

Understanding Mental Poverty

What brought you to this work?

Clinton: What led me to this project is the opportunity to share a voice in improving equity and equality in educational practices. Everyday I carry the weight of the disparities and inequalities of our black and brown students who are institutionalized in systemic oppression. This project is important to me because our black and brown students matter when it comes to the injustices that stifle their success and keep them at a disadvantage when compared to the white educational system. We have to address the elephant in the room and start having those courageous conversations.

LaVenía: As a white researcher, I think the opportunity to partner with Alesha and let her expertise drive our research agenda is such a gift. She gives me perspective and insights that I could never gain on my own or even in a partnership that did not intentionally elevate her voice.

Research questions

How does classism and the wealth gap continuously affect the black and brown educational system? How do we move to make a change where our lower-income schools have the same access to the resources as higher income schools? How do we break the cycle of mental poverty? How do we get educators to see through an equity lens?

Research plan

Phase one of this work will involve focus group discussions, interviews, and surveys to understand how educators think about the lack of equity for students, as well as deficit thinking (mental poverty) when it comes to black and brown youth.

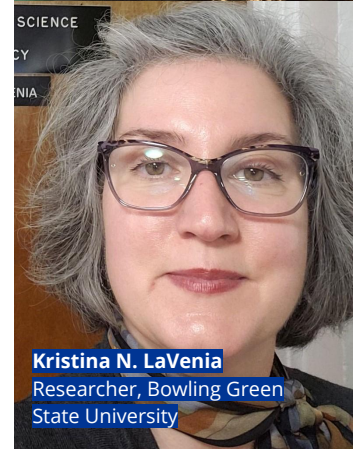
Working together

Clinton: This has been a transformative experience partnering with Kristina. We've had the opportunity to take a just approach to reimagine and redesign the way educators examine their educational practices in placing a greater value and investment in our black and brown scholars.

LaVenía: Alesha helps me think more carefully about the practical and applied aspects of research. Her passion for always bringing our work back to the question of "how do we improve education for marginalized students" is wonderful.



Alesha Clinton
Educator, Propel Schools



Kristina N. LaVenía
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