominantly White school districts are able, mostly through property tax revenue, to allocate more funds than their counterparts in economically challenged districts (Sector, 2010). During 2007–08, the predominately Black and underprivileged residents of East St. Louis, Illinois contributed to a property tax rate that was six times higher than that which was paid by the largely White taxpayers in the nearby suburb of Rosemont. Overall in Illinois, due to the locally funded school financial system, many poor Black districts, as illustrated by East St. Louis, depend on the state to provide 75% of needed funds.

The executive director of the Center for Tax and Budget Accountability, and member of the U.S. Department of Education’s Commission on Equity and Excellence in Education, Ralph Martire, argues that, “For decades, Illinois has denied an adequate education to the vast majority of its school children, and it [has] set up a structurally-racist system of education finance that specifically singles out African Americans and Latinos for very poorly funded education” (Fortino, 2014). Martire maintains that Illinois will manage to allocate approximately 17% less in the FY2013 than it provided in FY2000 to pre-K through 12 public schools.⁸ Since FY2009, allotments committed to this population were cut by \$861 million dollars (Illinois State Board of Education, 2013). General State Aid has also decreased from 95% in 2012 to 89% in 2013.⁹ In addition, since FY2011 the state has not met the required minimum dedicated for per-pupil (i.e., foundation levels) expenditures. The General State Aid foundation level has remained constant at \$6,119 for five years.

With regard to population trends, disproportionately poor Black and Latino schools and districts are affected the most by the discussed funding decreases. Ralph Martire, executive director of the Center for Tax and Budget Accountability at DePaul University, argues that Illinois has spent approximately \$1,500 less on Black school-age children in comparison to the allocations dedicated to their White counterparts for the past 40 years (Fortino, 2014). Martire, Mancini, and Kaslow (2008) contend that 93 percent of all Black students attend school districts with a 30 percent or greater low-income rate. Using the Illinois State Achievement Test, Martire et., al (2008) argue that a convincing correlation exists concerning academic performance and increasing instructional expenditures per-pupil (\$1,000-\$2,200).

It is important to recognize that 55% of Black Illinois residents live in 5% of the public school districts with both the highest rate of poverty and lowest levels of property tax revenue per student (Fortino, 2014). In 2012, the U.S. Census Bureau estimated Blacks comprise approximately 14.8% of the total population in Illinois with 32% of those living in poverty (Social IMPACT Research Center, 2014). The poverty level for Blacks in Illinois is disproportionate compared to other demographic groups: 21.4% for Latinos, 12.3% for Asian/Pacific Islander, and 9.2% for Whites.

The property tax rates and revenues in Illinois illustrate systemic disparities within the inequitable school funding system. Despite high tax rates in high poverty school districts, those districts have much lower than average revenues (Baker & Corcoran, 2012). Regarding district expenses, on average, wealthier school

⁸ Illinois Fiscal year begins in July of each year.

⁹ These funds vary depending on the wealth of the property tax within a district. Wealthier areas receive less in comparison to poorer property tax districts.

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districts receive as much as three times the revenue dedicated per-pupil than their counterparts. Additionally, expenses for all school activities in wealthier districts are 2.5 times larger than revenues provided in financially distressed school districts. For example, *Rondout Elementary District 72* and *East Aurora Unit District 131* have property tax revenues of \$30,381 and \$2,816 per student respectively in the 2013–14 school year (Griffin, 2014).

A comparison of the school districts in Chicago and the surrounding areas in Cook County illustrates the differentiated intrastate spending in Illinois. It is important to know, as of 2012, the city of Chicago is 45% White, 32.9% Black, 28.9% Latino, and 5.5% Asian (U.S. Census Bureau, 2012). In regards to poverty, areas of Chicago such as Riverdale, Fuller Park, Englewood, West and East Garfield Park, have not only the highest concentration of Blacks, but also have high rates of poverty (Clary, 2013). Wealthier areas located in and around the city are concentrated with a disproportionate number of non-Blacks.

