

2013

# Book Review--Research Studies in Higher Education: Educating Multicultural College Students

Terence Hicks

## Journal of Negro Education

---

### BOOK/MEDIA REVIEWS

*Research Studies in Higher Education: Educating Multicultural College Students: Issues in Black Education Series* by Terence Hicks and Abul Pitre

Review by: Rhonda Erica Baylor

*The Journal of Negro Education*, Vol. 82, No. 3, The Race Against Time: Preparing Black Students for the Changing Landscape of Higher Education (Guest Editors: Bryant T. Marks and Karl W. Reid) (Summer 2013), pp. 353-355

Published by: [Journal of Negro Education](#)

Stable URL: <http://www.jstor.org/stable/10.7709/jnegroeducation.82.3.0353>

Accessed: 21/11/2013 16:50

---

Your use of the JSTOR archive indicates your acceptance of the Terms & Conditions of Use, available at <http://www.jstor.org/page/info/about/policies/terms.jsp>

JSTOR is a not-for-profit service that helps scholars, researchers, and students discover, use, and build upon a wide range of content in a trusted digital archive. We use information technology and tools to increase productivity and facilitate new forms of scholarship. For more information about JSTOR, please contact [support@jstor.org](mailto:support@jstor.org).



*Journal of Negro Education* is collaborating with JSTOR to digitize, preserve and extend access to *The Journal of Negro Education*.

<http://www.jstor.org>

This content downloaded from 129.207.146.201 on Thu, 21 Nov 2013 16:50:29 PM  
All use subject to [JSTOR Terms and Conditions](#)

venue for the reader to feel, to connect, and relate to the journey of the Black teacher. The voice of Justin Newell launches this section with a magnificent piece entitled *They Deserve It*.

Newell's personal accounts include a precious homage to his own teachers; those select individuals who recognized his potential and pushed him to actualize his strengths which once lay dormant. Through his story, we are reminded of the power of words and their ability to bring forth confidence or plant seeds of insecurity in the hearts of students. The classroom, for this author, seems to be more than a platform for regurgitation of basic definitions and mathematical concepts. Rather, the classroom is just as much a milieu of identity formation, purpose and self-discovery for the learner.

Although Newell's narrative was both personal and endearing, the author concludes chapter 13 in classic teacher form and fashion. He informs his readers by sharing 5 *Practical Strategies for Teachers and Parents*, which are summarized below.

- Regardless of your role in a young person's life, stress the importance of reading.
- Edify areas of strength and fortify areas of weakness.
- There is nothing wrong with saying "I love you".
- Discipline is a sign of love, not meanness.
- Seconds or minutes of consistent organization can help prevent endless "straightening" or "reorganizing binges."

The remaining chapters of this section reflect the same level of purity and insight that keep the reader engaged as well as enlightened.

Throughout Chapter 17, the authors, Leslie Fenwick and Chike Akua, provide compelling evidence which highlights the impact that same-race teachers have on improving academic outcome and school engagement with students of color. The authors recall a series of prolific studies that empirically conclude that African American teachers are, in fact, essential variables in promoting academic achievement for all students.

*Black Male Teachers: Diversifying the United States Teacher Work Force* does a stellar job of critically examining and exploring a hot topic educational issue. Readers should use this extensive volume as a catalyst for practical application, social change, and implementation of relevant policy initiatives. The state of our national educational agenda and reform depends on it. More importantly, our beloved children deserve it.

•

*Research Studies in Higher Education: Educating Multicultural College Students: Issues in Black Education Series*, edited by Terence Hicks and Abul Pitre. Lanham, MD: University Press of America, 2012, 284 pp., \$37.95, paperback.

**Reviewed by** Rhonda Erica Baylor, *University of the District of Columbia Community College*.

*Research Studies in Higher Education: Educating Multicultural College Students* is a compilation of nine research studies that examine how to effectively educate minority students matriculating through higher education institutions. Author Terrence Hicks is a scholar who currently teaches at Fayetteville State University and author Abul Pitre is the Chair of Leadership Studies at North Carolina A&T State University. Both seem to have a sentient understanding of issues that minority students must navigate while studying at universities and colleges. The authors not only identify the challenges that minority students face, but they also provide data and information on factors that contribute to collegiate success of multicultural students. Hicks and Pitre join a diminutive

league of contemporary education researchers who examine high performing minority students. They declare that “to produce excellence, you must study excellence” (p. 29).

