Exploring the Relationship between Ethnic Identity Development Status and Student Achievement

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Abstract

This study explored the ethnic identity development status of African-American adolescent male (AAAM) students (n = 127) and the relationship it has to their student achievement. The study used a mixed-methods design in order to triangulate the quantitative and qualitative data gathered to investigate the topic. The exploration of identity development was based in Erikson’s theory of psychosocial development and Phinney’s (1992) ethnic identity theory. The study used student achievement data gathered from the research site and qualitative data from the interview processes to explore the relationship between the two variables. The results of this study suggest that there is a relationship between the ethnic identity development status and the student achievement of the AAAM participants in this study. While these results have implications for all stakeholders in the realm of education, focused attention should be given to parents, teachers, and students themselves for a greater awareness of the impact of ethnic identity development on student achievement.