When comparing the differences in per-pupil revenue between Black and White students in the state, evidence provided by the National Center for Education Statistics (2010-2011 academic year) indicates that districts populated with a 50 percent or greater Black student body receive disproportionately less local revenue. Consequently, the combined state and local per-pupil revenue dedicated to districts with a predominance of Black students is more likely to be less than that which is allocated to school districts populated with 70 percent or more White students. During the 2010-2011 school year, socioeconomically challenged and predominantly Black, as Tables 1 and 1a show, received much less than the mostly wealthy and White student districts. East St. Louis SC 189 and Township High School District (TWP HSD 113) funding data illustrate this disparity. Overall, when looking at total revenue, the illustrated White school districts in the sample shown in Table 1 on average received more than their counterparts. Regardless of the General State Aid contributions that are meant to remediate the lack of local revenue available in heavily populated Black districts, such does not financially counterbalance the inequitable and disproportionate per-pupil funding patterns.

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Table 1: 2010-2011 Illinois School District Per-Pupil Revenue: 50% ≥ Black Student Population

Black> Districts	% White Students	% Black Students	State Revenue	Local Revenue	Total Revenue
Pembroke CCSD 259	1	95	9,695	1,596	11,291
South Holland SD 150	0.7	88	3,854	7,613	11,467
CCSD 168	9	78	8,801	2,718	11,519
Matteson EDS 162	5	89	5,110	6,986	12,096
Prairie-Hills ESD 144	4	86	7,749	4,398	12,147
Harvey SD 152	0.4	78	10,033	2,146	12,179
Calumet City SD 155	2	84	7,454	4,864	12,318
Brookwood SD 167	5	74	5,671	6,693	12,364
East St. Louis SD 189	0.4	98.6	11,452	1,042	12,494
Cahokia CUSD 187	10	88	9,815	2,854	12,669
Hazel Crest SD 152-5	2	88	7,635	5,201	12,836
Sunnybrook SD 171	5	76	5,897	7,144	13,041
Gen George Patton SD 133	0	97	7,879	5,602	13,481
Park Forest SD 163	5	82	8,596	5,215	13,811
Calumet SD 132	0.3	78	9,749	4,187	13,936
South Holland SD 151	14	63	6,711	7,972	14,683
Brooklyn UD 188	0	100	9,601	6,693	16,294
Cairo USD 1	7	85	13,180	3,643	16,823
Average	3.9	84.6	8,271	4,809	13,080

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Table 1a: 2010-2011 Illinois School District Per-Pupil Revenue: 70% ≥ White Student Population

School Districts	%White Students	%Black Students	State Revenue	Local Revenue	Total Revenue
Mount Prospect SD 57	81	0.8	2,103	9,105	11,208
Kirby SD 140	83	2	2,472	9,891	12,363
Downers Grove GSD 58	79	5	2,203	10,033	12,236
Fremont SD 79	72	2	1,924	10,680	12,604
Lincoln Way CHSD 210	88	3	3,286	10,862	14,148
Arlington Height SD 25	83	1	2,540	11,215	13,755
Frankfort CCSD 157C	84	4	2,346	12,069	14,415
Lake Zurich CUSD 95	84	1	2,517	12,231	14,748
Tinley Park CCSD 146	77	4	2,927	12,825	15,752
Geneva CUSD 304	88	0.3	2,467	12,864	15,331
Kildeer Countryside CCSD 96	70	2	3,067	14,040	17,107
Hinsdale CCSD 181	84	1	2,468	14,333	16,801
CHSD 117	83	4	3,974	14,665	18,639
Hinsdale TWP HSD 86	73	8	3,044	16,599	19,643
Northfield TWP HSD 225	75	1	3,346	21,099	24,445
Adlai E. Stevenson HSD 125	73	2	3,422	21,133	24,555
CHSD 128	76	2	3,095	22,683	25,778
TWP HSD 113	84	1	3,172	23,856	27,028
Average	79.8	2.4	2,799	14,455	17,254

BRIEF FISCAL ANALYSIS: ALABAMA

The Foundation Program is a formula-driven mechanism that funds K-12 public education in the state of Alabama (Smith, 2013). The Program places accountability to fund public education on the local communities. Data regarding the 2010-2011 academic year indicates that even though heavily populated Black school districts receive more revenue from the state, they receive less from local sources. In regard

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to revenue collected from local property tax contribution, Alabama is one of two states that provides 70 percent from state funding source (Howell & Miller, 1997). But unlike Illinois, selected Black school districts in Alabama had a larger revenue stream than White school districts (See Tables 2 and 2a), and the total local plus state revenue is much more equal in Alabama than in Illinois. However, the level of overall funding in Alabama is much less than Illinois.

