Introduction

Recent research has placed emphasis on the need to create racially equitable school environments, while primarily highlighting the role of school administrators in this effort. However, given their educational preparation in cultural humility, including how to recognize and respond to personal bias, school social workers are in prime positions to take the lead in assessing and facilitating racially equitable school cultures. This article communicates the evaluation outcomes of a leadership workshop series designed to provide professional development to Pre-K through 12th grade school social workers about racial equity, leadership, and barriers to social workers' efforts in promoting racially equitable school cultures.

Literature Review

Education is an opportunity to decrease effects of poverty and enhance social and economic advancement across populations (Tierney, 2015). Yet, decades of efforts to confront educational inequalities have promoted little change in policies that seem to sustain unequal practices. Bhopal (2017) notes, there is a relationship between sociocultural capital and access to quality postsecondary education. This access is hindered by policies and practices that support racial inequities. For example, contemporary challenges in the education system include discipline disparities, "neighborhood schools" models resulting in socioeconomically isolated schools, underrepresentation in rigorous academic programs for students of color, and minimal diversity in the teaching workforce all hinder the educational and career trajectory of students who are impacted by biases embedded in the educational system (Public School Forum of North Carolina, 2016). While districts have begun to implement restorative interventions in an effort to reduce differential processing of discipline-related consequences, a recent study by Gregory, Huang, Anyon, Greer, and Downing (2018) found that such practices may not result in a significant difference in the out of school suspension rate disparities between Black and White students. This further emphasizes the need for "prevention-oriented, race-conscious or culturally adapted approaches that address the broader contexts in which disparities arise (e.g., poor relationships between school adults and students of color, racial biases in perceptions of student behavior, differential access to rigorous and engaging instruction)" (Gregory, Huang, Anyon, Greer, & Downing, 2018, p.176).

Such biases are further understood through the concept of *racial equity* described as an effort to promote racial justice through the "elimination of policies, practices, attitudes and cultural messages that reinforce differential outcomes by race or fail to eliminate them" (Racial Equity Tools, n.d.). In order to

shift toward student equality in school systems, race as a determinant of success needs to be confronted across micro, mezzo, and macro levels. Recommendations from professional literature highlight the need for bias trainings amongst school personnel (Bhopal, 2017) and encourage a strategic focus on factors related to racial equity in schools. According to Warren (2017), shifts in perspectives and systems that support and sustain racial inequities occur when efforts are implemented to facilitate change. Specific programming that enables such transitions can help address the cultural messages that are embedded in school policies and practices.

The concept of the *racial equity lens* (Philanthropic Initiative for Racial Equity, n.d.) can be applied in order to deconstruct embedded biases and provided the underpinnings for the development of the leadership project implemented with Pre-K through 12th grade school social workers about racial equity and leadership. For example, a *racial equity lens* takes into consideration the influence of race on factors including sociocultural and economic access to opportunities and seeks to promote racial justice through methods including data analysis, implementing strategies to identify and understand disparities across systems, and broaching race-based discussions as a solution-oriented plan of action (Racial Equity Tools, n.d.).

While recent advocacy efforts call for research-based standards for culturally responsive pedagogy in educator preparation programs (Public Schools Forum of North Carolina, 2016), Hawley and James (2010) surveyed education leadership preparation programs and found that they surveyed typically focused on the societal causes of racial inequity rather than specific strategies for addressing inequities in school settings. Furthermore, Cox (2017) reported that programs in one state were preparing principals primarily using traditional program design without including effective strategies for developing socially just leadership skills. Although the recently published National Educational Leadership Preparation (NELP) standards (National Policy Board for Educational Administration, 2018) placed greater emphasis on issues of equity, assessment, and cultural responsivity than did previous standards, not all educational leadership preparation programs have received national recognition using these standards.

