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Racial Identity, Religious/Spiritual Support, Self-Efficacy, and Academic Support in Predicting Black College Students' Academic Performance

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by

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MSW, California State University, Stanislaus, 2007

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Dissertation Submitted in Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree of

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Abstract

Black students in the United States continue to struggle academically as they matriculate into postsecondary education, placing them at risk for missing opportunities for work and social success. Research has identified the dimensions of Black racial identity, as well as other social factors, that may contribute to academic success. What is missing, however, is research grounded in a theory of Black identity that examines how identity and other factors combine to influence academic success. This quantitative online survey research tested 5 hypotheses to ascertain their relative strength in predicting academic success among Black college students: (a) demographics (age, gender, socioeconomic status, parents' level of education, and number of semesters in school), (b) Black racial identity, (c) academic support, (d) self-efficacy, and (e) religious/spiritual support. A sample of 87 Black American students (at least 18 years of age, currently enrolled as a matriculating student in postsecondary undergraduate education) completed the Cross Racial Identity Scale, the Daily Spiritual Experience Scale, the Self-Efficacy Scale, the Academic Support Scale, and a demographics form that included self-reported overall GPA, as of most recently completed term. Four regression analyses were conducted, but only self-efficacy significantly predicted academic performance. The lack of significant results on key predictors was ascribed to the relative homogeneity on these measures and to an academically high-performing sample. Nevertheless, these results expand the literature on the importance of self-efficacy as a correlate of academic performance. The results also suggest that high school and college counselors and educators can gain insights into Black students by understanding racial identity, parents' education, and academic support.

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Dedication

I dedicate this dissertation to my loving mother, Susan Hudson who passed on March 27, 2010 and to my loving son, Joenathan Hudson who passed on November 15, 2012. I am thankful for the many acts of loving kindness and support shown to me during my education endeavors. Your thoughtfulness is deeply appreciated and will always be remembered.

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Above all, I give thanks to my Lord and Savior Jesus Christ in blessing me with wisdom and understanding and providing me this opportunity in earning a doctoral degree in Educational Psychology. I would like to thank my family and chair Dr. Susan Marcus. Thank you for your motivational support and guidance in making sure I stayed the course in completion of this research study. I would also like to thank Dr. Anthony Perry and my dissertation committee member Dr. Marlon Sukal for your guidance, feedback, and support. I would also like to recognize my cheerleading section that collectively consists of family and friends. I thank you for your prayers and moral support. Of course words alone can't fully express how thankful I am for my wife, Judy, as she has been by my side from the start to the completion of this dissertation process.

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Chapter 1: Introduction to the Study

Introduction

This study examined the influence of Black racial identity and other social psychological factors on the academic performance of Black college students. There is considerable research on the relationship between academic success and factors beyond academic aptitude. These include demographic variables (e.g., age, gender, socioeconomic status, level of parent education, and number of semesters in school), academic support, spiritual beliefs, and self-efficacy (Alfaro, Umaña-Taylor & Bámaca, 2006; Bandura, 1977, 1997, 2001, 2006; Brady-Amoon & Fuertes, 2009; Carey, 2004; Carter et al., 1997; Constantine, Miville, Warren, Gainor & Lewis-Coles, 2006; Fhagen-Smith et al., 2010; Fife et al., 2011; Hyers, 2001; Massey, 2004; Orfield & Lee, 2005; Parham & Helms, 1985; Rowley, Chavous & Cooke, 2003). There is also a growing body of evidence that racial identity plays a role in the success of Black Americans in school and career (Constantine, Miville, Warren, & Lewis-Coles, 2006; Fortunato, 2011). However, there is limited research on the relative strength of racial identity and other psychosocial variables to predict academic success among Black college students. Employers and the media continue to emphasize the importance of a college degree (Jones & Williams, 2006; Kodrzycki, 2004; McGuire, 2013; Roksa, 2010; Sandham, 1997), and Black students continue to be at-risk for dropping out (Alliance for Excellent Education, 2007; Green & Winters, 2006; Newman et al., 2000; No Child Left Behind, 2011; U.S. Department of Education National Center for Educational Statistics, 2010). Therefore, this study attempted to fill the gap in the literature by examining these variables using a multivariate approach.

The results of this study may be useful in promoting the recognition of, and access to, racially and culturally appropriate resources for Black college students that go beyond traditional academic support. It is important to understand the role of Black racial identity and other psychosocial factors because they could offer ideas for expanding existing services or designing new extracurricular activities for enhancing academic success. This chapter provides an overview of the study, including the background, problem statement, purpose, research questions and hypothesis, theoretical framework, nature of the study, definition of key terms, assumptions, limitations and delimitations, and anticipated significance.

Background of the Study

Black people in the United States comprise a group with a very complex range of preferences about Black racial identity, ethnic cultural beliefs and attitudes. Yet the term "African American" continues to be used to characterize Black people, presuming that they are homogenous in Black racial identity and cultural experiences (Cross, 1991; Shell, 2011). This group includes biracial individuals (e.g., Black and non-Black parentage) as well immigrants, first-generation Americans, second-, third-, and fourth-generation Americans, and so on.

Despite historical and current efforts to create equal opportunities, ethnic and racial minorities in the U.S. continue to struggle to gain access to resources and opportunities for educational and economic advancement (Cross, 1991; Jones 2010; Luhman, 2002). Black students are particularly at risk as they transition into postsecondary education. National test results have revealed that Black students struggle academically; before transitioning into postsecondary education, they do not perform as

well as White students, particularly in reading, mathematics, and geography (Harris & Marsh, 2010; NAEP, 2007; NCES, 2006; NCLB, 2011; Thernstrom & Thernstrom, 2003). Therefore, this study attempted to identify the intrapersonal and social factors that moderate postsecondary academic success. Identification of these factors could help fill a gap in the literature, and give direction to postsecondary student services for bolstering the social and academic supports that promote the success of Black college students.

Problem Statement

Black students in the United States are still faced with the challenges of unequal educational opportunities. According to the National Association of Educational Progress (2007), a disproportionate number of Black students do not complete high school. Black students have poorer academic outcomes than Whites. More Black students live in poverty and attend lower performing schools than White students. Further, there is considerable evidence to suggest that Black students continue to struggle academically as they matriculate into postsecondary education (Charles, Dinwiddie & Massey, 2004; Lee & Shape, 2007; NAEP, 2007). This problem is of acute concern as this culture emphasizes the value of college education as a means for improving opportunities for work and social success (Alliance for Excellent Education, 2007; Charles et al., 2004; NCES, 2006).

Despite these challenges, there is some research that suggests that Black Americans who developed positive attitudes towards Black racial identity found success in academic endeavors. For example, Smith and Hopkins (2004) reported that through positive racial identity Black students are more likely to overcome academic struggles

and performing well in mathematics; Fife, Bond, and Byars-Winston (2011) found a strong correlation between racial identity and self-efficacy.

Theories of racial identity suggest that racial identity in the Black population is multifaceted and diverse, that is, there is no uniform "Black" identity (Shell, 2011). Cross's newly expanded nigrescence theory of Black racial identity further suggests that personal evolution of Black identity comes with an increased sense of self-efficacy, self-acceptance, and acceptance of others (Cross & Vandiver, 2001; Fhagen-Smith, 2010).

In related literature, self-efficacy and academic support have been identified as strong predictors of a student's academic performance and career-goal orientation (Brady-Amoon, 2009; Edman & Brazil, 2007; Fife et al., 2011; Hoffman, Liagas & Sanders, 2003; Hsieh, Sullivan & Guerra, 2007; Orfield & Lee, 2005). Alfaro, Umaña-Taylor, and Bámaca (2006) found that academic support (i.e., parents, teachers, and peers) had a specific influential impact on academic performance measures. Other research has indicated that religious and spiritual support are strong influences on the Black population in overcoming academic struggles and achieving success (Constantine et al., 2002; Constantine et al., 2006; Krause, 2002, 2003, 2004a; Lee & Sharpe, 2007; Walker & Dixon, 2002).

The problem addressed in this study was Black postsecondary academic achievement and research grounded in a theory of racial identity that examined these dimensions (racial identity, academic support, religious support) and how they combine to influence academic performance in the Black college student population.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this quantitative study was to examine the dimensions of Black identity and psychosocial factors that contribute to academic success. A non-experimental survey design was used, using Cross's expanded nigrescence model of Black racial identity (Cross & Vandiver. 2001; Fhagen-Smith, 2010) that assessed the influence of the independent variables (racial identity, religious/spiritual support, self-efficacy, and academic support) on the dependent variable (academic performance) in U.S. Black college students. The results of this study provide further understanding of the role of racial and ethnic identity, and offer guidance and ideas to student services for enhancing academic success.

Research Questions and Hypotheses

The study was guided by the following research questions and hypotheses. The questions were formulated the researcher to allow a step-wise multiple regression approach to select the order of entry of variables according to the theoretical framework and findings of relevant published literature (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2013). The primary question this study had relative importance of this set of predictor variables on the criterion variable, GPA.

1. Are self-reported demographic variables (age, gender, socioeconomic status, level of parent education, and number of semesters in school) among Black college students significant predictors of academic performance, as measured by self-reported overall GPA?

   $H1_0$: Black college student demographic data (age, gender, socioeconomic status, level of parent education, and number of semesters in school), as

assessed by the self-report CRIS form, will not significantly predict academic performance, as measured by self-reported overall GPA.

$H1_a$: Black college student demographic data (age, gender, socioeconomic status, level of parent education, and number of semesters in school) as assessed by the self-report CRIS form, will significantly predict academic performance, as measured by self-reported overall GPA.

2. Is racial identity (as measured by the six factor scales of the Cross Racial Identity Scale) among Black college students a significant predictor of academic performance as measured by self-reported overall GPA?

   $H\ 2_0$: Racial identity (as measured by the six factor scales of the Cross Racial Identity Scale) among Black college students will not significantly predict academic performance, as measured by self-reported overall GPA.

   $H\ 2_a$: Racial identity (as measured by the six factor scales of the Cross Racial Identity Scale) among Black students will significantly predict academic performance, as measured by self-reported overall GPA.

3. Is academic support (as measured by the Academic Support Scale) among Black college students a significant predictor of academic performance, as measured by self-reported overall GPA?

   $H\ 3_0$: Academic support (as measured by the self-reported Academic Support Scale) among Black college students will not significantly predict academic performance, as measured by self-reported overall GPA.

H 3_a: Academic support (as measured by the self-reported Academic Support Scale) among Black college students will significantly predict academic performance, as measured by self-reported overall GPA.

4. Is self-efficacy (as measured by self-reported Self-Efficacy Scale) among Black college students a significant predictor of academic performance, as measured by self-reported overall GPA?

   H 4_0: Self-efficacy (as measured by the two subscales of the Self-Efficacy Scale) among Black college students will not significantly predict academic performance, as measured by self-reported overall GPA.

   H 4_a: Self-efficacy (as measured by the two subscales of the Self-Efficacy Scale) among Black college students will significantly predict academic performance, as measured by self-reported overall GPA.

5. Is religious/spiritual support (as measured by the Daily Spiritual Experience Scale) among Black college students a significant predictor of academic performance, as measured by self-reported overall GPA?

   H 5_0: Religious/spiritual support (as measured by the Daily Spiritual Experience Scale) among Black college students will not significantly predict academic performance, as measured by self-reported overall GPA.

   H 5_a: Religious/spiritual support (as measured by the Daily Spiritual Experience Scale, DSES) among Black college students will significantly predict academic performance, as measured by self-reported overall GPA.

Theoretical Framework

This study used Cross's expanded nigrescence theory of Black racial identity as the theoretical framework (Cross & Vandiver, 2001; Fhagen-Smith, 2010). Cross' original work specified a developmental model, moving from "pro-White to pro-Black attitudes" (Cross. 1991; 1995; Cross & Vandiver, 2001, p. 179). The expanded theoretical framework incorporates social identity with lifespan development in order to capture time, context, personal identity, and reference group across the life span (Vandiver, 2001; Vandiver et al., 2002).

Racial identity was described according to three thematic categories: preencounter, immersion-emersion, and internalization (Cross & Vandiver, 2001; Worrel et al., 2001). *Preencounter* refers to an identity of a negative stereotype, ignorance or miseducation about Black culture, and self-hatred. *Immersion-emersion* refers to an identity in limbo or "flux." This category is dimensional: on one end (*immersion*), the attitudes connote intense Black/anti-White identification. On the other end (*emersion*), the attitude reflects "more nuanced views of the Black and White community" (Worrell et al., 2006, p. 522). Internalization refers to the reconciliation of Blackness within a multicultural world, where there is acceptance of, and value in, being Black, while simultaneously having regard for other racial and ethnic groups.

From these categorical themes, Cross and his colleagues (Vandiver et al., 2000; Worrell et al 2004) developed the six-factor Cross Racial Identity Scale (CRIS), which measures racial identity attitudes: preencounter assimilation, preencounter miseducation, preencounter self-hatred, immersion-emersion, anti-White, internalization Afrocentric, and internalization multiculturalist inclusive. These dimensions have been examined in

relation to the preferences of mental health counselors (Shell, 2011), academic performance (Arroyo & Zigler, 1995), and psychological adjustment (Anglin, Alberti, Link, & Phelan, 2008). Further discussion of these dimensions is presented in Chapter 2.

This theoretical framework and its accompanying measure CRIS were chosen because of the emphasis on reference group and social identity. This is consistent with other major developmental models (i.e., Erikson, 1968) that point to the importance of social relationships to young adults as they navigate their academic years. Yet, it goes beyond traditional models by attempting to articulate and measure the Black experience of social identity. Further, quantitative tool made it possible to examine Black identity relative to other relevant social factors (i.e., religion, self-efficacy, and academic support) that have been shown to influence academic success.

Nature of the Study

The study use a nonexperimental survey design, with data collected through a Web-based questionnaire. An online survey was chosen for three reasons:

1. Convenience: (a) Most students had ready access to the Web and the study was self-administered. (b) Using the Internet allowed me to reach a larger pool of participants and rapidly collect data within a short period of time (Bourque & Fielder, 2003; Creswell, 2009).
2. An online survey was cost efficient (Bourque & Fielder, 2003; Fortunato, 2011).
3. Participants are likely to feel more comfortable answering questions about sensitive issues or personal experiences anonymously, rather than in person or by telephone (Bourque & Fielder, 2003).

The intent of the study was to identify a model that best predicts academic performance based on (1) demographics), (2) Black racial identity, (3) academic support, (4) self-efficacy, and (5) religious/spiritual support independent variables that represent factors identified in the literature as having relevance to understanding the Black college students unique stressors and supports. The 15 predictor variables included the following:

1. Five demographic variables: age, gender, socioeconomic status, level of parent education, and number of semesters in school
2. Cross Racial Identity Scale (CRIS): six (factors
3. Daily Spiritual Experience Scale (DSES): one summary scale
4. Self-Efficacy Scale (SES): two subscales
5. Academic Support Scale (ASS): one summary scale

The dependent variable was overall GPA, self-reported, as of the most recent completed term.

The study used a convenience sample of volunteers. I identified the following sources: United Black Student Unions of California and Black Student Union organizations; the local chapter of the NAACP; and five Black churches in the geographic area. The recommended sample size was calculated using G-Power Analysis (Faul, Erdfelder, Buchner & Lang, 2009) based on these parameters: a medium effect size of .15; alpha error probability of .05; power of .80, and 15 predictors. The result was 139 cases. I also applied Tabachnick and Fidell's (2013) guidelines for estimating sample size: "The simplest rules of thumb are $N \geq 50 + 8m$ (where m is the number of IVs) for testing the multiple correlation and $N \geq 104 + m$ for testing individual predictors" (p.

123), with a recommendation to use the higher number, in this case, $N \geq 50 + 8 (15) = 170$.

I obtained permission for the above organizations to post flyers and announcements to invite their members (Appendix A). The invitation contained a brief description of the study and a link to the online Informed Consent (Appendix A) and survey (Appendix B). Prior to taking the survey, all participants had to indicate (via electronic checkbox) that they had read and agreed to the terms of the Consent (Appendix A). Only then could they click the link to begin the survey. Their responses were collected anonymously. At the conclusion of the data collection period, I downloaded the dataset to my secure computer for analysis.