Table 2: 2010-2011 Alabama School District Per-Pupil Revenue & School Millage: 50% ≥ Black Student Population¹⁰

School Districts	%Black Students	%White Students	State Revenue	Local Revenue	Total Revenue
Selma City	97	2.9	5,655	1,563	7,218
Fairfield City	99	0.2	5,382	2,319	7,701
Bessemer City	93	2.4	5,065	2,686	7,751
Wilcox Co.	99	0.5	6,086	1,964	8,050
Anniston City	91	6	4,968	3,103	8,071
Macon Co.	99	1.1	6,141	2,082	8,223
Birmingham City	96	1	5,077	3,662	8,739
Sumter Co.	99	0.4	6,301	4,326	10,627
Perry Co.	99	0.8	7,022	1,335	8,357
Average	96.8	1.7	5,744	2,560	8,304

Table 2a: 2010-2011 Alabama School District Per-Pupil Revenue & School Millage: 70% ≥ White Student Population

School Districts	%Black Students	%White Students	State Revenue	Local Revenue	Total Revenue
Blount Co.	1	87	5,778	1,486	7,264
Haleyville City	2	90	5,409	2,387	7,796
Cullman City	1	90	4,528	3,537	8,065
Arab City	0.3	97	5,440	2,639	8,079
Winston Co.	0.5	98	6,091	2,581	8,672
Winfield City	4	94	5,931	2,876	8,807
Franklin Co.	0.7	89	6,056	3,719	9,775
Scottsboro City	6.6	91	6,128	3,773	9,901
Mountain Brook City	0.2	98	4,182	7,937	12,119
Average	1.8	92.6	5,505	3,437	8,942

BRIEF FISCAL ANALYSIS: MISSISSIPPI

In order to address the issue of inequalities regarding school finance, the Mississippi Legislature adopted the formula-driven Mississippi Adequate Education Program (MAEP). Each district in the state is legally mandated to provide up to 27 percent of the cost through a local funding (resident and property taxes). The

¹⁰ All other data was retrieved from: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Common Core of Data (CCD), "Survey of Local Government Finances, School Systems (F-33)", 2010-11 (FY 2011) v.1a-2a. <http://nces.ed.gov/ccd/elsi/expressTables.aspx>. All percentages were rounded to the nearest percent.

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state then required to make up the difference in order to meet the specified base student revenues. It is important to note that the program has only completely funded public education twice since its inception (Skinner, 2014).

Tables 3-3a illustrate that, unlike Illinois, Black school districts, in Mississippi, on average receive more equitable funding from both state and local sources. However, examples of inequities can be viewed through individual comparisons between the Yazoo City Municipal School District and the Yazoo County School District. Both districts are in the same city and provide further evidence to support the White Racial Frame assertion regarding the current condition of racial injustice. Specifically, the state and local revenue per-pupil for the mostly Black populated Yazoo City Municipal School District were \$4,481 and \$829. In the mostly White Yazoo City Municipal School District, state and local per-pupil revenue were \$3,963 and \$3,638. The revenue collected from property taxes in White school districts is yet higher than that to Black districts, meaning of course, that Black property values are far below that of White property values.

Overall, in the state of Mississippi, spent less on per-pupil expenditures between fiscal years of 2008 and 2014. Mississippi ranked 10th among the 50 states and was assigned a letter grade of “C” in terms of school equality regarding funding distribution by Baker, Sciarra, and Farrie, 2010.

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Table 3: 2010-2011 Mississippi School District Per-Pupil Revenue: 50 ≥ Black Student Population¹¹

School Districts	%Black Students	%White Students	State Revenue	Local Revenue	Total Revenue
Yazoo City Municipal School District	99	0.9	4,481	829	5,310
Durant Public School District	98	1.3	4,094	1,306	5,400
Clarksdale Municipal School District	97	2	4,556	1,349	5,905
Greenville Public Schools	94	1.3	4,567	1,676	6,243
Indianola School District	96	2	4,490	1,719	6,209
Humphreys Co. School District	98	0.7	4,439	1,733	6,172
Greenwood Public Schools	92	7	4,122	2,064	6,186
Leland School District	70	7	4,800	2,425	7,225
Columbus Municipal School District	89	9	4,088	3,010	7,098
Natchez-Adams School District	90	9	4,145	3,261	7,406
Hattiesburg Public School	90	5	4,083	4,224	8,307
Average	92.0	4.1	4,351	2,145	6,496

