

Relationship between
double-
consciousness and
african american
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The purpose of this paper is to identify a research topic of interest involving quantitative data that I believe to be in need of additional research. In the process, I will use this paper to lay the foundation for developing a quantitative research project, by identifying the statement of problem, the purpose of the study, develop research questions, and compose a hypothesis. I will ensure the statement of problem focus on the problem, I will ensure the purpose of the study stress the intent of the study, I will ensure the research question(s) address the purpose of the study, and I will ensure the hypothesis address the research question(s).

Statement of the Problem

There is a qualitative study completed by Dinkins & Thomas (2016) that was of interest to me. The study examined the perspectives and experiences of ten African American students at a predominantly white institution to understand why the students either persisted or discontinued their pursuit to become educators. The researcher found three factors that influenced the decision of the participants. First, they discovered that African American educators in the lives of the candidates played a significant role in inspiring them to pursue a career in education. Second, the candidates love for social justice provided the internal drive and pursuit to give back to their community. They felt that it was a calling to help other African American students to connect to their cultural identity. They wanted to present students with hope for a better future, despite the challenges of racial setbacks. They wanted to give them hope for the future by helping student to think outside the box and pursue academic excellence. Third, the candidates experienced standardized exams that typically required them to

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think inside an academic box and limit their creativity. They experience extra financial barriers that served as hindrances and barriers from completing education programs.

The problem in education for African American student, teachers, and administrators is double-consciousness (Goings, Alexander, Davis, & Walters, 2018). Du Bois (1903) in his autoethnographic, *The Souls of Black Folk*, wrote, "One ever feels his twoness, an American, a Negro; two souls, two thoughts, two unreconciled strivings; two warring ideas in one dark body, whose dogged strength alone keeps it from being torn asunder" (pg. 6).

Double-consciousness is a continuous struggle for African American students in education because they are being taught to be culturally white which is direct conflict with their black experience. Although segregation and separate but equal was outlawed by the Supreme Court (*Brown v. Board of Education*, 1954), segregation and separate but equal practices continue to be the systemic order across the United States. The Civil Rights Act (1964) was a legal action signed by President Johnson, declaring that it was illegal to discriminate and exclude citizens of the United States from experiencing full citizenship as declared by the Constitution, because of the color of their skin. Black history as taught in K-12 perpetuates double-consciousness because the curriculum limits black history to narratives of oppression and resistance, slavery and a continuous fight for freedom (King, 2017). There is more to Black history than what is selectively portrayed in public school history books. Positive youth development is crucial for African American youth as they deal with the aspects of double-consciousness. They must forever learn to navigate a social, political, education, religious and <https://assignbuster.com/relationship-between-double-consciousness-and-african-american-youth-identity-development-in-public-schools/>

historical paradigm deeply rooted in systemic inequities. The term African American rightly labels this struggle. Students of African descent will wrestle with the reality that their ancestors were once enslaved in a free country that practiced a double standard of freedom for whites and slavery for blacks. Students who are black of American descent will wrestle with the reality that their ancestors had to continuously fight to be recognized as citizens, and in a lot of cases recognized as a human being.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study is to determine the relationship between double-consciousness and African American youth identity development in public schools. The study will explore the concepts of double-consciousness, racial socialization, racial identity, differentiation of self, and the effects the media has in regards to negative stereotypes and disparaging narratives of African American people. Regardless of how successful an African American becomes in American society, in the background there is the imagery of acting culturally white to succeed in America. African American students are disconnecting from the classroom because of the cultural divide between students and educators (Boston & Warren, 2017). The social and legal constructs of racial identity has produced harmful emotional and psychological repercussion in American society, especially on the African American male (Dinkins & Thomas, 2016; Gushue et al., 2013).

Critical Race Theory (CRT) will serve as a theoretical framework (Ladson-Billings & Tate, 1995). CRT expounds on the fact that African American issues are acknowledged and advanced when it is in the best interest of the

white majority. CRT examines the negative stereotypes and disparaging narratives of African American through counter storytelling. Counter storytelling empowers African Americans to confidently emphasize their life experiences and feelings in the face of white backlash. CRT highlight the fact that the political, social, economic, education, and religious systems in American society are not equipped to remedy the wrongs of slavery because each system is intimately connected to the ideology of white supremacy. For example, Hughes-Hassell, Barkley, & Koehler (2009) used CRT to conclude that children of color are rare in transitional books. Transitional books help young children to transition from early readers to independent, self-regulating readers. When the transitional books in the education system are predominately white with few depictions of African American characters, the education system perpetuates the concept of double consciousness. In addition is demonstrates how ill equipped the system is to help the African American student navigate the struggles of double consciousness (Szymusiak, Sibberson, & Koch, 2008). Therefore, the double-consciousness dilemma is initiated and developed within the African American child as early as kindergarten in the education system. There have been advances in increasing ethnic and racial diversity in America but the person of African descent has not been given the social capital needed to effectively advance in a society that dismissed them as human being for centuries.

Research Questions

The research question sets the tone of my research. It helps me as a researcher and as an African American to maintain focus and narrow my <https://assignbuster.com/relationship-between-double-consciousness-and-african-american-youth-identity-development-in-public-schools/>

writing process toward supporting a specific foundational claim. This study will look to determine if there is a correlational between double consciousness and African American youth identity in public schools. Currently, there is research addressing the relationship between parent messaging and youth racial identity (Peck, Brodish, Malanchuk, Banerjee, & Eccles, 2014; Richardson et al., 2015; Tang, McLoyd, & Hallman, 2016; Thomas, Speight, & Witherspoon, 2010). There is research that examines the relationship between racial identity and African American youth sense of belongingness in school (Boston & Warren, 2017). There is research that examines behavioral problems exhibited by African American youth in relation to self-esteem (Davis, Smith-Bynum, Saleem, Francois, & Lambert, 2017). There is research on positive African American youth development relating to mentorship (Grills et al., 2016). There is limited research concerning the relationship between double-consciousness and the African American youth identity development in public schools. There is research that introduces strategies for expanding and utilizing double consciousness as a process to empower African American students but it does not address the struggles of double consciousness as it relates to the overall development of the African American student and their identity (Wynter-Hoyte & Boutte, 2018; Brannon & Markus, 2015).

The research questions proposed for this study are:

Research Question 1: What relationship does double consciousness as expressed by Du Bois affect the racial identity of African American youth identity in the public school system?

Research Question 2: What relationship does double consciousness have on the literacy and academic achievements of African American students?

Hypothesis

The purpose of the study is to examine the relationship between the theory of W. E. B. Du Bois' double consciousness concept and the identity of African American youth identity. Racial socialization, racial identity, differentiation of self, negative media imagery, and disparaging media narrative will be examined to support the claims of the study. Critical Race Theory (CRT) will serve as the theoretical framework to examine inequity and bias within the public school system's policies, practices, and curriculum. It is hypothesized that double consciousness as defined by Du Bois presents a continuous struggle for African American students' identity and academics. It is hypothesized that the public school system continues to perpetuate a curriculum that feeds into the double consciousness concept, thereby producing subtle mixed messages that produce large scale consequences on the identity of African American youth and their academics with far reaching effects into higher education.

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