IBM SPSS (version 21.0) was used to analyze the data. I began by examining the data file for missing data, incorrect values, and outliers. Descriptive analyses was conducted and reported. Distributional properties were examined to ensure that proposed analyses met the statistical assumptions (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2013). To meet the statistical assumptions and examine the research questions:

1. I examined the psychometric properties of each of the published scales because this contributed to the literature (additional scale validation) and increased the validity of the study's statistical conclusion.
2. I examined the correlations among the independent variables. This helped to understand the relationships among the predictors and identified risks for multicollinearity.
3. I conducted multiple regression analyses to determine the best fitting model and the relative strength of the predictor variables.

Definition of Key Terms

Academic Achievement: an individual's perceived highest level of education, GPA scores, standardized test scores, and internal accomplishments such as academic achievement efforts, perceived educational goals and perceived importance of academic achievement goals, and importance of academic achievement (Newman et al., 2000; No Child Left Behind, 2011; U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Educational Statistics, 2010).

Academic Support: significantly meaningful and influential resources (i.e., cultural values and beliefs, spouse, significant other, teachers, extended family members and friends) that help promote and foster motivation, resiliency, and educational success during difficult and adverse times (Sands & Plunkett, 2005; Alfaro, Umaña-Taylor & Bámaca, 2006).

African American: a Black person who was born and raised in the United States and a descendent of American colonized slavery (Berlin, 2010; Shell, 2011).

Biracialism: a genetic combination of two idiosyncratic different races of biological parents; a physical/genetic mixture between two distinct races of people (Herring, 1995).

Black: identity of racial classification for individuals of a dark skinned genetic makeup.

Ethnicity: an individual or ethnic group of people based upon their ancestry, history, and cultural distinctiveness (i.e., native language, traditions, values, customs, and beliefs) (Cokley, 2007; Helms, 2007; Jiménez, 2010; Yoon, 2011; Yoon, Langrehr & Ong, 2011).

Ethnic Identity: identity based upon an individual's self concept in having a common bond with a distinctive ethnic group of people because of similar experiences in culture (i.e., shared beliefs, practices, and values), ancestry (i.e., generational descendents or kinship), and history (i.e., record of inherited past) (Cokley, 2007; Luhman, 2002; Jiménez, 2010).

Ethnic Identity Development: a lifelong socialization process of self categorization based upon on an individual's cultural distinctiveness and common bond with an ethic group of people (Phinney, 1992; Cokley, 2007; Yoon, 2011).

Race: an individual or racial group of people based upon their commonly shared genetic physical appearances through one's ancestral heritage, shared commonality of history (social and cultural influences), and/or geographic origin of birth (Luhman, 2002; Cokley, 2007; Jiménez, 2010; Jones, 2010; Shell, 2011).

Racial Identity: identity based upon an individual's perception of commonality in a specific racial group by ancestral heritage, culture, place of origin, and appearance (i.e., skin color, hair) (Cokley, 2007; Jones, 2010; Luhman, 2002).

Racial Identity Development: a lifelong socialization process of self categorization in understanding his or her racial experiences and identifying with a particular race (Cross, 1971; Cross, 1976; Cross, 1978; Cross, 1991; Cross, Flagen-Smith, Worrell, & Vandiver, 2002; Cross & Vandiver, 2001; Fhagen-Smith, Vandiver, Worrell, & Cross, 2010).

Religious/Spiritual Support: a methods or strategies that are based on one's religious and spiritual values, beliefs, and practices that help an individual better

understand and deal with societal and academic stress in providing optimism (Constantine, Miville, Warren, Gainor & Lewis-Coles, 2006).

Self-efficacy: an individual's perceived belief in having self competence in the ability to act upon completing a task, succeed in reaching potential ambitions and goals, and cope with unexpected problems (Bandura, 1977, 1997, 2001, 2006; Brady-Amoon & Fuertes, 2009; Fife et al., 2011).

Assumptions

The fundamental assumption underlying this research was that the constructs under study could be accurately captured through the use of self-report instruments delivered online. All of the instruments were selected because of their psychometric properties; i.e., moderate to high estimates of internal consistency and evidence of construct validity (Alfaro, Umaña-Taylor & Bámaca, 2006; Bandura, 1977; Bandura et al., 1977; Brady-Amoon & Fuentes, 2009; Fhagen-Smith et al., 2010; Fife et al., 2011; Loustalot, Wyatt & Boss, 2006; Plunkett & Sands, 2005; Sherer et al., 1982).

The second assumption was that a sufficient number of constructs had been selected to adequately explore fairly complex phenomena. The choice of constructs was justified by prior literature. It was also assumed that the choices for order of entry of variables reflected an accurate representation of their influences, that is, that the predictive model was a reasonable approximation of any cause and effect relationships.

The third assumption was that the accessible population would consist of Black College students who were at least 18 years of age, currently enrolled as matriculating students in postsecondary undergraduate education (i.e., Community Colleges, State Colleges or University Colleges), and have completed at least one term.

Limitations

Survey research has inherent limitations regarding construct, internal and external validity. I was hopeful that construct validity limitations were mitigated with the use of psychometrically acceptable measures. However, I had no control over the data collection context. Issues of social desirability (e.g., participants who may have been concerned about stereotyping or being "singled out" as Black or African American) may have arisen in the process of completing the survey. Another limitation was that participants may have tried to guess a "correct response" or over exaggerated their responses on an instrument to seek social acceptance (Creswell, 2009).

There were three threats to internal validity. First, survey research does not allow the researcher to manipulate and control the variables in making inferences of causation. At best, the variables were ordered according to a theoretical and/or temporal framework in order to examine independent/dependent relationships. Also, the self-administered survey questionnaire did not allow assignment of participants to groups, so that any comparisons of groups were based on attributes (Creswell, 2009).

The second threat was self-report bias, which means that the participant may not have been entirely truthful. The third threat was that the amount and influence of extraneous variables (e.g., variations in setting, having others fill out the questionnaire) on the data was unknown (Creswell, 2009).

There were two threats to external validity; I could not control selection of participants, because a convenience sample was used. Participants were self-categorized into groups: those who were currently attending college and those who had once attended

college. Self-selection does not allow for estimating sampling error nor generalizing to a specific population (Bourque & Fielder, 2003; Creswell, 2009).

Scope and Delimitations

This research inquiry focused on the relative strength of Black racial identity and psychosocial factors (academic support, self-efficacy, and religious/spiritual support) in predicting academic success among Black college students beyond demographics (age, gender, socioeconomic status, level of parent education, and number of semesters in school). Internal validity was limited by the self-selection of participants, lack of control over the administration of the survey; and the in advertent omission of potentially relevant variables.

The scope of this study was limited to Black college students in the United States who were at least 18 years old. Other U.S. minority populations (e.g., Hispanic) were excluded because the focus of the study was the ethnic and cultural identity unique to the Black population. The study was further bound by geographical access to the Black colleges in the North, whereas most predominantly Black colleges are in the South. While the results include the descriptive characteristics of the sample for comparison to other research, I was not certain of the generalizability of the results because the sample was not randomly selected.

Significance of the Study

The implications in the data analysis of this study include filling a gap in the literature by contributing to the knowledge of the relative strength of Black racial identity and other psychosocial variables (religious/spiritual support, self-efficacy, academic support) in predicting the academic performance of Black college students. Much effort

in education is directed towards preparing Black students for college, yet the research still points to the struggles Black students' face as they matriculate to postsecondary education. It is reported "academic environments that, although not outwardly hostile, provide little or no social support to Black students" (Jones & Williams, 2006, p. 27). Other relevant factors include "parental education, family income, academic resources and achievement in high school, and affordability of college" (Kodrzycki, 2004, p. 1).

It is anticipated that the findings of this study will contribute to positive social change by helping educators understand the role of Black racial identity among African American students pursuing higher education and successful careers. Understanding the role of Black identity could offer guidance to school educators and could give student services ideas for enhancing academic performance. The information from this dissertation study will contribute to psychological research and help educators, school counselors, and other scholar practitioners by increasing their knowledge and skills for helping African American Black college students in the 21st century. Therefore, in working with Black students in this era, educators can be encouraged in understanding African America history and can view Black Americans as a resilient, diverse race of Black people by being proactive in providing Black students with the essential tools needed in overcoming societal and academic adversities. This dissertation research will also help develop social awareness of other communities and organizations about the diverse cultural and historical experiences of Black people in America; such experiences are prominent in the lives of most African Americans. Such findings can provide a new source of knowledge in understanding the importance of Black racial identity and how one self-identifies as being Black. Church organizations can use these findings to

understand Black racial identity and the important role religious/spiritual beliefs may have on Blacks people who are members of a church congregation or members of Black organizations pursuing educational and economic success.

Summary and Transition

The literature indicated that Black people in the United States are not a homogenous group. To explain the variations, the theoretical construct of Black racial identity has emerged and is a useful measure for examining the variations in Black students' academic success. This construct incorporates the dimensions of social identity and reference group, which are hypothesized to be relevant to this age group as they transition into postsecondary education. However, little is known about the role of racial identity in the academic success of Black students, relative to other relevant factors, which include religious/spiritual support, self-efficacy, and academic support.

After an examination of the literature, it was hypothesized that there is relative strength in the role of racial identity in the academic success of Black students, relative to other factors. A model was proposed to investigate the relative strength of Black racial identity attitude, religious/spiritual support, self-efficacy, academic support, and other demographic variables (age, gender, socioeconomic status, level of parent education, and number of semesters in school) predict overall GPA, as of most recently completed term. The sample population consisted of Black college students who are at least 18 years of age, are currently enrolled as matriculating students in postsecondary undergraduate education (i.e., Community Colleges, State Colleges or University Colleges), and who have completed at least one term. This included any Blacks currently residing in the

United States who identify themselves as being of Black identity, regardless of their racial and ethnic cultural background.

Chapter 2 presents an extensive literature review and includes a discussion of the prominent theoretical models of racial identity and research findings identifying factors that are significant to academic success in college. Chapter 3 presents the research design and approach, the measurement instruments, and explains how the data were collected and analyzed. Chapter 4 provides the results of the analyses and testing of research questions and hypotheses. Chapter 5 presents a summary and interpretation of the results, limitations, and the implications for positive social change.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

Introduction

Researchers have explored social and cultural factors that represent the ongoing struggle in many African American students as they transition into postsecondary education: racial tension, unequal educational opportunities, income, family life, mental health (Charles, Dinwiddie, & Massey, 2004; Lee & Shape, 2007; NAEP, 2007). However, there remains a gap in research on racial and ethnic cultural identity as a primary or mediating influence on academic success (Alfaro, Umaña-Taylor & Bámaca, 2006; Constantine, Miville, Warren, Gainor & Lewis-Coles, 2006; Edman & Brazil, 2008; Murrell, 2002; Smith & Hopkins, 2004).

Prior research indicated that Black people in the United States are not a homogenous group. Rather, there are clear preferences and degrees of ethnic and cultural identification that shape individuals' interests and ability to integrate into the dominant culture. As postsecondary academia represents both an educational and acculturation experience in the dominant culture, it is important to understand how ethnic and cultural identity influence academic success. The purpose of this study was to examine the relative strength of racial identity, religious/spiritual support, self-efficacy, academic support, and demographic variables (age, gender, socioeconomic status, level of parent education, and number of semesters in school) in predicting academic performance in the Black college student population.

This chapter provides extensive review of the literature on the importance of, and need for, continued research on the complex cultural differences in Black identity and the academic struggles and success of Black students. As of 2004, Black students enrolled in

public schools accounted for 16% of the United States population and continue to struggle at a disproportionate rate, as evidenced particularly by poor academic outcomes (Alliance for Excellent Education, 2007). The United States continues to emphasize education as way to improve employability and social success. But the rate of poverty among Black Americans remains high and poverty lowers the chance of living a productive and successful life (Alliance for Excellent Education, 2007). This is a great concern, because as the Alliance for Excellent Education (2007) has predicted, by the year 2050, ethnic minorities will account for well over half the population of the United States.

With this demographic change and growth in the racial and ethnic minority population, educators need to be prepared and cognizant in the diverse racial and ethnic cultural identity in Black Americans. Educators can develop some knowledge, skills, and understanding in the history and context of racial and ethnic cultural identity in Black Americans, as this would include: the development in one's awareness of racial and ethnic cultural identity development, as well as an understanding of biracialism, and other relevant cultural differences. Further, one can develop knowledge about other factors that might contribute to social change implications in the academic and social success in Black Americans. The goal of this dissertation was to better understand Black identity and the influence of other factors that may help predict academic success in Black students.

The theoretical framework that was used in guiding this dissertation was the African American Centered Theory. The importance of this theory is that it focuses on Black identity, self-awareness, re-education, history, culture, spirituality, sense of

community, sense of social justice, and psychological well-being. African American Centered Theory suggests that identifying one's self with some Black identity and cultural practice sets the individual apart from traditional dominant Western culture (Murrell, 2002). It draws upon a deeper meaning in understanding one's Black identity, sense of belonging, and importance found in the African American population (e.g., shared beliefs, values, struggles and hardship; Murrell, 2002).

This chapter provides a review of the following sections: (a) definition of terms of race and ethnic identity; history and context of ethnic identity, (b) theories of racial and ethnic cultural identity development, (c) racial and ethnic cultural identity development and academic success and re-education of Black students, (d) racial and ethnic cultural identity development and biracialism, and (e) factors that contribute to academic struggles and success to include demographics, social/family systems, religious/spiritual support, self-efficacy, academic support.

Literature Search Strategy

The following electronic databases were used in searching for peer-review literature: EBSCO (i.e., PsychINFO, and SocINDEX) full text, Google Scholar. Books and other resources such as Kindle were also used in providing history in context of racial and ethnic cultural identity in Black Americans. The following keywords were used: Black, racial, biracial, ethnic, identity, development, cultural, religious support, spiritual support, academic, self-efficacy, performance, academic support, African American, and ethnic identity.

Definitions of Racial and Ethnic Identity

Although race is commonly used interchangeably with ethnicity, there are researchers who would dispute the interchangeable use of race and ethnicity (Jiménez, 2010; Jones, 2010; Luhman, 2002; Shell, 2011). Whereas this study focused on race rather than ethnicity, it is essential to differentiate between these two frequently used interchangeable terms.

Definition of Race and the Importance of Distinction

The term *race* is commonly defined as, yet not limited to, a diverse social cultural concept that is widely used to distinctively identify or categorize an individual or racial group of people based upon their commonly shared genetic physical appearances through one's ancestral heritage (Jiménez, 2010; Jones, 2010; Luhman, 2002; Shell, 2011). Jones (2010) defined racial identity as an individual's perceived experiences, sense of pride and importance in acceptance, and belonging to a group of people who share commonality.

Race is a term that was first coined by Carolus Linnaeus in 1758 who published *Systema Naturae* and by Johann Friedrich Blumenbach in 1775 who published *De Geberis Humani Varietate Nativa*. In 1775, Blumenbach believed humans belonged to five categorized racial groups: (a) Caucasians, Whites; (b) Mongolians, Asians; (3) Ethiopians, Blacks; 4) Americans, Native Americans; and (5) Malays, Polynesian, Melanesians, and Australian aborigines. There appears to be very little change in the scientific theoretical inquiry of racial identity over the past two centuries, as present research has given belief to the construct of race with similar racial groupings today (Luhman, 2002).

Definition of Ethnicity and Importance of Distinction

Researchers study ethnicity as it is also a complex, multifaceted, and diverse social construct that has numerous meanings. Most research has defined ethnicity fundamentally on an individual's cultural distinctiveness (i.e., native language, traditions, values, customs, and beliefs; Helms, 2007; Yoon, 2011; Yoon, Langrehr, & Ong, 2011). Jiménez (2010) nicely defines ethnicity in having three distinctive components (i.e., ancestry, culture, and history). The term ethnic refers to a process normally used to describe one's ethnic identity, ethnicity or ethnic social group that is referred in sharing similar ancestry, place of origin, and similar cultural values and/or religious heritage (Yoon, 2011). In addition, the term ethnic is distinctive in nature that has some cultural importance in one being set apart and identifying with a particular group of people for their distinctive characteristics, attitudes, and values. Ethnic group of identity refers to identifying one's self with a group who share commonality in family heritage and/or similar cultural beliefs (Yoon, 2011; Yoon, Langrehr, & Ong, 2011).