Social work preparation programs, however, incorporate the Council on Social Work Education's (CSWE) Educational Policy and Accreditation Standards (CSWE, 2015), which provide competencies that weave the importance of eliminating oppressive structural barriers through the use of culturally responsive practices across micro, mezzo, and macro settings throughout the social work curriculum. Social justice, as a core component of the social work profession, along with the concepts of cultural competence and cultural humility (National Association of Social Workers [NASW], 2015), are cornerstones of the

social work profession and emphasize the expectation that social workers advocate against social injustices, such as discrimination and prejudice. Further, the profession has specifically addressed the role of social work practitioners in addressing institutional racism (NASW, 2007). As a result, school social workers, who complete additional licensure requirements specific to school settings and hold expertise in education rights and advocacy, knowledge of educational data-based decision making, awareness of ethical guidelines and educational policy, and roles as the home-school-community linkages, are in prime positions to serve as leaders in addressing racial inequities. While current literature documents perceived barriers to social work practice in areas such as school suspension and dropout intervention (Teasley & Miller, 2010), there are clear gaps in the research as it relates to school social work and issues of racial equity (Stone, 2017). While urban school social work practitioners have been the focus of research on education and professional development in regards to racial equity (Teasley, 2005), there have been no studies identified that focus solely on the professional development of school social work practitioners in rural areas in regards to racial equity. Further, school social workers indicate interest in implementing primary prevention for the purpose of facilitating positive school culture, yet have not included practices (e.g., consultation, teacher training) into their routine roles (Kelly et al., 2016).

Current Study

The current study examined outcomes related to the development and implementation of a racial equity workshop series created to engage school social workers as leaders to educate and form wide-ranging alliances with school district personnel. Overall, the workshop series was designed to confront ways of thinking about racial equity and implement strategies to promote change, lead collaborative efforts and consensus building across the education system, and encourage policy and practice shifts that promote racial and educational justice.

The racial equity lens (Philanthropic Initiative for Racial Equity, n.d.), combined with Brofenbrenner's Ecological Systems Theory of Development (Eamon, 2001), provided the theoretical basis for the workshop series. The racial equity lens concept was highlighted during the initial workshop and integrated throughout the training series to communicate the role of the lens at various levels of the educational system.

Ecological systems theory, which provides insight about the role of varying system levels on youth development and academic performance (Velez & Spencer, 2018), was used to underlie the workshops and create strategies to promote insight and ideas for change across workshop attendees. In light of the relationship between school system practices and racial inequities, highlighting

the systems and structures that support the misuse of power and sustaining of oppressive factors that contribute to inequities is necessary. As a result, each workshop included efforts that promoted the attendees' awareness of structures (e.g., disciplinary models) as well as internal biases that may impact educational and career attainment.

The series consisted of five workshops, follow-up practice activities, and debriefing of practice activities with trainers, and was in alignment with individual elements of the North Carolina Professional School Social Work Standards (Public Schools of North Carolina, 2008). The overall objectives of the series of workshops included promoting social workers' understanding of and obligation to facilitating racial equity in schools, analyzing educational data through a racial equity lens, conceptualizing school social workers as influencers in addressing racial inequities in schools, and collaborating with school professionals of various disciplines to practice and implement evidence-based approaches for facilitating racial equity in schools.

Each workshop consisted of three hours of content, with the entire series providing 15 total hours of continuing education, three of which were ethics, and three of which meet the new digital learning competency requirements required for licensed educators in the state of North Carolina.

Workshop one, "Facilitating Racial Equity in Schools: Practice and Ethical Obligations," provided an introduction to the concept of racial equity, an overview of data reflective of national and state school systems and racial equity issues, and an examination of school social work professional obligations and ethical standards within the context of facilitating racial equity in schools. Workshop two, "Facilitating Racial Equity in Schools: Assessment and Analysis," provided a review of the concept of racial equity, examined the relationship between school social workers and leadership in the educational environment, and created an individualized plan for assessment and analysis of data related to racial equity in schools. Workshop three, **"**Facilitating Racial Equity in Schools: Broaching at the Micro Level," introduced the concept of broaching to school social work professionals and engaged participants in active learning through case scenarios reflecting cultural conflicts stemming from issues of mistrust, insensitivity to cultural meanings, and factors contributing to systemic racism. Workshop four, "Facilitating Racial Equity in Schools: Broaching at the Mezzo and Macro Levels," furthered the concept of broaching by applying skills to broader systems such as groups and policy, with a focus on how to educate these broader systems about racial equity in schools. Finally, Workshop five, "Facilitating Racial Equity in Schools: Leading Change," explored ways participants could maintain and implement their learning pertaining to racial equity and leadership as social workers, such as through ongoing professional development and evaluation in their schools.