¹¹ Millage rates were retrieved from http://mdah.state.ms.us/arrec/digital_archives/governmentrecords/files/mde/mde-ar/2012_Superintendent_Annual_Report.pdf

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Table 3a: 2010-2011 Mississippi School District Per-Pupil Revenue: 70 ≥ White Student Population

School Districts	%Black Students	%White Students	State Revenue	Local Revenue	Total Revenue
George Co. School District	9	88	4,400	1,313	5,713
Pontotoc Co. School District	10	82	4,545	1,500	6,045
Union Co. School District	8	89	4,620	1,642	6,262
Green Co. School District	17	82	4,410	1,894	6,304
Tishomingo Co. Sp. Municipal School	3	93	4,459	2,170	6,629
Pearl River Co. School District	4	92	4,227	2,488	6,715
Prentiss Co. District	6	93	5,229	1,698	6,927
Rankin Co. School District	22	74	3,779	3,556	7,335
Ocean Spring School District	13	79	3,991	3,755	7,746
Monroe Co. School District	8	90	4,710	3,885	8,595
Bay St. Louis Waveland School District	22	72	3,923	5,373	9,296
Average	11.0	84.9	4,390	2,661	7,051

BRIEF

FISCAL ANALYSIS: SOUTH CAROLINA

The Education Finance Act of 1977 (EFA) prescribes South Carolina's weighted public school funding system. The statutory mechanism is a formula based mainly on local property tax revenue. The State is ultimately responsible for 70 percent of district funding while local districts provide 30 percent (Tetreault & Chandler). Overall, the percentage of state support fluctuates between 5 and 91 percent. In regard to school financial equity, the state was ranked 6th and received a “C” letter grade by Baker, Sciarra, and Farrie, 2010).

Tables 4 and 4b reveal a similar pattern in school finance inequality to that in Illinois and Mississippi. The Black districts on average receive less state and local revenues per pupil. But like Alabama, total property tax revenue for Black districts was greater than in White districts.

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Table 4: 2010-2011 South Carolina School District Per-Pupil Revenue & Millage Rate: 50 ≥ Black Student Population¹²

School Districts	%Black Students	%White Students	State Revenue	Local Revenue	Total Revenue
Dillon 04	67	24	4,307	1,417	5,724
Marion 02	70	25	4,811	1,715	6,526
Marion 01	74	24	4,715	1,959	6,674
Fairfield 01	86	11	1,763	4,968	6,731
Williamsburg 01	92	7	5,012	3,066	8,078
Richland 01	74	18	4,544	3,880	8,424
Lee 01	94	4	6,980	2,770	9,750
Orangeburg 05	89	9	5,115	4,532	9,647
Average	81	15	4,656	3,038	7,694

Table 4a: 2010-2011 South Carolina School District Per-Pupil Revenue: 70 ≥ White Student Population

School Districts	%White Students	%Black Students	State Revenue	Local Revenue	Total Revenue
Anderson 01	85	6	4,221	2,879	7,100
Anderson 02	85	10	4,615	3,033	7,648
Spartanburg 04	76	13	4,944	2,861	7,805
Greenwood 51	76	17	5,113	3,258	8,371
Pickens 01	84	6	4,544	3,880	8,424
Lexington 01	81	9	4,780	4,067	8,847
Spartanburg 03	75	14	4,969	4,465	9,434
Spartanburg 01	83	8	5,403	4,414	9,817
Oconee 01	80	10	4,518	6,075	10,593
Average	81	10	4,790	3,881	8,671

BRIEF FISCAL ANALYSIS: GEORGIA

Georgia ranked 8th in equal funding distribution patterns, and presented with a “C” letter grade by Baker, Sciarra, and Farrie, 2010. Georgia’s education funding formulas are based on the state statute Quality Basic Education Act (QBE), a weighted system similar to South Carolina (Hassel, Doyle, and Locke, 2012). The statutory formulas require that 90 percent of allocations be based on student enrollment. The remaining 10 percent is based on the number and size of a particular school. Ninety percent of the local funding is based on property tax revenue. Critics have noted that, within this funding system, smaller districts receive higher per-pupil allocations in comparison to larger districts.

