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**Integrating a Responsive Trauma-Informed Pedagogy in Social Work Education:
Events, Experiences, and Effects**

by

Brittany Guisintanner

A Banded Dissertation in Partial Fulfillment

Of the Requirements for the Degree

Doctor of Social Work

University of St. Thomas

Morrison Family College of Health, School of Social Work

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Abstract

This Banded Dissertation is comprised of three Scholarly Products that emphasize the need for undergraduate social work educators to become aware of the impact that trauma has on students' academic achievement. A trauma-informed perspective is used as the framework to explore educators' teaching practices and their perceptions of their student's educational experiences. The first Product is a conceptual article titled, "*Teaching Strategies to Effectively Engage Undergraduate Students Impacted by Trauma: An Exploration of African American Students*". This article analyzes the effects that adverse childhood experiences have on undergraduate students' academic success. Trauma-informed teaching strategies are emphasized to support educators in providing students with a safe and liberating learning environment. The second Product is a scoping review titled, "*Educational Experiences of Implementing a Trauma-Informed Pedagogy in Baccalaureate Social Work Education: A Scoping Review*". This Product evaluates the current educational experiences of students in social work programs where educators primarily practice from a trauma-informed approach. The third Product is a professional poster presentation that advocates for the inclusion of the six trauma-informed principles within baccalaureate education. This presentation was presented at the Lilly Conference located in San Diego, CA with a core motive to promote active and engaged learning. Empathizing, creating safe spaces, and opportunities within higher education for the oppressed and vulnerable populations is a collective mission and one that helps society shift the cultural narrative from asking "What's wrong with you?" to "What happened to you?".

Keywords: baccalaureate trauma-informed education, academic stress, trauma teaching strategies, trauma-informed pedagogy

Dedication

This dissertation is dedicated to all trauma survivors who have been ostracized from people and opportunities because of their unique history. Kings and Queens, I am here to remind you that you are valuable, you belong, your voice matters, and you were not birthed on accident, but for a mighty purpose that the world is waiting for you to fulfill. My hope is to see every educator, business innovator, leader, practitioner, and researcher, whether nationally or internationally joining together in a labor of love to implement trauma-informed support within micro, mezzo, and macro systems.

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To God: Dear Abba, my heavenly father, my Lord and Savior. I could not have conquered this journey without you being by my side and your spirit dwelling within me this whole entire time. My faith was pivotal in helping me to endure, especially during the moments when I wanted to give up. Lord, you have been my comforter, my rock, my protector, my friend, and my everything. You died for me, so I am going to live for you. As it pertains to my wisdom, talents, and abilities, all glory belongs to God. Forever I will praise your name.

To Dad: Dear Soldier, my “Daddy’O”, my number 1 supporter. Elliott Guisintanner, thank you for receiving me as your own. You have always been my biggest motivator. Your hard work, provision and constant words of encouragement has truly transformed my life for the better. You left this earth in 2015, but your heart and jovial spirit lives within me forever. I feel

honored to have carried your last name thus far. I know you are proud of me. I wish you were here to share this journey with me. Thank you for always believing in me and not only telling me who I am but also showing me who I could be. I miss us singing and watching basketball games together. This doctoral degree is for you! I love you.

To my Future: Dear Royal Husband and Children. You are all so much already a part of everything that I do. I have many dreams that I desire to fulfill in life and aside from being a phenomenal virtuous wife and mommy, becoming a doctor was one of them! I am so grateful that I now get to live out my dreams with you all. I am also equally excited that I have been chosen to help you all achieve your own dreams. I look forward to the astounding memories that we will create as a family. Here's to us continuing to build a life honorable to Jesus, full of peace, purpose, unconditional love and legacy.

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Integrating a Responsive Trauma-Informed Pedagogy in Social Work Education: Events, Experiences, and Effects

Over the past two decades, the prevalence of trauma and its negative influence on students' academic achievement has increased dramatically (Berg, 2017). Trauma is an emotional response that individuals experience due to witnessing or living through a distressing event. Whether experiencing a traumatic event in childhood or adulthood, the impacts can have lasting effects, especially in the areas of mental, emotional, social, and spiritual development (SAMHSA, 2014). There is a critical need for social work educators to become aware of the signs that students display when impacted by trauma so that students' educational needs can be accommodated. While students' optimal educational experiences are highlighted as a priority, this banded dissertation simultaneously prioritizes the needs of educators to ensure that educators are also supported and provided with the adequate resources needed to integrate a responsive trauma-informed approach.

Adverse childhood experiences (ACEs) are the term commonly referenced in this banded dissertation when defining and seeking to understand the traumatic experiences college students encounter. ACEs are classified by an individual experiencing at least one form of maltreatment or household dysfunction before reaching the age of 18 (Centers for Disease and Prevention CDC, 2018). Over 70% of undergraduate students experience one or more ACEs before reaching the age of 18 (Cherry & Wilcox, 2020). This is imperative for educators to be aware of because traditional college students are typically pursuing higher education at the age of 18. Consequently, the aftereffects of ACEs impact everyone differently. More precisely, students negatively impacted by ACEs may appear to be easily distracted, withdrawn from peers, delayed in completing coursework, hypersensitive towards certain subject matters, easily agitated, more

prone to engage in risky behaviors, and at a higher risk for being a college dropout than their counterparts (Allen et al., 2020). Educators having a keen awareness on the signs to look for that indicate a student has experienced some sort of trauma can mitigate students academic stress, potential mislabeling, and/or retraumatization.

Although ACEs impacts everyone generally, a portion of this dissertation specifically focuses on how ACEs influence African American students. African American students became a central focus because literature revealed that this population has a higher exposure to ACEs (Liu et al., 2017). Specifically, 61% of African American college students are exposed to family dysfunction, incarceration of a household member, domestic violence, parental separation, death of a parent, household substance abuse, and/or a family member living with a mental or physical illness (Sacks & Murphey, 2018). These external adversities negatively impede on African American students' cognitive faculty. Thus, making it difficult for these students to integrate and earn a degree from four-year institutions (Boyras et al., 2013). Moreover, the National Center for Educational Statistics reveals that graduation rates for Black students are 40% compared to the 64% of their White counterparts (NCES, 2021). Furthermore, the African American population is considered to be one of the most vulnerable, underserved, and unrepresented groups (Roseby & Gascoigne, 2021). This fact remains true and transfers over to Black students' educational experiences. Additional researchers who have explored the prevalence of trauma in African American students report that the main reason most African American students withdraw from college settings prior to the completion of their program is that majority of them feel misunderstood, there is a low representation in educators who understand them culturally, and they lack a sense of belongingness among their peers (Museus et al., 2018). Support in providing educational attainment opportunities for Black students is imperative. Thus, a trauma-informed

pedagogy can truly be a necessary asset to BSW programs. However, before requiring educators to adopt this approach, there first needs to be understanding on where BSW programs are currently in addressing this phenomenon.

Trauma-informed Approach in BSW programs

Approximately 68% of BSW programs currently practice from a trauma-informed framework and as a profession who values assisting vulnerable and oppressed populations, the hope is to increase this percentage to having at least 85% of all social work programs in the United States practicing from a trauma-informed perspective (Carello & Butler, 2014). A present barrier interfering with undergraduate programs becoming trauma-informed is that trauma is considered to be a specialized topic where educators and students are generally not oriented and familiarized with trauma-informed principles until graduate school when preparing for clinical work (Thomas, 2016). Grades K-12 have been proactive at practicing from a trauma-informed framework. As a school system they recognize the educational difficulties trauma-affected students present with such as, emotional dysregulation, aggressive behaviors, decline in attendance, and/or grades (Carello & Butler, 2015). However, where does this leave undergraduate programs? BSW programs have been slow to enforce a trauma-informed pedagogy and at the undergraduate level is where it is most crucial. Schools who policies and procedures that are not currently trauma-informed may misinterpret the actions of their students and resort to an ineffective course of action such as, inaccurate judgement or even worse, college expulsion.

The NASW code of ethics and the council of social work education prioritizes diversity, equity, and cultural inclusion (CSWE, 2015). According to competency 3 in the Educational Policy and Accreditation Standards (EPAS), social workers must understand that forms of

oppression can shape individuals' lives for better or for worse. Therefore, cultural humility and critical self-awareness should be exercised when considering to implement a trauma-informed pedagogy (EPAS, 2022). Additionally, CSWE deems incorporating a trauma-informed approach to education as beneficial because there is a high chance that faculty and students will encounter someone who has a history of trauma while working on campus or in the community (CSWE, 2015; Levenson, 2017). Thus, incorporating a trauma-informed framework within undergraduate education aligns with the constructs of our professional values.

Within the past 2 decades, baccalaureate social work programs have become more persistent in advocating for the inclusion of trauma-informed content in their curriculums, but more research is still needed to examine the status of this implementation (Boel-Studt et al., 2021). There are many ways to integrate trauma-informed approaches into BSW programs, but it will take the active awareness, intentionality, and strategic planning of administrators, faculty, and respective school personnel. A collaborative effort from this group will help provide social work programs with the support and practical skills needed to build and sustain a positive trauma-informed teaching and learning environment. Carello & Butler (2015) asserts the same position and argues that BSW educators must be able to recognize and respond to the behavioral, emotional, relational, and academic impacts of traumatic stress. Infusing a trauma-informed pedagogy is an adaptive protocol to reduce academic stress and enhance students' educational achievement. This dissertation includes an overview of how trauma manifests within undergraduate social work classrooms and argues for educators to become trauma sensitive and prepare to establish a safe and engaging teaching-learning environment.

Implementing a Trauma-Informed Approach: Educators' Perceptions and Experiences

Social work educators express that the implementation of a trauma-informed approach has its advantages and disadvantages. A small portion of educators have reservations on adopting a new pedagogical paradigm out of fear that they will experience secondary trauma and that there would not be enough support (Carello & Butler, 2015). Educators' initial perceptions are validated, as literature reveals that educators have minimal support among faculty peers and minimal access to trauma-informed training (Santiago, 2021). Therefore, they are left feeling inadequate to effectively practice from this framework. Educators who found a trauma-informed approach to be a feasible transition, transitioned into their roles embodying a new identity. Allen et al., 2020 expressed that educators who considered themselves trauma-informed advocates and leaders were able to embrace students shared lived experiences and created a safe, culturally inclusive environment that considered students' traumatic histories. Additionally, Stokes & Brunzell (2019) found that the educator's whose pedagogy was trauma-informed had a goal to foster educational resiliency in their students. This resulted in educators seeking to understand their students' behaviors, spending time before or after class to discuss classroom or course concerns. Educators also had a resource list handy to provide to students that aided in regulating their emotions and academic stress with interventions such as counseling, mentoring, or tutoring (SAMHSA, 2014). The intentionality demonstrated by educators helped to foster post-traumatic growth for their students, an improvement in graduation rates, and a positive student-teacher relationship (Vieselmeier et al., 2017).

Conceptual framework

A trauma-informed (TI) perspective guided this banded dissertation. It is the conceptual lens that was utilized to evaluate social work educators' current practices. TI is based on the

concept that trauma has long-lasting adverse effects on individuals' mental, physical, emotional, social, and spiritual development (Roseby & Gascoigne, 2021). This framework is an approach developed by Harris and Falot (2001). The developer's intent initially was to improve clinical practice and service delivery. However, the TI perspective has now expanded to be a framework that encourages educators to recognize, understand, and respond deliberately to the disparities and oppression endured by trauma survivors. A TI perspective also asserts the need for the six trauma-informed principles to be implemented in social work education.

The degree to which trauma impacts a student and their development will depend on various factors such as, an individual's perception of the traumatic event that they have experienced, their resilience, their genetics, and their environment (Santiago, 2021). A main motive of this dissertation is to guide educators on practical ways to infuse this conceptual model into their teaching approach. For that reason, understanding a TI perspective is invaluable knowledge. As mentioned above, teaching from a TI perspective includes integrating the six trauma-informed principles into education. The six principles are as follows, safety, trustworthiness and transparency, peer support, collaboration and mutuality, empowerment, and cultural, historical, or gender issues.

Integrating the Six Trauma-Informed (TI) principles into Education

For a TI perspective to effectively be embedded into social work education, educators' will have to first consider their current teaching practices and determine how to include these following principles. **Safety** considers a students' physical and emotional safety. Educators are advised to provide students with a safe space that is confidential, non-judgmental, and reassuring (SAMHSA, 2014). While offering students a safe place where one is free to share learning and life experiences, educators should also be cautious to not allow communication to go beyond the

scope of their faculty expertise. For instance, teachers and educators can share lived experiences that are helpful and relevant to a student's academic achievement but should avoid topics that may place the student or teacher at risk for experiencing a traumatic response.

Trustworthiness can be achieved by educators creating a classroom structure where their students are reassured that they can trust them, their environment, and one another. This can be done by educators being transparent with syllabus requirements, classroom/grading procedures, as well as being vocal about student and teacher expectations (Venet, 2019). Documents and verbal communication should be clearly laid out, consistent, and easily accessible. A main component of incorporating a TI perspective is building a positive student-teacher relationship (Stokes & Brunzell, 2019). Educators can model this by practicing with integrity. Doing what they say they will do or informing students proactively if they are no longer able to fulfill a request.