During each workshop, participants engaged in a collaborative learning community that included diverse content, activities that promoted active learning related to their own school populations, homework assignments to allow for implementation of skills, and a reflection component. Evaluation of workshop outcomes examined the following research questions: (1) What, if any, change in knowledge do participants demonstrate as a result of completing the racial equity leadership workshop series?, (2) Do school social workers' perceptions of self-readiness in taking the lead on assessing and facilitating racially equitable school cultures increase as a result of completing the workshop series?, and (3) Do school social workers' self-perceptions as leaders versus support staff in regards to racially equitable school cultures increase upon completion of the workshop series? Participant feedback regarding workshop content and the potential long-term impact of the workshops on school social work practice is provided for consideration into future curricula designs.

Methods

An analysis of the evaluations and surveys completed by school social workers in a rural North Carolina school district took place in order to provide feedback for the development of future workshop trainings. A racial equity workshop series developed by the authors was implemented to engage school social workers as leaders in promoting racial equity across the school system. The series took place over a one-year period and included pre and posttest measures and a one-year follow-up survey.

Participants

Five training workshops were presented to participants who were either employed in a public school setting as licensed school social workers (n = 8) or licensed school-based mental health practitioners (n = 1). Participants were primarily female (88.8 percent, n = 8), with five participants holding a BSW degree and four holding an MSW degree. They had a mean of 13.8 years of experience as school social workers. The geographic location was a rural school district serving approximately 6,000 Pre-K through 12th grade students. Participation was voluntary and the workshop series took place within a one-year period. Participants were informed of the workshop series by the Director of Student Support Services. Nine participants completed the pre and posttest measures, while five of the nine participants (BSW = 2 and MSW = 3) responded to the one-year follow-up survey.

Instrumentation

Individual social worker characteristics. On the initial evaluation forms, the social workers indicated their education level, the grade levels to which they provide service, and number of years as a practicing school social worker.

School social workers' knowledge of key terminology. Prior to the implementation of workshop one, participants completed a pretest of key terminology designed by the authors. Participants were asked to define, in their own words, the concepts of racial equity and a lens of racial equity. Participants completed a posttest of key terminology at the end of workshop five. Due to the small sample size and the intent to ensure anonymity of participants' scores, the pre and posttests were not matched.

School social workers' self-readiness in taking the lead on assessing and facilitating racially equitable school cultures. Prior to the start of workshop one, participants were asked to complete a survey designed by the authors to gauge their readiness in assessing and facilitating racially equitable school cultures. Participants were asked, "On a scale of 0-10, with 0 being not ready at all and 10 being completely ready, how ready are you to take the lead in assessing racially equitable school cultures?" and "On a scale of 0-10, with 0 being not ready at all and 10 being completely ready, how ready are you to take the lead in facilitating racially equitable school cultures?" Participants completed the same survey as a posttest at the end of workshop five.

School social workers' self-perception as leaders versus support staff regarding racially equitable school cultures. Prior to the start of workshop one, participants were asked to complete a survey designed by the authors to gauge their perceptions of themselves as leaders versus support staff in their schools, specifically regarding the area of racial equity. Participants were asked, "I consider myself to be (a) support staff or (b) a leader in assessing and facilitating racially equitable school cultures. Participants completed the same survey as a posttest at the end of workshop five.

School social workers' feedback. Participants provided comments on evaluation forms following the completion of workshop one and workshop five. This included open ended questions that asked participants to identify (1) something from the workshop that was squared away, (2) their favorite activity from the workshop, (3) something still circling in their minds, and (4) suggestions for workshop changes.

One-year follow-up survey. At the end of the academic year following completion of the workshop series, the study participants were surveyed to gain an understanding of how the workshop sessions impacted their practice in school settings. The survey asked participants to: (1) Check all of the ways the racial equity workshops impacted their practice in school settings, allowing for additional comments to be entered, (2) provide specific examples or stories of

how the racial equity workshops impacted their practice, and (3) share about the training you received and/or your use of the training in your daily practice.

Data Analysis

The constant comparison method of data analysis was used to interpret findings generated from the first research question (Merriam, 2009). While the purpose of this research was not to build theory, the constant comparative method of data analysis was used to compare data from the written responses of the workshop pre-test documents to written responses of the workshop post-test documents and survey for the purpose of identifying patterns in the qualitative data (Merriam, 2009). Participants' responses about the effect of the professional development workshops on school social workers' knowledge of key terminology regarding racial equity and the racial equity lens, the school social workers' written feedback, and the one-year follow-up survey were reviewed for comprehensive themes.