Tables 5 and 5a continue to illustrate financial inequality between predominately White and Black school districts. Predominantly Black school districts receive less state and local monies.

¹² All Property tax data was retrieved from 2010-2011 PublicSchoolStats.com.

Table 5: 2010-2011 Georgia School District Per-Pupil Revenue: 50 ≥ Black Student Population¹³

School Districts	%Black Students	%White Students	State Revenue	Local Revenue	Total Revenue
Brooks Co.	50	37	4,568	3,225	7,793
Jefferson Co.	68	25	5,364	2,837	8,201
Crisp Co.	57	36	5,368	3,078	8,446
Clayton Co.	71	4	4,508	4,150	8,658
Richmond Co.	73	20	4,910	3,923	8,833
Dooly Co.	75	10	5,017	4,290	9,307
Calhoun Co.	94	2.2	5,172	4,181	9,353
Early Co.	64	32	5,848	3,703	9,551
Average	69	20.7	5,094	3,673	8,767

Table 5a: 2010-2011 Georgia School District Per-Pupil Revenue: 70 ≥ White Student Population

School Districts	%Black Students	%White Students	State Revenue	Local Revenue	Total Revenue
Forsyth Co.	3	76	3,650	5,382	9,032
Oconee Co.	5	84	4,136	5,447	9,583
Gilmer Co.	0.1	79	4,104	6,042	10,146
Fayette Co.	23	57	4,072	6,102	10,174
Towns Co.	0.2	97	3,237	7,677	10,914
Fannin Co.	0.2	94	4,215	6,760	10,975
Dawson Co.	0.4	93	3,738	7,572	11,310
Decatur City	32	57	4,469	11,179	15,648
Average	7.9	79.6	3,953	7,020	10,973

CONCLUSION

It is important to note that existing scholarly literature pertaining to the effects of the current means for public school financing in the U.S. is established and growing; however, comparatively little examination exists investigating the issue with regard to the use of a racialized lens. This article is relevant due to the fact little scholarship exists that explores the use of the White Racial Frame with regards to systemic disparities relating to school funding. Overall, the use of the Frame in this context legitimizes the Racial Frame as a respected lens with which to analyze, reveal, and conceptualize the manner education funding policies affects Black students.

The overall argument presented illustrates that historically systemic practices of racial oppression in public elementary and secondary education have been both explicit and covert. The issue of school funding is, in fact, an extension of the founding fathers' constructed and well-preserved system of oppression. Today, obvious and prominent targeting has lessened in comparison to previous eras. But currently, nebulous forms of systemic discrimination exist which create racial disparities that have affected Blacks since the founding of the country. This article has shown, with a very brief analysis, how the dynamics of race and the current status of Blacks in education, in combination with the current state of school financing, continue to hinder Black students' academic and imminent social and economic progress. This hindrance is not a new challenge in America for Blacks. Historically, United States governance has operated in a fashion that

¹³ Retrieved from https://etax.dor.ga.gov/ptd/cds/csheets/LGS_Georgia_County_Ad_Valorem_Tax_Digest_Millage_Rates_by_Taxing_Jurisdiction_PTZR006OD_2011.pdf

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empowers Whites, while maintaining a racialized caste system that disempowers marginalized people of color from the power, resources, and privileges commonly reserved by their counterparts.

The current financial disparity in public school funding will continue to exist until new socially just approaches are instituted. For example, plans to address distribution allocation inequities were proposed in New York City in 2007. (Schwartz, Rubenstein, & Stiefel, 2009). The plans allocate funds based upon the demographics of the student body (e.g., population, SES and consequently provide appropriate educational resources. The initiative allocates actual funds which allow for school leaders to have greater control and discretion to secure necessary resources. Racial ramifications and impacts on Black students of fiscal distribution needs further scholarly research. Ultimately, to achieve equity within the public school finance system requires reform in the legislative formulas to fund public schools. For this to occur, the impact of the issue of racial disparities on U.S. interests and economic success must be presented as a basis for challenging the status of public school finance. This overall context must be shown to affect the existence of the republic. Derived from Bell's Interest-Convergence Theory, this strategic approach is practical for Whites in power due to their need for protecting their interests within an increasingly international complex and competing world economy.

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