Peer support should be encouraged by the educator. Working in groups or calling on students to be leaders of the classroom can help a trauma survivor feel like they belong and are a valuable contribution to their teacher, classmates, and school. Still acknowledging the importance of safety for a trauma survivor, the educator is advised to have students be aware of appropriate self-disclosure, communication and physical space boundaries (Venet, 2019).

Collaboration is where educators have an opportunity to co-collaborate with their students (SAMHSA, 2014). This may look like offering students a space to exercise their academic freedom. Students should feel safe to voice their concerns if they feel like topics, assignments, or delivery could be enhanced. Educators can put students into breakout rooms where students become facilitators of their groups and identify common interests or engage in a healthy debate to address differences.

Empowerment can entail educators encouraging their students to be advocates for themselves. Students can be reminded that their voice matters. Another aspect of empowerment is informing the trauma survivor that they can choose to be a student of life. This means looking for the lessons in their life experiences. With the lessons learned, one can seek ways to acquire new skills or apply their wisdom in creative ways for positive self-expression within school or at work (Stokes & Brunzell, 2019). Educators should be aware that they can also find ways to empower students through their feedback on assignments. For instance, consider if the feedback given is constructive and promotes growth opportunities for students or does it criticize and belittle one's intellectual property? (Vieselmeyer et al., 2017). Most trauma survivors have endured mental, emotional, physical, spiritual, and verbal abuse, which can be harmful to their self-esteem (Santiago, 2021). Therefore, highlighting students' strengths, providing praise, encouragement and resources can help a trauma survivor get where they want to where they desire to be in their learning.

Cultural, gender, & historical issues under a TI perspective allows for educators to challenge student's perceptions and biases. Educators can provide students with a broader perspective on controversial topics that may come up in class such as racism, LGBTQIA, and/or faith (Haynes, 2022). All students should be aware that despite their background, their traumatic history and cultural differences do not have to depict their future. Individuals typically allow their trauma to define them, but with educators being aware of this, there is an opportunity for educators to support students in rediscovering their true purpose and identity. A TI perspective grants educators the liberty to practice from a place of empathy and compassion. Thus, social work educators can verbally plant a seed in their students informing them that what they do and

who they are is meaningful for former, present, and future generations. Students may then find hope or a vision that inspires them to persist to fulfill their educational goals.

The Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) was one of the first pioneers to bring awareness to trauma and implied that not only was it impactful for medical professionals and service workers to be trauma-informed, but educators as well should practice from a TI perspective. SAMHSA (2014) offers educators a universal guiding post to direct their teaching, and that consists of cultivating teaching strategies that honor the six trauma-informed principles, which are highlighted above. Operating from a trauma-informed perspective can also be considered as educators using a strength-based approach in education. For example, educators will choose to focus on students' strengths instead of their behavior from their traumatic history. The goal of this interaction is for educators to resist retraumatizing their student trauma survivor with their words, actions, or content. Amid all the other educational responsibilities educators have, applying these six principles to social work education will be yet another task that requires additional effort from faculty. However, if executed efficiently, students and educators can experience post-traumatic growth, deeper engagement, a safe space to teach, learn, and thrive in academia (Carello & Butler, 2015).

Summary of Banded Dissertation Products

This Banded Dissertation is composed of three scholarly products. The first product is a conceptual analysis, the second product is a scoping review, and the third product is a professional presentation. A trauma-informed perspective is interwoven through each product as the conceptual lens that helps one understand the impacts that trauma has on educators and students teaching-learning experiences. All three products have an intentional goal to support social work educators in implementing a responsive trauma informed pedagogy.

Product One is a conceptual analysis that explores the impact of adverse childhood experiences on college students' academic success. Literature has revealed that 74 % of undergraduate students have experienced at least one form of trauma before reaching the age of eighteen, which adds to their academic stress and negatively impacts their engagement when attending college (Cherry & Wilcox, 2020). Three themes were highlighted that perpetuate low college persistence for trauma survivors and those themes include, low cultural representation, students feeling a lack of belongingness, and inadequate resources for educators to receive trauma-informed training. (Carello & Butler, 2015). To combat these concerns, implementing the six trauma-informed principles; safety, choice, collaboration, trustworthiness, empowerment, and cultural diversity and making training accessible is recommended (SAMHSA, 2014; Carello & Butler, 2015).

Product Two is a scoping review. A scoping review was performed to analyze the current knowledge gaps that exist in relation to applying a trauma-informed approach in undergraduate education. This product synthesizes a combination of 15 conceptual articles and research studies that evaluated social work educators' current TI pedagogy experiences. The conceptual articles and research studies were used to extract key characteristics, concepts, and themes that aligned with answering the research question: What are the current educational experiences linked with implementing a trauma-informed pedagogy in social work education? More specifically, what are educators' perceptions on practicing from a TI perspective?

A majority of the conceptual articles indicated the need for educators to establish a positive student-teacher relationship. It was made evident that applying a trauma-informed approach is less about systematically completing a task, but more about relationally connecting to students from an ecological perspective. A relational approach allows students to feel safe,

develop a sense of belongingness in class, and reach a place of academic resiliency despite their traumatic histories (Stokes & Brunzell. 2019; Greig et al. 2021; Venet. 2019; Allen et al., 2020). A minority of the articles highlighted a gap in infusing a trauma-informed approach. BSW educators expressed that there is a need for faculty to increase their awareness on adverse childhood experiences, as well as the need for more collaboration among faculty (Carello & Butler. 2014; Frankland. 2021; Rahimi et al., 2021). Educators who presently practice from a TI perspective were exemplars to their peers and community of how infusing an interdisciplinary component could help make the transition to a TI pedagogy more efficient and rewarding. Across the literature, a lack of trauma-informed training was consistent, and educators argued that they would feel more competent and confident to implement this framework if there was more training made available for undergraduate social work programs (Levenson, 2017). Future research can explore this barrier and potential solutions. Lastly, results also revealed that there is a limited body of research studies being conducted on undergraduate trauma-informed classrooms. It is suggested that future research add some coverage in this area of knowledge.

Product Three of this banded dissertation is a professional poster presentation. This presentation was presented at the *Evidence-Based Teaching and Learning Lilly Conference* located in San Diego, CA. The Lilly conference has a mission to promote and educate educators on teaching strategies for active and engaged learning. I presented on January 7th, 2022 and invited educators to learn practical trauma-informed principles that they could apply to their classroom. This presentation was based on product one's conceptual paper, which informed educators on the behaviors students may exhibit in class when impacted by trauma and advocated for the inclusion of the six trauma-informed principles: safety, trustworthiness and

transparency, peer support, collaboration and mutuality, empowerment and choice, and cultural, historical, and gender issues to be integrated into baccalaureate education.

The overall response received from the educators who presented was positive. Presentation participants expressed that a trauma-informed perspective is relevant to the work that they do and to the inequities that their students currently face. The content of the presentation was detailed in providing evidence-based teaching strategies on how to effectively integrate a trauma-informed approach. Educators expressed feeling supported and were encouraged to continue assessing their current teaching practices and adjusting their pedagogy where necessary. With trauma having immediate and lifelong impacts on students' social, emotional, mental, and spiritual health, it is imperative for educators to establish a safe classroom environment that is engaging to all walks of life and intentional about fostering hope and academic resiliency.

Discussion

This Banded Dissertation essentially has a two-part aim and that is to first discover the factors hindering academic achievement of students who have been impacted by trauma and secondly, to offer social work educators with the respective resources needed to help them be proactive in implementing a responsive trauma-informed pedagogy. Literature affirms that trauma is a major factor that negatively impacts undergraduate students' academic success (Rahimi et al., 2021). Trauma also influences teaching and learning engagement in trauma-affected classrooms. If educators remain unaware of the way trauma manifests in classrooms, teaching pedagogies may be ineffective in responding to trauma survivors.

Part of understanding the way trauma leads to poor educational outcomes, is educators mainly increasing their awareness on a traumatic phenomenon called adverse childhood

experiences (ACEs). ACEs are exposure to violence, abuse, and household dysfunction before reaching the age of 18, which over 60% of undergraduate students are affected by (Sacks & Murphey, 2018). Findings give educators insight into the aftereffects of ACEs and emphasize that it is not only about the traumatic event that is experienced, but students' perception of the event they experienced. Considering that educators may also be subjected to experiencing secondary trauma, faculty collaboration was suggested for educators to receive support on their endeavors of integrating a trauma approach (Frankland. 2021; Venet. 2019). Educators may find this recommendation useful because it will grant educators access to convenient consultation among peers, exchangeable resources, and harmony across character and curriculum development.

Additionally, trauma-informed training is a necessary component of integrating a trauma-informed pedagogy. The literature indicated that social work educators desire to focus on their students' overall well-being and make adequate adjustments to their pedagogy but are limited in their efforts due to insufficient training (Allen et al., 2020). This is a critical concern for undergraduate teachers and students because most of the weight is being placed on school counselors to address trauma related behaviors. However, it is not the school counselor's sole responsibility. Students spend majority of their educational experience in the presence of their professor. Therefore, it is imperative to equip educators with the knowledge they need to effectively embrace a trauma-informed approach to social work education.

The Substance Abuse Mental Health and Service Administration encourages educators to begin incorporating the six trauma-informed principles to education (SAMHSA, 2014). Students who have a traumatic history first need a safe environment and a safe person in order to thrive academically, socially, and emotionally. The six trauma-informed principles gives educators a

universal approach to cultivate professional relationships with their students. To be a safe educator means that educators ensure that their tone is calm and assertive instead of abrupt. They are proactive in communication and ensure that all of their actions are consistent with students so to build trust. Moreover, trauma-informed educators seek to collaborate with students to co-create knowledge and embrace cultural differences that others may judge and see as negative. In fact, it was educators' consideration of students that helped foster a positive teacher-student environment that changed the trajectory of students' educational experiences (Brunzell et al., 2018). Instead of students distancing themselves, lacking motivation to turn in assignments on time, withdrawing from peers, or at worst withdrawing from college, they felt connected, expressed having a greater appreciation for life, empowerment, higher awareness of priorities, healthy social relationships, and increased graduation rates (Vieselmeyer et al., 2017).

Implications for Social Work Education

This banded dissertation brings awareness to the need for a trauma-informed pedagogy to be employed at the baccalaureate social work level. This transition will require trauma-informed educators to become trauma-informed learners and leaders in their social work programs. Social work educators are encouraged to understand the ramifications trauma has on their student's development. This asserts the need for social work programs to become trauma sensitive. Developing a trauma sensitive approach can begin by making updates to the social work curriculum. Dialogue has been held on creating a specialized curriculum that focuses specifically on including trauma related content in the social work curriculum (Carello & Butler, 2014). This will be useful for educators to have a foundational protocol for delivery. The NASW code of ethics and the Council of Social Work Education (CSWE) values diversity, equity, and inclusion and has made initiatives to prepare educators to walk into their trauma-informed identity, but

more work needs to be done to officially implement this framework at the undergraduate level (CSWE, 2015; EPAS, 2022).

Social work educators cannot implement this change without support. Supplying educators with trauma-informed training is a necessity. Some gaps that exist as it relates to trauma-informed training are discrepancies between what is needed when teaching at urban campuses versus rural campuses, and educators who teach at HBCUs versus educators who teach on campuses that have predominantly white students (Stokes & Brunzell, 2019). Facets of trauma may appear in various ways depending on the academic setting and student. Thus, educators and social work administrators are being reminded to consider these nuances when choosing the best training methods, as it will vary across different spaces and populations.

Consistent trauma-sensitive interventions and teaching strategies need to be easily accessible to social work educators, as well as an accountability system to ensure educators are protected from secondary trauma, remain ethical in approaches, and avoid potentially retraumatizing their students. SAMHSA suggest all educators consider their baseline of implementing a trauma informed approach by incorporating the six trauma-informed principles to education. For the principle of *safety*, educators are encouraged to create a safe classroom environment by building classroom community. It is advised to build rapport with students, support them in engaging with other students, and contribute to their mental and emotional safety by providing resources to the counselor's office, campus safety, or student support services. For the principle of *trust*, educators are advised to be transparent, welcome in vulnerability through shared lived experiences and make every effort to remain consistent in their teaching approach. For trauma survivors to regulate their emotions and learn, it is helpful for students to have structure and predictability. For the principle of *peer support*, it is recommended that group work

is part of students active learning, as this helps students embrace diversity, strengthen their social skills, and enhances self-advocacy. For the principle of *collaboration*, teaching and learning expectations are personalized toward teacher and student preferences. Co-facilitation is encouraged so that students can become leaders and agents of change despite their traumatic histories. For the principle of *empowerment*, educators are advised to avoid using assignment material that may induce a traumatic response. If students become withdrawn, seek to understand and find practical ways to consider students whole self: Mind, body, and soul. For the principle of *cultural, historical, and gender issues*, it is recommended that educators critically challenge and discuss biases and stereotypes in their classroom in the areas of racism, feminism, sexual orientation, sexual preference, age, religion, gender orientation. This may help break down any false truths or perceptions students have about themselves and the world.