Why Scholars Study Racial and Ethnic Identity

Thus, majority of researchers appears to agree that ethnic identity is naturally developed from an elastically woven union between (a) culture (i.e., commonly shared beliefs, practices, and values of a distinct ethnic group); (b) common ancestry (i.e., generational descendant or kinship); and (3) history (i.e., shared past experience or record of inherited past). Ethnic identity plays an important role in the developing nature of one's identity, as it makes distinctive claims to the culture, common ancestry, and history of a distinctive group (Jiménez, 2010; Luhman, 2002). Yoon (2011) distinguished the different research approaches when exploring ethnic identity and racial identity in

reporting racial identity research being concerned with societal issues of racial discrimination or racial oppression; whereas, research on ethnic identity is more concerned in cultural collective identities of people such as, "interested in cultural aspects of collective identities, namely how an individual explores and resolves one's identity as a cultural being" (p. 144).

As ethnicity focuses on the cultural aspects of one's collective ethnic identity, this study is concerned in the importance of an individual's racial identity when faced with societal issues. For example, in the United States racism and discrimination remained legal up until the 1960's and even through the 1970's as Black Americans were discriminated against in equality opportunities so far as unequal privileges in job employment due to educational discrimination (Luhman, 2002). Such discrimination entailed both overt and institutionalized discrimination; having no regard in race and ethnic differences creating a susceptibility to institutional discrimination. Most of the time Black people who were identified by their race as (dark skin and texture of hair) and ethnicity as (cultural differences and/or ancestral differences) were labeled Niggers, Negro, Spook, Coon, Darky, Black, Afro-American, or African American, suffered cruel and harsh consequences of racism and discrimination. For these reasons researches are interested in exploring the various factors and implications associated with race and ethnic cultural identity (Jones, 2010; Luhman, 2002).

It is logically within reason to believe individuals who identify as being Black; sharing some common cultural and/or ancestral experiences of racism, inequality, and discrimination are more likely in also experiencing difficulties with behavioral and psychological problems in low self-esteem and academic struggles. In addition,

empirical studies reveal that anti-racial identity and anti-ethnic cultural identity can have harmful effects on ethnic socialization and psychological well being in Black American students (Herring, 1995).

History of Migration and Identification of Blacks in the United States

There continues to be controversy regarding how Black people are defined (and define themselves) in terms of their race and nationality. Many immigrant/migrant Black people do not refer to themselves as African Americans and prefer that their racial identity is only referred according to their motherland or place of origin (i.e., Nigerian, Ethiopian, Jamaican, Haitian, etc.; Berlin, 2010). All Black migrant people in America do not share the same cultural backgrounds or experiences. Thus, the term African American is an ambiguous term indicating that not all races of Black people in the United States are a homogenous group. Although essentially every Black person who is able to trace their family tree and roots back to Africa can be categorized as an African American. Nonetheless, African American is a term that has been used loosely to describe a diverse group of Black people in America without clearly understanding the etiological meaning of Black racial identity and its African origin; as this would also include clearly understanding the historical background and cultural experiences of Black people who originated from Africa (Berlin, 2010; Shell, 2011).

There were four great migrations that helped frame the historical Black racial identity of Black people in the United States of African ancestral background. The first migration, which is known as the Middle Passage, began in the seventeenth century and eighteenth century where thousands of African women, children, and men were forced into slavery and were deported from the Western coast of Africa to the continent of

Northern America. The second migration, known as the Atlantic African Slave Trade, began in the nineteenth century where Millions of Africans were deported from the Atlantic Seaboard States to Southern America. The third migration is known as The Great Passage to the North, taking place in the twentieth century where millions of African Americans fled from the rural plantation/sharecropper Southern States to the urban Northern industrial States. During the end of the twentieth and twenty-first centuries began the fourth migration of Black people of African descents from all over the world (Africa, South America, Caribbean, Europe, etc.; Berlin, 2010). In addition, although aforementioned migrations of Black people share commonality in etiology does not mean that they share the same historical cultural experiences. For example, millions of Black people who originated from various parts of Africa and were sold into slavery share a common historical etiology in a place of origin, yet do not share similar cultural experiences of slavery, as African slaves were being sold throughout the vast continents of the world (i.e., from Africa to mainland Northern America and from Africa across the Atlantic seaboard to the Southern and Northern interior of America), including the experiences of slavery in Africa (Berlin, 2010).

By and large, African American slaves who were deported from Africa to America endured the most dehumanizing circumstances of slavery in both the industrial Northern and rural Southern States of America. Historically, the enslavement of Blacks in America resulted in some long term negative effects as slaves were brutally raped, beaten and maimed, even death. Slaves and descendents of slaves faced the losses of families and possessions. Most importantly, Black descendents of slaves were deprived of the significant meaning and importance of their Black racial identity as they endured

the consequences of racism, discrimination, segregation, disfranchisement, and struggles for equality of being Black in America (Berlin, 2010). Consequently, most immigrant Blacks cannot relate to Black slavery in America and in part disassociate themselves from the historical experiences of slavery as well as the repercussions that followed slavery (i.e., racism, Jim Crow Laws, discrimination, segregation, disfranchisement, etc.). As a result, most Black immigrants do not want to be labeled African American as this term is too closely associated as being Black and a descendent of slavery (Berlin, 2010; Shell, 2011).

Furthermore, the enslavement of Blacks in America, particularly Blacks in the Southern States, endured the most oppositional and oppressive struggles for education, as slavery committed against Blacks robbed them of their educational efforts in securing schooling for themselves and their children. Between the mid-eighteenth century and early nineteenth century Blacks in the south who emerged from slavery were left illiterate, but yet they still had a deep-seated desire for educational learning (i.e., how to read and write). Not only were Blacks not allowed to read or write, it was a crime to teach Blacks and worse of a crime to be a literate Black (Anderson, 1988). Nonetheless, although Blacks faced such oppositional and oppressive educational struggles, by 1863 the Emancipation of Proclamation was issued by President Abraham Lincoln and the Freedmen Bureau was issued in 1865 during the Reconstruction era of the United States to where Black schools were already systematically being established, primarily through the efforts of slaves and African Americans who were descendants of slaves. During the Reconstruction era and prior to the rise of universal education, most Blacks students attended schools predominantly sponsored by Black churches called “Sabbath” schools or

"Sunday" schools. Black students were taught basic literacy instruction (i.e., spelling, reading, writing, and arithmetic) in the evenings and on the weekends during or after church services. It is reported in 1889, that one of the Sabbath schools held in the south at an African Methodist Episcopal (AME) church had over 200,000 Black students' enrolled (Anderson, 1988).

Soon after the Reconstruction era, began the southern educational reform of common schooling for Black students which took place by the late eighteenth century and early nineteenth century. Such a reform was designed in keeping public education open through a system of universal public education as an act of Black advancement in a racist oppressive society. Needless to say, this system of universal public education in reconciling the racism of southern whites to the idea of collective common schooling for Blacks did nothing more than assisted the white south in creating a second-class education by preparing Black students, in so called success, of subordinate roles in southern economic employment. White supremacist, George Peabody who was one of the first educational philanthropists in the United States from Massachusetts was one who insisted on the second-class education of Blacks as he viewed all Black Americans being an inferior race of people as "children in mental capacity" (Anderson, 1988, p. 92). Sharing similar views, white supremacist Wallace Buttrick, trustee of Southern Education Board and General Education Board stated "I recognize the fact that the Negro is an inferior race and that the Anglo-Saxon is the superior race" (Anderson, 1988, p. 92).

Despite the hardships and struggles in the education of Blacks in the southern states, it is clear that all Black people do not share the same cultural experiences of slavery (e.g., in Africa, in the Colonies, or America) nor similar experiences in the

educational repercussions of Black slavery in America, as there are clearly defined difference in the Black racial identity among being 1) an African American born in the United States and a descendent of slavery, versus being 2) an African American born outside the United States and a descendent of an African immigrant. African Americans born outside the United States speaks of Black people in America who were immigrants from great Africa (i.e., Caribbean Islands, South America, and Europe) and who have no historical experience of the first three great migrations of African America (i.e., inhuman enslavement as a result of racism, discrimination and segregation) practices in America (Berlin, 2010; Luhman, 2002).

Theories of Racial and Ethnic Cultural Identity Development

There are several race and ethnic cultural identity theoretical models that focus on the cultural self from an independent, interdependent, and external social context of development as such models relate to the experiences of Black identity. As previously mentioned, ethnic cultural identity has been described as having many multidimensional cultural constructs defined differently across the disciplinary schools of psychology and social psychology, as this may relate to research methodologies in theoretical approaches (Yeh & Hwang, 2000; Yoon, 2011; Worrell, & Gardner-Kitt, 2006). For the purpose of this study, Cross's initial and two revised Black racial identity development models as well as other Black identity models will be discussed (Cross, 1971; Cross, 1976; Cross, 1978; Cross, 1991; Cross, Flagen-Smith, Worrell, & Vandiver, 2002; Cross & Vandiver, 2001; Fhagen-Smith, Vandiver, Worrell, & Cross, 2010).

Cross's Nigrescence Black Identity Theory

Cross's Black race identity development model continues to be the most prominently used psychological model when investigating Black racial identity (Cross, Flagen-Smith, Worrell, & Vandiver 2002). There are three versions of nigrescence theory at which there have been two revisions of Cross's nigrescence Black identity model (Fhagen-Smith et al., 2010). Nigrescence is a Latin word for Negro developed from "nigger" that was adopted in the United States meaning a process in becoming Black or a developmental process in defining Black identity. The first theory is Cross's (1971) Initial Nigrescence Theoretical model (NT-I) that is primarily based on the following five developmental stages: (a) Pre-Encounter (e.g., anti-Black and pro-White attitudes), (b) Encounter (e.g., experienced an intense outcome(s), (c) Immersion-Emersion (e.g., anti-White and pro-Black attitudes with emotional relevance to Blackness only), (4) Internalization (e.g., pro-Black without emotional relevance to Blackness only), and (5) Internalization-Commitment (e.g., pro-Black that is pro-activist). Cross's original model focused on the development of Black identity as a self-actualization process, where negative attitudes about being Black were replaced with the development of self-acceptance and positive attitudes of Black identity when referring to one's racial group (Cross, 1971).

Cross's Revised Nigrescence Theoretical Model (NT-R)

The second nigrescence theory is Cross's (1991) Revised Nigrescence Theoretical model (NT-R) that is based on categorical stages of attitudinal themes and subtypes. The first categorical stage of attitudes is Pre-counter. There are two subtypes of pre-counter attitudes described in NT-R: Assimilation and anti-Black. The second categorical stage

of attitudes is Immersion-Emission. In this second categorical stage there are also two subtypes: Intense Black involvement and anti-White. The third categorical stage of attitudes is Internalization that consists of three subtypes: Black Nationalist, bicultural, and multicultural (Cross, 1991; Worrell & Fhagen-Smith, 2002).

Cross's Newly Expanded Theoretical Model (NT-E)

The third nigrescence revision of the theory is the Expanded Nigrescence Theoretical model (NT-E) introduced in 2001 (Cross & Vandiver, 2001). The NT-E was primary developed by Cross and colleagues (Vandiver et al., 2000; Worrell & Fhagen-Smith, 2002) as this newly developed model allows in the assessment from a multitude of Black racial identity multidimensional attitudes and cultural experiences from an observational approach across time (Fhagen-Smith et al., 2010). In contrast to the NT-R model, the NT-E model consist of the same three stages found in Cross's (1991) NT-R model: (a) Pre-encounter stage, (b) Immersion/Emersion stage, and (c) Internalization stage; however, expands upon overarching attitudinal themes and subtypes of Black identity by expanding upon the (a) Pre-encounter stage having three subtypes (Assimilation, Miseducation, and Self-hatred), (b) Immersion/Emersion stage having two subtypes (Intense Black involvement and anti-White), and the (c) Internalization stage with four subtypes (biculturalism, Afrocentric, Multiculturalist racial, and Multiculturalist inclusive; Cross & Vandiver, 2001; Fhagen-Smith, 2010).

The NT-E model describes the first categorical Black racial identity attitude Stage 1 Pre-encounter consists of three attitudinal subscales (assimilation, miseducation, and self-hatred) as the author relates the first identity attitude subscale Pre-encounter-assimilation as being anti-Black and pro-American. This identity attitude subscale

indicates that it is more important in being identified as an American rather than being identified as an African American. The second identity attitude subscale is Pre-encounter-miseducation of Black people at which one has a pre-misconceived mindset and belief in the negative stereotype of the Black community. The third attitude subscale is Pre-encounter-self hatred. This anti-Black subscale is derived from one's own individual views in believing that there is nothing positive about being Black, nor is there any positive outcome in association or affiliation with other Blacks (Cross & Vandiver, 2001; Fhagen-Smith et al., 2010).

The second categorical Black racial identity attitude Stage 2 Immersion-Emission contain two attitudinal subscales (intense Black involvement and anti-White) as Immersion-Emission includes attitudes that are either strong anti-White and/or attitudes that are intensely pro-Black. An individual displaying intense Black identity is deeply passionate and immersed into Black cultural experiences. An individual displaying anti-White identity is opposed to any value in the White culture, as this may include causing Whites and the White culture to appear evil or threatening (Cross & Vandiver, 2001; Fhagen-Smith et al., 2010).

The third categorical Black racial identity attitude stage (c) Internalization consist of four attitudinal subscales (biculturalist, Afrocentric, multiculturalist racial, and multiculturalist inclusive). Internalization-Afrocentric racial identity has the attitude for Black Nationalism in the empowerment of Blacks and seeks an African centered environment. Internalization-bicultural racial identity refers to an individual who is acceptant and seeks both Afrocentric and other cultural ways of living. Internalization-multiculturalist racial identity attitude hold strong value in being Black, yet also has high

regard for other racial and ethnic groups. Internalization-multiculturalist inclusive racial identity not only holds strong values in being Black and has strong regards for other racial and ethnic groups; it has a strong interest in developing cohesive relationships (Cross & Vandiver, 2001).

Although there have been several Black racial and ethnic cultural theories used to measure Black identity, particularly, in response to the psychological well being and education success and achievement of Black Americans (Helms & Parham, 1990, 1996; Parham, 1989; Parham & Helms, 1981; Plummer, 1995), Worrell and Watson (2002) reported the CRIS has been tested in being the most reliable and valid scientific instrument of measure for inferential studies in regards to moderate to high internal consistency estimates and consistent structural validity (i.e., reliability estimates ranging between .70 and .90). To avoid criticism on the instruments being used in relation to poor reliability and validity in the psychometric evidence of scores that most Black racial and ethnic cultural identity measures were getting (Helms & Parham, 1990, 1996; Parham & Helms, 1981), Vandiver, Cross, Fhagen-Smith, Worrell, Swim, and Caldwell (2000) developed the CRIS in operationalizing the NT-E (Cross & Vandiver, 2001; Vandiver, Cross, Worrel & Fhagen-Smith, 2002; Worrell, Cross, & Vandiver, 2001). The expanded nigrescence model (Table 1) provides a variety of attitudinal and identity subscales in further explanation of each categorical stage (Cross & Vandiver; Fhagen-Smith, 2010).

Table 1

The Expanded Nigrescence Theory, Categorical Stages, Attitudinal, and Identity Subscales

Categorical stage	Subscale	Definition
Pre-Encounter	Assimilation	Focuses more so on nationality in being identified as an American rather than racial identity.
	Miseducation	Pre-misconceived mindset and belief in the negative stereotype of Black people.
	Self-Hatred	Negative beliefs and one's self. Feeling there is nothing positive about being Black.
Immersion-Emersion	Anti-White	An individual displaying anti-White identity is opposed to any value in the White Western and European American culture.
Internalization	Afrocentricity	An individual who seeks African centered experiences with the attitude of Black nationalism in the empowerment of Blacks.
Internalization	Multiculturalist Inclusive	Attitudes that hold strong value in being Black, yet also has high regard for other racial and ethnic groups.

