

*African American College Students' Narratives of Their High School Experience and Its Effect on Their Self-Perception*

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One of the most crucial points of development in a child's life occurs during high school. However, studies show that minority students are experiencing poor qualities of education which lead to higher chances of socioeconomic disparity among these students. Research also suggests that negative experiences during high school - specifically with teachers - shape a student's perception of themselves. The goal of our research is to identify interventions that could improve the quality of education for minority students by first understanding the factors which affect their educational experiences. We interviewed college students about their memories of the quality of their teacher-student relationships in high school to understand how it shaped their identity as students and individuals today, as well as to track how these experiences have encouraged or hindered their academic and interpersonal success. Interestingly, we found that our participants reported that the challenges they faced as minorities in high school did not deter them, but instead motivated them to continue their education and strive for more in their lives which highlights the vaguely discussed topic of minority perseverance instead of failure. Therefore, it is important to discuss minority narratives of their educational experiences so that they can be understood and improved.