Implications for Future Research

With only a little over 60% of BSW programs currently practicing from a trauma-informed perspective, a lot of social work educators remain un-informed and ill-prepared to implement a trauma-informed approach effectively (Carello & Butler, 2014). Future research can be done on teaching strategies and best practice for infusing a trauma-informed framework to social work education. There are currently limited research studies on trauma-informed pedagogy and educators acquiring this knowledge can help close the gap in research and provide them with the tools they need to recognize and support intervening with students social, emotional, and academic needs.

Although this banded dissertation had many strengths and argued for the integration of trauma-informed principles in social work programs, the results were limited to BSW programs. Future research can be done on trauma-informed perspectives being implemented within other

disciplines and at the MSW educational level. Perhaps, the way another profession has approached integrating a TI perspective can help give insight to additional best practices in social work education. Another direction for future research is studies on TI curriculums and faculty collaborations. Researchers can examine these two areas further to determine what makes TI curriculums effective, are there any courses being recommended to activate this framework across the department's personnel and are there any workshops/experiential learning opportunities available for social work educators to glean from one another as they embark on becoming trauma-informed leaders. Research that values students and educators' perceptions and educational experiences will be the catalyst to administering transformative post-traumatic growth.

Conclusion

Educators approach each course with particular objectives in mind. Students enter college with their own goals to fulfill. There are instances outside of their control that may deter the plans they initially set out to achieve. Trauma is one of those unexpected factors that can influence a person to have a difficult educational experience, or it can be the exact factor that motivates a person to want to challenge themselves and achieve more. Educators being knowledgeable of how to effectively intervene and deescalate trauma related behaviors is necessary. Students are complex individuals and bring their whole selves to the classroom. Thus, if signs of trauma are present, it is imperative that the educators become an expert on this topic allowing them to be the best support to their students. Something as simple as the language educators use when communicating with their students can empower students to change the course of their lives. After all, trauma survivors should be aware that their histories do not define

who they are. Let's move from the narrative of "what is wrong with you, to "what happened to you?" (Winfrey & Perry, 2021) and empower social students to achieve greater academic results.

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**Teaching Strategies to Effectively Engage Undergraduate Students Impacted by Trauma:
An Exploration of African American Students**

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Abstract

Research reveals that undergraduate, African American students have lower degree completion, higher rates of trauma and greater academic stress compared to their counterparts. Whether an isolated incident or a series of emotionally disturbing and life-threatening events, trauma has immediate and lasting adverse effects on students' mental, emotional, physical, social, and spiritual well-being. Establishing a safe, liberating educational environment is essential. In this conceptual article, the author provides ideas for educators to be better prepared with teaching strategies to effectively engage trauma-exposed students. The author suggests that educators infuse the six trauma-informed principles: safety, trustworthiness and transparency, peer support, collaboration, empowerment and choice, and cultural, historical, and gender issues. Recommendations are provided for social work educators and students working with this specific population.

Keywords: academic stress, teaching strategies, trauma-informed pedagogy

Teaching Strategies to Effectively Engage Undergraduate Students Impacted by Trauma: An Exploration of African American Students

Low academic resiliency and degree completion continues to plague undergraduate African American students. A common and overlooked reason is African American students' having higher exposure to adverse childhood experiences (ACEs). ACEs refer to individuals experiencing child abuse or neglect before reaching the age of 18. This includes sexual, physical, and verbal abuse. Additionally, it includes exposure to family dysfunction, such as incarceration of a household member, domestic violence, divorce, substance abuse, death of a caregiver, and a family member living with a mental or physical illness (Blodgett & Lanigan, 2018). These traumatic events add distress to individuals and negatively impact students' mental, emotional, physical, social, and spiritual well-being, thereby leaving this population at-risk and vulnerable to low educational attainment.

Trauma is defined by the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) as the:

experiences that cause intense physical and psychological stress reactions. It can refer to a single event, multiple events, or a set of circumstances that is experienced by an individual as physically and emotionally harmful or threatening and has lasting adverse effects on the individual's physical, social, emotional, or spiritual well-being (SAMHSA, 2014).

Up to 74 percent of undergraduate students have experienced at least one form of trauma with 61 percent of this population being African American students (Cherry & Wilcox, 2020). Presently, only 67% of BSW programs in the United States have integrated a trauma-informed approach (Carello & Butler, 2015). This number can be increased to reflecting at least an average of 80% across all social work programs. However, an exploration of educators' level of

preparedness to shift to a trauma-informed paradigm needs to occur first. The aim of this conceptual review is to proactively equip educators with teaching strategies to effectively respond and engage individuals who are impacted by trauma. The NASW code of ethics and the council of social work education prioritize diversity and cultural inclusion (CSWE 2015). Specifically, CSWE deems incorporating a trauma-informed approach to education as beneficial due to the disadvantaged populations typically being serviced and students having a higher chance at encountering someone who has been exposed to trauma while completing practicum.

This conceptual article argues the need for educators to be prepared to apply a trauma-informed pedagogy to their undergraduate classes. A trauma-informed theoretical framework guided this conceptual examination, incorporating the six trauma-informed principles to education (SAMHSA, 2014). Operating from a trauma-informed framework is a strength-based approach to education that acknowledges the impacts of trauma, resists retraumatizing trauma survivors, and promotes post-traumatic growth (Carello & Butler, 2015). Moreover, infusing a trauma-informed framework to undergraduate education can be a catalyst to establishing a teaching and learning environment that is engaging, liberating, holistic, constructive and collaborative for trauma-exposed students, educators, and even their communities.

Theoretical Framework: A Trauma-informed Approach

A trauma-informed framework is based on the concept that trauma has long-lasting adverse effects on an individuals' mental, physical, emotional, social, and spiritual development (Roseby & Gascoigne, 2021). This framework encourages educators to recognize, understand, and respond effectively to those impacted by trauma. The Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration was one of the first pioneers to bring awareness to trauma and its impacts in the early 2000's (SAMHSA, 2014). This was after a study was conducted in 1997 on

17,000 adults who were exposed to ACEs (Felitti, 2021). The study revealed that most adults who were exposed to ACEs later in life had poor health outcomes. These poor health outcomes resulted in poor academic performance, rejection from peers and family, alcohol and drug abuse, experience of racism, poverty, and at worst, a premature death (SAMHSA, 2014). In response, SAMHSA launched the National Child Traumatic Stress Initiative along with the National Child Traumatic Stress Network. This movement sparked a call for medical professionals, service workers, and educators to become trauma informed.

SAMHSA's initiative to promote trauma awareness came with an overall goal to enhance the public health and common good. To achieve this goal, it employed the six trauma-informed principles: safety, trustworthiness & transparency, peer support, collaboration & mutuality, empowerment & choice, and cultural, historical & gender issues to service and education (SAMHSA, 2014). Applying these six trauma-informed principles to practice can serve as a safeguard and help avoid re-traumatizing clients, students, and staff. Additionally, if executed effectively, a trauma-informed approach can provide a physically and psychologically safe environment for trauma survivors to thrive. African American students especially need a safe space to thrive in academia, as they are considered a vulnerable population due to their high exposure to trauma and the underrepresentation of black educators in undergraduate programs. Integrating a trauma-informed framework is a system that may provide additional safety and support in helping African American students achieve their desired educational outcomes.

Integration of a Trauma-informed Framework in Undergraduate Programs

The integration of a trauma-informed framework at an undergraduate level is a necessary and timely quest. Most faculty and students are persistently under stress, experience adjustment issues, and are often triggered by trauma due to the remnant of the COVID-19 pandemic (Wilson

& Nochajski, 2016). COVID-19 was an unexpected shock to the world that altered individuals' lives permanently. COVID-19 is a coronavirus disease that led to many deaths and temporary shutdowns of college campuses (Harper & Neubauer, 2020). Although universities are slowly returning to in-person instruction, as of this writing, others are still required to remain in a hybrid format or in a fully online platform. This pandemic took away the normalcy for the way educators teach and the way that students must now learn.

Integration of a Trauma-informed Framework and African American Students

African American students are documented as having higher exposure to trauma than their counterparts (Liu et al., 2017). Beyond this fact, in addition to African American students having to live through the COVID-19 pandemic and its aftermath, they were also simultaneously being exposed to the perpetuating social injustice, discrimination, and police brutality circling the news and social media (Hitchcock et al., 2021). The popular and devastating stories that led to the world being in upheaval with accompanying fatal riots were the killings of Ahmaud Arbery on 2/23/2020, Breonna Taylor on 3/13/2020, and George Floyd on 5/25/2020 (Ortega-Williams et al., 2021). These killings were all by police whom society deems as professionals who should offer protection and security. However, the reality of protection and security by police officers for Black Americans was being experienced differently. The victims involved in these incidents were all black and looked like the family and friends of many African American students. With the internal and external traumatic occurrences existing within the African American community, a trauma-informed framework implemented in undergraduate programs aligns with SAMHSA's inception mission of re-establishing safe places for individuals impacted by trauma to thrive and experience post-traumatic growth. This paper challenges educators to infuse a culturally responsive pedagogy that will prioritize becoming trauma sensitive and

applying the six trauma-informed principles to pedagogy. I will explore the current barriers and gaps interfering with African American students' academic success, as well as offer practical ways for educators to respond effectively.

Literature Review

The enrollment of African American students entering undergraduate programs is increasing. With this acknowledgement, there is a need for educators to become trauma sensitive. To be trauma sensitive means to understand and consider the complex and challenging adverse effects that trauma has on individuals' cognitive functioning, along with social, spiritual, physical, and emotional well-being (Sacks & Murphey, 2018). Presently, when African American students exhibit low academic performance and college persistence, educators are describing these students as disengaged, defiant, and ill-equipped to fulfill the demands of higher education (Roseby & Gascoigne, 2021). Moreover, African American students have also been labeled as "underachievers". Incorrectly categorizing this population may be doing them more of a disservice than fostering an environment that is conducive to their academic growth.

The central focus of this literature review is to explore the factors preventing academic achievement for African American students. Students' perceptions of their learning experiences along with educators' perceptions of teaching from a trauma-informed framework are examined. Findings from studies in the review of the literature revealed three important themes. The first theme is low cultural representation, the second is inadequate training for faculty, and the third is educators' inability to perceive noticeable signs of trauma exhibited in their classroom. These themes have been the perpetuating factors interfering with the implementation of a trauma-informed approach.

Low Cultural Representation

Cultural representation refers to groups of people who share similar beliefs and common practices that keep them connected (Vasquez, 2017). Whether among peers or educators, cultural representation is significant for African American students to thrive in higher educational settings. African American students who come from traumatic backgrounds experience challenges related to belongingness in the classroom. Many African American students' professors, mentors, and classmates are White (Vasquez, 2017). This is especially true for African American students who are enrolled in predominantly white institutions versus those who attend historically black colleges and universities (HBCUs). This is important to note because African American students had lower academic achievement, less positive relationships with their professors, and lower social involvement with their peers due to a lack of cultural representation (Lane, 2017). While there is no control over which colleges African American students choose to attend or how often institutions can recruit black professors, educators regardless of their ethnicity can prepare to be culturally aware and establish culturally inclusive teaching and learning environments effectively responsive in engaging trauma-exposed students.

Culturally Inclusive Environments Consider Students' Whole Self

Creating a culturally inclusive environment considers African American students' *whole self*. Considering a student's whole self is similar to the concepts outlined in the ecological systems framework developed by theorist Bronfenbrenner. Ecological systems is a framework that assumes an individual's community and wider society will have a direct influence on their growth (Forte, 2014). In other words, this framework focuses on the person-in-environment, suggesting that educators understand how African American students' exposure and experience with trauma will have a direct influence on how well they are able to function academically.

Therefore, incorporating the lens of a holistic perspective is beneficial as it honors and respects the students' mind, body, and soul. Additionally, researchers Museus et al., (2018) discuss that culturally inclusive environments allow African American students to feel seen and heard, which helps them become more resilient and gain back their voices that are often diminished due to their trauma. Infusing a trauma-informed pedagogy at an undergraduate level can help educators become more culturally inclusive. Additionally, African American students can achieve greater academic success and have greater chances at effectively engaging and responding to individuals who have been impacted by trauma.

Trauma-Informed Training for Faculty

Faculty can play a significant role in moving social work education forward in becoming more trauma informed. Understanding how prepared educators are to implement a trauma-informed approach is a crucial priority if one is to intervene effectively. Educators are charged with the task of being gatekeepers of their classrooms. Also, educators are usually the first point of contact students seek out for guidance, structure, and school safety (Brown et al., 2020). Educators being able to recognize and respond to the needs of students who have experienced trauma can minimize the stress students and educators find themselves under. More specifically, social work educators have an opportunity to be a model to their students on what being trauma-informed looks like when working with clients. Exploring the barriers and perceptions of educators and students is imperative to determine what barriers may be preventing faculty from implementing a trauma-informed approach to practice. The hope is to discover the gaps and infuse teaching strategies that will help educators become knowledgeable, prepared, and confident in implementing a trauma-informed pedagogy.