Measurement of Racial Identity

As previously mentioned, there are several research methodologies and theoretical approaches that have been used to conceptualize and measure racial identity (Cross, 1971, 1991; Cross, Helms & Parham, 1985; Cross, Parham, & Helms, 1991; Cross & Vandiver, 2001; Helms, 1990; Parham, 1989a, 1989b; Phinney, 1992; Vandiver et al., 2001, 2002; Worrell et al., 2001). The scale that has gained the most prominence as a psychometrically valid and reliable measure is the Cross Racial Identity Scale (CRIS) (Plummer, 1995; Worrell & Watson, 2012).

The Cross-Racial Identity Scale

The CRIS was developed using both exploratory and confirmatory factor-analytic approaches (Cross & Vandiver, 2001; Vandiver et al., 2001, 2002; Worrell et al., 2001). The reliability and construct validity development process of this scale involved six phases over five years.

Since the final development of the CRIS (Vandiver et al., 2001, 2002) the construct validity of CRIS scale has been successfully supported in four studies using Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA) (Gardner-Kitt & Worrell, 2007; Helm, 2002; Simmons, Worrell, & Berry, 2006; Worrell, Vandiver, Cross & Fhagen-Smith, 2004).

Helm's (2002) used a principle components analysis to examine the 30 CRIS items on a sample of 388 college students. Results indicated all CRIS items loaded on all assigned subscales scores using Cronbach's alpha with reliability estimates ranging from (.78 to .89). Similar results were found by Worrell, Vandiver, and Cross (2004) (sampling 105 African American adults and using a EFA, reported similar results (n = 105; M age = 34; Cronbach's alpha = .70). Simmons et al (2006) calculated reliability estimates ranging from (.77 to .84) results for college students with (n = 225; M age = 19; school Age M = 14) and Moreover, Gardner-Kitt & Worrell (2007) reported coefficient alpha reliability estimates for internal consistency of CRIS subscale scores (N = 143) ranging from (.70 to .87). Thus, the coefficient alpha reliability estimates for the CRIS subscale scores among a total of ten studies range from (.70 to .89) verifying internal consistency for each item subscale score (see also Worrell & Watson, 2008).

Worrell and Watson (2008) conducted a Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) in examining the psychometric properties of the CRIS (i.e., internal consistency and factor

structure validity). The authors of the study chose the CFA for three purposes: (a) to research the structure and validation of the CRIS scales when using a large sample; (b) to examine other factor models in comparison to the NT-E six factor model (in operationalization of the NT-E in theory testing); and (c) to further the psychometric assessment of the NT-E, as there has only been one other study using the CFA of CRIS scores based on the NT-E, which was during the initial development of the CRIS (Vandiver et al., 2002). The results of this study indicated a greater fit in support of the NT-E six factor structure than all other factor models. Overall results revealed significant support of the CRIS scales as an operationalization of the NT-E in theory testing. Results of the study provide support for the use of CRIS scores in this current study in addressing the Black college student population.

Other Black Racial Identity Measurement Approaches

Other researchers have sought to expand upon the Cross's (1971) Black racial identity nigrescence theoretical model (Cross, 1991; Cross, Helms & Parham, 1985; Cross, Parham, & Helms, 1991; Helms, 1990; Parham, 1989a, 1989b). Parham and Helms (1985) developed the Racial Identity Attitude Scale-B (RIAS-B) in operationalizing Cross's (1971) original nigrescence model. Parham (1989a, 1989b) believed Black racial identity attitudes would provide a better understanding of racial identity from a societal developmental process (i.e., childhood, adolescence, early and late adulthood). For example, the influence of one's parents or societies belief about race is likely to have an effect on Black racial identity attitudes. Thus, the RIAS-B was specifically designed to measure Black racial identity personality characteristics in

African Americans, as the instrument first seeks to describe one's attitudes and then assesses for any evolving distinctive personalities in Blacks (Plummer, 1995).

In spite of this, both the RIAS-B and CRIS are noted in being psychometrically valid and reliable measures, particularly for their internal consistency and structural validity (Helms & Parham, 1985; Plummer, 1995; Worrell &Watson, 2012). Conversely, in relation to the psychometric developmental process of scales, the RIAS which still remains widely used today was based on the original nigrescence model created in 1971 (Cross, 1971; Cokley, 2007), whereas the development of the CRIS was foundationally based on the revised nigrescence model NT-R created in 1991 and 2001 (Cross, 1991; Cross & Vandiver, 2001) and used in operationalizing the expanded nigrescence model NT-E. Unlike the psychometric development process of CRIS scale, there is no mention of the RIAS to have gone through such a rigorous process that took a period of five years to develop (Cross & Vandiver, 2001). Nonetheless, rather than criticizing the RIAS, Vandiver et al (2002) gives comment in the dated revision of the Black Racial Identity Attitude Scale by mentioning the RIAS-B "is dated with respect to the revised nigrescence theory" (p. 71).

Other Scales to Measure Ethnic Cultural Identity Development

In comparison and contrast to the measure of Black racial identity, Phinney introduced the Multi-group Ethnic Identity Measure (MEIM) in 1992. The MEIM has contributed to the expanding growth in the research of ethnic identity. Phinney (1992) developed the MEIM with the idea to operationalize the construct ethnic identity with three mechanisms she felt was interrelated: (a) Affirmation, (b) Achievement, and (c) Behaviors. Phinney suggested that these three working components were for the most

part interrelated and would allow researcher to assess and compare Black ethnic identity attitudes towards one's own ethic group and across various ethnic groups. In contrast to the CRIS, the MEIM does not measure Black racial identity attitudes (Cross & Vandiver, 2001; Vandiver, Cross, Worrel & Fhagen-Smith, 2002; Worrell, Cross, & Vandiver, 2001). Unlike the NT-E, the MEIM was designed in measuring ethnic cultural identity attitudes about one's own group orientation and attitudes about other groups, as this includes Whites. Phinney (1992) hypothesized that, as an individual emerges from affirmation stage, he or she has a strong sense of acceptance and belonging which indicates positive attitudes towards his or her identified ethnic grouping. In achievement stage the individual feels a sense of accomplishment and finds gratification in one's own skills and abilities that are represented as major contributions toward one's identified group. From achievement stage, emerges Behaviors such as cultural practices (e.g., participating in church services, prayer meetings, bible studies, community social events) that would represent and strongly identify an individual with one's ethnic group (Cokley, 2007; Phinney, 1992).

Further, the MEIM scale was not designed to address Black racial identity and cultural specific issues; however, the scale is known to address ethnic cultural identity as Phinney (1992) believed that how an individual identifies with his or her own self-ethnic identity in relation to the interaction with other cultures/ethnic groups does encompass societal influences (e.g., social identity) which might also be a predictor on his or her own ethnic identity. Even though there have been several studies that have used the psychometric approach of the MEIM in analyzing ethnic identity (Lee & Yoo, 2004; Roberts et al., 1999; Spencer et al., 2000), it has been criticized for lack of consistency in

its statistical analysis when measuring ethic identity across research studies (Cokley, 2007; Yoon, 2011). Since the development of the MEIM, newly developed and revised ethnic identity measures include the Ethnic Identity Scale (EIS) and the revised Multi-group Ethic Identity Measure (MEIM-R). All three theoretical models are based on the social identity and identity development theories of researchers Henri Tajfel, Erik Erikson, and James Marcia (Yoon, 2011).

Other measures have also been developed. For example, Marcia (1980) expanded upon Erikson's theory of ego identity by developing a methodological model that could be operationalized for research. Marcia's ethnic identity model categorized identity into four stages (e.g., diffusion, foreclosure, moratorium, and achievement) which also consisted of two key identity components (e.g., crisis and commitment; Yoon, 2011).

In sum, I have attempted to do a thorough review of the development and use of measures that asses Black identity. Based on the review of existing measures, the present dissertation study utilized the CRIS scale as it has gained the most prominence for its psychometric approach in measuring and explaining Black racial identity attitudes (Cross & Vandiver, 2001; Vandiver, Cross, Worrel & Fhagen-Smith, 2002; Worrell, Cross, & Vandiver, 2001; Phinney (1992).

Racial Identity Development and Biracialism

Biracialism emerged as a phenomenon since the beginning of slavery and the establishment of American colonies, as it was common for slave masters to do what they pleased with their slaves (Khanna, 2011). During this time period, the sense of White and Black biracialism was not socially accepted as biracial identity was strongly rejected and unrecognized. Biracial identity was treated as another form of racism and societal

discrimination of laws and rules over blacks in the preserving demise of slavery. For example, it did not matter if an individual was biracial in White features (i.e., lighter skin color, straighter hair, blue eyes, smaller lips, smaller nose, etc.); one was still identified as being Black. Such societal rules help start the "one drop of Black blood" rule which began in the Southern states. This rule stated that any biracial child, no matter how "White" their physical appearance, was considered racially Black and was therefore enslaved (Anderson, 1988; Berlin, 2010; Herring, 1995; Khanna, 2011).

Thus, this rule ensured the separation among the Black inferior race and the White superior race, as those who were born of White and Black ancestry had no part in the White superior race. More so, this rule helped the White superior race justify the enslavement of White and Black biracial individuals. In some cases, biracial enslavement also included offspring who could pass in looking White. Biracialism varied across American's southern states as other states defined Black identity at different percentages (e.g., 50%, 25%, 12.5%, or 3.125%) of being Black. Although the "one drop of Black blood" law no longer holds any legal societal control on racial and ethnic cultural identity today, it is apparent there still remains a societal informal rule, as physical appearance remains a primary influence in determining the racial and ethnic cultural identity among Black and White biracial adults (Khanna, 2011).

Definition of Biracialism

Biracial is defined as a genetic combination of two idiosyncratic different race of biological parents; a mixture of both racial and ethnic cultural identity. Specifically, biracial identity describes a person's physical/genetic (i.e., genetic mixture) between two distinct race of people. In 1987 the U. S. Bureau of the Census reported an increasing

number of biracial ethnic identities in the United States, as there were more than 827,000 multi-ethnic marriages. Of the 827,000 multi-ethnic marriages, less than 200,000 were among Black Americans and White Americans. These increasing numbers do not include biracial children of multi-ethnic non-marriage relationships in addition to multi-ethnic marriages that have divorced, as several biracial children are being parented in a single parent home or being parented by one parent in the home who is a biological parent and the other a non-biological parent (Herring, 1995).

Biracial Identity Development Models

There are several identity development models that attempt to address biracial identity development in response to the integration of biracial cultural stages of identity such as positive self-concept, competence, positive personal and racial identity (Gibbs, 1987). The Marginal Person Model (Stonequist, 1937) is the first initiated biracial identity development model that concentrates on social identity problems (i.e., identity confusion with a particular racial or ethnic group) when comparing between biracial heritage and non-biracial heritage (Herring, 1995). The majority of other racial and ethnic biracial identity models either focus on the development of African American identity (Cross, 1987; Parham & Helms, 1985) or are based on a deficit model prospective of biracialism and do not identify specific societal struggles and concerns of biracialism (Gibbs, 1987, 1989).

In contrast to racial cultural and ethnic cultural identity development which has previously been defined as a person having a sense of pride and identity in one's race and ethnic cultural heritage (Herring, 1995; Sue & Sue, 1991), Herring (1995) defines biracial being more complex, as the author's Biracial Identity Development Model (BIDM)

includes five stages for identity development (e.g., Personal Identity, Choice of Group Categorization, Enmeshment/Denial, Appreciation, and Integration). Similar to other previously mentioned racial and ethnic cultural identity development models, the BIDM utilizes a racial and ethnic cultural identity integration stage, yet is different as it is designed in addressing more defined characteristics in relationship to societal concerns. For example, Stage 1 Personal Identity-helps in identifying internal problematic issues (i.e., high or low self-esteem and self-worth) within a child's referenced racial group. In Stage 2 Choice of Group Categorization-a child is usually encouraged in choosing only one racial identity from either one of the two ethnic groups. Stage (3) Enmeshment/Denial-occurs when a child is confused and feeling guilty due to being placed in an awkward position in having to choose only one racial and ethnic cultural identity; feeling a sense of constraint in not freely expressing one's dual racial and ethnic cultural identity. Stage (4) Appreciation-is where the individual still identifies with only one racial group, yet has learned to appreciate one's dual heritage and begins to associate with other racial and ethnic cultural groups. Stage (5) Integration- the individual has learned to find value and importance in one's dual racial and ethnic cultural identities, as there is now a safe, self-confident, and assured integrated identity (Herring, 1995).

Bi-racial models of ethnic identity have emerged as one important variation of the exploration of the construct of ethnic identity. This review has covered many theoretical models and measurement approaches (CRIS, RIAS, RIAS-B, EIS, MEIM, MEIM-R, Marginal Person Model, and BIDM). Since the focus of the proposed study is on how ethnic identity influences academic performance, I has chosen Cross's Newly Expanded Theoretical Model to investigate the role of Black racial identity as a primary or

mediating influence on academic success. In the subsequent pages, the literature examining this relationship is reviewed. Additionally, the literature identifying other recognized predictors of academic success (i.e., religious/spiritual support, self-efficacy, academic support) is presented.

The Relationship of Racial Identity to Demographic and Socio-Economic Factors

As the construct of multi-dimensional racial identity became psychometrically viable, many researchers explored possible differences in key demographics and socio-economic variables. The literature contains mixed findings regarding gender differences in racial identity. Some indicated that there are significant gender difference (Carter et al., 1997; Parham & Helms, 1985; Plummer, 1995), yet other studies found inconclusive results about the differences between Black males and Black females (Fhagen-Smith et al., 2010). For example, Plummer (1995) reported males scoring higher among adolescents in the category of identity attitudes "Pre-encounter" stage. Similar research results were reported among college students, men scoring higher on "Pre-encounter" identity attitudes (Carter et al., 1997; Parham & Helms, 1985). In another study, Hyers (2001) revealed differences in gender among adult women and men, as women were reported to score lower than men on Black racial identity attitudes in the "Internalization" stage, yet there were no differences reported in the "Pre-encounter" stage (Fhagen-Smith et al., 2010).

Fhagen-Smith et al., (2010) conducted a study from a predominantly Black college of 336 African American college students using three multivariate tests in an analysis of differences among groups (e.g., gender, community type, and SES). Female students scored higher than male students in subscale (multicultural-inclusion)

"Internalization" stage. Such findings suggest that gender identity issues have a strong influential relationship to Black racial identity (Fhagen-Smith et al., 2010). "Racial identity attitude patterns act as social, emotional, and cognitive maps that affect how African American individuals interpret and decipher events, relational interactions, and other experiences in their world" (Fhagen-Smith et al., 2010; p. 165).

Influences of Academic Success in Black Student

United States National Education Policy

In 1969 congress created the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) to examine nation-wide testing academic struggles and success in minority students (4^{th}, 8^{th}, and 12^{th}) graders in the United States. The test results reported that Black students continued to struggle more so academically than White students. A survey of students in the United States (ages 9, 13, and 17) revealed that Black (12^{th} grade) students had lower test scores than White (8^{th} grade) students in the following subjects: reading skills, mathematics, history, and geography (Harris & Marsh, 2010; Thernstrom & Thernstrom, 2003). In 2002 under President Bush's administration, the No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Act was implemented, resulting in the reform of educational institutions and re-education of Black students. The NCLB was means of politically advocating for the educational equality of Black and minority students, and creating equal opportunities for academic success as White students to close academic gaps in subject areas including problem solving skills, English and math (No Child Left Behind, 2011; Weinstein, Gregory & Strambler, 2004).

According to the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) there is a disproportionate concentration of African American students enrolled in public schools.

Many of these students live in poverty, attend low performing schools, and are at greater risk for insufficient learning outcomes that reduce the chances for success in work and careers as adults. The NCES (2006) reported that, for the school year 2003-04, 78% of White students graduated on time (within four years) compared to only 55% of Black students (Green & Winters, 2006; NCES, 2006). In the school year 2006-07 only 60.3% of Blacks graduated from public high schools in comparison to 80.3% of whites (NCES, 2010).

