Abstract
The purpose of this qualitative research study was to investigate how an Educational Studies department in a small, Midwestern liberal arts college might employ a professional development initiative to confront and dismantle whiteness in curricular and pedagogical choices. Utilizing a critical participatory action research design, five higher education faculty engaged in a critical conversation inquiry group (Schieble et al., 2020) to develop their critical literacy (Rogers and Mosley, 2014). This study was designed to answer the following questions: How do faculty within an Educational Studies department think about their racial identities and the relevance of racial identity to the program? How do Educational Studies faculty in a critical conversation inquiry group develop critical self-reflection? How do Educational Studies faculty in a critical conversation inquiry group develop racial literacy? How does participation in a critical conversation inquiry group affect curricular and pedagogical choices in an Educational Studies program? Participants analyzed personal narratives and meeting transcripts using critical discourse analysis that produced meeting notes. After the study, the researcher analyzed participant reflections and all other artifacts. The findings from this study have implications for future faculty development initiatives in higher education regarding faculty fitness as critical, anti-racist educators.

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