Barriers within BSW Programs

Within the past 2 decades, BSW programs have become more persistent in advocating for the inclusion of a trauma-informed approach within their programs. However, limited information is available regarding the implementation of trauma-informed approaches in teaching (Boel-Studt et al., 2021). Findings from studies reveal that there are a few barriers preventing this transformation from taking full effect. Thomas (2016) indicates the first barrier is that trauma is being considered a specialized topic in higher education. For example, educators are typically introducing trauma to their students in graduate school when they are preparing students to engage in clinical practice (Thomas, 2016). Additionally, most incorporation in schools of a trauma-informed framework is occurring at grade school levels (K-12) (Carello & Butler, 2015). ACEs are affecting individuals before they reach the age of 18. Having graduate school be the first-time educators and students discuss the impacts of trauma is far too late, especially when most black students are coming from low socioeconomic and disadvantaged backgrounds and will be impacted by some sort of trauma well before they reach graduate school.

Barriers and Perceptions of BSW Students and Educators

Researchers and findings from reports indicate that most likely BSW educators are hesitant in applying a trauma-informed approach because of an underlying belief that infusing a trauma informed pedagogy to education will open a door for students to be retraumatized and for educators to experience secondary trauma (Carello & Butler, 2015). Educators also express a belief that a trauma-informed approach might add on more responsibility with no adequate support available from directors or other campus staff (Carello & Butler, 2015). Additionally, BSW educators have a concern that they will not be adequately trained due to a lack of extra

funds for BSW programs to provide training (Anderson et al., 2015). Due to these barriers and reservations to implement trauma-informed principles, trauma is going under-recognized and undertreated. As a result, 66%-85% of African American students express feeling burnt out, misunderstood, and socially isolated in their BSW classrooms (Museus et al., 2018).

Janice Carello and Lisa Butler are professors and researchers at one of the top human rights and trauma-informed schools, University at Buffalo. They conducted a study to better understand if applying trauma-informed principles would be effective in enhancing social workers' educational practices (Carello & Butler, 2015). They found that implementing these principles; safety, choice, collaboration, trustworthiness, empowerment, and cultural diversity; helped improve the way educators related to students from traumatic backgrounds (Ibid). In another article where educators were able to be trained in utilizing trauma-informed care (TIC) principles, educators reported that the more competent they became in trauma-informed education, the better they were able to relate to their students (Ciganek, 2020). Moreover, African American students report lower academic stress and a greater sense of belongingness when their professors demonstrated a genuine interest in their overall well-being (Baez et al., 2019).

Noticeable Signs of Trauma-Exposed African American Students in BSW classrooms

Transitioning into college is a significant adjustment for many first-year students. Add on the disparities and disadvantages that African American students have entering in college with higher exposure to ACEs creates another layer of academic stress. The National Center for Educational Statistics reveals that graduation rates for black students is 40% compared to 64% of white students (NCES, 2021). Part of effectively engaging this population is understanding what signs to look for in students who may come from traumatic backgrounds. Probable signs that

may appear in class will be highlighted in the next section. Being aware of these signs can eliminate potential negative judgements and assumptions, such as African American students not being ready for higher order thinking. Instead, this awareness encourages educators to ponder the deeper-rooted issue here impacting them, which is trauma.

Some signs that may manifest in class from students who are impacted by trauma is disengagement in class, low academic performance, over vigilance when next to people, minimal eye contact, silence, being overly apologetic when explaining themselves, appearing to be unsafe or verbally expressing discomfort, displaying verbal and physical inadequacy, and early college withdrawal (Cousineau, 2018). The description of signs is a general analysis, as signs and traits may vary from student to student. In any event, educators being knowledgeable of the complex adversities African American students face and potential behavior patterns they may present with can reduce academic stress, promote resiliency, and create a safe space for lifelong learning.

Post-traumatic Growth and Resiliency

Once educators can notice the signs of trauma manifesting in their classrooms, they will be able to begin teaching from a resilience perspective that promotes post-traumatic growth (PTG). Findings on PTG often interconnect with resilience. Therefore, both terms are worth defining. Resilience can be defined as individuals' ability to recover quickly from adverse experiences (Leitch, 2017). In other words, individuals will demonstrate character traits of strength, hope, and adaptability despite their exposure to oppression and adversity. PTG refers to individuals' ability to rebuild after trauma due to experiencing a cognitive shift (Vieselmeyer et al., 2017). Trauma usually alters a person's worldview and self-view for the worse. However, there is an underlying assumption that PTG has an opposite effect, in the sense that individuals

can endure their harmful adverse experiences and then choose to grow and thrive in the same manner they would have had the traumatic event not occurred.

Vieselmeier et al. (2017) conducted a study about trauma and what factors contributed to fostering PTG and resiliency. Their findings highlighted students who had positive formal and informal supports in place were able to convert their adverse experiences into personal growth (Anderson, 2018). Students' personal growth was a result of students receiving active, thorough, and attentive support, along with compassionate listening from educators, family, and friends (Ibid). Moreover, students reported having a greater appreciation of life, higher awareness of priorities, healthy social relationships, feelings of empowerment, creativity, and hope for new possibilities to emerge for their overall well-being (Vieselmeier et al., 2017). The student outcomes highlighted in these findings can be reassuring to social work educators that they will also be creating a classroom atmosphere that offers their students an opportunity to experience PTG. Although trauma can have its negative consequences, a trauma-informed pedagogy with interchangeable filters of PTG and resiliency can add to educators' skills to effectively engage individuals impacted by trauma. It is beneficial to highlight specific teaching strategies that educators can incorporate when working with trauma survivors. Recommendations for effective teaching protocol will be provided below.

Recommendations for Trauma-Informed Practice

While exposure to ACEs can potentially lead to negative social, emotional, and educational outcomes, educators can cultivate an environment that positively shifts the trajectory of their student's lives. SAMHSA (2014) informs educators that infusing the six trauma-informed principles into practice can alleviate student's academic stress and maximize their

academic success (Rahimi et al., 2021). The definition and description of each principle will be elaborated on below.

Strategies to Infuse the Six Trauma-Informed Principles: Safety

Safety is defined as educators demonstrating the ability to ensure physical, psychological, and emotional safety in the classroom (SAMHSA, 2014). One method of providing safety within the classroom is to minimize the risk of retraumatizing students. Educators can reduce retraumatizing students by avoiding the use of potentially harmful course material or homework assignments. If there is no way to avoid using potentially triggering material, educators can inform students ahead of time of what the topic is and give students the space to excuse themselves from class momentarily or choose to provide a safer assignment as an alternative. Additional ways to promote safety include educators providing on-campus resources to a counselor's office, campus safety, and/or student support services.

Strategies to Infuse Trauma-Informed Principle: Trustworthiness & Transparency

Trustworthiness & Transparency refers to educators being clear on the teacher and learner responsibilities in the classroom (SAMHSA, 2014). Educators can implement this strategy in class by discussing with students what their teaching philosophy is, remaining consistent in their teaching approach, and inviting students to express what type of learning environment they believe they learn best in. The professional use of self can also be beneficial in establishing a trustworthy partnership with students. For example, educators can share their personal experiences and mistakes made in the field as it relates to classroom subjects, not only as an expert, but as a lifelong learner themselves.

Strategies to Infuse Trauma-Informed Principle: Peer Support

Peer support is defined as trauma survivors having classmates and other school staff to connect with (SAMHSA, 2014). Educators can offer peer support opportunities for students by building a classroom community. A classroom community can be created by establishing a classroom culture with values everyone desires to honor. Educators can also choose class assignments that encourage group participation and critical thinking skills. For example, utilizing quotes related to course material and then having students divide into pairs to interpret the quote before returning to full group to discuss collectively promotes teamwork and peer support. If students have questions educators can redirect students to answer the question of their peers. Fostering healthy relationships allows students to feel a sense of belongingness and keeps them aware of the support available to them from peers, faculty, and campus staff.

Strategies to Infuse Trauma-Informed Principle: Collaboration and Mutuality

Collaboration and mutuality is defined as having a commitment to shared decision-making (SAMHSA, 2014). To educators, this may look like a constructivist approach where educators co-facilitate with their students so that students become leaders and hold themselves accountable for achieving their work outcomes and the educator is open to learning from the student. Lastly, because it is recommended that trauma survivors share their stories as many times as possible to heal, the use of expression through creative assignments, such as poems, music, visuals, and mindfulness exercises while in class, is effective. Collaborating with students will require educators to create personalized expectations for their learning experiences. Trauma impacts everyone differently. Therefore, responses to students when collaborating will need to be in a unique way.

Strategies to Infuse Trauma-Informed Principle: Empowerment and Choice

Empowerment and choice is defined as recognizing and building on the strengths of students (SAMHSA, 2014). Educators can model this strategy by encouraging students to use their voice and make intentional decisions. Trauma survivors' voices are often diminished. Therefore, reinforcing self-advocacy skills, self-determination skills, effective communication patterns, interpersonal skills, authenticity, and integrity can help students gain their voices back. Additionally, normalizing challenging discussions and intense emotions that may arise when speaking about trauma can be helpful. If educators notice students are becoming withdrawn, it is recommended that one seeks to understand what may be causing the change (Roseby & Gascoigne, 2021). Offering self-regulation strategies may also be helpful. Self-regulation strategies in a classroom setting can look like a student writing down present emotions and stressful barriers preventing them from achieving their goal or an educator noticing a student is overwhelmed and discreetly offering them to go take a walk or some deep breaths. These strategies are suggested as meaningful for students to release stress and get refocused on their tasks.

Strategies to Infuse Trauma-Informed Principle: Cultural, Historical, and Gender

Cultural, historical, and gender issues include moving past stereotypes that pertain to ethnicity, sexual orientation, age, religion, geography, and gender identity (SAMHSA, 2014). Educators can honor this by embracing students' differences. Students should be encouraged to respect one another's ideas and shared lived experiences even if they may differ from their own. Educators can offer students an opportunity to learn about different cultures and worldviews by engaging in experiential learning activities. Some effective strategies are role-play and simulation projects. A team of researchers argue that simulation should be used more for

understanding diversity and difference (Kourgiantakis et al., 2020). These types of projects can help challenge students' beliefs and remove their biases known or unknown. Furthermore, welcoming challenging discussions based on current news can also enhance student's awareness. Strengthening students' skills in this area can prove beneficial for when students engage with diverse populations in the field.

Discussion

This conceptual article argues the need for educators to be prepared to apply a trauma-informed pedagogy to their undergraduate classes. A major component impacting African American students' academic success is their high exposure to adverse childhood experiences (ACEs) (SAMHSA, 2014). Additionally, educators being ill-equipped to effectively engage students impacted by trauma was also identified as a hindering factor. Three themes were noted as contributing to the perpetuating cycle of low degree completion for African American students. The themes were: low cultural representation among black students and their educators, insufficient training accessible for educators, and educators' inability to perceive the noticeable signs of trauma displayed in their classrooms. These themes were examined through a trauma-informed theoretical lens and guided this paper to argue the need for the six trauma-informed principles: safety, trustworthiness and transparency, peer support, collaboration, empowerment and choice, and cultural, historical, and gender issues to be applied to educators' pedagogy.

Trauma amplifies African American student's academic stress and leaves them at greater risk for low academic resiliency than their counterparts (Roseby & Gascoigne, 2021). Despite the traumatic events African American students are subjected to, they still deserve to reach their personal and professional pursuits. Social work educators can play an essential role in establishing a safe and liberating learning environment for trauma survivors to thrive

academically and experience post-traumatic growth (PTG). Educators are usually a prominent adult figure in students' lives outside of their parents and caregivers. Therefore, it was imperative to discuss the literature because it revealed students' perceptions of their learning experiences and educators' level of preparedness to effectively respond to individuals who were trauma survivors.

Barriers to Infusing a Trauma-Informed Pedagogy

The literature review informs us that the educator's role in integrating a trauma-informed framework is limited due to several barriers. Findings indicate that a trauma-informed approach in education is mainly being integrated at the graduate level and in grades K-12 (Carello & Butler, 2015). This barrier further supports the aim of implementing a trauma-informed pedagogy at the undergraduate level. A trauma-informed framework can help us close the gap and ensure that students impacted by trauma have supports in place as well as resources readily available to help them thrive in academia from grade school all the way through to graduate school. Until this gap is closed, a deficit will persist in engaging African American students. Moreover, delays and barriers persist in employing a trauma-informed framework because minimal agreement has been made on the best way to train educators (Anderson et al., 2015). This article comprises effective teaching strategies that addresses this gap. Educators can choose to employ the six trauma-informed principles from SAMHSA within their classrooms. Information on how to adequately infuse the six trauma principles can be disseminated during faculty department meetings, online trainings, or through an in-house workshop by qualified trauma-informed employee. Finding affordable and accessible ways to train faculty can help educators feel competent and confident when adopting a trauma-informed approach.

Potential problems could arise if educators are not practicing from a trauma-informed framework. Studies on African American students' perception of their learning experiences explained that students in undergraduate school expressed having sentiments of guilt, shame, overwhelm, anger, loneliness, and hopelessness (Cousineau, 2018). African American students need a safe learning environment to reconstruct their maladaptive responses to trauma into more adaptive responses. This fact increases the urgency to train educators in becoming knowledgeable of the negative impacts that trauma has on students and offers them effective teaching strategies to apply to practice, reducing the risk of harming students.

