

Exploring the Impact of Social Justice Research Projects Conducted by Emerging Scholars

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Abstract:

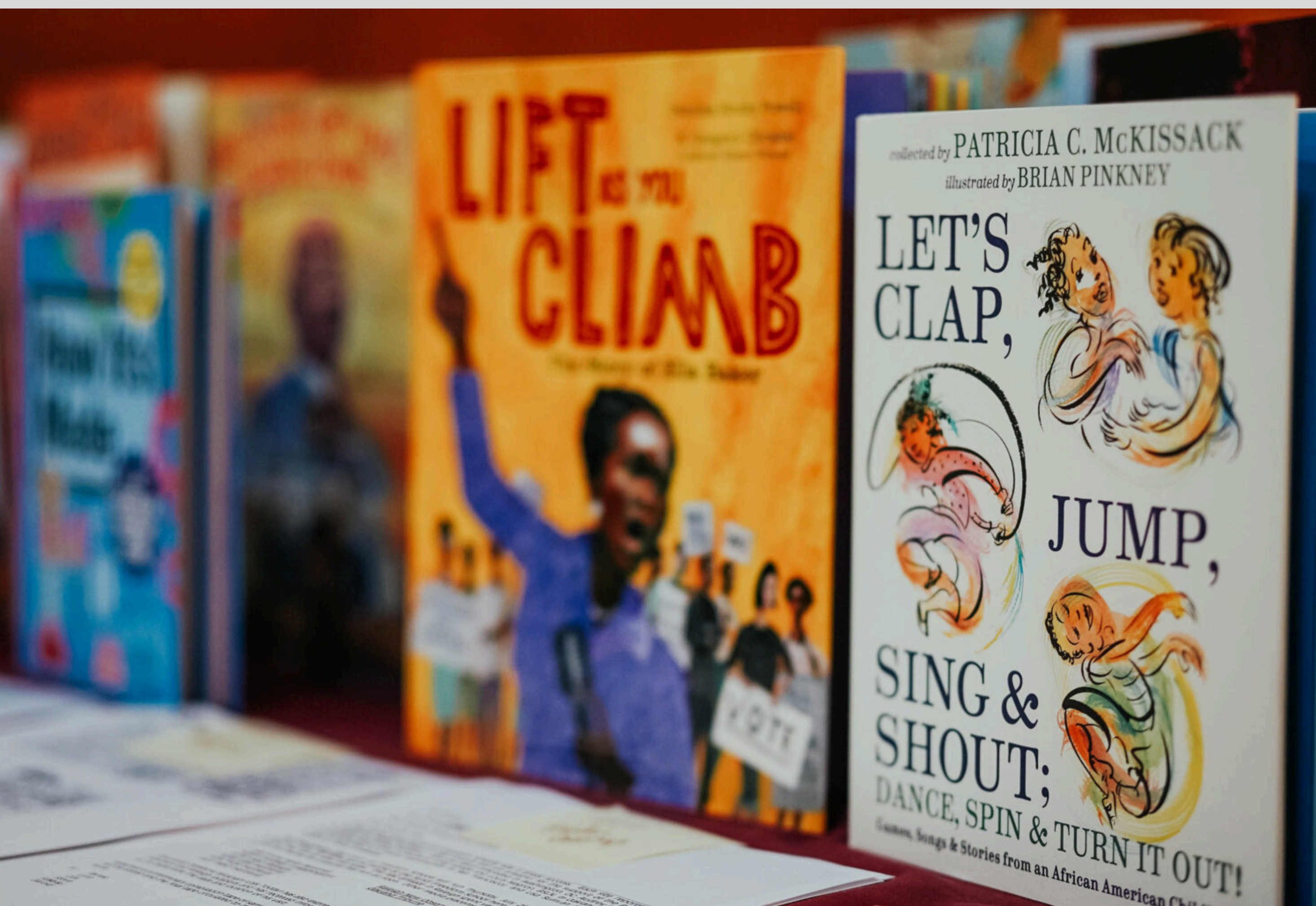
PURPOSE is a joint fellowship program between the FSU and FAMU campuses which teaches its cohorts how to conduct “research focusing on social justice in education with the long-term goals of expanding the research workforce and advancing innovative solutions in the education sciences”. Our goal with this study was to investigate the research posters which resulted from these projects and understand what kind of impact they may have had in the community, Freedom Schools, and even the program itself. Looking into the scope of these posters leads to a deeper understanding of whether PURPOSE research is having a real-world impact. In this descriptive study, we compiled information about each poster into an excel sheet, then analyzed the produced data through rounds of qualitative thematic coding. Results are still ongoing in this study. Next steps following current data should aim to look at how these research projects have influenced Student Leader Interns, teachers, and/or students at Freedom School institutions as well as their respective communities.

Methodology:

- A descriptive approach was adopted for the purpose of reviewing fellow posters.
- PURPOSE posters from 2018 to 2025 were compiled, then arranged in alphabetical order on an Microsoft excel sheet
- The following categories were then made to sort specific data from each study:
 - Name, Year, Methodology, Population, Sample Size, Institution, Field of Study, Study Type, Sampling Notes, Findings, Constructs, and Operationalized Variables.
 - Constructs were determined by identifying ideas fellows were researching that could not be quantified.
- A period of qualitative coding took place after a holistic review of the data, where we identified common themes between cohorts and the PURPOSE program.
- Lastly, we opted to summarize what exactly Freedom Schools as an institution learned from the research conducted by their cohorts.