Racial Identity and Academic Success

The present research is not the first that has investigated the role of racial identity in predicting academic success. For example, Harris and Marsh (2010) examined racial identity and educational achievement outcomes and aspirations in a survey of 1407 youth from 23 junior high schools. The results indicated that Black students who identified themselves in the race profile Ambivalent (affirm both similarity and dissimilarity) and Similar (being Black is an important reflection in who I am) had much higher achievement than Black students in the race profile Neutral (I don't affirm any measure). Black students who reported having regret in being Black revealed lower educational achievement than Black students who did not. Further, Blacks who identified in the Ambivalent and Similar profile revealed higher schooling achievement than Blacks who did not affirm this belief (Harris & Marsh, 2010).

Similarly, students who identified with Race Similar profile indicated a much higher aspiration towards education than Black students who did not. Non-Neutral profile students reported higher educational aspirations than Blacks in race profile Neutral. Overall, Blacks in race profiles Mild-Ambivalent, Ambivalent, and Similar

placed a much higher value of schooling than Blacks in race profile Neutral (Harris & Marsh, 2010). This suggests that racial identity may play an important role in academic success at the junior high school level.

Smith and Hopkins (2004) found that Black college students with high cultural identity and high internal perception to do well academically. And, other researchers have focused on the role of racial environments (attending a predominantly White or predominantly Black colleges), race-focused courses, and student- instructor relationships in academic success (Davis, 1994; Littleford, Ong, Tseng, Milliken, & Humy, 2010).

These studies strongly suggest that racial identity is an important predictor of academic success, and that the population of Black college students had not been sufficiently examined. This identified "gap" in the literature was the foundation for including racial identity as one of the predictors in the present model.

Demographic, Socio-Economic Factors, and Academic Success

There has been a considerable amount of research examining the factors that predict academic struggles and success in African American students in school, from elementary to postsecondary education. Charles, Dinwiddie and Massey (2004) suggested that Black students who have experienced stressful events in life (i.e., poverty, racial segregation, and social issues associated with stress) are less likely to achieve academic success than those who have experienced less stressful events. NAEP (2010) reported, prior to matriculating into postsecondary education, African American students living in poverty are more likely to perform lower education performance than White students. Some researchers have examined the community in which one lives (e.g., urban, rural, or suburban) and socioeconomic status, as has been shown (Hyers, 2001; Rowley, Chavous

& Cooke, 2003) students who live in rural neighborhoods in poverty are more likely to struggle academically than students in suburban neighborhoods who live above poverty level.

Black racial discrimination and segregation are primary predictors in determining the academic struggles that most Black students find themselves facing in a racist society. Carey (2004) reported out of forty-nine states in the United States there are thirty-one states with community school districts that contain a high enrollment of Black and minority students, who are low-income, live in urban communities, and who receive fewer resources than community school districts with the least enrollment of Black and minority students; at which, of these thirty-one states (6 of every 10) minority students receive education. Orfield and Lee (2005) observed that over 60% of Blacks attend public schools where there is a high percentage of the school population over 50% report poverty income, compared to 18% of White students.

These trends are also reflected in Black students' matriculation to postsecondary education. One of the most widely used standardized college entrance exams used in the United States is the Scholastic Assessment Test (SAT). Black students in the 12th grade score the lowest average SAT scores than any other racial and ethnic group, as White students score the highest among all racial and ethnic groups. This includes the following subjects: critical reading, mathematics, and writing. On a scale ranging from 200 to 800 possible points, Black students average score in critical reading declined from 434 in the year 1998 to 430 in the year 2008. Disproportionally to Black students, White students average critical reading score has increased from 526 in the year 1998 to 528 in the year 2008. This created a great concern for researchers (Alfaro, Umaña-Taylor, &

Bámaca, 2006; Hoffman, Llagas, & Snyder, 2003) and for this current study in respect to the disparity in academic achievement and academic success among Black students as there continues to be an achievement gap in public schools in regards to the education of racial and ethnic cultural groups (U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Educational Statistics, 2010).

Similar to the SAT scores, Black students also scored lower than White students and other minorities on the American College Testing (ACT) in the subject of English and mathematics, as Black students average score decreased in English from 16.4 in the year 1998 to 16.1 in the year 2008. Black students also have the lowest preparatory for college rate in all four subject matters (English, mathematics, reading, and science) than White students. With ACT benchmark scores of 50% probability = B grade, or 75% probability = C grade in taking a college course, in the year 2008, respectfully Black students scored lower than all other racial and ethnic cultural groups in prepared rate for college (English 37%, mathematics 11%, reading 21%, and science 5%). Further, although the dropout rate for Black students (ages 16 to 24) has declined between the year 1997 from 13% and 2007 to 8%, Black students that graduate from a secondary school on time with a diploma between the year 2006 and 2007 is only 60.3% compared to White students of 80.3% who respectfully have the highest graduation rate than any other minority group (U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Educational Statistics, 2010).

Religious/Spiritual Support and Academic Success

From a historical perspective the Black church has been highly emphasized as being one of the most predominant resources of support for African Americans in

response towards racism, discrimination, poverty, and the segregation of Black people in the United States (Anderson, 1988; Parham, 1999). It is also evident that African Americans have historically endured and overcome many struggles through the support of the church by learning how to cope when faced with socioeconomic challenges (Parham, 1999). Prominently distinguished for its religious and spiritual influence, the Black church has been the foundational rock of psychosocial support during the Civil Rights movement as Black people relied on religious and spiritual practices of prayer, spiritual songs, biblical preaching and teaching found in scriptural reading of God's word (Lee & Sharpe, 2007; Martin, Young & Smith, 2003; Parham, 2003).

Literature revealed limited research when examining the academic struggles and success of Black college students in relation to religious/spiritual support (Lee & Sharpe, 2007; Constantine, Miville, Warren, & Lewis-Coles, 2006; Constantine, Wilton, Gainer & Lewis, 2002; Walker & Dixon, 2002). Lee and Sharpe's (2007) study suggested that religious/spiritual support should be considered as a supportive facet when examining the success of African Americans. Results revealed cultural values, beliefs, and religious support were consistently higher for African Americans. There was a significant difference between racial groups, as African Americans indicated God as being one's primary source of support. To the African American people, religious and spirituality are distinctive in definition, yet are also interrelated as supportive resources that provides a source of resilience and social support when faced with the difficult challenges of life, as this would include overcoming academic struggles to perform well in school. Walker and Dixon (2002) reported Black college students with religious/spiritual support revealed higher academic performance than students with no religious/spiritual support.

Constantine et al (2006) study revealed both religiosity and spirituality as influential predictors to academic performance and success of African American college students.

Fox (2003) conducted a study on religious/spirituality and academic success in African American college students in conjunction to adjusting to college life revealed that Black college students showed great resilience when faced with various adversities and stressful life experiences. For example, in adjusting to a new college environment, Black college students indicated the stressful adjustment was positively related to one's religious practices and spiritual beliefs (Phillips, 2000). Further contributions of religiosity and spirituality playing an important role to the academic performance (i.e., grade point averages, academic honors, academic attendance, and compliance to school policies and procedures) of African American college students, Walker and Dixon (2002) discovered that Black college students were more likely to perform higher in academic performance who had levels of support in religious/spiritual beliefs than students who had no support in religious/spiritual beliefs. Thus, the racial identity of the Black American culture has historically relied on the Black church within its religious practices and spiritual beliefs and values for centuries in dealing with a diverse multitude of life struggles and adversities (Constantine et al., 2003; Constantine et al., 2006).

Constantine et al (2006) conducted a qualitative and cross analysis case study to explore religion and spiritual support variables and how they relate to African American college students. The researchers defined categories and subcategories in participant in responses as being 1) *general* (*n* = all 12 cases), 2) *typical* (*n* = 6 to 11 cases), and 3) *variant* (*n* = 3 to 5 cases). The results of this study suggest that African American college students depend upon the roles of both religiosity and spirituality as being high ranking in

their lives in overcoming academic struggles; religious/spirituality is also believed to be an important influence in students pursuing further educational and career goals.

For example, in dealing with the stressful challenges of academic performance in relationship to the challenges in one's career goals, one student identified how influential the role of both religion and spirituality was in overcoming such challenges:

> When I'm discouraged about school, I just stop what I'm doing and pray about whatever's bothering me. Prayer gives me the courage and strength to keep on keeping on, especially when I feel like I'm at the end of my rope…Sometimes I can't do anything but pray to deal with all the crap I deal with [on this campus]. You don't know what's around the corner in terms of what you'll face, but praying allows me to let go of my problems and let God handle [them] Constantine, 2006, p. 236).

In sum, prior research has demonstrated the importance of religious/spirituality to African American lives in respect to communal and collective values, (Constantine, Gainor, Ahluwalia, & Berkel, 2003; Mattis, Fontenot, Hatcher-Kay, Grayman, & Beale, 2004). However, there have been no studies specifically examining the moderating effect religiosity and spirituality may have on academic success in Black American college students, and the present study sought after in filling this gap.

Self-efficacy and Academic Success

Self-efficacy is an empirical construct that has been identified as a strong predictor of student motivational learning, academic performance, and career goal orientation (Brady-Amoon, 2009; Fife et al., 2011; Edman & Brazil, 2008; Hsieh, Sullivan, & Guerra, 2007).

Brady-Amoon and Fuertes (2009) describe self-efficacy as belief in one's ability to act in ways to complete a task or to succeed in reaching some potential ambition or goal. Bandura placed a high emphasis on social cognitive learning theory, as he strongly believed that an individual's external behavioral outcomes such as success in academic performance of higher grades and career performance in better jobs, and in setting high standards in personal goals are contributed to self-activation in an individual's thinking processes of belief, inspiration, and expectations. Bandura (1977) theorized that students would more likely be motivated in the desire of reaching educational outcomes and succeed in academic performance when they believe in their abilities in being able to act on the internal beliefs of one's abilities. For example, an individual feeling a strong sense of accomplishment within one's self is predicted in being motivational toward one's actions that are more likely to increase one's efforts in producing successful measurable outcomes (Bandura, 1977, 1997, 2001)

Gore's (2006) study in a sample of European American college students enrolled in the first and second semester of liberal arts courses revealed self-efficacy as being a significant predictor in overall academic performance, as scores had significantly increased by the time students reached the end of the semester when comparing academic college test (ACT) scores to a sample of Grade Point Averages (GPA's).

Reid (2013) conducted a quantitative study of 190 Black males enrolled as full-time sophomore students at five predominantly White research based universities. The results of a multiple regression analysis revealed that academic self-efficacy, high school GPA scores, and combined SAT scores having a significant main effect and positive influence on the academic achievement of Black male college students. Specifically,

among these variables, the study revealed self-efficacy to be a significant predictor for improving the educational outcomes and collegiate achievement in Black college students (Reid, 2013).

Jaret and Reitzes (2009) conducted a study of 652 college students at a large traditional urban university. The results revealed self-efficacy significantly associated with academic achievement. Interestingly, Black students showed higher level of self-efficacy than White or Asian students; while White students showed higher GPA scores than Black or Asian students.

Tyler et al. (2010) reported when investigating 290 Black and White college students performance, academic self-efficacy is an important factor in predicting academic outcomes. Results revealed family importance and family sharing being significantly associated with academic self-efficacy; such findings suggest self-efficacy as an antecedent of academic achievement.

Although the previous research provides evidence of the importance of self-efficacy as associated with academic achievement, its relationship to Black identity and academic success had not been sufficiently explored. Therefore, self-efficacy was included as a predictor in the current study.

Academic Support and Academic Success

As described in earlier sections of this literature review there are a myriad of long-standing impediments that African Americans students face: impoverished socio-economic conditions; racism; and inadequate academic resources (Alliance for Excellent Education, 2007; Green & Winters, 2006; U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, 2010). The construct of academic support has recently emerged

as an important area of study. While it has not been examined specifically in Black college students, the research from related areas suggests that this construct is important to consider. The growing interest in academic support arose as researchers and educators saw that academic success was more than the sum of coursework, aptitude, and socio-economic advantage. Academic support has been broadly defined in the literature, and refers to an array of "informal resources" that students identify as relevant to their academic success. These include parents, teachers, and peers (Chen, 2005; Mazer & Thompson, 2011).

The ASS was developed by Sands and Plunkett (2005) to assess for perceived educational level of support (mother, father, teacher, and friend). The ASS is a 6-item self-report measure that utilizes a 4-point Likert scale as participants indicate that they: 1–strongly disagree, 2–disagree, 3–agree, and 4–strongly agree. Sands and Plunkett (2005) describe academic support as being significantly meaningful and influential resources (i.e., cultural values and beliefs, spouse, significant other, teachers, extended family members and friends) that help promote and foster motivation, resiliency, and educational success during difficult and adverse times (Alfaro, Umaña-Taylor & Bámaca, 2006).

Another measure of academic support was developed by Thompson and Mazer (2011). Using a grounded theory approach followed by quantitative psychometric development, the Student Academic Support Scale (SASS) was designed to focus on the informational and emotional supports students provided to each other. Recent psychometric efforts have demonstrated strong construct and discriminative validity (Mazer & Thompson, 2011).

Research on the influence of academic support on academic achievement has been conducted with different ethnic and cultural groups. Chen (2005) used a structural equation model in a survey of 270 Hong Kong adolescents and found that the strength and impact of academic support varied by type of support (parent, teacher, peer) and academic achievement. Perceived teacher support and parent support were directly related to academic success, while peer support was indirectly related.

Régner, Loose and Dumas (2009) examined the differential impact of teacher support and parent support on academic goals of 503 French high school students. Using measures of parental support, teacher support, and achievement goals, the results of this survey research indicated that parental support was related to mastery goals, but unrelated to performance goals. Teacher monitoring support was more directly related to performance goals.

Alfaro, Umaña-Taylor and Bámaca (2006) conducted a quantitative study of Latino adolescents. The authors reported academic support as being academically motivational and an influential factor in promoting student educational success and academic achievement, as academic support has been positively linked to high performing or low performing summative evaluation scores (i.e., GPA, SAT and ACT standardized testing, and rate of completion; Alfaro et al., 2006; Newman, Lohman, Newman, Myers, & Smith, 2000). The results revealed that parent, teacher, and peer academic support were all significantly and positively associated in being academically motivational with adolescents (Alfaro et al., 2006).

In sum, the present study will add to the literature because it specifically examines the role of academic support in academic achievement for Black college students. While

related literature on Black students has suggested that social support through church and extended family is important (Armstrong, 2000; Newman et al., 2000), academic support has not been directly examined. The literature on other populations suggests that academic support is important, and the present research was conducted to hopefully advance knowledge about the influence of academic support on the academic achievement of Black college students.

Summary

Among the various theories and models in describing racial and cultural ethnic identity, Cross's nigrescence theory is the most prominently researched psychological model that best describes the development of Black racial identity. Cross's expanded nigrescence theoretical model provides sufficient psychometric evidence in exploring a multitude of Black racial identity, multidimensional attitudes, and cultural experiences, as the model focused on three developmental stages of Pre-encounter stage, Immersion/Emersion stage, and Internalization stage. Moreover, Cross's model of Black racial identity provides researchers further insight regarding the role of racial and ethnic cultural identity developmental processes affiliated in understanding the multiple factors that may be mediating influences on academic success in Black students.

Black people in the United States are not a homogenous group, as there are clear preferences and degrees of racial and ethnic cultural identification; such preferences and degrees of one's racial identity help shape an individual's interest and ability to integrate into the dominant culture. Postsecondary academia represents both an educational and acculturational experience of the dominant culture. It is suggested that Black racial identity may contribute to the academic success in Black college students.

In addition, socio-economic research has suggested that most Black students experience societal and cultural factors such as racial tension, unequal educational opportunities, and impoverished living and educational conditions. Thus, factors that capture basic demographics and socio-economic status are also important to understanding Black college student academic success.

Interest in the non-academic influences on academic achievement has grown. This literature review identified and discussed the role of religiosity and spirituality, self-efficacy, and academic support. While research on these factors has not directly addressed black college student achievement, this related research strongly supports their inclusion in the proposed research model. In the following chapter, the details of methodology and procedures are presented for this study.

Chapter 3: Methodology

Introduction

The purpose of this quantitative study was to examine the relative strength of racial identity and social factors in predicting academic success in Black college students using Cross' nigrescence theoretical model of Black identity (Cross & Vandiver, 2001). The predictor variables included: racial identity, religious/spiritual support, self-efficacy, academic support and selected demographic variables (age, gender, socioeconomic status, level of parent education, and number of semesters in school). The dependent variable was academic performance, defined as overall GPA, as of most recently completed term.

