




Small Acts of Resistance: Factors Underlying Youth Coping with Stereotype Threat in Schools




Omar. Abdulhussein¹, Thandiwe. Dlamini^{2*}, Mona. El-Sayed³

¹ Department of Family Counseling, University of Basrah, Basrah, Iraq

² Department of Psychology, University of Cape Town, Cape Town, South Africa

³ Department of Educational Psychology, Cairo University, Giza, Egypt

* Corresponding author email address: thandiwe.dlamini@uct.ac.za

E d i t o r	R e v i e w e r s
Trevor Archer  Professor Department of Psychology University of Gothenburg, Sweden trevorcsarcher49@gmail.com	Reviewer 1: Mohammad Salehi  Associate Professor, Department of Educational Management, Sari Branch, Islamic Azad University, Sari, Iran. Email: drsalehi@iausari.ac.ir Reviewer 2: Zahra Yousefi  Assistant Professor, Department of Psychology, Khorasgan Branch, Islamic Azad University, Isfahan, Iran. Email: yousefi1393@khuif.ac.ir

1. Round 1

1.1. Reviewer 1

Reviewer:

The phrase “The school environment is a key developmental context in which young people construct their sense of self and social identity” is strong but generic. Consider integrating South African context here to establish cultural relevance earlier.

You state “relatively little is known about the everyday coping strategies and acts of resistance employed by youth in African contexts”. Please support this claim with at least one systematic review or gap analysis citation to reinforce originality.

The description “open-ended questions addressing students’ awareness of stereotype threat...” would benefit from sample interview questions to enhance transparency and replicability.

Non-Compliance: The sentence “If a teacher tells me only the ‘smart’ kids should lead, I don’t follow” is striking. However, please acknowledge the risks students face when resisting authority, as this nuance is absent.

You state “the positionality of the researchers... may have influenced data collection and analysis”. Please expand this reflexivity by explicitly stating your research team’s cultural or institutional standpoint and how this was managed.

Authors uploaded the revised manuscript.

1.2. Reviewer 2

Reviewer:

You write “Wu and colleagues demonstrated that stereotype threat not only impedes academic functioning but also influences poverty-elimination dynamics...”. This connection to poverty is compelling, but the link to your study is unclear. Please clarify why this evidence is relevant to school-based coping strategies.

In “Emotions such as stress and anger often emerge in response to racial stereotypes in schools”, it would be helpful to distinguish between acute stress and chronic stress trajectories, since your findings later discuss both adaptive and maladaptive responses.

The sentence “These structural dimensions underscore that coping with stereotype threat cannot be reduced to individual-level strategies alone...” is important. Please strengthen this point by directly foreshadowing how your findings on “negotiating power in school spaces” address this gap.

Internalizing Stress: You note “Not all strategies were adaptive”. Consider presenting more detail on the prevalence of maladaptive strategies (e.g., how many students reported withdrawal) to balance interpretation.

Policy Awareness: The quotation “I told the teacher the code of conduct says no favoritism” indicates legal/policy literacy. Please explain whether such awareness was common or isolated to specific participants.

Cultural Pride: The paragraph beginning “One of the central themes in this study was identity negotiation...” effectively compares to existing literature. However, please avoid over-relying on parallels with non-African populations (e.g., Asian or refugee youth) and emphasize distinct South African dynamics.

Authors uploaded the revised manuscript.

2. Revised

Editor’s decision after revisions: Accepted.

Editor in Chief’s decision: Accepted.