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How does race affect a person's educational identity?

INTRODUCTION

Race refers to putting human beings into groups on the basis of shared bodily or social qualities largely viewed as diverse in a given community. The term race was initially used to signify speakers of a similar language and also to refer to nationwide affiliations. By the seventeenth century, this terminology started to imply phenotypically or, in other words, physical traits. However, contemporary science regards race as a societal construct, an identity designed on the basis of laws made by the community. Though partly founded on physical resemblances in groups, race doesn't bear an intrinsic bodily or biological meaning. However, there are several significant races in the world. They include; whites, blacks, Asians, American Indians as well as native Hawaiian. White people are people whose origins are Europe, northern parts of Africa, or the Middle East. It constitutes individuals who report entries like Arab, Caucasian, Lebanese, Irish, Italian, Moroccan or German, or those who denote their races as White.

Blacks, are people whose origin is from one of the black ethnic groups from Africa. It comprises individuals who recognize their race as Black or report entrances like Haitian, African American, etc. American Indians are persons whose beginning is any of the original individuals of South and North America and Central America. In these groups, individuals identify and indicate their race as American Indian. Also, they report entrances like Central\south American Indian groups, Inupiat, Navajo, Yup'ik or Blackfeet. Asians are people whose origins are from any original persons of South-East Asia, Indian subcontinent or the Far East comprising, for instance, China, Korea, Thailand, Vietnam, Malaysia, Cambodia, Japan, the Philippine Islands as well as India. However, these individuals report detailed Asian replies like Korean, Chinese, Vietnamese, Japanese, Filipino, etc. lastly, Native Hawaiian. This category constitutes individuals whose origin

is either Samoa, Guam or Hawaii. It, however, comprises individuals who denote their race as Fijian, Native Hawaiian, Guamanian, Tongan, Marshallese or Samoan.

On the other hand, identity constitutes the relations, memories, values as well as experiences that aids in creating an individual's sense of self. In other words, it helps a person to know who they are. People construct their identity all through their lifetime. other components of identity include; economic background, gender, culture and, sexual orientation. However, in the theory of identity, it (identity) refers to individual categorization as an inhabitant of a role as well as integration of meanings and opportunities linked with that role together with its performance.

However, numerous factors affect the way adolescents see themselves. Learners' cultural and racial upbringings play a fundamental function in what they believe, their practices, and educational expectations. Therefore, features of educational identity and academic/educational personal concept are firmly linked to and bear an impact on the educational performance of a learner. Being aware of race and the ways through which institutional or structural racism impacts, for instance, students of color is crucial to assisting them in achieving their full potential in academics (Pop et al., 2016).

However, educational identity generally refers to the way people see themselves in the academic domain, and it is a broad dimension of worldwide self-concept. Additionally, a learner's academic identity may impact the way they navigate the environment of the school; it affects choices as well as behaviours that learners make, which influence their educational outcomes. These outcomes of the students are learning goals or goal orientation, motivation, intellectual engagements, disidentification or identification, achievement as well as academic and occupational aspirations.

However, it is crucial for educators to understand the way race and culture manifest in academics and the way race moulds the way learners view their words. Having a clear understanding of a learner's academic self-concept as an educator helps explain the student's orientation of the school. School factors aids in shaping a learner's individual made perceptions, particularly students of color, since educational identity is not easy ¹ to separate from sex and racial identities. Therefore, leveraging ethnic identity and cultural awareness can be one way in which educationalists can aid n meeting the diverse wants of students. The theory of Person environmental fit and self-determination suggests that particular learners want ought to be met so that the learner can be fully engaged and motivated in school. Firstly, the person-environment fit theory mainly emphasizes the interaction between the surroundings and characteristics of a person. Not only does a person affect his/her environment, but also the environment influences the person. However, when it comes to an educational setting, the competence of this fit amongst students and their school environment impacts their motivation towards learning, behavior, and generally, mental and physical health. This means that if the fit is optimum, the learner's functioning can be facilitated, whereas, if it's not suitable, the learner might experience maladaptation. For instance, a developmental behaviour paediatrician can study that a particular school environment isn't providing good academic programming for an educationally vulnerable student. The clinician can mediate this situation aiming at maximizing the fit in between the learners wants and the programming of their school. The significance of this theory with parents is that it provides a suitable rationale when a specific intervention is suggested.