The Cross Racial Identity Scale was used to measure racial identity (CRIS; Cross & Vandiver, 2001). Religious/spiritual support was measured with the 16-item Daily Spiritual Experience Scale (DSES; Underwood & Teresi, 2002). The Bandura et al (1977) Self-efficacy Scale was used to measure self-efficacy (Bandura et al., 1977; GSE, SSE; Sherer et al., 1982). Academic support was assessed with the 5-item measure of parents' ability to help with academic support (Plunkett & Sands, 2003) and the 7-item Academic Support Scale (Plunkett & Sands, 2005). The dependent variable academic performance was defined as overall GPA, as of most recently completed term. This section presents the research design and approach, including selection of participants, instrumentation, procedures, data processing and analysis, and protection of participants.

Research Design and Rationale

A nonexperimental quantitative survey design was chosen because it allowed examination of the predictive relationship between attribute (nonmanipulated) independent variables and dependent variable (George & Mallery, 2010; Hair, Black,

Babin, & Anderson, 2009). This design was consistent with the use of a stepwise multiple regression approach in selecting the order of entry of variables according to the theoretical framework and the findings of the relevant literature (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2013).

An online survey was used to collect data through SurveyMonkey.com. Online surveys have many advantages (Bourque & Fielder, 2003; Fortunato, 2011). They are economical, cost-effective to produce and distribute, widely accessible to people who have access to a computer, and are self-administered. Online survey designs provide speedy turnaround in collection of data (Bourque & Fielder, 2003; Creswell, 2009). Additionally online surveys may allow participants to feel more comfortable because they can remain anonymous in answering questions about sensitive issues or personal experiences, as participants are more likely in responding more openly to online surveys than interview surveys conducted in person or by telephone (Bourque & Fielder, 2003).

There are also disadvantages to an online survey design. An online survey design does not permit the researcher to control the ultimate selection of participants (because they self-select) or the circumstances under which the survey is taken. While random sampling assures that participants in the accessible population have the same probability of being selected; self-selection means that the sampling error cannot be estimated, and therefore it is not known how well the sample represents the accessible population (Bourque & Fielder, 2003).

A second disadvantage is that the use of attributes as independent variables does not allow the researcher to randomly assign to conditions (as in experimental or quasi-experimental design); thus increasing the risk of error. Other outside extraneous

variables such as the influence of other family members or friends filing out the online survey questionnaire for the actual participant are also outside of the researcher's control (Creswell, 2009). Thus, survey research tends to have weak internal validity, depending on the reliability and validity of the data collection instruments.

I did not choose qualitative approach for epistemological and methodological reasons. Qualitative research relies on an inductive approach to explore meaningful themes among a small group of participants (Creswell, 2009), whereas this present study focused on deductive approach to quantitative explore the predictive strength of the variables. A qualitative approach would be helpful to understand the "meaning" of Black students' academic experience. However, the intent here was to use the hypothesis testing process to determine how well these variables can statistically explain the variance in the dependent variable academic success (Creswell, 2009; George & Mallery, 2010; Tabachnick & Fidell, 2013).

Research Questions and Hypotheses

The present study consisted of the following research questions and hypotheses. The questions were formulated so that I could use a step-wise multiple regression approach to select the order of entry of variables according to the theoretical framework and findings of relevant published literature (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2013). The primary question this study examined was the relative importance of this set of predictor variables on the criterion variable, GPA.

1. Are self-reported demographic variables (age, gender, socioeconomic status, level of parent education, and number of semesters in school) among Black college

students a significant predictor of academic performance, as measured by self-reported overall GPA?

Hypothesis 1_0: Black college student demographic data (age, gender, socioeconomic status, level of parent education, and number of semesters in school), as assessed by the self-report CRIS form, will not significantly predict academic performance, as measured by self-reported overall GPA.

Hypothesis 1_a: Black college student demographic data (age, gender, socioeconomic status, level of parent education, and number of semesters in school) as assessed by the self-report CRIS form, will significantly predict academic performance, as measured by self-reported overall GPA.

2. Is racial identity (as measured by the six factor scales of the Cross Racial Identity Scale) among Black college students a significant predictor of academic performance as measured by self-reported overall GPA?

   Hypothesis 2_0: Racial identity (as measured by the six factor scales of the Cross Racial Identity Scale) among Black college students will not significantly predict academic performance, as measured by self-reported overall GPA.

   Hypothesis 2_a: Racial identity (as measured by the six factor scales of the Cross Racial Identity Scale) among Black students will significantly predict academic performance, as measured by self-reported overall GPA.

3. Is academic support (as measured by the Academic Support Scale) among Black college students a significant predictor of academic performance, as measured by self-reported overall GPA?

Hypothesis 3_0: Academic support (as measured by the self-reported Academic Support Scale) among Black college students will not significantly predict academic performance, as measured by self-reported overall GPA.

Hypothesis 3_a: Academic support (as measured by the self-reported Academic Support Scale) among Black college students will significantly predict academic performance, as measured by self-reported overall GPA.

4. Is self-efficacy (as measured by self-reported Self-Efficacy Scale) among Black college students a significant predictor of academic performance, as measured by self-reported overall GPA?

   Hypothesis 4_0: Self-efficacy (as measured by the two subscales of the Self-Efficacy Scale) among Black college students will not significantly predict academic performance, as measured by self-reported overall GPA.

   Hypothesis 4_a: Self-efficacy (as measured by the two subscales of the Self-Efficacy Scale) among Black college students will significantly predict academic performance, as measured by self-reported overall GPA.

5. Is religious/spiritual support (as measured by the Daily Spiritual Experience Scale) among Black college students a significant predictor of academic performance, as measured by self-reported overall GPA?

   Hypothesis 5_0: Religious/spiritual support (as measured by the Daily Spiritual Experience Scale) among Black college students will not significantly predict academic performance, as measured by self-reported overall GPA.

Hypothesis 5_a: Religious/spiritual support (as measured by the Daily Spiritual Experience Scale, DSES) among Black college students will significantly predict academic performance, as measured by self-reported overall GPA.

Methodology

Population

The target population of participants consisted of Black American students who were at least 18 years of age, currently enrolled as matriculating students in postsecondary undergraduate education (i.e., Community Colleges, State Colleges or University Colleges), and have completed at least one term. This included any Black racial and Black ethnic cultural person from African ancestry or migration. This included Blacks who were born in America and descendants of slaves from Africa, Blacks who were born in Africa and who currently reside in the United States, and Blacks who currently reside in the United States who identify themselves as being of Black identity regardless of their racial and ethnic cultural background.

Sampling and Sampling Procedures

The study used a non-random convenience sampling strategy to maximize the chance of sufficient sample size and variance within the variables. It is recognized that the disadvantage of this approach is the inability to estimate sampling error and weak external validity (Babbie, 2004). Participants were recruited from the United Black Student Unions of California via website (www.joinubsuc.com) and of BSU organizations. In addition, I contacted the following organizations in geographical proximity that attract young Black constituents:

Churches: Saint John Missionary Baptist Church located in Long Beach, CA; Maranatha Christian Center located in San Jose, CA; Bible Way Christian Center located in San Jose, CA; First Baptist Missionary Church located in Los Banos, CA; and New Canaan Missionary Baptist Church located in Los Banos, CA.

Black organizations: National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP Los Banos, CA Chapter); 100 Black Women (San Jose, CA and Oakland, CA Chapter); 100 Black Men (San Jose, CA and Oakland, CA Chapter).

Sample Size

A recommended sample size was calculated using G-Power Analysis (Faul, Erdfelder, Buchner & Lang, 2009). The parameters used were an effect size of .15 (a medium effect size); alpha error probability of .05; power of .80, and 15 predictors. This resulted in a total sample size of 139 cases. I also applied Tabachnick and Fidell's (2013) guidelines for estimating sample size. "The simplest rules of thumb are $N \geq 50 + 8m$ (where m is the number of IVs) for testing the multiple correlation and $N \geq 104 + m$ for testing individual predictors" (p. 123), with a recommendation to use the higher number, in this case, $N \geq 50 + 8 (15) = 170$. Differences between what was proposed and what occurred are described in Chapter 4.

Procedures For Recruitment, Participation, and Data Collection

Recruitment. I contacted the organizations (via phone and e-mail) asking them if they would be willing to distribute research invitations (in the form of a flyers, email or Facebook post) on the researcher's behalf. This is in compliance with current IRB policy (www. researchcenter.waldenu.edu/Application-and-General-Materials.htm). I traveled to the locations of nearby organizations to deliver the invitation (Appendix B).

Participants who responded to the invitation went to the URL and reviewed a Letter of Informed Consent (Appendix A) informing them of their role, benefits and risks of participation, the researcher's contact information, and contact information for the Walden IRB (IRB@waldenu.edu). Recruitment of participants was voluntary and there were no special entitlements or compensation for participating.

Participation. Participants were directed to the online survey platform SurveyMonkey.com. After reviewing the Informed Consent form (Appendix A), participants agreed to participate by clicking on the link to begin the survey, or they were provided the opportunity to decline to participate by closing the survey window. The online survey took approximately 35 minutes to complete. Online participants were provided the opportunity to withdraw from the study at anytime without having to give explanation or reason.

Data Collection. The survey data was collected anonymously. Online survey data collection is useful because it is cost-effective to produce and distribute. This form of data collection is widely accessible to participants who have access to a computer, as online surveys are self-administered (Bourque & Fielder, 2003; Creswell, 2009). Most importantly, this form of data collection allows participants to feel more comfortable in anonymously answering questions relating to sensitive issues or personal experiences, as participants are more likely in responding more openly to online surveys than interview surveys conducted in person or by telephone (Bourque & Fielder, 2003).

Exit and Debriefing Procedures. Upon completion of the survey, a brief statement debriefing participants was displayed. This reminded them of the survey confidentiality, who to contact with questions, and a contact should they want to request a

summary of the results. The Informed Consent provided contact information of the researcher for any questions or concerns regarding the study.

Instrumentation

Demographic Information

Demographic information was obtained from the CRIS instrument, described below. This consisted of highest level of college education, place of residence, age, gender, socioeconomic status, level of parent education, and number of semesters in school.

The student's self-reported overall GPA as of the most recently completed term was requested in this part of the survey.

Cross Racial Identity Scale (CRIS)

The CRIS operationalizes Black racial identity attitudes (Vandiver, Cross, Fhagen-Smith, Worrell, Swim, & Caldwen, 2000). It takes approximately 20 minutes to complete as it has a reading/grade level of 7.0 (Worrell et al., 2004). The CRIS is a self-report survey consisting of 40 items, at which 30 of the items assess Black racial identity attitudes. Ten of the items are filler and do not assess Black racial identity and include six factors consisting five items in each. The study used all six factors as predictors. Utilizing a 7-point Likert scale, participants will be asked to identify with one of the listed responses: 1 *strongly disagree*, 2 *disagree*, 3–*somewhat disagree*, 4–*neither agree nor disagree,* 5–*somewhat agree,* 6–*agree*, or 7–*strongly agree* to the statement. Participants received a score pertaining to each participant's Black racial identity attitudinal level according to the six subscales.

Examples of the types of questions included:

I think of myself primarily as an American, and seldom as a member of a racial group.

Too many Blacks "glamorize" the drug trade and fail to see opportunities that don't involve crime. I go through periods when I am down on myself because I am Black.

The CRIS is well known for its psychometric (internal consistency and structural validity) in measuring Black racial identity (Fhagen-Smith, Vandiver, Worrell, & Cross, 2010; Gardner-Kitt & Worrell, 2007; Simmons et al., 2006; Worrell, 2007; Worrell, Vandiver & Cross, 2002; Worrell, Vandiver, Cross & Fhagen-Smith, 2004). Coefficient alpha reliability estimates for internal consistency of CRIS scores ranged from .65 to .90 (Fhagen-Smith et al., 2010; Worrell et al., 2004; Worrell, Vandiver & Cross, 2002).

To obtain permission to use the newly expanded version of the CRIS scale, I contacted the authors by e-mail. Permission to use the CRIS scale for this study was granted at no charge, providing that I will not make any modifications to the instrument, the six subscale scores are not to represent the sum for a global score, and the entire instrument is not to be made public through publication of one's dissertation. On behalf of the CRIS Team (Vandiver, Cross Jr., Fhagen-Smith, Worrell, Swim, and Caldwell), Dr. Worrell provided I (via e-mail) with the technical manual at which the scale was made available in the appendix of the manual. In addition, Dr. Worrell requested, if I was willing, that CRIS data results of present study be made available upon the completion of this research as the CRIS team is in the process in collecting data for large-sample analyses.

Daily Spiritual Experience Scale (DSES)

The DSES was used to measure an individual's personal religious and spiritual life experiences of coping and when facing various challenges in life (Underwood, 2002). The instrument is used in measuring an individual's spiritual awareness as it has been widely applied to religious and spiritual coping, social support, social science, psychological well being and health studies (NIA/Fetzer, 1999b; Underwood, 2002).

The DSES assesses an individual's spiritual perception of God and relationship with God from a daily experience. This 16-item scale uses a 15-item 6-point Likert response (1 = *Many times a day*, 6 = *Never or almost never*) pertaining to frequency questions. An example question is "*I find strength in my religion or spirituality*." Item 16 is a 4-piont Likert response (1 = *Not close at all*, 4 = *As close as possible*). An example question is "*In general, how close do you feel to God*." In response to psychometric results, the scale revealed high internal consistent results of high Cronbach's alphas ranging from .86 and above. This scale takes less than 5-7 minutes to complete (NIA/Fetzer, 1999b; Underwood, 2002; Underwood & Teresi; 1999).

When comparing and testing the reliability and validity of the 16-item DSES and 6-item DSES, researchers Loustalot, Wyatt, and Boss (2006) conducted a convience sample of 40 African American participants who ranged between the ages of 35 to 85. Overall results revealed that the 16-item DSES and 6-item DSES were stable over time and internally consistant in have good test-retest (of two day) reliability. Results for stability of the 16-item DSES revealed a Pearson's correlation at .77 and an inter-class coefficient of .77. Internal consistencey results revealed Cronbach's alphas between .86 and .90. For equivalence, Pearson's correlations of .79 and .85 were satisfatory with a

standardized means of test 1 ($t = 1.28$, $p > 0.05$) and test 2 ($t = 203$, $p > 0.05$) indicating no significant differences between mean scores (Loustalot, Wyatt, & Boss, 2006; Underwood, 2011).

In addition, a general social survey also reported the internal consistencey reliability estimates of the 16-item DSES with high Cronbach's alphas of .94 and .95 (David, Smith, & Marsden, 2001; Underwood & Jeanne, 2002). Underwood and Jeanne (2002) reported most of all 16-items of the DSES loading high on the first factor analysis ranging from .69 to .93. There were only two items that loaded low at .33 and .27; however, these two items did load higher on the second factor analysis at .77 and .78. The two itmes were "I feel a Selfless caring for others" and "I accept others even when they do things that I think are wrong." The items and response categories were fielded in the 1998 General Social Survey which can be obtained online (www.fetzer.org).

Self-Efficacy Scale (SES)

Self-efficacy is an empirical construct strongly associated in mediating/moderating academic success (Brady-Amoon, 2009; Edman & Brazil, 2007; Fife et al., 2011; Hsieh, Sullivan, & Guerra, 2007). The SES is a 30 item scale, which takes less than 5 minutes to complete. The likert scale points range from 1=*disagree strongly* to 5= *agree strongly*. The scale consists of two subscales: General Self-efficacy (GSE) is composed of 17 items and Social Self-efficacy (SSE) is composed of 6 items. The other 6 items are "filler" items. Examples of questions include:

When I make plans, I am certain I can make them work.

I do not handle myself well in social gatherings.

Sherer et al (1982) conducted extensive research on the content, construct and criterion validity of this measure. A factor analysis was conducted from a study of 376 college students. Factor loadings for the GSE subscale ranged from .42 to .69. The factor loadings on the SSE subscale ranged from .47 to .70. Cronbach's alpha was calculated as .86 GSE and .71 for SSE.

