

Thresholds in Education (ISSN 0196-9641)

CALL FOR PAPERS

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Special Issue

Critical Quantitative Methods in Education

The Thresholds Story

Thresholds in Education (originally *Thresholds in Secondary Education*) was first published in 1975 by faculty members at Northern Illinois University in DeKalb. Their intention was to “explore fresh ideas and viewpoints that may become the pathways to the future,” and for 35 years this venerable journal published four thematic issues a year. In those 35 years, articles by well-known educators and non-educators including Theodore Brameld, Benjamin Spock (yes, Dr. Spock), Linda O’Neil, Bill Ayers, William Schubert, Jan Woodhouse, Deron Boyles, Ming Fang He (to name just a few) appeared in the pages of *Thresholds* doing exactly that: exploring fresh ideas and viewpoints. However, in the face of rising publication costs and the growing contemporary online publication milieu, the last print version of *Thresholds* was published in 2010.

Fast forward to 2014. In discussions between the *Thresholds Foundation* executive board and representatives of the *Academy for Educational Studies*, a plan was hatched: re-launch *Thresholds in Education* as an open access online journal and house it at the *Academy for Educational Studies* web site. In addition to resurrecting *Thresholds*, it was decided that the new *Thresholds* would take on the look, feel, and substance of a slightly more traditional scholarly journal—the original *Thresholds* having had a more “magazine-like,” short-article, look and feel. With this in mind, the *Thresholds in Education* editorial board, in partnership with the *Academy for Educational Studies*, has recently published issues on the educational impact of COVID-19, critical race theory, and rural educational matters. Future issues include one on contemplative approaches to teaching and learning, and this issue.

Overview: Critical Quantitative Methods in Education

The theme for this special issue is *Critical Quantitative Methods in Education*. January 2025 marked the beginning of a new era for the conduct of Critical quantitative educational research in the United States. Seeking a space for Critical quantitative researchers to convene and strategize, the Critical Quantitative Work Week was proposed in January of 2025 and held remotely in July of 2025. This Work Week brought together quantitative researchers, scholars, practitioners, and students from across the country and around the world, who remain committed to conducting their quantitative work using Critical frames. Throughout the Work Week, participants across diverse U.S. and international institutions demonstrated how Critical Quantitative research can advance societies towards more democratic and liberatory spaces. In the spirit of the inaugural Work Week, this special issue invites scholars, practitioners, graduate students, and teachers to share their thinking, research, and/or teaching within and around Critical Quantitative methods at all

levels of education. Educational contexts are open with no geographical restrictions, and the work aims to be as free and open-access as possible.

Critical Quantitative methods play a vital role in education because they illuminate the complex social, cultural, and political forces that shape teaching and learning. Unlike approaches that prioritize measurement and standardization, Critical Quantitative research centers human experience, voice, and context. It asks not only *what* happens in educational settings, but *why, for whom, and with what consequences*. This orientation is especially important in education, where power relations are deeply embedded in everyday practices. Critical Quantitative methods represent a paradigm shift in educational research, challenging the traditional notion that quantitative inquiry is or ever could be neutral, objective, or value-free. These approaches recognize that all research, including quantitative work, is shaped by the researcher's values, social location, and political commitments, as well as by the historical and structural contexts in which knowledge is produced.

Unlike traditional quantitative research that often treats differences as deficits and presents findings as universal truths, Critical Quantitative methods interrogate the assumptions embedded in measurement, categorization, and analysis. These methods challenge deficit-based assumptions and expose how curricula, policies, and institutional norms can reproduce social inequities related to race, class, gender, language, and ability. In doing so, they push researchers and practitioners to reflect on their own positionality and the ethical dimensions of knowledge production. Critical Quantitative inquiry encompasses various specific approaches including, but not limited to: QuantCrit, TribalCrit, decolonizing quantitative research, DisCrit, and QueerCrit quantitative approaches. Each approach centers particular systems of oppression while sharing common commitments to equity and justice.

Furthermore, Critical Quantitative inquiry supports transformative aims in education. Its findings are not merely descriptive but are oriented toward critique and social change. By connecting lived experiences to broader structures of power, Critical Quantitative methods provide educators with insights that can inform more equitable educational practices. These approaches can both document community strengths and assets while also examining barriers, centering joy and resistance alongside struggle. In this sense, they are essential tools for understanding and reimagining education in pursuit of equity and democracy.

Author Guidelines:

Please submit a 500 - 700 word proposal, along with a short bio and contact information for each author by August 31st, 2026 (see submission email address below).

Final manuscripts will be 4,000-8,000 words, double-spaced, 12-point font, APA style 7th edition.

Submissions will undergo a blind peer review by at least two reviewers (i.e., one editorial team member, one volunteer reviewer). Submissions to the special issue will be evaluated based on their relevance to the theme and objectives outlined in the call for papers. Manuscripts should demonstrate a clear and substantive connection to the special issue's focus and contribute meaningfully to ongoing scholarly debates or identified gaps in the literature. Preference will be given to papers that offer original contributions through novel theoretical insights, innovative methodologies, new empirical evidence, or fresh interpretations of existing research.

Submissions should engage critically with relevant and up-to-date literature, situating the study within existing scholarship while advancing new perspectives. Clarity of writing and organization are essential: manuscripts should be well structured, clearly argued, and written in an academically appropriate style. Consideration will also be given to how each contribution complements the overall coherence and intellectual diversity of the special issue. Finally, submissions must comply with the journal's formatting, length, citation, and ethical guidelines.

General Timeline

Call for papers: March 11, 2026
Proposals Due: August 31, 2026
Accept/Reject: October 30, 2026
Draft Articles Due: January 30, 2027
Feedback to authors: April 30, 2027
Final Drafts Due: July 31, 2027
Published: Winter 2027

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