The person-environmental fit model has been effectively incorporated into a developmental framework. Within this perspective of development, stage-environmental fit theory, to be precise, suggests that the merging of a person's developmental stages together with

their surroundings yields to an adaptive change in the person. Protagonists of this viewpoint uphold that synchronizing the developmental trajectory to the features and modifications in the immediate environment will inspire positive individual growth and maturity. As per the stage environmental fit concept, adaptation is likely if amendments within a person are harmonized with supportive transformation within the learner's 3 environments, that is, home, peer as well as school. One environmental adjustment that marks initial adolescence is the shift from elementary school level to junior high school/middle school. Several negative alterations within the learner are linked with this shift/transition. These changes include decreased levels of motivation, self-confidence, self-concept and amplified academic failure. However, this might result from numerous differences between the elementary school and the middle school that, in turn, makes the endless developmentally suitable for learners in this age range. A study carried out depicted that junior high school were accompanied by a higher emphasis on discipline as well as control, fewer chances for the learners to take part in making decisions, less individual and less teacher-learner relations, as well as lower cognitive requirements for allocated tasks, as compared to elementary schools. Therefore, a stage mismatch is linked with bad outcomes that frequently occur in school.

On the other hand, self-determination, through its need-based approach, provides real evidenced founded guidelines for educators on the way they can create a school environment that is motivational. This ³ theory suggests that humans are motivated to revolve and grow by three innate and common psychological wants. The self-determination model, however, proposes that individuals are capable of becoming self-determined if their desires for connection, competence as well as autonomy are satisfied. Autonomy; individuals need to feel that they are in control of their behaviours and goals. In school, educators need to give the learners chance to have control of their dreams and guide them (the learners) where necessary, no matter the backgrounds the

learners come from. By so doing, the learners feel a sense of being capable of taking direct actions that lead to actual positive change that plays a crucial role in feeling that they are self-determined. Competence; students need to gain mastery of diverse school tasks as well as learn different skills. However, tutors need to provide a learning environment whereby all learners from different walks of the world are offered equal chances of learning and gaining diverse skills in school. When learners feel like they have the adequate knowledge and skills required for their academic success, they most likely take actions that will assist them in achieving their goals. Connection; learners need to feel a sense of belongingness and attachment to other persons in their school. No matter the culture or racial background a learner comes from, educators need to create an environment where all learners are recognized and validated as students with unique cultures, interests, beliefs, and talents.

A school culture that values each student empowers them to discover the enjoyment and purpose of studying. Though, creating this culture does not take place overnight. First of all, educators need to unlock the studying by diagnosing the significant constraints that hinder the learners from attaining their full educational potentials. Some of the critical hindrances that may obstruct learnings together with a sense of belongingness are, one, cultural differences; this happens when the school environment doesn't appreciate and promote a sense of belonging for learners coming from diverse cultures. Lack of cultural appreciation makes learners feel unrecognized and don't belong to the school community (Rouland). Compliance is the second constraint. This happens when students feel uncomfortable or, instead, they aren't sure of something. This makes the learners return to doing what they used to do before and fail to embrace novel challenges and ideas. The third constraint is low self-esteem. This happens mostly in interracial learning environments or schools. Some learners might feel insecure about how they

look, not being informed like the other learners from different races, or feeling not smart enough. For instance, a student of color in a class full of white students might feel they are not as bright as the white learners or maybe the white learners are more informed than them. This can highly impact the way a learner interacts with other learners. Students' fear of failure is the fourth constraint. Students can be afraid of taking any risks and otherwise tend to look for ways in which they can avoid the embarrassment that they believe results from failing. The last one is secrets. Students go to school with issues related to their background or with their peers. Some of the secrets are big and might be difficult to disclose. However, they can affect how learners feel and view themselves and others.

Therefore, the above constraints can be the reasons why some learners face a lot of challenges succeeding in school. However, it is vital for educators to at least take time to get to know their students immediately after reporting to school as freshmen. Building a neutral culture of studying is about creating relations founded on trust and respect regardless of where the learners come from. This is because every learner requires to have a sense of belongingness in the classroom environment and feel that everyone in the classroom, including the tutor, cares about them before jumping into academics. Although for some learners, it might take a while before establishing a relationship simply because some secrets they hold into the heart that harm them and can't share with anyone easily (Gopalan et al., 2019).

