A CRITICAL ASSESSMENT OF THE CORRELATION BETWEEN IMPOSTOR SYNDROME IN STEM AND STEM SELF-EFFICACY IN EARLY ADOLESCENT LEARNERS

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Over the years, there has been a surge in the demand for a proficient STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math) workforce to occupy the growing STEM job vacancies worldwide. The United States has the obligation of producing competent STEM workers if it intends to make a profound contribution to this sector. However, the reputation of STEM learning as being arduous has proven to be a deterrent to students’ interest in the pursuit of STEM careers. In an expounding mixed-methods study, 15 students responded to survey questions that sought to measure STEM IS and S-SE in adolescent learners. Following the analysis of the quantitative data derived from the survey, 3 STEM teachers were interviewed as part of a focus group for the purpose of examining STEM IS and S-SE from a teacher’s perspective. Results of the quantitative analysis found STEM IS to be present in adolescent learners. It showed no effect for gender in STEM IS. Findings also indicate a moderately negative and significant correlation between STEM IS and S-SE. The analysis of the qualitative findings indicates that teachers are aware of the manifestation of STEM IS among their students. They acknowledged the difficulty in their interaction with students who exhibit signs of STEM IS in the classroom and also suggested that there is an inversely proportional between STEM IS and S-SE.