African American students can be reminded that what they were subjected to in their former years does not have to predict the future attainable to them in their later years. One study found that viewing African American students holistically helped contribute to the enhancement of students mental, emotional, physical, social, and spiritual well-being. Students were able to turn their negative experiences into positive experiences making them more resilient in achieving their academic pursuits (Carello & Butler, 2015). Boel-Studt et al. (2021) explained having support in implementing a trauma-informed framework and addressed the intention to incorporate a trauma-informed approach to BSW programs. However, their research failed to provide a vision or effective teaching strategies on how to successfully integrate this new framework. BSW educators can refer to the recommendations listed above as a guide when working with trauma survivors. However, that is just the beginning. The list above is not an all-inclusive solution and further research considering additional possibilities for employing a trauma-informed approach may be needed in the future.

A reservation educators may have when engaging with trauma survivors is the fear that they will experience secondary trauma. Taking this concern into consideration, educators can

proactively imbed a self-care plan into their daily lifestyle. They can also encourage their students to create and implement a self-care plan. A self-care plan can reduce stress and foster more resiliency within educators and students. The process on establishing an effectual self-care plan is elaborated on more below.

Recommendation to Incorporate Self-Care

It is recommended that anytime an individual desires to make a lifetime change, protective measures should be in place to minimize psychological and emotional exhaustion (Carello & Butler, 2015). Creating a self-care plan can proactively prepare educators and students to be knowledgeable of potential triggers while simultaneously giving them access to resilient strategies to help reduce stress and improve focus. Educators who may be overworked and students impacted by trauma can reap the most benefits of employing a trauma-informed framework by having a self-care plan established. Categories on the self-care plan could include mind, body, emotions, spirit, work, and relationships. Educators and students are multidimensional individuals, and we must invest in every area of ourselves to promote health and live a well-balanced life.

Benefits of Utilizing a Self-Care Plan

A self-care plan is a list of activities and routine practices that can guide educators and students on enhancing their psychological, physical, and spiritual well-being. The self-care plan should be referred to on a regular basis to prevent burnout, compassion fatigue, & secondary traumatic stress (Carello & Butler, 2015). The benefits of utilizing a self-care plan reduces stress, increases productivity, improves health, and can help achieve a work-life balance. It is imperative that educators and students take time to prioritize their own mental, emotional, and physical resiliency. It takes energy to care for family, friends, and the community. Therefore,

making healthy deposits into self will enhance the quality of how one cares of the people they love.

Implications for Social Work Educators

The theory and findings have implications for social work educators seeking to adopt a trauma-informed approach. Being proactive at providing a trauma-sensitive and culturally inclusive learning environment is imperative. Social work educators can increase their awareness of the many ways that trauma may show up within their classroom. Understanding and considering that students may express their trauma through mental and physical disorientation as well as emotional dysregulation can be beneficial to students and educators. Educators being knowledgeable of how to effectively intervene and deescalate trauma related behaviors is necessary. Due to students usually bringing their whole selves to the classroom, which often includes exposure to some form of trauma, educators must become the experts on this topic.

Additionally, despite a history of trauma, African American students bring a range of strengths to their educational pursuits. Students can benefit from educators relying on their strengths to foster educational resiliency. Educators may also notice their stress being reduced when they begin to focus on what a student is doing well instead of their areas of struggle. It is essential that educators, researchers, policymakers, and practitioners become trauma-informed and apply the six trauma-informed principles to practice. Lastly, educators striving to use empowering language when teaching trauma survivors can also be helpful. Afterall, these students are not trauma victims, they are trauma survivors, and when communicating to them or about them, the dialogue should not state “what is wrong with you,” but instead, “what happened to you?” (Winfrey & Perry, 2021).

Future Studies

Trauma is considered a public health issue (SAMHSA, 2014). Therefore, educators in schools need more training on how to reduce the negative adverse effects that trauma has on students. This conceptual paper focused specifically on African American students. Future research can focus on a broader population to determine the unique impact of trauma on different underserved populations.

For example, academic outcomes may vary depending on educators and students attending urban and suburban schools or HBCUs versus predominately white campuses. This is a reminder that trauma is present in various spaces across different populations. Therefore, social work educators can benefit from future research being conducted on an effective protocol to train educators on trauma-informed teaching strategies. More specifically, more training for social work programs to update their curriculum to proactively address trauma concerns in undergraduate classrooms is needed. Trauma-informed training designed to help educators in supporting their students during any life adjustment may be the evolutionary shift social work programs have been seeking.

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**Educational Experiences and Outcomes of Implementing a Trauma-Informed Pedagogy in
Baccalaureate Social Work Education: A Scoping Review**

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Abstract

Undergraduate social work educators frequently encounter students who experience adverse childhood experiences (ACEs), which often results in unresolved trauma. Social work educators face unique challenges teaching students who have been affected by trauma, as trauma frequently leads students to display some degree of physical, social, emotional, behavioral, and academic delays. This paper is a scoping review that consists of peer-reviewed published articles within the past 10 years examining undergraduate level social work educators' experience with implementing a trauma-informed pedagogy. A qualitative analysis of the 15 articles that fulfilled inclusion criteria (i.e., English, within the United States, social work education and a history of adverse trauma at the BSW level) formulated information conducive to understanding educators' teaching experiences and current educational outcomes for their students. Literature on trauma-informed education highlighted a few key themes reflecting practical teaching strategies effective for increasing students' academic success. Establishing a positive student teacher relationship, having faculty collaborate for integrated support, and having access to adequate trauma-informed training is suggested. Social work educators working in trauma-affected schools and educators teaching students how to practice as trauma-informed professionals would likely benefit from learning the teaching strategies available on effectively infusing a trauma-informed pedagogy.

Keywords: adverse childhood experiences, trauma-informed education, teaching strategies

Educational Experiences and Outcomes of Implementing a Trauma-Informed Pedagogy in Baccalaureate Social Work Education: A Scoping Review

Exposure to Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) has a negative impact on students' academic success. Students' subjection to ACEs can produce a traumatic stress response influencing how a persons' body and brain functions over the course of their lives (Cousineau, 2018). The prevalence of trauma is noticeable at all grade levels: grade school, high school, undergraduate, and graduate school (Vasquez & Boel-Studt, 2017). Many grade schools and social work graduate programs have implemented a trauma-informed approach to reverse the negative academic, cognitive, and social outcomes of their students. However, the emergence of infusing a trauma-informed pedagogy on the undergraduate level has been slow (Carello & Butler, 2014). With BSW students and faculty being exposed to trauma among one another and while also fulfilling practicum, it is valuable to have a trauma-informed teaching strategy in place that will foster academic resiliency and longevity.

While considering the complex and subjective nature that the term trauma can represent, the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) provides a definition feasible for all to comprehend. SAMHSA (2014) defines trauma as the experiences that cause intense physical and psychological stress reactions. It can refer to a single event, multiple events, or a set of circumstances that is experienced by an individual as physically and emotionally harmful or threatening and has lasting adverse effects on an individuals' physical, social, emotional, and spiritual well-being. This review focuses on a specific type of trauma called adverse childhood experiences (ACEs). ACEs refers to any individual who has experienced physical and emotional abuse, neglect, and household dysfunction, such as divorce,

substance abuse, domestic violence, incarceration of a family member, or the witnessing of a family member living with a mental or physical illness before the age of 18 (SAMHSA, 2014).

Adopting a trauma-informed pedagogy can be a challenging task for BSW educators. Although, social work educators can see the value in infusing a trauma-informed approach, they have reservations due to the risk of experiencing secondary trauma or having to adjust their current pedagogical style to being more trauma sensitive (Carello & Butler, 2014). This paper is a scoping review that considers studies with evidence as well as, conceptual articles that aim to examine the main themes being discussed across educators' experiences when implementing a trauma-informed approach in undergraduate social work education. There are 15 peer-reviewed articles included in this scoping review that explore trauma-informed pedagogy, educators' experience in executing this approach, and its impact on students' educational outcomes. With an overall goal to maximize educator-student achievement and minimize academic stress in trauma-affected classrooms, it is significant to understand educators' current progress and perceptions on practicing from a trauma-informed approach. This scoping review will give educators and researchers a snapshot of where BSW education is at currently with infusing a trauma-informed approach and offer direction for where social work education can go in being trauma-informed with the adequate support and resources.

Literature Review

There is a high demand on higher education faculty. For instance, educators' duties can run far and wide with their need to meet the requirements of their program, maintain accreditation standards, as well as ensure that their students excel academically. To add to this, a complex phenomenon called adverse childhood experiences (ACEs) is now something else that educators need to consider. ACEs are traumatic events that occur between the ages of 0-17. Brief

examples of traumatic experiences include emotional, physical, and sexual abuse; neglect; and household dysfunction (Centers for Disease and Prevention CDC, 2018). By the time students enter college, 85% of them have experienced at least one form of a traumatic event (Santiago, 2021). Not only are students experiencing ACEs, but they are also exposed to school shootings, bullying, and racial trauma (Allen et al., 2020). Thus, it is incumbent upon educators to be trauma-sensitive and adopt a responsive pedagogy that will help their students experience academic success despite their traumatic occurrences.

ACEs Impact on College Students

Students who have been exposed to trauma or have experienced ACEs often feel oppressed, discarded, and invaluable (Rahimi et al., 2021). Their exposure to abuse, violence, victimization, and other traumatic experiences has a direct influence on their identity, mental health and how they show up to fulfill their daily life tasks. For instance, students impacted by trauma may display some degree of physical, social, emotional, behavioral, or academic delay (Museus et al., 2018). Particularly, the more affected a student has been by ACEs, the higher chance they have at experiencing negative educational outcomes, such as early college withdrawal (Cousineau, 2018). Cramer (2018) states that disharmony currently exists between students and faculty due to educators not being aware of ACEs and its ramifications. The hope is that once educators have a thorough awareness of ACEs and its potential impact on their students, they will be able to apply that understanding and implement a trauma-informed pedagogy essential to engaging trauma survivors.

Trauma-Informed Pedagogy

According to Carello and Butler (2014), a trauma-informed pedagogy considers how abuse, neglect, and injustice alter a students' cognitive ability to perform well academically.

Similarly, SAMHSA (2014) agrees with this statement and adds that a trauma-informed approach is considering a student holistically. Holistic education is defined by educators as practicing from an approach that is comprehensive and seeks to understand students' emotional, social, ethical, and academic needs (Francis et al., 2022). Thus, implementing a trauma-informed pedagogy is about connecting to students' mind, body, and soul. Yielding to this concept would honor student's external environment and connect it to students' ability to learn within higher education. Ultimately, a trauma-informed pedagogy asserts that educators will be able to consider that school is only part of an individual's world and that there may be other factors influencing students' educational outcomes, such as their experience(s) with ACEs. Lastly, educators may encounter students from various walks of life. Some will be first generation students, some will be non-traditional students, and others may have children or be caregivers to their elderly parents. Combine these various factors with a students' traumatic background, and it may be easier to understand how trauma could negatively impact their academic success.

Applying a trauma-informed pedagogy requires educators to demonstrate trauma-informed teaching. Carello and Butler (2014) describe educators who are trauma-informed as being models to students of an effective voice tone and body posture, while also utilizing work materials and language that will nurture, liberate, and empower individuals to thrive and shift the narratives of their traumatic lives. SAMHSA (2014) lends educators and practitioners six trauma-informed principles as a foundational baseline to follow when creating a trauma-informed atmosphere. The six trauma-informed principles are as follows: Safety, trustworthiness and transparency, peer support, collaboration and mutuality, empowerment and choice, cultural, historical and gender issues. With SAMHSA (2014) being one of the initial pioneers to discover trauma and its negative impacts on individual's livelihood, their suggestion of employing these

strategies seems relevant and feasible to achieve in undergraduate education with the appropriate training. Training on how to infuse these six principles into the classroom may also help educators avoid traumatizing students as well as, protect themselves from experiencing secondary trauma.

Trauma-Informed Pedagogy and Educator Experience

A trauma-informed approach was first utilized in service agencies, between grades K-12 and in the medical field (SAMHSA, 2014). More recently, a trauma informed perspective has made its way to higher education. A trauma-informed approach is commonly introduced in graduate schools and is often neglected in undergraduate programs (Carello & Butler, 2014). Educators are agreeing that practicing from a trauma-informed pedagogy produces academic resiliency and retention in their students and is a vital asset to their career.

Educators currently practicing from a trauma-informed pedagogy express their experiences within these three categories: clarifying their role as a trauma-informed educator, establishing a healthy student-teacher relationship, and creating a safe learning environment (Venet, 2019). These categories will be explored in greater detail later in the review. To effectively integrate a trauma-informed pedagogy, educators state that they first had to embrace their new identity as a trauma-informed educator. In doing so, they went for training to strengthen their competency, developed a self-care plan that reminded them to prioritize maintaining healthy boundaries, and became trauma-informed leaders and advocates (Allen et al., 2020). These practices contributed to the student and teacher relationship developing. Educators wanted their students to know that they had a person being a voice for them when they are unable to advocate for themselves (Allen et al., 2020).