The workshop series was developed and implemented in order to fulfill the professional development needs of rural school district social workers. To collect information from participants and enhance anonymity in a rural environment, identifiers were not collected, which inhibited the pairing of pre and posttest scores for program evaluation purposes. In contrast, the pretest data and posttest data were compared to measure change in knowledge and perceptions of the workshop participants through the one-sample t test. According to York (2017), pre and posttest scores that are not matched should be analyzed using the one-sample t test. While the sample size (n = 9) for this research may be considered small, York (2017) notes that "a sample size of less than 15 should not be considered a disqualifier for statistical analysis" (p. 92). Analysis for the second and third research questions were each conducted using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) software to perform a one-sample t test on the self-readiness scaling questions. The mean of the pretest scores was computed and used as the threshold score for the comparison of the posttest scores. Furthermore, the effect size for each self-readiness measure was computed due to the small sample size (de Winter, 2013; York, 2017).

Results

School social workers' knowledge of key terminology. Analysis of the pretests found that participants' definitions for key terminology were general, broad, and often vague. For example, most participants defined racial equity using language such as "equal access for all" and one participant defined it by stating that "race should not be an issue." When asked to define a lens of racial equity, responses included answers such as "how we as ourselves will see a certain

situation," "your perceptions, which can differ," and "who's looking- the viewpoint," with one respondent answering with a "?" (question mark).

On the posttest, the definitions provided for key terminology were enhanced in detail when compared to those on the pretest, indicating significant change in knowledge. For example, one participant defined racial equity as, "what's achieved when one's racial identity isn't assumed/ predicted through statuses or biases," and another wrote, "acknowledging racial differences, bias, and promoting equity among all races." When asked to define a lens of racial equity, responses included answers such as, "developing a race awareness to make a change," "considering how race and ethnicity shape experience with power and access to opportunity and outcomes," and "evaluating and assessing decision-making through racial competence."

School social workers' self-readiness in assessing and facilitating racially equitable school cultures. When participants were asked, "On a scale of 0-10, with 0 being not ready at all and 10 being completely ready, how ready are you to take the lead in assessing and facilitating racially equitable school cultures?," the mean scores on the pretest were 3.33 for assessment and 3.22 for facilitation, with three participants giving a score of 0 for both. In contrast, the mean scores on the posttest were 5.22 for assessment and 5.33 for facilitation, both demonstrating increases from the pretest scores. Further, three participants gave a score of 0 for both factors (assessing and facilitating).

A one-sample t test was conducted to compare pre and posttest scores on leading assessment (see Tables 1 and 2) and facilitation (see Tables 3 and 4) of racial equity practices in schools. The mean posttest score on social workers' self-readiness to take the lead in assessing was 5.22, which was compared to the mean pretest score of 3.33 with the one-sample t test. The results reveal support of the hypothesis (t = 3.171; p < .05).

Table 1

One-Sample Statistics of Social Workers' Self-Readiness in Assessing Racially Equitable School Cultures, n = 9

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Post Assessing	9	5.22	1.79	.60

Table 2

One-Sample t Test Results of Social Workers' Self-Readiness in Assessing
Racially Equitable School Cultures, n = 9

| | Test Value = 3.33 | | | | 95% Confidence Interval of the Difference | |
	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Lower	Upper
Post Assessing	3.171	8	.013	1.89	.52	3.26

The mean posttest score on social workers' self-readiness to take the lead in facilitating was 5.33, which was compared to the mean pretest score of 3.22 with the one-sample t test. The results reveal support of the hypothesis (t = 3.271; p < .05). In addition, the observation that no participants gave a score of 0 for either factor (assessing and facilitating) on the posttest is worth noting.

Table 3

One-Sample Statistics of Social Workers' Self-Readiness in Facilitating Racially
Equitable School Cultures, n = 9

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Post Facilitating	9	5.33	1.94	.65

Table 4

One-Sample t Test Results of Social Workers' Self-Readiness in Facilitating
Racially Equitable School Cultures, n = 9

| | Test Value = 3.222 | | | | | |
| | | | | | 95% Confidence Interval of the Difference | |
	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Lower	Upper
Post Facilitating	3.271	8	.011	2.11	.62	3.59

School social workers' self-perception as leaders in assessing and facilitating racially equitable school cultures. Initially, participants did not perceive themselves as school leaders in the areas of assessing and facilitating racially equitable schools. Of the nine participants who completed the initial survey, 100% perceived themselves as support staff rather than leaders in assessing and facilitating racially equitable schools. Final survey results also indicated most participants continued to perceive themselves as support staff, rather than leaders, in assessing and facilitating racially equitable schools. One participant wrote "I am not viewed as a leader or allowed to be by current administration," and another wrote, "I am not considered a leader within the school." However, two participants responded that they view themselves as leaders, with one writing, "I am support staff, which makes me a leader," and another noted, "I consider myself a leader because I'm the one that advocates for students and educates staff."