However, the following are ways in which educators should embrace to create belongingness amongst learners and make them have the desire to be part of the class community. The first is the self-introduction of the educator to the learners. This is by sending emails, notes or even a link to the learner's parents for the introduction. Secondly, make sure to make it personal. This is through the inclusion of a fun photo that constitutes a favourite pet or hobby. And also

creating a personal note of the ways the class is going to be like alongside contact info. The third step involves knowing each learner by their name. Tutors ought to get a list of their learners' names alongside their photos and memorize them before their first class. By so doing, every learner will feel accepted and appreciated. Forth, greet every learner while saying their names. The tutor can even make it more fun by implementing their way of greeting their learners and making the learners memorize it. Five, creation of outside inside. Make the learners come up with a drawing or write a replication of themselves. Request them to note how people view and know about them on the left side while on the right side, tell them to write what they believe concerning themselves that people are aware of. The sixth one is encouraging the learners. Invite all the students to brainstorm what they are confident of is their laws and bill of rights for their class. The educators should share their experiences with the learners and show them how they (educators) have learned from failure. Inspire the learners to open and always be free to raise their concerns so that they can learn from mistakes. Seven, provide journals to the learners in order to reflect how they feel, the way they study or even face challenges studying and the way they interact with others in the class and even outside the class. Lastly, schedule meetings for every learner (individually). The educator should let every learner choose the date for themselves to have a face-to-face chat concerning their outside inside. However, these are some of the many tips an educator can embrace and practice to create a positive learning culture that accommodates every learner despite their differences in originality and abilities (Allen).

Additional information on a sense of belongingness.

Research reveals that when learners feel they are part of a school community, they engage actively in academic and non-academic school activities. Therefore, the feeling of belongingness generally impacts the academic performance of learners. The desire to belong entails a learner's

feeling about themselves and their relations with other people in the school surrounding. A sense of belongingness has been associated with good academic results for all learners. However, it's specifically crucial for learners who come from socially stigmatized societies like urban African Americans who have historically been discriminated against in educational institutes. The social structures found in high schools can impact learners' feeling of belongingness to the extent that they spread racial stereotypes as well as social exclusion or encourage inclusiveness. For instance, in predominantly African-American societies, it is most likely that most of the tutors are of diverse backgrounds with a small number of the training on serving different populations. However, the lack of the educator's know-how of African American learners' unique wants can result in learners feeling of disconnection from the school environment. Additionally, learners' ethnic identity can affect their feeling of belonging as well as achievement in school. Therefore, it is important for tutors to understand the connection between learners' race, the sense of belongingness in the framework of the school environment, and academic excellence (Strayhorn, 2018).

N.B. Research depicts that learners who report elevated levels of feeling of belongingness to the school surroundings and the classrooms experience positive academic outcomes. For instance, an elevated sense of belonging is linked with high school graduation rates and intellectual satisfaction, not forgetting high educational achievements. On the contrary, the absence of a sense of belongingness amongst learners is linked with anxiety, loneliness, alienation, and depression. In turn, these bad feelings can result in poor academic motivation, school dropouts, and low academic engagement among learners.

Apart from promoting a sense of belongingness in a school setting, here are some other ways through which educators can help in boosting the academic outcomes of learners of color. Firstly, educators should adapt the usage of culturally responsive learning and teaching practices.

Educational experts have carried out keen research on the role that cultural backgrounds practices, and beliefs play in a learner's achievement. They have, however, emphasized that culture is a primary connection to understanding the educational performance of black students. Therefore, to improve the academic results of these learners, the educational curriculum as well as instructional approaches in public learning institutions ought to start reflecting the learner's outside school cultural/social experiences. Tutors can promote cultural continuousness between learners' ¹home and school experiences by recognizing and stimulating learners' strengths or studying in their lives and families. However, these tactics can be put into practice in several ways, like incorporating multiracial books in learning and teaching practices or educating the learners using content from issues in their community or giving examples while tutoring from the learner's community (Celeste et al.,2019).

The other way of promoting excellent outcomes amongst students of color is through ¹leading by example. Ethnic identity has been considered an asset in aiding learners of color in negotiating exposure to risk linked to ethnic injustices. For African American students, ethnic identity can help in protecting and promoting factors of achievement-related results. However, one of the ways that tutors can assist their learners is by acknowledging the social and political as well as historical function played by race in the U.S.

CONCLUSION

¹Self- determination theory is founded on the ideology that human beings have intrinsic propensities to engage in active, curiosity-founded exploration as well to integrate novel pieces of knowledge into oneself. This inherent enthusiasm and personal regulation results in positive results like excellent school achievements, improved decision-making skills, and enhanced goal-setting manners. However, this is attained when several psychological wants are satisfied. They include;

the want for autonomy, the desire for competence and the need for relatedness or connectedness. However, all these needs need to be met so that a student can be fully engaged in school activities as well as ¹ feel more determined. Therefore, by understanding the significance of racial/ethnic identity and educational identity in the survived experiences of African American learners, educationalists can identify the underlying devices between school outcomes, motivation as well and learner's engagement and lessen bias in classes and the school at large.

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Links

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<https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/EJ1150199.pdf>

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