Furthermore, educators recognized that showing their students compassion, caring about their learning, as well as their emotional well-being helped foster a bond where their students were able to flourish (Cramer, 2018). In this instance, educators stretched their teaching capacity and envisioned themselves as facilitators of connection instead of just knowledge. One might compare this teaching strategy to that of a constructivist approach where educators acknowledge students lived experiences and co-create knowledge with them. This way of partnering with students resulted in healthy relationships being built and enhanced the engagement within their classroom community. The majority of writers agreed that infusing a trauma-informed pedagogy was easier once educators recognized that their role in a student's life expanded beyond the scope of simply disseminating content (Brunzell et al., 2018).

Overall, Stokes & Brunzell (2019) found that the educator's goal was to foster educational resiliency, alleviate academic stress, and enhance students' experiences within trauma-affected schools. The way educators strived to achieve this goal was by creating a safe learning environment for their students. Creating a safe learning environment was the direct result of accomplishing the first two tasks: embodying the role of being a trauma-informed educator and forming a healthy student-teacher relationship. In this article, educators who had over 15 years working with students impacted by trauma expressed that it was their responsibility as an educator to demonstrate to their students what physical and emotional safety looked like (Stokes & Brunzell, 2019).

Fulfilling these duties consisted of developing clear communication, the expression of objectives/expectations, and educators modeling what a safe person looked like. Educators in baccalaureate programs emphasized that trauma survivors were usually exposed to inconsistent and harmful relationships with caregivers, parents, teachers, and friends (Cramer, 2018). Thus,

students who experience the aftermath of ACEs often do not perceive when they are safe, may engage in risky behaviors, feel conflicted in who they can trust, struggle with identity issues, and are unaware of how to create or maintain healthy boundaries (Allen et al., 2020). Therefore, educators in this article highlighted the priority they made in being consistent with their students, teaching their students how to be self-aware, as well as how to articulate their needs when necessary. If complex issues occurred then they were addressed among the whole class, after class or privately during office hours. Educators wanted to assure students that the relationship built was so that students could thrive academically, relationally, and professionally. Lastly, educators emphasized the significance of monitoring the implementation of their trauma-informed pedagogy. This allowed for changes to be made in a timely manner if one needed to improve in their practice.

Challenges and Successes to Implementing a Trauma-Informed Pedagogy

It may be clear that the key to effectively engaging a student impacted by trauma is mainly about forming a positive teacher-student bond first. Up to 25% of teachers who leave the profession state they leave due to experiencing complex behaviors in students and not understanding how to address them (Greig et al., 2021). This presents as an issue not only for educators, but for their students who have been impacted by trauma. As mentioned above, students who have traumatic histories may demonstrate their needs in unpleasant ways. This does not negate their desire to obtain a college degree. In fact, the majority of educators believe they should learn how to open the right doors of opportunity by incorporating adequate strategies, resources, and personnel to reach students who are trauma-affected (Stokes & Brunzell, 2019).

Surprisingly, with social work students being trained to work with clients who may also have traumatic backgrounds, there is an assumption that social work educators would be able to

easily implement effective teaching strategies to help engage their student with traumatic histories. However, it is quite the opposite in that educators admit to having little to no training on how to be trauma informed. This leads into another issue that persists in higher education, specifically in undergraduate social work programs because trauma is considered a specialized topic not usually discussed or modeled by educators until students reach their graduate years (Carello & Butler, 2014). Challenges highlighted across the literature included faculty mislabeling students, a lack of training/collaboration among faculty, and faculty ignoring the "hidden curriculum" (Venet, 2019; Levenson, 2017). Educators went in depth in expressing the challenges and successes they encountered with infusing a trauma-informed pedagogy. While some of the findings from the literature revealed mixed information on what the next best step is to take when considering addressing these challenges, there is a consensus among BSW educators that until these presenting issues get addressed, there may be a disservice being done to students who are impacted by trauma (Venet, 2019).

Mislabeling Trauma-Impacted Students

A clear challenge discussed in the literature was educators' misjudgment of their students' behavior. Students who are negatively impacted by trauma respond, adjust, and learn in unique ways (Rahimi et al., 2021). For instance, students who came from traumatic backgrounds appeared to be disengaged in class, turned in assignments late, and limited their communication with peers. When educators noticed these behaviors instead of looking deeper than the behavior, they misinterpreted the student's behavior and labeled them as defiant, distracting, attention-seeking, and deemed them unprepared to complete collegiate level work (Mersky et al., 2019). This response to a trauma-affected student whose behavior appeared resistant was addressed by most educators.

A minority of educators took a trauma-informed approach and mentioned that they have approached this challenge differently. The minority chose to reflect on what external or internal circumstances could be causing their student to perform this way. The minority also assumed that there had to be an underlying issue and made the attempt to discover their student's perspective and consider their worldview when teaching. Additionally in one article, the teachers presented these concerns during department meetings, and it encouraged the school to acknowledge the need for a trauma-responsive pedagogical approach that would address the needs of their students (Frankland, 2021). This ignited a successful educational experience for educators and trauma survivors. Educators were happy to realign their thinking and pedagogical practice to include the principles of trauma-informed care and the classroom culture shifted for the betterment of the students. Students with a history of trauma were no longer being judged unfairly or blamed for their traumatic backgrounds. Educators sought to understand their students' behaviors and this intentionality fostered healing and post-traumatic growth for their students, which ultimately led to higher graduation rates for students in social work undergraduate programs (Vieselmeyer et al., 2017).

Faculty and Holistic Collaboration

Subsequently, accepting the solution of adopting a trauma-informed approach was just the beginning of educators implementing a trauma responsive pedagogy. Once educators began employing this framework, they soon realized that there is a need for more collaboration if this approach was going to be sustainable for students. Educators felt pressure and overwhelmed being the only ones responsible to demonstrate trauma-informed behavior to their students. Educators are advocating for more integration between faculty, students, school counselors and building staff (Venet, 2019). Educators expressed that it can be more beneficial when everyone

who encounters their students to be able to understand the complexity of their students' lives and respond effectively. Otherwise, the work being done in their classrooms could be reversed. Educators' vocalization of this desire and the challenges that could potentially persist, such as burnout or a lack of student inclusion, resulted in yet another success. The majority of schools that educators taught at were described by Frankland (2021) as happy to establish a student-centered, trauma-informed system that fostered a community of individuals who were all committed to providing a safe space for trauma student survivors to grow holistically: mentally, emotionally, spiritually, socially, academically (Frankland, 2021). Clear boundaries were established so the efforts were equally distributed among faculty, students, staff, counselors, and the community (Venet, 2019). Lastly, trustworthy relationships were built where everyone felt excited and eager to intervene on behalf of the students.

Inadequate Trauma-Informed Training

Educators admitted that they would be more likely to implement a trauma-informed framework if they had the adequate training. A majority of educators described their challenge with becoming trauma informed had to do with the competency barrier and a lack of understanding that their school had a "hidden curriculum" which is also known as the implicit curriculum (Ciganek, 2020). Educators were learning on the job that there were deeper rooted issues interfering with how students learned and that they would have more to focus on than their student's academic performance. Venet (2019) agrees and states that in addition to being responsible to accommodate a hidden curriculum, they also had to learn how to navigate their pedagogical approach between urban and suburban college campuses (Stokes & Brunzell, 2019). There was a noticeable difference in how students living in urban communities' traumatic traits

manifested within the classroom versus students who lived in suburban environments (Banks & Meyer, 2017).

With the hope to reduce the overwhelming feelings of implementing a trauma-informed approach for educators, during professional development meetings, surveys were taken to assess educators' current awareness of ACEs, complex trauma, vicarious trauma, and culturally relevant teaching strategies (Cramer, 2018). The results from the surveys taken displayed that most educators felt unprepared to intervene with students who experienced traumatic backgrounds. At this point, school administrators knew that they had to get their teachers in a position where they could increase their capacity to work in trauma-affected environments. Through professional development training, a trauma-informed expert was hired to train all baccalaureate school staff, educators, and program directors. This training equipped educators with the skills they need to create trauma sensitive learning environments. Additionally, with educators' pedagogy now focusing on student's holistic well-being, their students' self-regulation increased, there were higher graduation rates, educators were less frustrated, students learned how to become advocates for their health and academic success and their overall educational experience was enhanced. Overall, a baseline most educators agreed to was being culturally inclusive, trauma sensitive, honoring their students' social skills and wellbeing, as well as being trained in the various concepts, tenets, and strategies to being trauma informed.

The benefits of trauma-informed education are innumerable for students. Trauma-informed educators adopting a trauma-sensitive pedagogy helps improves student's classroom engagement. For instance, students tend to feel safe and confident in their abilities to learn despite their history of adverse traumatic events. Another advantage is that educators can differentiate students who are exhibiting appropriate behaviors versus behaviors that are related

to trauma and then offer students the support that is needed to achieve their educational goals. The broad purpose of completing this scoping review is to answer the research question: What is the state of research and conceptual literature for applying a trauma-informed pedagogy at the BSW level? Specifically, the educational outcomes being explored was educators' perspectives on implementing a trauma-informed pedagogy along with their student's classroom experiences and academic success. Utilizing the databases ERIC and Google Scholar, 15 articles met the inclusion criteria and were reviewed.

Methodology

To examine the current information on applying a trauma-informed approach in baccalaureate social work programs, a scoping review of the literature was conducted. The purpose of this review is to examine educators' application, perception, and educational experiences associated with implementing a trauma-informed framework. Scholarly research databases were identified and used to perform this comprehensive search.

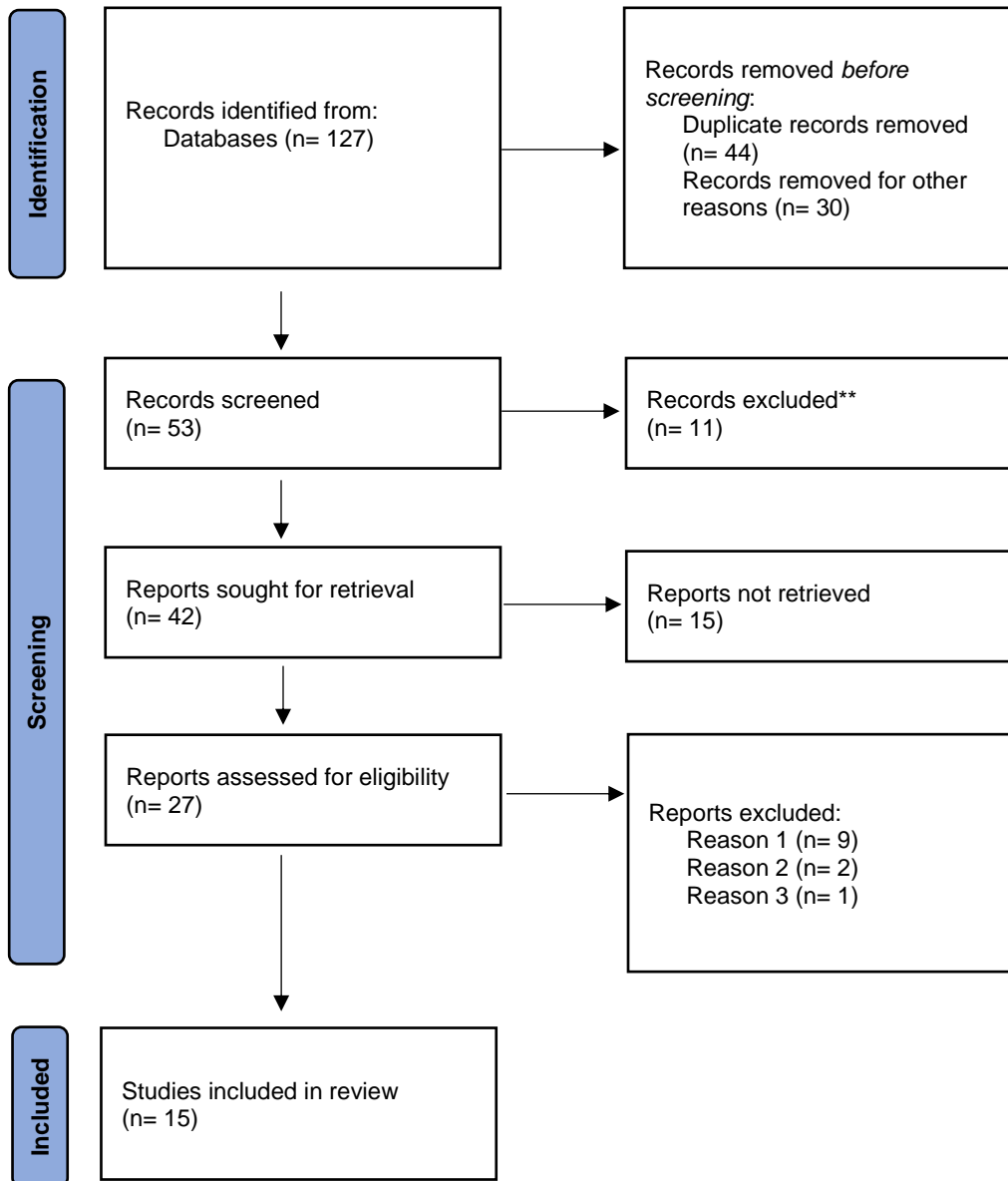
Search Method

The search databases used were ERIC, PsycINFO, EBSCOhost, Campbell Collaboration, and Google Scholar. There were limited articles exploring trauma-informed educational outcomes on PsycINFO, EBSCOhost, and Campbell Collaboration. The bulk of the peer-reviewed articles were filtered and derived from ERIC and Google Scholar search engines. The search terms used were: Trauma-informed pedagogy and BSW education, trauma-informed practice and BSW educational outcomes, adverse childhood experiences, and academic resiliency.

