**Abstract**

Courtne Thomas

Academic Resilience: Narratives of High-Achieving Black Female Middle School Adolescents

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Carol Thompson, Ed.D.

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The purpose of this qualitative study was to examine the academic experiences of four grade 6, high-achieving Black females in an urban middle school. Using the interpretive lenses of Feminism, Critical Race Theory, Critical Race Feminism, Intersectionality and Identity Formation, roles and identities were explored with language analysis, barriers to success were identified as well as habits and factors contributing to their success revealing their beliefs about academic achievement.

Through the use of narrative inquiry, data were collected from semi-structured in-depth individual interviews, observations and researcher field notes, personal autobiographical narratives, archival document reviews and artifacts.

Findings of this study revealed that participants exhibited critical roles in their academic success and demonstrated strong academic identities. All four participants described challenges they faced and what contributed to their academic success despite those challenges. The participants acknowledged both intrinsic and extrinsic factors that contribute to their success. Some intrinsic factors include self-respect, motivation and vision while extrinsic factors are positive parental influences, caring educators, friends and community members. Though the four participants acknowledge their race and gender, more emphasis is placed on their academic identity.

Implications for black male and female learners, classroom teachers, school administrators and policy makers are provided. Suggestions for future research are also shared.