The first four chapters of the book consist of qualitative research studies that examine the education process of students of color. Chapters 5, 6, and 7 consist of a mixture of quantitative and qualitative research studies about first-generation college students. Chapters 8 and 9 are quantitative research studies about undecided and non-traditional college students. Since most of the studies are qualitative, much of the data were collected during student focus groups and interviews; thus, this book is rich with collegiate student voices. This method is a strength of the text because few research studies gather data from student themselves. Another strength of this book is that it contains practical, implementable recommendations based on the collected data. College administrators, faculty members, and students may benefit from reading this work. Across the nine studies, it is clear that student self-efficacy and academic preparation contribute to the persistence and retention rates of multicultural students at higher education institutions.

Student affective disposition is one of the least studied predictors of academic success; yet, data from various standardized tests show a correlation between how students *feel* about their aptitude and their academic performance. Upon completing a synthesis of the research studies presented in this text, it is clear that student self-efficacy has an effect on academic performance. Perhaps, since there is no index to measure confidence, researchers tend not to use this non-cognitive factor in education empirical studies. Emerging research, however, draws connections between the two as this text does. The combined research studies in this text clearly indicate that students of color must navigate through their self-efficacy feelings to perform well in college. In her book, *The Pedagogy of Confidence*, Dr. Yvette Jackson corroborates this finding by writing that confidence is not only a feeling but it is also neurologically connected to performance: “When feelings of competence are increased, fewer catecholamines (the body’s natural chemical response to stress) are released” (Jackson, 2012, p. 9). Furthermore, authors of the research studies included in this text convey the message that self-efficacy beliefs are blended with other sociocognitive factors that together regulate human behavior

Hicks and Pitre discuss that many of the students who expressed having low confidence also reported feeling no sense of belonging at their respective higher education institutions. Accordingly, students stated that having a “sense of belonging” to their universities is important to their academic success. When they do not get this external validation, they may become uncomfortable in their environments. Chapter 3 is a research study entitled, “Enhancing Success in the Community College: Recommendations from African American Male Students.” Black males involved in this study declare that having a sense of belonging affects their academic success. In order to create a sense of belonging for them, the students in this study suggest that institutions do the following:

- bring successful Black male role models to campus and
- establish a Black male academic success program.

Another common theme among these studies addresses the fact that many students of color, first-generation students in particular, feel as if they received a subpar primary and secondary education when compared to their peers. The study in chapter 6 is titled, “‘I Thought I Was So Dumb. . .’: Low-Income First-Generation College Students, Inequities in Academic Preparation and Reference Group Theory.” During many of the focus groups and interviews, across research studies, students of color reported that once they reached college, they realized that they had not received the same quality education as their peers. In chapter 2, “Inspired to Be the First: How African American First-Generation Students are Predisposed to Pursue Higher Education,” the authors find that first-generation students must select ‘the right’ high school (college preparatory high school) and must enroll in competitive courses once there in order to receive a sufficient education. The two aforementioned decisions can be determinants of collegiate success.

In chapter 9, “An Analysis on Retention among Traditional and Non-Traditional Students in Select North Carolina Community Colleges,” the authors close with a quantitative study that

examines retention and persistence rates. They acknowledge that while demographic factors are predictors of student success, academic factors seem to be more correlated with collegiate persistence. More specifically, this study reports that the first-semester grade point average is heavily correlated with retention. This study also reveals that application submission dates are a predictor of collegiate persistence. Students who applied to college within two months of the first day of class were less likely to persist when compared to students who applied to college more than two months prior to the first day of class.

In conclusion, *Research Studies in Higher Education* achieves the objective of providing information on educating multicultural college students. The text is well-written and the research studies coalesce to make the salient points. To make this an even more effective piece of work, the authors could have included more quantitative studies that show the outcomes of the practices that were discussed in the book. This book clearly achieves the objective of educating multicultural college students more effectively. College administrators, higher education professors, research analysts, policymakers, and college students can benefit from reading this work.

#### REFERENCE

Jackson, Y. (2012). *The pedagogy of confidence: Inspiring high intellectual performance in urban schools*. New York: Teachers College Press, Columbia University.

*Rhonda Erica Baylor is an independent Education Research Analyst and teaches at the University of the District of Columbia Community College. §*

©The Journal of Negro Education, 2013, Vol. 82, No.3

355