Inclusion Criteria

Figure 1

Articles Included/Excluded for Final Data Set



Initially, 127 articles seemed relevant to answering the desired question by their titles and abstracts. However, the number of articles limited to 53 once all the inclusion and exclusion criteria were considered. The inclusion criteria for this scoping review included empirical studies

and conceptual articles found between the years of 2012-2022, in English within the United States, regarding social work education and adverse trauma at the BSW level. The articles and studies chosen for this scoping review were selected with the intent to capture and learn of the lived experiences that educators had when implementing a trauma-informed pedagogy. The descriptions outlined within the articles were able to provide a full explanation of the process, beliefs, thoughts, and emotions relevant to answer the research question.

The exclusion criteria precluded articles published more than 10 years ago, non-English, and studies outside of the United States. Additionally, if trauma-informed education was mentioned at the master social work level, it was considered inapplicable. Lastly, the articles and book chapters selected all needed to be peer-reviewed to be included in review. This narrowed the review down to a total of 15 qualified articles (See Figure 1).

Content Analysis

After solidifying the eligible articles, the process of analyzing them began. A content analysis was chosen for this scoping review because it is a reliable way to analyze the findings and interpret the meanings between the themes and concepts uncovered in literature (Elo et al., 2014). The 15 articles chosen for this review were coded by hand to begin highlighting the recurring themes. Articles were coded and organized according to what each article stated about (1) educators' perceptions and (2) educator's experiences with implementing a trauma-informed pedagogy.

Content Analysis Terms Defined

A content analysis approach is a method that seeks to explore the meaning and relationships between themes or concepts identified within the literature. To derive this information from the selected articles, first open color coding occurred within each individual

article. Open coding consisted of looking through the literature and breaking down the data into individual themes that stood out. Secondly, axial color coding took place to examine the key concepts and themes across the literature. Axial coding can be understood as combining the individual themes collected during open coding phase and comparing these themes across the literature to draw connections between codes. This part helped identify the relevant and repetitive themes consistent with understanding educators' perceptions and educational experiences of applying a trauma-informed approach. Key emphasis was also paying attention to descriptors. One descriptor included the school settings in which BSW educators were located and reporting their experiences. It was helpful to notice whether educators were teaching students in urban or suburban communities and if their location impacted their educational experiences or not.

Results

The primary goal of this scoping review was to understand how educators were doing in applying and conceptualizing implementing a trauma-informed framework within higher education. Scoping reviews, also commonly referred to as "mapping reviews" are research projects exploratory in nature that systematically map key concepts, theories, and sources to inform practice (Munn et al., 2018). A scoping review was conducted to determine the knowledge gaps that may exist when implementing a trauma-informed approach within undergraduate social work education. The results of this scoping review illustrate key factors that contribute to effectively establishing trauma-informed classrooms within undergraduate social work programs and highlights the present gaps that counteract the successful implementation of infusing a TI approach.

Thematic Analysis

After conducting a careful analysis of the literature, three significant themes comprised the successes and challenges that needed to be understood by educators if they were to effectively infuse a trauma-informed pedagogy at the undergraduate level. These three themes include: 1) a positive student-teacher relationship; 2) ACEs/faculty collaboration; and 3) trauma-informed training of faculty. These were the prominent themes highlighted across the literature reviewed within the 15 articles chosen. A combination of conceptual articles and research studies make up this scoping review. Tables one, two, and three will be highlighted below associated with each thematic category describing the characteristics of each theme and their unique distinctions.

Table 1 Positive Student-Teacher Relationship (n=6)

Author	Research/Conceptual Article	Main Thematic Focus
Stokes & Brunzell (2019)	Conceptual Article	Promotes positive student-teacher relationship, suggests viewing students from a holistic perspective: mind, body, and soul.
Greig et al. (2021)	Conceptual Article	Argues that positive student-teacher relationships promotes academic resiliency.
Venet (2019)	Conceptual Article	Promotes positive student-teacher relationship to foster academic engagement.
Allen et al. (2020)	Conceptual Article	Promotes positive student-teacher relationship.
Cramer (2018)	Conceptual Article	Highlights students' traumatic characteristics, promotes practice empathy to develop a positive student-teacher relationship.
Brunzell et al. (2018)	Research Article	Promotes positive student-teacher relationship.

Positive student-teacher relationship. Many of the educators in the literature emphasized the value that was placed on establishing a positive relationship with their students. Establishing positive relationships with students, staff, and the community can effectively employ a trauma-informed approach. At least four conceptual articles identified this relational approach as an effective strategy in connecting to trauma survivors and promoting academic resiliency (Stokes & Brunzell, 2019; Greig et al. 2021; Venet, 2019; Allen et al., 2020). In trauma-affected classrooms, most students have high levels of mistrust, become socially isolated, feel misunderstood, and ultimately withdraw from school (Cramer, 2018). Establishing a positive student-teacher relationship can reassure undergraduate students that they are in a safe and trustworthy partnership committed to helping them thrive academically.

Another aspect to fostering a positive student-teacher relationship was undergraduate educators viewing their students holistically, from a mind, body, and spirit perspective (Stokes & Brunzell, 2019). Stokes and Brunzell (2019) specifically urge educators to consider applying a trauma-informed positive education (TIPE) model with their undergraduate students. TIPE is a pedagogical approach that provides educators with a foundation to build a safe learning environment that honors students from a whole person perspective. TIPE is made up of three tiers: (1) Increasing students' self-regulatory abilities, (2) Increasing students' relational capacities, and (3) Increasing psychological resources for students' overall wellbeing (Stokes & Brunzell, 2019). Educators who learned the TIPE model were able to ingrain these teaching strategies into their way of naturally working with their students and found that this positive framework to education was effective. The TIPE model was presented to staff during their professional development trainings and weekly staff meetings over the course of a 12- month time frame. Ultimately, with educators' intentionality and consistency infusing this framework,

they noticed that their students began performing better and had character growth. Educators expressed looking forward to their next staff meeting so that they could hear and share with their colleagues the success stories that developed from implementing the TIPE framework. Furthermore, educators' students expressed feeling more resilient, displayed more positive self-talk, healing, and a growth in mindset (Stokes & Brunzell, 2019). Students began to feel validated, encouraged, and as if their educator genuinely cared about their goals in life (Brunzell et al., 2018).

The TIPE model fits into the overarching purpose and process of implementing a trauma-informed perspective in undergraduate programs. Educators who practice from a TI perspective were able to notice their bond strengthening with their students. Students were encouraged to persist in fulfilling higher education demands when some days that goal seemed nearly impossible to focus on accomplishing. When students were inspired to learn, educators found themselves more inspired to teach. Educators made a point to show up to teach with a positive mindset. Educators also remained flexible in their teaching approaches, asked questions with concern if they noticed that a student had become withdrawn, and ensured that they remembered key details that their students may have shared during group or private discussions, which theoretically would help students understand that they were seen beyond their periodic behavioral outbreaks (Venet, 2019). Educators' positive attitudes allowed students to feel comfortable to connect and created a sense of belongingness (Greig et al. 2021). While a positive student-teacher relationship set the learning environment from trauma-affected students, faculty collaboration was the foundation that set educators up for success in implementing a trauma-informed pedagogy.

Table 2 ACEs/Faculty Collaboration (n=6)

Author	Research/Conceptual Article	Main Thematic Focus
Carello & Butler (2014)	Conceptual Article	Highlights gaps in Trauma-informed training for baccalaureate programs.
Frankland (2021)	Conceptual Article	Promotes faculty collaboration as an effective method to implement a trauma-informed pedagogy.
Rahimi et al. (2021)	Research Article	Promotes faculty collaboration, argues for educators to increase their awareness on adverse childhood experiences.
Museus et al., 2018	Research Article	Advocates for educators to adopt a trauma-informed identity and encourages multidisciplinary collaboration.
Vieselmeyer et al. (2017)	Research Article	Support faculty collaboration, promotes best practices for social work educators to implement post-traumatic growth teaching strategies.
Santiago (2021)	Research Article	Highlights gaps in faculty collaboration between urban/rural colleges.

ACEs/Faculty Collaboration. At least 50% of the social work educators included within the literature reviewed express the importance of educators and program directors first becoming aware of how ACEs are defined, evaluate how ACEs may have impacted their own lives, and then come up with a responsive pedagogy to engage and meet the learning needs of their students (Carello & Butler, 2014; Frankland, 2021; Rahimi et al., 2021). Once educators grasped the concept of ACEs and its impacts, it was an easier adjustment to adopt a trauma-informed identity as an educator (Museus et al., 2018; Rahimi et al., 2021). This resulted in educators' classrooms

shifting from a culture of blaming their students for their behaviors to understanding that their students' behavior was appropriate considering their traumatic histories.

Educators effectively implementing a trauma-informed approach was not by independent effort. Conceptual articles indicate that with the integrated support received from BSW educators collaborating with counselors, community members, other educators, and staff, is what made their implementation feasible (Frankland. 2021; Venet. 2019). A highlight from this collaboration was that educators were able to share ideas on best practices to use when applying teaching strategies that promoted post-traumatic healing and growth for their students (Vieselmeyer et al., 2017). Santiago (2021) described that despite the success some educators were having in collaboration, a gap in collaboration persisted among urban and rural institutions. Santiago (2021) argued that there could be more cohesion between faculty and students in rural schools. For instance, educators in rural settings were struggling to be culturally competent especially if their students were predominantly part of an underrepresented population. This differed from educators teaching in urban communities because those educators were already informed of the unique challenges and disadvantages the students in their community faced such as trauma, poverty, homelessness, or financial insecurity (Santiago, 2021). Thus, it is suggested by educators that more trauma-informed training be made available at the undergraduate level to encourage and sustain consistent cohesion between students and faculty members.

Table 3 Trauma-Informed Training for Faculty (n=3)

Author	Research/Conceptual Article	Main Thematic Focus
Levenson (2017)	Conceptual Article	Promotes trauma-informed training for faculty.
Vasquez (2017)	Conceptual Article	Promotes faculty training to alleviate secondary trauma and academic stress for educators and students.
Mersky et al. (2019)	Conceptual Article	Highlights educators mislabeling students behavior in trauma-affected classrooms due to inadequate trauma-informed training.

Trauma-informed Training. Literature on trauma-informed pedagogy revealed that educators were initially informed at k-12 and graduate levels about implementing a trauma-informed approach, but it was slow to take effect on the BSW undergraduate level (Carello & Butler, 2014). This gap in trauma-informed awareness calls for more training to be made available to educators. Afterall, educators cannot be expected to be effective trauma responders without the knowledge and support. A primary benefit of being trained as a trauma-informed educator is to be able to effectively address trauma as it manifests within the classroom. Another useful benefit is that educators will have a foundational protocol to resort to that will help reduce educators feeling overwhelmed when teaching in trauma-affected classrooms (Levenson, 2017). Lastly, trauma-informed training can also help educators inform and cultivate a trauma-informed curriculum suitable to safely introducing students to trauma content, while simultaneously meeting the learning needs of students who are impacted by trauma (Vasquez, 2017). The more awareness educators received on the intricacies of trauma through trauma-informed training, the greater chance there is at reducing exposure to secondary trauma and alleviating academic stress for educators and students.

Some behaviors exhibited by students who have been negatively impacted by trauma are angry outbursts, turning in assignments late, and avoiding socializing with peers during group work. Current literature confirmed that educators feel unprepared to attend to the mental, social, and emotional needs of their students (Allen et al., 2020). This unpreparedness has resulted in students being mislabeled with terms such as defiant, rebellious, disengaged, and not ready to fulfill higher education requirements (Mersky et al., 2019). Educators mislabeling was mainly due to educators looking at the surface behaviors of their students instead of considering that there could be a deeper-rooted concern causing their students to perform poorly in class, such as trauma. To combat this wedge between educators and students, professional development offering trauma-informed training by a trauma-informed expert may be the next best step.

Discussion

This scoping review informs social work educators of the positive impacts and unique challenges that may arise when implementing a trauma-informed pedagogy in undergraduate education. Educators need to make proactive attempts at providing their students with a safe learning environment, as this will yield the best accelerated educational outcomes for trauma survivors. Many of the articles included in this scoping review allowed for educators to have a dominant voice on the support that is needed at the undergraduate level to implement a trauma-informed pedagogy. Although students' voices were minimized in this scoping review, through advocacy means, educators were able to give their students an active voice by sharing their perception on their student's classroom experiences and how they witnessed their students' academic performance improving by way of grades, class participation and a noticeable change in higher graduation rates (Brunzell et al., 2018; Cramer, 2018; Vieselmeyer et al., 2017). Overall, implementing a trauma-informed pedagogy can produce a trauma sensitive atmosphere

that aims to regard students' actions from a place of curiosity instead of judgement.