In assessing the Self-efficacy Scale for construct validity, Sherer et al (1982) reported appropriate moderate Pearson correlations of GSE and SSE scores with other measures of personality characteristics (Internal-External, Personal Control, Social Desirability, Ego Strength, Interpersonal Competency, and Self-Esteem). I also reported positive relationships between the self-efficacy measures and vocational, educational, and military success, suggesting strong criterion validity.

I contacted Dr. Mark Sherer, to request permission in the use of the Self-efficacy Scale for this study. Dr. Sherer gave permission to use the scale. Dr. Sherer e-mailed I the full scale, scoring instructions, and the original article that presented the scale's psychometric properties. There was no charge for the use of the scale.

Academic Support Scale (ASS)

The ASS was used to measures perceptions in how significant the support of others (mother, father, teacher, and friend) is helpful in one's academic performance. The ASS was developed by Plunkett and Sands (2005) to assess for perceived educational level of support (mother, father, teacher, and friend). The ASS is a 6-item self-report measure that utilizes a 4-point Likert scale as participants indicate that they: 1–*strongly disagree*, 2–*disagree*, 3–*agree*, and 4–*strongly agree*. The 6-items are to be summed for each person to receive one overall score. Higher scores indicate higher level

of academic support from others. The scale has obtained favorable internal consistency based on Cronbach alpha reliability coefficients of .72 (mothers) and .78 (fathers). Based upon 324 Latino adolescents' participants, Alfaro, Umaña-Taylor, and Bámaca (2006) determined the internal consistency coefficients alphas for academic support (mother, father, teacher, and friend) subscales ranged from .89 to .96. This test takes approximately 3 minutes to complete.

I contacted Dr. Scott Plunkett, via e-mail, and he granted permission to use the scale. Dr. Plunkett e-mailed the researcher the 6-item scale from Plunkett and Sands (2005) and scoring instructions. There is no technical manual, as items are to be average from subscale scores. There was no charge for the use of the scale.

Statistical Analysis

I used IBM SPSS statistical version 21.0 for running a step-wise multiple regression analysis with the significance criterion $\alpha = .05$ to explain the variance in the dependent variable (i.e., academic performance) based on the influence of multiple independent variables (i.e., Black racial identity, religious/spiritual support, self-efficacy, and academic support, and selected demographics). A regression analysis was appropriate for this study as it allowed the researcher to use standardized Beta (β) value coefficients to directly compare and assess the relative strength and direction of the relationship between the predicted independent variables and the dependent variable. In avoiding Type I or Type II error, running a regression analysis allowed the researcher to test for assumptions of normality, linearity, homoscedasticity, and reliability of measures.

A step-wise multiple regression statistical procedure was used in selection of independent variables (default criteria of $F \geq 1.00$) with the greatest prediction value for

the dependent variable. Any entry value specified at $p \geq .20$ was not included in the regression analysis.

IBM SPSS Statistical Version 21.0 Software

As previously mentioned, I used the IBM Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) software version 21.0. The IBM SPSS statistical version 21.0 was designed for its advanced statistical operations and regression modules that provided the researcher the module with descriptive statistics (i.e., predictor variables, mean scores, standard deviation scores, and *N* = participants) that addresses regression models used to evaluate this present studies research questions. The SPSS version 21.0 was appropriate for this present study in conducting statistical data analysis, interpreting and presenting data results (e.g., ordinal multiple regression, and reliability of instrumentation using Cronbach's alpha).

Threats to Validity

Conducting an online survey poses methodological challenges regarding the internal and external validity of the study. With minimal control over sample selection and data collection conditions, the results of any type of survey research should always be interpreted with caution (Creswell, 2009; Fink, 2003; Tabachnick & Fidell, 2013).Internal Validity

Construct Validity. Each of the measures described above was selected for their demonstrated psychometric properties. The construct validity of each instrument (CRIS, Daily Spiritual Experience Scale, Self-efficacy Scale, and Academic Support Scale) has been demonstrated in published academic literature and was reported earlier in this

chapter (Bandura, 1977; Bandura et al., 1977; Plunkett & Sands, 2005; Sherer et al., 1982; Underwood, 2002; Worrell et al., 2004).

Examining Internal Consistency. I used SPSS to examine the internal consistency of all self-report questionnaire instruments used in this present study. As previously mentioned, prior studies (Alfaro et al., 2006; Bandura, 1977; Bandura et al., 1977; Fhagen-Smith et al., 2010; Sherer et al., 1982; Worrell et al., 2004; Worrell, Vandiver & Cross, 2002) revealed internal consistency in the reliability and construct validity of instruments with Cronbach's alpha's ranging between .65 or higher. Estimates calculated from the data of this present study were compared to those in previously published studies.

Control Over Data Collection Conditions. The use of attributes as independent variables does not allow the researcher to randomly assign to conditions (as in experimental or quasi-experimental design); thus increasing the risk of error. Other outside extraneous variables such as the influence of other family members or friends filing out the online survey questionnaire for the actual participant are also outside of the researcher's control (Creswell, 2009).

Incomplete Data. In online survey research, participants may discontinue in completing the online survey for various possible reasons. Therefore, missing data is "fact of life…and the researcher's challenge is to address the issues raised by missing data that affect the generalizability of results" (Hair et al., p.49). To attempt control for this, I conducted the following: (a) attempting to over-sample (i.e, aimed for more than the 146 cases recommended in the power analyses) and, (b) conducting missing data diagnostics to identify non-random data patterns that could bias the results.

Statistical Conclusion Validity. Cohen (1992) reported one of the major threats to data analysis results is the mistake of reporting false results (having an effect) by rejecting the null hypothesis when in reality it had no effect. This places the researcher at risk in committing a Type I error (reporting false results). Type I error may be induced because of the lack of control over data collection conditions, weak construct validity and missing/incomplete data problems. As described above, I made an effort to systematize data collection as much as possible, used psychometrically strong measures, and planned for missing data analyses prior to testing the hypotheses.

External Validity

Sample Size. A low response rate could be a threat to external validity causing too small of a sample size. To reduce such a threat and risk of a Type II error (rejecting the null hypothesis that in fact is false), I identified multiple institutions and multiple strategies for recruiting participants.

The present study utilized a non-random convenience sampling strategy to maximize the chance of sufficient sample size and variance within the variables. It is recognized that this approach does not permit the researcher to control the ultimate selection of participants (as they are self-selected) or survey taking circumstances. Thus, I was unable to estimate sampling error and not know how representative the sample is of the accessible population (Babbie, 2004; Bourque & Fielder, 2003).

Reactive Effects of Data Collection Arrangements. As aforementioned, an online survey design has its advantages as well as disadvantages as it does not permit the researcher to control for reactive effects of its participants, as an online survey design is self-selection of participants. However, Bourque and Fielder (2003) reported online

surveys allow self-selected participants to feel more comfortable in anonymously answering questions related to sensitive issues or personal experiences, as participants are more likely in responding more openly to online surveys conducted in person or by telephone.

Ethical Procedures

Protection of Participants

This present study did not commence till I met the approval of the Internal Review Board (IRB#3-25-14-0187024) of Walden University. Prior to consent in participating in the study, information regarding the study was provided to all online participants in the Letter of Informed Consent through SurveyMonkey.com. An online Informed Consent form (Appendix A) must be agreed by online participants before taking the survey. Online participants were provided the opportunity in withdrawing from the study at any time without having to give explanation or reason. Withdrawal from the study would not have any impingement on participant and researcher relationship; nor would it impinge the relationship with Walden University. Although online surveys assume minimal risk to participants, I assured confidentiality of all collected data.

The collected data included no identification information. My computer was password-protected. All print-based data were stored in a locked safe to which only I had access; all data, whether in print or on computer, will be shredded or securely deleted from my computer after 5 years.

Summary

This study used the expanded nigrescence theoretical model of Black racial identity (Cross & Vandiver, 2001); religious/spiritual support; self-efficacy; academic support; and other demographic variables (age, gender, socioeconomic status, level of parent education, and number of semesters in school) as predicting factors that influence academic performance in the Black college student population. Thus, I chose a non-experimental quantitative online survey design as being the most appropriate design for its many aforesaid issues and advantages. The discussion regarding research design and approach, procedures, instrumentation, data collection, data processing and analysis, statistical threats to data analysis results, and protection of participants were discussed.

Chapter 4: Results

Introduction

The purpose of the study was to examine the role of racial identity and social in predicting academic success in Black college students using Cross' nigrescence theoretical model of Black identity (Cross & Vandiver, 2001). The research questions this study addressed were:

1. Are self-reported demographic variables (age, gender, socioeconomic status, level of parent education, and number of semesters in school) among Black college student's significant predictors of academic performance, as measured by self-reported overall GPA?

   Hypothesis 1_0: Black college student demographic data (age, gender, socioeconomic status, level of parent education, and number of semesters in school), as assessed by the self-report CRIS form, will not significantly predict academic performance, as measured by self-reported overall GPA.

   Hypothesis 1_a: Black college student demographic data (age, gender, socioeconomic status, level of parent education, and number of semesters in school) as assessed by the self-report CRIS form, will significantly predict academic performance, as measured by self-reported overall GPA.

2. Is racial identity (as measured by the six factor scales of the Cross Racial Identity Scale) among Black college students a significant predictor of academic performance as measured by self-reported overall GPA?

   Hypothesis 2_0: Racial identity (as measured by the six factor scales of the Cross Racial Identity Scale) among Black college students will not

significantly predict academic performance, as measured by self-reported overall GPA.

Hypothesis 2 $_a$: Racial identity (as measured by the six factor scales of the Cross Racial Identity Scale) among Black students will significantly predict academic performance, as measured by self-reported overall GPA.

3. Is academic support (as measured by the Academic Support Scale) among Black college students a significant predictor of academic performance, as measured by self-reported overall GPA?

   Hypothesis 3_0: Academic support (as measured by the self-reported Academic Support Scale) among Black college students will not significantly predict academic performance, as measured by self-reported overall GPA.

   Hypothesis 3_a: Academic support (as measured by the self-reported Academic Support Scale) among Black college students will significantly predict academic performance, as measured by self-reported overall GPA.

4. Is self-efficacy (as measured by self-reported Self-Efficacy Scale) among Black college students a significant predictor of academic performance, as measured by self-reported overall GPA?

   Hypothesis 4_0: Self-efficacy (as measured by the two subscales of the Self-Efficacy Scale) among Black college students will not significantly predict academic performance, as measured by self-reported overall GPA.

Hypothesis 4_a: Self-efficacy (as measured by the two subscales of the Self-Efficacy Scale) among Black college students will significantly predict academic performance, as measured by self-reported overall GPA.

5. Is religious/spiritual support (as measured by the Daily Spiritual Experience Scale) among Black college students a significant predictor of academic performance, as measured by self-reported overall GPA?

   Hypothesis 5_0: Religious/spiritual support (as measured by the Daily Spiritual Experience Scale) among Black college students will not significantly predict academic performance, as measured by self-reported overall GPA.

   Hypothesis 5_a: Religious/spiritual support (as measured by the Daily Spiritual Experience Scale, DSES) among Black college students will significantly predict academic performance, as measured by self-reported overall GPA.

Data Collection

Participation

Survey data were collected from March 3 until August 31, 2014; a total of 133 people responded to the invitation (flyer, e-mail or Facebook post, as described in Chapter 3). All completed survey using the online website SurveyMonkey.com. This was less than the power estimates of 139 to 170 cases estimated using G-Power Analysis (Faul, Erdfelder, Buchner & Lang, 2009) with an effect size of .15 (medium), an alpha error probability of .05, a power of .80, and 15 predictors. I also applied Tabachnick and Fidell's (2013) guidelines for estimating sample size. "The simplest rules of thumb are *N*

≥ 50 + 8*m* (where *m* is the number of IVs) for testing the multiple correlation and N ≥ 104 + *m* for testing individual predictors" (p. 123), with a recommendation to use the higher number, in this case, N ≥ 50 +8 (15) = 170.

Procedures for informed consent were followed as described in Chapter 3. Of the 133 participants, 33 cases were deleted because they had less than 50% of the questionnaire completed. An additional 13 cases reported no longer being enrolled in college. The resulting sample participants (*N* = 87) responded to at least 85% of the survey, and all reported being currently enrolled and all completed the online survey questionnaire.

Post-hoc Power Analysis

Using the same parameters for estimating sample size as described in Chapter 3, a post-hoc power analysis was conducted using G-Power Analysis (Faul et al., 2009). The parameters were an effect size of .15 (a medium effect size); alpha error probability of .05, *N* =87 and 15 predictors. The results indicated power (1-β) = .51, which is below the accepted level of .80. Therefore, the study results may be at risk for Type II error, and are reported and interpreted with caution.

Estimation of Missing Data

Given the small sample size, central tendency missing data estimation was used to replace missing data points (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2013). For variables with missing data that were normally distributed, the mean was used for 17 missing responses. There were 2 missing responses in the CRIS, 4 missing responses in the DSES, 3 missing responses in the SES, and 8 missing responses in the ASS. For variables with missing data that were non-normally distributed or ordinal scales, the median was used for 14 missing

responses. There were 2 missing responses in the CRIS, 4 missing responses in the SES, and 8 missing responses in the ASS. The adjustment of substituting these values did not substantially change the distribution of any of the adjusted variables.

Description of the Sample

Demographics

The sample consist of 87 Black American students who were at least 18 years of age, currently enrolled as matriculating students in postsecondary undergraduate education. Table 1 presents the demographic characteristics of the sample obtained from the CRIS scale demographic questionnaire (age, gender, socioeconomic status, level of parent education, and number of semesters in school). Most of the participants were female (67.8%) and between 22 and 34 years old (51.7%). Of those currently enrolled, 54.0% reported being undergraduates and 46.0% reported being graduate students.

Most of the survey participants (72.4%) identified themselves as being African American or Black. Almost half (48.3%) of the Black college students reported their socioeconomic status as working class, and about 29% identified as middle class. The majority (74.0%) identified as living in either urban or suburban communities. About 30% of the sample had parents (mother or father) who had less than a high school education.

Table 2

Demographic Characteristics (*N* = 87)

Variable	Categories	Freq.	Percent
Gender	Male	28	32.2
	Female	59	67.8

Age	18 to 21 years	25	28.7
	22 to 34 years	45	51.7
	More than 34 years	17	19.5
Ethnicity	African American	45	51.7
	Black	18	20.7
	Mixed	14	16.1
	Other	10	11.5
Family SES	Poor	4	5.4
	Working Class	42	48.3
	Middle Class	25	28.7
	Upper Middle	14	16.1
	Wealthy	2	2.3
Community lived	Suburban	16	18.4
	Urban	48	55.2
	Other	23	26.4
Student Currently Enrolled	Undergraduate	47	54.0
	Graduate	40	46.0
Semesters in School	Freshman (1 or 2 Semesters)	4	4.6
	Sophomore (3 or 4 Semesters)	17	19.5
	Junior (5 or 6 Semesters)	15	17.2
	Senior (7 or 8 Semesters)	12	13.8
	Graduate School (≥ 9 Semesters)	39	44.8
Mother's Education Level	Elementary or Some HS	4	4.6
	High School or Equivalent	19	21.8
	Trade School or Some College	23	26.24
	Two Year or Four Year Undergraduate Degree	22	25.23
	Some Graduate/Graduate or Professional Degree	19	21.28
Father's Education Level	Elementary or Some HS	4	4.6
	High School or Equivalent	24	27.6
	Trade School or Some College	28	32.2
	2 or 4 Yr. Undergraduate Degree	11	12.6
	Some Graduate/Graduate or Professional Degree	20	23.0

Racial Identity

Each of the CRIS Scale scores were calculated according to the manual (Worrell et al., 2004). The possible range of scores for each scale was 1 to 7, where 1 means that the student does not identify with that description of racial identity and 7 means a strong identification with that identity.

