

# AFROCENTRIC KNOWLEDGE WITHIN THE CONTEXT OF SOCIAL WORK EDUCATION AND PRACTICE

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*“Africans have always asked questions about life, literature, nature, religion, and humanity. It is the nature of humans to ask questions when confronted with difficult issues and then to search for answers. Unfortunately, in this historical age it is necessary to emphasize that the search for solutions is not a European idea; it is a profoundly human process” (Asante, 2002, pp. 97-98).*

## PERSONAL EXPERIENCES

### Precious:

I am a Nigerian-Canadian woman with a BA in International Development Studies and African Studies. As a Canadian immigrant who spent some of her early years in Nigeria, I have acquired a well-informed understanding of "Africaness" both on and off the continent. The information that I became privy to during my research process better informed me on the power of Afrocentricity to transform fields of care, like Social Work.



### Nafisa:

I am a Somali-Canadian woman completing a Clinical Master of Social Work program. As a first-generation person of African descent, I have had to carry knowledge from two worlds while learning in an education system that operates based on a Western perspective. This research on Afrocentric education is a reminder of the ongoing work that students and practitioners of African descent face within these fields, and the emotional/mental toll of this responsibility.



### The Impact of Intersectionality on identity as lessons learnt in our role as Research Assistants

Afrocentricity is a term developed by Molefi Asante in the 1980's, Afrocentricity "is the conscious process by which a person locates or relocates African phenomena with an African context. It is then location as opposed to dislocation and centeredness as opposed to marginality"(Asante, 2002, p. 97).

- Challenges faced by Black women in feminism discussions and intersectional identities resulted in feelings of exclusion and being forgotten within multiple movements, such as Black Lives Matter and women's rights (Rodgers, 2017).
- There is a need to have multiple components of identity validated when being required to express vulnerability. The exploration of the historical impact of systemic racism describes how the helping fields have continued to marginalize people of African descent due to the privileged nature of these professions (Goode-Cross, 2011).
- Minimizing experiences of Blackness require a deeper discussion on how the inclusion of Afrocentric education can empower students and recognize their learning needs. Exploration of the traditional role of education requires an understanding of how to include Afrocentric paradigms without centering Whiteness as the countering system (Allen, 2010).

### References

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## Study

### Background

This poster is based on a qualitative research titled: ***The United Nations (UN) People of African Descent (PAD) Decade and the recommendation for Afrocentric Education in Canada: An exploration of an Afrocentricity paradigm for social work education and practice.***

### Purpose

This research project is in alignment with UN PAD decade (2015-2024), and the recommendation 94 (e) in the report of the Working Group of Experts on PAD who visited Canada from October 17 to 21, 2016. The study draws from **both disciplines of African/Black Studies and the study of Social Work** to better understand the African/Black population in Canada. It aims to strengthen the utilization of Afrocentric Knowledge in Social Work.

### Main Research question

In what ways can Afrocentric knowledge inform/advance social work education and practice to render services to PAD centered on equity and anti-Black racism?

## LITERATURE REVIEW METHODOLOGIES

### Scoping literature review

Six search criteria:

- Afrocentricity and Social Work paradigm
- Afrocentricity in Canadian Education
- Social Work Afrocentric Identity
- Critical Race Theory and Afrocentricity
- Afrocentric Social Work
- Black Social Workers



### Seminal Works

- Key words search
- Citation analysis
- Marker paper analysis
- Reviewed work of popular scholars

***“...one cannot understand the full social effects of race without understanding the interrelated effects of other aspects of social oppression and how race is mediated with other forms of social difference” (Allen, 2010, p. 330).***

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