

Identity and Achievement: A Depth Psychology Approach to Student Development

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Abstract

This case study report describes a series of workshops exploring social and developmental challenges confronted by Black adolescents in the schooling process. Analysis of workshop session notes led to a community-based educational initiative aimed at promoting African heritage identity as an incentive to school achievement. Wilfred R. Bion's theory of small group behavior is used to shed light on the group process of workshop sessions and post workshop events and activities. Case findings are discussed in terms of Janet Helms's theory of racial identity development and Perry, Steele, and Hillyard's work on promoting Black student achievement. It is concluded that defining the culturally specific conditions for personal growth and combining professional concern with family support can be crucial to promoting developmental success for Black and African heritage youth.



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