Fundamentally, a trauma-informed pedagogy is truly a relational one. Undergraduate educators can discover in the literature that students who are negatively impacted by adverse childhood experiences are able to advance academically once a positive-student teacher relationship has been established (Vieselmeyer et al., 2017).

Strengths and Limitations

A scoping review was conducted on trauma-informed education within undergraduate programs. Following a comprehensive literature search, a total of 15 peer-reviewed articles were retrieved from reliable databases using specific inclusion criteria to help narrow the search results to relevant articles and studies. The execution of this scoping review proved to have many strengths. The scope and search terms of the literature review were clear and appeared to be appropriate to answer the research question. The focus of the review being solely on undergraduate students served as a strength in this case instead of a limitation because previous researchers discovered that there was a gap with trauma-informed practices primarily being employed between grades K-12 and in graduate schools, leaving out the undergraduate level (Carello & Butler, 2014). Three themes emerged and were efficiently outlined for present and future educators to become informed when seeking to implement a trauma-informed pedagogy.

While there were strong aspects of conducting this scoping review, there are also some gaps that exist within the methodology. An important limitation is that majority of these articles (10 out of 15) were not actual studies. There is not much research being done on trauma-informed classrooms and most literature being published on addressing trauma in higher education is conceptual in nature. Furthermore, biases towards trauma were not discussed or expressed as considered. The search terms were limited to social work educators. Beginning with

a broader search on how other disciplines implement a trauma-informed pedagogy and then funneling findings back to social work educators may offer researchers and educators with a wider perspective on the barriers and benefits that arise when implementing a trauma-informed approach.

Implications for Social Work Education

SAMHSA (2014) suggests that all educators, staff, and service workers embody the ability to include empowerment and choice, and cultural, historical and gender issues in their professional practice. Educators wishing to effectively implement a trauma-informed pedagogy should acknowledge the intersection that exists between trauma-informed teaching and cultural inclusion. Haynes (2022) informs educators that to accurately address trauma in the classroom, educators must consider the cultural experiences, sociopolitical, and socioeconomic inequities that may impact their students' learning. This means being intentional and understanding that a student who has a traumatic history whether from exposure to trauma in their homes or within their communities, will inevitably present a need to first feel safe socially, emotionally, and intellectually before engaging in rigorous learning. As mentioned above, a trauma-informed approach is typically consistent with a relational approach. Therefore, social work educators should make forming positive student-teacher relationships a priority to increase students' sense of belongingness and then move forward in implementing their trauma-informed teaching practices.

The NASW code of ethics and the Council of Social Work Education (CSWE) has also placed a high value on diversity, equity, and inclusion (CSWE, 2015). Discussions have been made about implementing a specialized curriculum to guide social work educators in making ethical decisions that account for a trauma-informed perspective. Social work programs can look

forward to making improvements to their curriculum and pedagogy. As a profession that often engages with students, clients, and community members who may come from traumatic backgrounds, having a trauma-informed curriculum as a roadmap could be a fundamental asset to social work programs.

Implications for Social Work Educators

Adopting and implementing a trauma-informed pedagogy has its challenges and successes. SAMHSA six trauma-informed principles are considered valuable and almost crucial for educators establishing a universal system that works when implementing a trauma-informed pedagogy to education. This would be a good direction for scholarly work to move into.

Researchers and educators can seek to find more resources and establish systems that effectively administer the six trauma-informed principles: safety, trustworthiness and transparency, peer support, collaboration and mutuality, empowerment, voice and choice, and cultural issues into undergraduate education. Applying these teaching strategies may promote post-traumatic healing and growth for educators' students (Vieselmeyer et al., 2017).

Educators already practicing are advised to work to establish a safe learning environment that is predictable and consistent. For students impacted by trauma, a safe and consistent learning atmosphere is pivotal. Educators should continue to seek training opportunities to become trauma informed, as it is a parallel process for educators to have the knowledge and support that they need to practice from a trauma-informed perspective successfully. Trauma-informed professional learning and development can be a scarce resource. However, without training many educators may continue to feel deterred from infusing this framework into their classrooms (Allen et al., 2020).

Implications for Trauma-Informed Training

Educators should note that four out of the 15 articles reviewed in this scoping review addressed training as a concern (Rahimi et al., 2021; Carello & Butler, 2014; Allen et al., 2020; Mersky et al., 2019). A primary issue regarding training for faculty was the affordability. Social work program directors can consider offering training online, in person, or as an onboarding process/part of orientation. This option may reduce costs as a trauma expert can come to train educators as a collective instead of sending each educator out independently to receive training. Moreover, educators will be able to become aware of trauma on a deeper level by having trainers explore topics such as the ACEs study, complex trauma, culturally relevant pedagogical strategies, symptoms/triggers of trauma, toxic stress, and vicarious trauma. Lastly, research also suggests experiential learning such as role-playing for educators to begin practicing incorporating trauma-informed pedagogical strategies (SAMHSA, 2014). This method can be impactful at helping educators become more comfortable with employing trauma-informed strategies ahead of time before utilizing them in class. Educators making intentional and deliberate efforts to practice from a trauma-informed perspective can strengthen their classroom culture, inspire unity, improve student's belongingness, and enhance students' overall academic performance.

Future Research Directions

Differences between teaching and learning for educators and students varied across rural and urban communities (Venet, 2019; Stokes & Brunzell, 2019). There is limited research on this topic. More studies examining the impacts of trauma-informed teaching strategies effective in rural and urban campuses can be helpful to social work education. Moreover, this scoping review was only able to locate a few articles that spoke specifically to social work education. Another

recommendation is for researchers to continue to study trauma at the undergraduate and graduate social work education levels.

Further research on effective teaching strategies to assist social work educators within rural school settings should be a priority because according to current literature on trauma-informed education, social work educators in urban schools were more proficient at understanding the full context of their vulnerable students. Educators in urban settings had a higher awareness to learn the needs of their students' dysregulated behavior due to their student's exposure to ACEs, and this awareness produced a more positive educational experience and outcomes for their students (Venet, 2019). Students impacted by ACEs in rural schools also contend with the negative ramification of ACEs and need direct support as well. While there was more information available for social work educators in urban schools, future research in this area can be conducive in supporting social work educators no matter which region they teach in. Ultimately, the goal is to ensure that adequate training for educators is received so that educators feel competent and confident in helping students who are affected by trauma have a positive and prosperous educational experience.

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**Infusing A Trauma-Informed Pedagogy to Promote Academic Achievement for African
American Undergraduate Students**

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Abstract

Research reveals that African American students have lower completion rates of college, higher rates of trauma and greater academic stress compared to their counterparts. With trauma having immediate and lifelong impacts on students' social, emotional, mental, and spiritual health, there is a need for educators to become trauma sensitive. This presentation argues for the inclusion of a trauma-informed pedagogy within undergraduate education. Educators can create a culturally inclusive environment that enhances students' sense of belongingness and maximizes their academic success by implementing the six trauma principles: safety, trustworthiness and transparency, peer support, collaboration and mutuality, empowerment and choice, and cultural, historical, and gender issues. The intent of this presentation was to introduce educators to a trauma-informed (TI) perspective and provide educators with practical (TI) teaching strategies to effectively implement a trauma-informed approach to practice.

Keywords: trauma-informed pedagogy, teaching strategies, African American students, academic success, undergraduate education

Infusing A Trauma-Informed Pedagogy to Promote Academic Achievement for African American Undergraduate Students

A professional conference presentation fulfills my banded dissertation. I presented at the 2022, peer-reviewed, annual International Teaching and Learning Lilly Conference. The presentation was held in San Diego, CA at the DoubleTree by Hilton Hotel- Mission Valley. The date I presented my poster was on January 7th. 2022 at 11:40am. The presentation was entitled *“Infusing a Trauma-Informed Pedagogy to Promote Academic Achievement for African American Undergraduate Students”*. The presentation addressed the impacts that trauma has on students, especially African American students who have a higher exposure to adverse childhood experiences compared to other marginalized populations.

The presentation highlighted the challenges and barriers preventing academic achievement for African American students. The audience at the presentation consisted of educators who were from local institutions as well as international institutions. The commonality among the group of attendees who heard me speak was everyone’s positivity and eagerness to learn how to effectively implement a trauma-informed perspective within their programs. Educators were informed of the present gaps that exist in education when infusing a trauma informed (TI) pedagogy. This information was based on the literature that conceptualized the effects of trauma in African American undergraduate educational experiences. This presentation provided educators with an overview of a trauma-informed approach to education, the behaviors students may present with who have experienced or been exposed to adverse trauma, as well as included empirically based teaching strategies that can be applicable to applying the six trauma-informed principles to practice regardless of professional setting.

The overall aim of my scholarship is to cultivate a safe learning environment for African American students to excel and thrive in their educational pursuits despite any disadvantages that they may encounter academically, socially, emotionally, and mentally due to their traumatic histories. Informing educators of the value in infusing a trauma-informed responsive pedagogy within BSW programs connects to my vision and was conveyed thoroughly through my presentation. This presentation is a significant component of my scholarly work because equipping educators on practical ways to integrate a trauma-informed approach that applies the six trauma-informed principles: safety, trustworthiness and transparency, peer support, collaboration and mutuality, empowerment and choice, and cultural, historical, and gender issues to education can shift the trajectory of African American students' educational experiences.

A trauma-informed framework is currently considered as a specialized topic introduced at the master's level. This poster presentation represented the relevance and necessity of having a trauma-informed approach to be employed at the undergraduate level. Educators are encouraged to become knowledgeable of the effects of trauma and adopt a trauma sensitive pedagogy. With trauma having immediate and lifelong impacts on students' social, emotional, mental, and spiritual health, it is imperative for educators to establish a safe classroom environment that is engaging to all walks of life and fosters hope and academic resiliency.

INFUSING A TRAUMA INFORMED PEDAGOGY TO PROMOTE ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT FOR AFRICAN AMERICAN UNDERGRADUATE STUDENTS

AUTHOR
Brittany Guisintanner



Reframing the question: "What's wrong with you?" to "What happened to you?"
-Dr. Bruce Perry



SIX TRAUMA-INFORMED PRINCIPLES

SAMHSA (2014) advised educators, service workers, and medical professionals to employ these six principles to practice.

- Safety
- Trustworthiness and transparency
- Peer support
- Collaboration and mutuality
- Empowerment and choice
- Cultural, historical, and gender issues

PRINCIPLES FOR TEACHING STRATEGIES

- Safety**
 - Build classroom community
 - Provide resources to counselor's office, campus safety, and student support
- Trustworthiness and transparency**
 - Embrace vulnerability and transparency through sharing of lived experiences.
 - Remain consistent in teaching approach
- Peer support**
 - Promote group work
 - Encourage self advocacy skills
 - Teaching-learning expectations are personalized
- Collaboration and mutuality**
 - Co-facilitate, students become leaders
 - Avoid using assignment material that may induce a trauma response
- Empowerment and choice**
 - Encourage self-determination
 - If students become withdrawn, seek to understand, offer self-regulation strategies
 - Foster resiliency
 - Consider students whole self: Mind, body, and soul
 - Cultural, historical, and gender issues
 - Motto: There is strength in diversity
 - Critically discuss biases and stereotypes on racism, feminism, sexual orientation, sexual preference, age, religion, and gender orientation

INTRODUCTION

74% of undergraduate students have experienced at least one form of trauma before reaching the age of eighteen (Cherry & Wilcox, 2020). These traumatic events are referred to as Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs). Although trauma impacts everyone, research reveals that African American students have higher exposure to ACEs than their counterparts, thus leading to greater academic stress and early college withdrawal (Vasquez, 2017). Applying a trauma-informed approach to education helped improve the academic success of African American students (Boyratz et al, 2013).

SIGNS TO LOOK FOR:

- Disengaged in class participation
- Poor academic performance
- Early withdrawal from college
- African American students, higher exposure to trauma (Remain Culturally Sensitive)

STUDENT VERSUS TEACHERS' PERCEPTIONS

- Low cultural representation
- Lack of belongingness
- Teachers lack of preparedness
- No adequate training available

OBJECTIVE

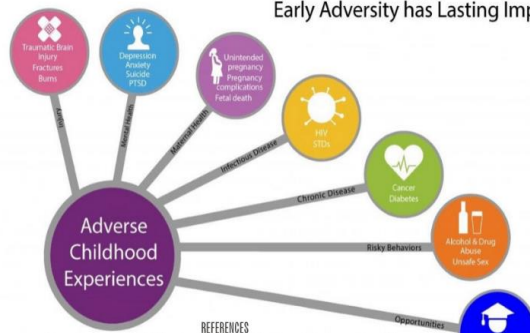
The purpose of this study was to analyze how trauma manifests itself within undergraduate classrooms and to determine if educators incorporated a trauma-informed pedagogy, would that strategy be effective in engaging trauma-exposed students.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

A Trauma-informed Approach guided this research (Carello & Butler, 2015).

- Values a strengths-based and post-traumatic growth perspective
- Resists retraumatizing students and clients (Mersky et al., 2019)
- Considers the effects trauma has on student's mental, emotional, and social development
- Constructivist Paradigm
- Promotes Engaged Pedagogy

Early Adversity has Lasting Impacts



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Do you currently practice from a trauma-sensitive approach? If so, what is your biggest challenge?



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