Effect of Varying Identifications

There is no “ideal placement” within these diagrams. Each position has both positive and negative outcomes for the individual.

One might argue, for example, that a person in the marginal position is experiences disconnection from both the ethnic and majority groups. At the same time, the person is free from the complexity of negotiating and prioritizing the pressures of both groups.

One might argue that a person with a pluralist orientation will be able to get “the best of both worlds.” However, this same person will experience pressures to “choose a side” or accusations of “being a chameleon to serve selfish goals.”

The role of educators, then, is not necessarily to push youth toward one direction or another, but to assist in the exploration of various positions and the evaluation of pros and cons that arise from each position.

When youth choose to occupy a certain position, educators can support youth best by being accepting of their choice (including a choice later to change their mind) and helping youth achieve satisfaction within their choice through open dialogue.