Discussion:

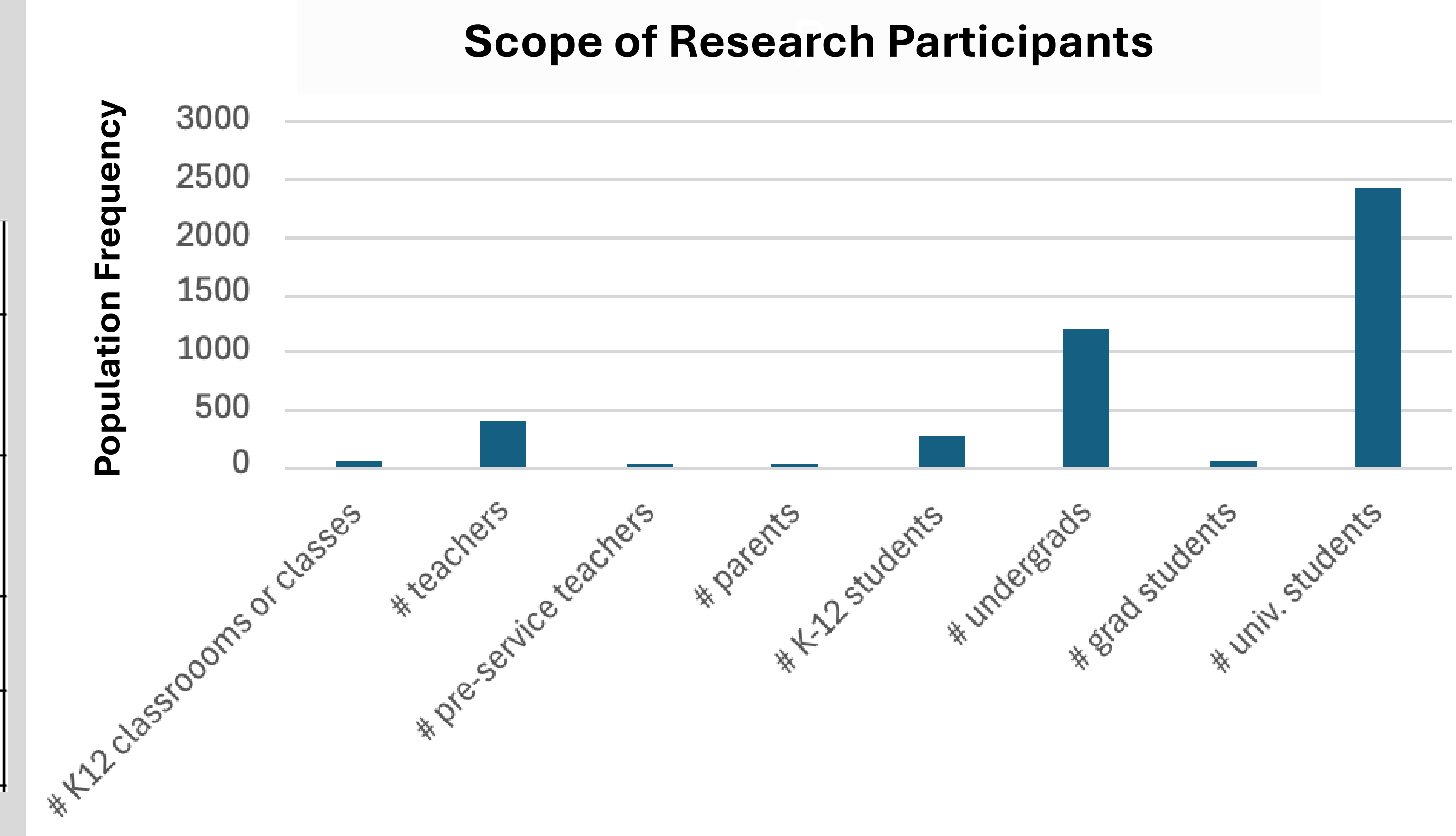
When coding, we expected belongingness and success to be prevalent themes due to their integration into PURPOSE’s core values. Rather, we found Leadership, Family, Culture/Race, and Mental Health to be more frequent. It proved quite difficult to determine the scope of PURPOSE’s fellowship studies. While we formulated various strategies and ideas for identifying who the research might’ve reached, we have not yet confidently located where the flow of information in these posters has traveled. Future studies relating to this topic should focus on how PURPOSE cohorts have studied Freedom Schools, and how their findings may have changed/influenced curriculums at these schools.



Poster Title	Subject/Field of Study	Population/Sample
African American Mothers’ Perspectives of Biased Medical Practices: Potential Implications for Maternal Health Education	Psychology	African American Mothers
Mentorship Matters: The Perception of Researcher Identity, Research Self-Efficacy, and Belongingness in Engineering in Black PhD Engineering Students and Their Faculty Mentor Relationships	Education	African American/Black PhD students at FAMU-FSU college of engineering
The Cost of Courage: Emotional and Identity Negotiation Among Black Student Leaders During A Redefining Era in Higher Education	Education	Black student Leaders
Childhood Social Media Exposure and the Psychological Well-being Among African American College Students	Psychology	African American college students

An example of thematic coding; colors represented various themes.

- Leadership
- Culture/Race
- Family
- Mental Health



The context of research was analyzed by counting the frequency of populations studied throughout the posters. Pictured above is an example of eight major target groups of research.

Resources:

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<https://purposetraining.create.fsu.edu/research/>

Preliminary Findings for Freedom Schools:

After reviewing our data, 28 studies were focused on Freedom Schools. Fellows who studied Freedom Schools were interested in finding how scholars within the program interact with each other, themselves, and learning material in the classroom. Furthermore, studies by some cohorts have displayed an interest in the foundation of Freedom Schools, inquiring about its political and cultural beginnings and how these influence the perceptions of its young scholars.

PURPOSE Archive:

Access to all cohorts of PURPOSE from 2018 to 2025. Here you can find more information about PURPOSE, Freedom Schools, and their initiatives.