Eight of the nine participants indicated that they continue to believe school and district administrators should take the lead in assessing and facilitating racial equity in schools. Finally, several participants' comments indicated that they clearly recognized the need for professional development on racial equity for all school district employees yet continued to lack confidence in presenting professional development workshops to their school administrators and colleagues themselves due to lingering questions on how to gain teacher buy-in and uncertainties about how school administrators might respond to their efforts. A summary of the research questions and outcomes is provided in Table 5.

Table 5

Summary of research questions and outcomes

Research Question	Outcome
What, if any, change in knowledge do participants demonstrate as a result of completing the racial equity leadership workshop series?	Definitions of key terminology provided by workshop participants were enhanced in detail when compared to those on the pretest, indicating significant change in knowledge after completion of the workshops.
Do school social workers' perceptions of self-readiness in taking the lead on assessing and facilitating racially equitable school cultures increase as a result of completing the workshop series?	Yes, results indicate a significant increase in participants' perceptions of self-readiness in taking the lead on assessing and facilitating racially equitable school cultures.
Do school social workers' self-perceptions as leaders versus support staff in regards to racially equitable school cultures increase upon completion of the workshop series?	No, the majority of participants continued to indicate that they believe school and district administrators should take the lead in assessing and facilitating racial equity in schools.

School social workers' feedback. Feedback from the evaluation at the end of workshop one included comments indicating participants learned the definition of a lens of racial equity, but still desired more information on how to implement a lens of racial equity to assess equity and create change in their schools. Six of the nine participants specifically cited the use of entertainment media to facilitate open discussions around the topic of racial equity as a strength of workshop one.

An analysis of the feedback from the evaluation at the end of workshop five found that participants learned how to access and analyze data for the purposes of identifying racial inequities in schools, how to identify and respond to implicit biases and microaggressions, and how to broach topics of race with colleagues and school leaders. Participants continued to express an appreciation for the use of media entertainment to engage them in the topic, and several cited the role plays, scenarios, and experiential learning opportunities as specific strengths of the workshops.

One-year follow-up survey. Findings from the one-year follow-up survey demonstrated ongoing commitment by those participants who responded. One participant highlighted an ongoing use of the workshop materials by stating, "I still refer back to the slides and paperwork that we used throughout the training. Very good information!" Others indicated changes they had implemented in their practice, with responses such as "I have used a survey within my school, and I have had discussions with colleagues, and administration based on collected data, as it refers to the race of students who are given disciplinary action," "training help me to learn how to recognize micro aggressive behaviors and really how it makes me feel. How healthy it is to your emotional self to acknowledge your feelings instead of being passive, dismissive and being okay with having uncomfortable conversations," and "I think that the workshop helped me to see things through a different lens. It has affected how I work with all of our students. I know am paying more attention to our school's data when it comes to discipline (office discipline referrals). I also have gained powerful new skills when it comes to me talking to school staff about racial equality." One final respondent provided a case scenario indicating how she had been able to broach a teacher about a student's concern of being treated differently than other classmates, thus facilitating conversation directly with the teacher about content learned in the racial equity workshops.

Discussion

An analysis of pre and posttest measures and surveys took place to explore participants': (1) change in the knowledge of school social workers due to completing the workshop series, (2) perceptions of self-readiness in assessing and facilitating racially equitable school cultures, and (3) changes in self-perceptions as leaders versus support staff. The findings revealed several perceived barriers to school social workers engaging as leaders in promoting racial equity in schools. For example, participants identified limited confidence in conducting professional development workshops to school personnel due to uncertainties about buy-in to their efforts. Previous research supports this through findings about challenges with buy-in and other forms of nonacademic barriers (Mellin & Weist, 2011; Mendenhall, Iachini, & Anderson-Butcher, 2013). Therefore, a recommendation is to invite and include school administration during the planning and coordination stages of the workshop series to enhance participation of personnel across the district.

