Toward A Multidimensional Framework: Exploring The Constructed Identities and Pedagogical Styles of Black Male Kindergarten Teachers in the South

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ABSTRACT

Given the one-dimensional, essentialist view of Black male teachers as social change agents (i.e., role models and father-figures) (Brown, 2012; Rezai-Rashti, 2008), the purpose of this study was to examine the identities, the ability to support Black male students’ success, and pedagogical styles of Black male kindergarten teachers in the South. Using a multidimensional conceptual framework including Black masculinity, Fictive Kinship Network, Culturally Relevant Pedagogy, and Critical Race Theory, this study captured counterstories of culturally relevant Black male kindergarten teachers. The counterstories were used as a methodological tool to convey major themes which demonstrated Black male kindergarten teachers’ ability to positively influence Black male kindergarteners academically using culturally relevant teaching.

Findings revealed that Black male kindergarten teachers perceived themselves to be fictive brothers/fathers who fostered collaboration and built solidarity with the Black community to academically and socially support Black male kindergarteners in early childhood classrooms. Black male kindergarten teachers were also found to be pedagogues of culturally relevant classroom management practices. Black male kindergartners reported that their Black male teachers used hip-hop, sports, and mathematics literacies as instructional approaches. Black family members perceived Black male kindergarten teachers as Role Models who represented positive images of Black manhood for their Black male kindergarteners. They also regarded Black male
kindergarten teachers as Role Models who minimized Black parents’ distrust for White female teachers and other White educational professionals.

Key Terms: Black male teachers, culturally relevant pedagogy, critical race theory, early childhood education, fictive kinship network, kindergarten teachers