A second identified barrier is the limited self-perception of school social workers as leaders in relation to the traditional expectations of social work roles in educational environments (Lee & Bhuyan, 2013). The North Carolina Standards for School Executives (NCSSE) (Public Schools of North Carolina,

2013) emphasizes a model of distributive leadership in which the collective knowledge of school staff is implemented to improve schools through noting that "school executives are responsible for ensuring that leadership happens in all eight critical areas, but they don't have to provide it" (p. 3). In addition, the North Carolina Professional School Social Work Standards (Public Schools of North Carolina, 2008), which specifically guide the practice of school social workers in this current study, includes a standard dedicated solely to the expectation that "school social workers demonstrate leadership" through being "knowledgeable of relevant laws, policies and procedures and providing staff development and training" (p. 1). This expectation exceeds the current perception where many school social workers continue to consider their school administrators as the sole leader in their school buildings. Self-perception can impact school social workers' abilities to develop, implement, and evaluate workshops as well as efforts to promote collaboration with school personnel and implement macro-level interventions. This communicates the importance of exploring school social work licensure programs and the process of supervision to implement leadership-based learning activities to come into alignment with practice standards that expect social workers to exhibit leadership qualities.

Through the training evaluations, study participants also communicated multiple strengths. For example, multiple respondents' answers transitioned from a general to specific definition of equality that highlighted various racial equity components including: (a) acknowledgement, (b) self-awareness, (c) the role of bias, (d) the element of prediction, and (e) knowledge of educational data and statistics. Posttest responses showed evidence of increased knowledge and detailed responses about racial equity in comparison to the pretest. As a result, a recommendation is for school social workers to reflect on their own interactions with service recipients and explore whether those interactions include practices that sustain racial inequities (Stone, 2017).

Further, posttest results showed increased self-awareness of strengths related to leadership and promoting racial equity. This increased self-awareness may contribute to school social workers taking actions toward confronting routine school system practices that maintain structural inequalities (Stone, 2017) and promote understanding about the impact of multiple systems (e.g., educational) on student development and career trajectory (Eamon, 2001). Respondents further identified the need for enhanced knowledge in the areas of collecting national and state school systems data as well as methods of collaboratively organizing and presenting information to school personnel that would generate systemic change. Further training in the areas of data collection and analysis in addition to professional presentation techniques would better equip school social workers to engage school personnel.

Limitations

Limitations that impact the generalizability of the findings and evaluation considerations for future workshops include the following. First, the workshops took place in rural setting school districts, which may not reflect the situations and practices in other geographic locations. Second, the workshops were provided to school social workers in one school district, which resulted in a small sample size. Third, the pre and posttests were not paired for this study due to the small sample size and intent to ensure anonymity of participants' scores, yet future research that pairs the scores would provide insight about individual change throughout the workshop series and the possible influence of variables including gender, years of experience, and degree level. Additionally, the use of a control group or random sampling techniques could also be considered to increase the generalizability of the findings of future studies. Further, it is undeterminable as to whether positive changes in responses on the pre and posttest measures were completely credited to the workshop series or influenced by extraneous factors.

Conclusion

Contemporary barriers ranging from discipline disparities and opportunity gaps to minimal diversity in the teaching workforce affect postsecondary education and career trajectory alternatives of children and adolescents. As a result, the implementation of strategies to confront structural inequalities are necessary throughout school systems. With professional expertise in areas including education rights and advocacy, school social workers are in prime positions to serve as leaders in addressing issues of racial inequity in public schools. Training specific to racial equity can raise self-awareness of school social workers' confidence in assessing for disparities and facilitating change in school culture through micro, mezzo, and macro level interventions. This article highlighted the outcomes of a racial equity leadership workshop series developed to address perceptions about racial equity, implement change-oriented strategies, and engaging in collaborative efforts and consensus building across the educational system to promote racial and educational justice.

Further research pertaining to the racial equity leadership workshop series could continue in multiple directions. First, researchers may want to investigate the extent to which school social work licensure programs prepare school social work trainees to engage as leaders in confronting diversity-related barriers in school systems, particularly by examining the types of preparation activities support trainees in their ability to provide leadership in subjects such as racial equity. Second, the concepts of *racial equity* and *racial equity lens* could be operationalized in order to enhance measurement of participants' knowledge base

of these topics and their perceptions of their respective institutions. Furthermore, this would provide empirical support for specific and strategic methods to promote racial equity in schools. Third, researchers may consider exploring the types of barriers experienced by school social workers who seek to implement racial equity trainings across mezzo and macro levels of the school system. Overall, these topic areas could support the importance of developing and implementing racial equity leadership training for practicing school social workers and school social work trainees.

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