On average, participants were neutral with respect to Pre-Encounter Assimilation, $M = 4$, $SD = 1.54$ (identifying more as an American rather than with racial identity). For Pre-Encounter Miseducation (pre-misconceived mindset and beliefs in the negative Black stereotypes), students somewhat disagreed, $M = 3$, $SD = 1.35$. For Pre-Encounter Self-Hatred (negative self-beliefs that there is nothing positive about being Black), students on average strongly disagreed, $M = 2$, $SD = 1.24$. Students strongly disagreed with Immersion-Emission Anti-White, $M = 2$, $SD = .789$ (identifying anti-White attitude, opposed to any value in the White Western and European American culture). For Internalization Afrocentricity (one seeking African centered experiences with the attitude of Black nationalism in the empowerment of Blacks), students neither agreed nor disagreed, $M = 4$, $SD = 1.32$. For Internalization Multiculturalism Inclusive (holds a strong value in being Black, yet also has high regard for other racial and ethnic groups), students on average tended to agree with this racial identity attitude, $M = 6$, $SD = 1.14$.

Published CRIS instrument reliabilities ranged from .78 to .89 (Worrell et al., 2004) and .65 to .90 (Fhagen-Smith et al., 2010; Worrell, Vandiver & Cross, 2002). As shown in Table 3, the current study results are consistent with prior research.

Table 3

CRIS Scale: Descriptive Statistics and Internal Consistency

	CRISPA	CRISPM	CRISPSH	CRISIEAW	CRISIA	CRISIMCI
Mean	4.00	3.09	2.18	1.56	3.67	5.64
Median	4.20	3.00	1.80	1.20	3.60	6.00
Mode	4.40	1.20[a]	1.00	1.00	2.20[a]	6.00
Std. Deviation	1.54	1.35	1.24	.79	1.31	1.134
Skewness	-.17	.28	1.16	1.70	.13	-1.02
Std. Error of Skewness	.26	.26	.26	.26	.26	.26
Kurtosis	-.84	-.93	.93	2.62	-1.03	.58
Std. Error of Kurtosis	.51	.51	.51	.51	.51	.51
Minimum	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	2.00
Maximum	7.00	5.80	6.60	4.20	6.00	7.00
Cronbach's alpha	.87	.81	.91	.89	.83	.86
Cronbach's alpha, Worrell et al, 2004	.85	.78	.89	.89	.83	.82

N = 336

a. Multiple modes exist. The smallest value is shown

Religious/Spiritual Support and Self-Efficacy

Religious and spiritual support was measured using the DSES, and scores were calculated according to the manual (Underwood, 2002). The possible range of scores for the scale was 1 to 6, where 1 means that the student reports having a direct personal religious/spiritual experience with God many times a day and 6 means never or almost

never having a relationship with God from a daily experience. Item 16 used a 4-point Likert response (1 = *Not close at all*, 4 = *As close as possible*). Majority of students identified in having a direct experience with God many times a day or every day *M* = 45, *SD* = 20. A large percentage (63.2%) of students reported that they "ask God for God's help in the mist of daily activities," 56.3 % reported "I find strength in my religion or spirituality," with 66.9% reporting "I feel God's love for me directly," and 71.3% reported "I feeling thankful for my blessings." On average 86.2% of students reported having a very close relationship or somewhat close relationship with God. A small percentage (8.0%) reported not close at all. For this study, internal consistency for the DSES was high (.97), and consistent with high reliabilities (.86 to .94) reported by other studies (Underwood & Jeanne, 2002).

Self-efficacy was measured using the 30 Likert scale items of the SES, and scores were summed according to the manual (Sherer et al., 1982), so that lower scores reflect low self-efficacy. For this study, the estimated reliability was .82 for the GSE .54, which is consistent with prior research (Sherer et al., 1982). However, the SSE alpha coefficient was .54, indicating inadequate internal consistency. This is different than more acceptable values that were reported by Sherer et al. (e.g., .71), and therefore this measure was not used in testing the hypotheses.

Table 4

Descriptive Statistics and Internal Consistency for the DSE and Self-Efficacy Scales(n=87)

		GSE2	SSE2	DSES2
N	Valid	87	87	87
	Missing	0	0	0
Mean		46.05	21.71	45.13
Median		45.00	23.00	38.00
Mode		44.00	24.00	35.00
Std. Deviation		6.10	3.67	19.54
Skewness		.378	-.72	1.04
Std. Error of Skewness		.26	.26	.26
Kurtosis		.90	-.35	.55
Std. Error of Kurtosis		.51	.51	.511
Minimum		31.00	12.00	19.00
Maximum		64.00	28.00	97.00
Cronbach's alpha Underwood & Jeanne, 2002 *N* = 122				.94
Cronbach's alpha, Sherer et al., 1982 *N* = 376		.86	.71	

a. Multiple modes exist. The smallest value is shown

Academic Support

The items of the ASS Scale scores were summed according to the manual (Plunkett & Sands, 2005). The possible range of scores for each of item of the scale was 1 to 4, where 1 means that the student strongly disagrees that the mother/father/teacher/ friend) have helped in their education and 4 means strongly agree. Majority of participants tend to strongly agreed more so in the academic support of the mother, *M* = 37, *SD* = 6.63 and academic support of teacher, *M* = 20, *SD* = 3.85. For academic support of the father, *M* = 35, *SD* = 8.46 and academic support of a friend, *M* = 20, *SD* = 3.25, students on average agreed in the level of support.

Cronbach's Alpha was calculated for each of the ASS scales, and indicated very strong internal consistency: mother (.96), father (.97), teacher (.94), and friend (.91). The results here are comparable to internal consistency estimates reported in the original research (Alfaro, Umaña-Taylor, & Bámaca, 2006), ranging from .89 to .96.

Table 5

ASS Scale: Descriptive Statistics and Internal Consistency for Academic Support

		Mother	Father	Teacher	Friend
N	Valid	87	87	87	87
	Missing	0	0	0	0
Mean		37.44	34.51	19.92	19.59
Median		39.00	35.00	20.00	18.00
Mode		44.00	33.00[a]	24.00	18.00
Std. Deviation		6.63	8.47	3.85	3.25

Table 5, con't

Skewness	-.95	-1.08	-.88	-.31
Std. Error of Skewness	.26	.26	.26	.26
Kurtosis	.57	.99	.53	-.07
Std. Error of Kurtosis	.51	.51	.51	.51
Minimum	17.00	11.00	7.00	9.00
Maximum	44.00	44.00	24.00	24.00
Cronbach's alpha	.96	.97	.94	.91
Cronbach's alpha, Alfaro, Umaña-Taylor & Bámaca (2006) *N* = 324	.92	.94	.90	.89

a. Multiple modes exist. The smallest value is shown

Results

RQ1: Demographic Predictors of GPA

In order to test the first research question, the correlations of the selected demographic variables and the dependent variable GPA were examined. As shown in Table 7, these results indicate that none of the demographic variables were significantly correlated with GPA. Among the independent variables, the highly correlated variables included mother's and father's education (r = .613, p <.001), father's education with standing in school (r = .818, p <.001), father's education with age (r = .370, p <.001), and standing in school with age (r = .491, p <.001).

Table 6

Correlations of Demographic Variables with GPA (N = 87)

	Current GPA	1	2	3	4	5
Current GPA						
1. Age	-.071					
2. Gender	.127	-.021				
3. Family Income	-.039	.010	.018			
4. Mother's Education	.026	-.028	.159	.093		
5. Father's Education	-.096	.370**	.104	.116	.613**	
6. Standing in School	-.116	.491**	.073	.102	.386**	.818**

**. Correlation is significant < 0.001 level (2-tailed).

The original intent of this investigation was to use a stepwise procedure in order to determine which of the demographic variables accounted for the most variance in GPA. However, none of the demographic variables were sufficiently correlated with GPA to enter into the equation. Instead, a standard regression analysis was conducted in order to enter all of the demographic variables at once, to assess what collective percent of the variance these variables could explain (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2013). The results indicated a very small portion of variance was predicted by the demographic variables, R^2 = .039, F (6, 80) = .543, p = .774; and none of the demographic predictors were statistically significant.

Table 7

Results of Standard Regression of Demographic Variables on GPA (N = 87)

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	T	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
(Constant)	3.574	.222		16.114	.000
Gender	.108	.093	.128	1.153	.252
Age	.009	.075	.015	.116	.908
Family Income	-.011	.040	-.030	-.276	.783
Mother's Education	.036	.050	.108	.721	.473
Standing in School	-.023	.061	-.079	-.382	.703
Father's Education	-.037	.075	-.113	-.489	.626

R^2 = .039, F (6, 80) = .543, p = .774

RQ2: Cross Racial Identity Scale Predictors of GPA

In order to test the second research question, the correlations of the six sub-scales of the CRIS questionnaire and the dependent variable GPA were examined. As shown in Table 9, none of the CRIS scales were significantly correlated with GPA. Among the CRIS sub-scales, the highly correlated variables included PM and PA (r = .262, p = 0.05), PSH and PM (r = .250, p = 0.05), IEW and PM (r =.218, p = 0.05), IEW and PSH (r = .444, p = 0.01), IA and PA (r =.601, p = 0.01), IA and PM (r = .296, p = 0.01), IA and PSH (r = .253, p = 0.05), IA and IEW (r = .385, p = 0.01), IMCI and IEW (r = -.292, p = 0.01). However, none of these relationships were of sufficient strength to warrant concern for multicollinearity in the regression analyses (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2013).

Table 8

Correlations of the CRIS with GPA (N = 87)

	Current GPA	1	2	3	4	5
Current GPA	1					
1. Pre-Encounter Assimilation	-.021					
2. Pre-Encounter Miseducation	-.149	.260*				
3. Pre-Encounter Self-Hatred	-.153	.033	.250*			
4. Immersion-Emersion Anti-White	-.060	.091	.218*	.444**		
5. Internalization Afrocentricity	-.141	.601**	.296**	.253*	.385**	
6. Internalization Multiculturalist Inclusive	-.057	.051	-.125	-.199	-.292**	.035

*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).
**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

The original intent of this investigation was to use a stepwise procedure in order to determine which of the CRIS variables accounted for the most variance in GPA. However, none of the CRIS variables were sufficiently correlated with GPA to enter into the equation. Instead, a standard regression analysis was conducted in order to enter all of the CRIS variables at once, to assess what collective percent of the variance these variables could explain (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2013). The results indicated that a very small proportion of variance was explained, $R^2 = .058$, F (6, 80) = .825, $p = .554$; and none of the CRIS predictors were statistically significant.

Table 9

Results of Standard Regression of CRIS Variables on GPA (N = 87)

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	T	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
(Constant)	3.925	.294		13.358	.000
Pre-Encounter Assimilation	.005	.007	.107	.760	.450
Pre-Encounter Miseducation	-.007	.007	-.121	-1.026	.308
Pre-Encounter Self-Hatred	-.008	.008	-.124	-.997	.322
Immersion-Emersion Anti-White	.005	.013	.046	.342	.733
Internalization Afrocentricity	-.009	.009	-.153	-.998	.321
Internalization Multiculturalist Inclusive	-.006	.008	-.083	-.715	.477

$R^2 = .058$, $F\ (6, 80) = .825$, $p = .554$

RQ3: Academic Support Predictors of GPA

In order to test the third research question, the correlations of the four sub-scales of the Academic Support Scale and the dependent variable GPA were examined. As shown in Table 11, these results indicate that none of the ASS variables were significantly correlated with GPA. However, intercorrelations among the ASS are moderately high and statistically significant, ranging from .372 to .60.

Table 10

Correlations of the Academic Support with GPA (N = 87)

	Current GPA	1	2	3
Current GPA	1			
1. Academic Support Mother	.118			
2. Academic Support Father	.028	.372**		
3. Academic Support Teacher	.144	.459**	.457**	
4. Academic Support Friend	.153	.498**	.466**	.600**

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

None of the independent variables were sufficiently correlated with GPA to conduct a stepwise procedure. Instead, a standard regression analysis was conducted where all of the ASS variables were entered simultaneously, resulting in $R^2 = .034$, F (4, 82) = .725, $p = .578$; and none of the ASS support predictors were statistically significant.

Table 11

Results of Standard Regression of Academic Support Variables on GPA (N = 87)

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	T	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
(Constant)	3.113	.299		10.423	.000
Academic Support Mother	.003	.008	.051	.394	.694
Academic Support Father	-.004	.006	-.086	-.671	.504
Academic Support Teacher	.009	.015	.092	.647	.519
Academic Support Friend	.014	.018	.112	.766	.446

$R^2 = .034$, F (4, 82) = .725, $p = .578$

RQ4. Self-Efficacy Predicting GPA

The fourth research question examined the relationship between self-efficacy and GPA. Originally it was proposed to conduct a multiple regression using both measures of self-efficacy, GSE and SSE. However, the assessment of internal consistency for SSE was not sufficient to use this measure in the test of this hypothesis (coefficient alpha = .54), so a simple regression analysis was conducted. The results revealed a small but significant negative correlation between self-efficacy and GPA, r = -.247, p =.05, and R^2 =.061, F (1, 85) = 5.507, p = .021, with β = -.247, p = .021. This type of relationship is not typically found, i.e., prior research indicates a strong and positive correlation (Brady-Amoon, 2009; Edman & Brazil, 2008; Fife et al., 2011; Hsieh, Sullivan, & Guerra, 2007). However, close inspection of the data revealed three "outliers"; students who had very high GPA's (≥ 3.77) and very low measures of self-esteem (≤ 33). The small sample size (N = 87) makes this relationship susceptible to the influence of outliers. With these three cases excluded, the correlation, r = .383, p <.001, is more consistent with previous research; and R^2 = .136, F (1, 82) =14.07, p <.001, and β = .383, p <.001.

RQ5. Daily Spiritual Experience Predictors of GPA

In order to test the fifth research question, the correlation between the Daily Spiritual Experience Scale and the dependent variable GPA were computed, r =.163, p =.132. Since this relationship was not significant, a test of Hypothesis 5 could not be conducted.

Summary

Of the 87 survey participants, most were female 67.8% between 22 and 34 years old 51.7%. Of those currently enrolled, 54.0% reported being an undergraduate and

46.0% were graduate students. Most of the participants 72.4% identified themselves as being African American or Black. Almost half 48.3% of the Black college students reported their socioeconomic status as working class, and about 29% identified as middle class. The majority 74.0% identified as living in either urban or suburban communities. The majority 77.0% identified being of working class or middle class families, and 18.4% being of upper middle or wealthy families. About 30% of the sample had parents (mother or father) who had less than a high school education. In contrast to the literature reported on in Chapter 2, the results of this study did not provide support (the null hypothesis was not rejected) for hypothesis 1a (demographics), hypothesis 2a (racial identity), hypothesis 3a (religious/spiritual support), or hypothesis (academic support) in predicting academic performance. Hypothesis 4a (self-efficacy) was supported (the null hypothesis was rejected), only after the three cases containing outliers were removed. Chapter 5 presents the interpretation and limitations of these findings, addresses the implications for positive social change, and provides recommendations for future research and support for academic success in Black college students.

Chapter 5: Discussion

Introduction

The purpose of the study was to determine the relative strength of racial identity, social factors (religious/spiritual support; self-efficacy, academic support) and other demographic variables (age, gender, socioeconomic status, level of parent education, and number of semesters in school) in predicting academic success in Black college students using Cross' nigrescence theoretical model of Black Identity (Cross & Vandiver, 2001). Five research questions were used to help determine the relative strength of these variables in predicting academic success among Black college students. The goal and nature of the study was to examine the dimensions of Black identity and psychosocial factors that might contribute to academic success.

It was anticipated that the results of this study would yield insights into the role of racial and ethnic identity and be used by postsecondary counselors and educators to inform strategies about how to contribute to the academic success of Black students. Since the extensive literature review in Chapter 2 strongly suggested the importance of these factors, the lack of significant results from this study were surprising.

Interpretation of the Findings

This qualitative study of 87 Black American college students, at least 18 years of age and currently enrolled, used nonrandom sampling (an online survey questionnaire) currently enrolled as matriculating students in postsecondary undergraduate education. The study focused on variables that are similar to those used in previous studies on the academic development of Black college students. Previous studies focused on Black undergraduate college students currently enrolled at either historically Black universities

or predominantly White universities (Brady-Amoon, 2009; Fife et al., 2011; Reid, 2013). The present study is unique in that the majority of participants reported attending mixed colleges in the United States. Although nonrandom sampling was used in prior studies, this study used an online survey questionnaire where the researcher did not have access to participants on college campuses. The lack of direct access may account for the low number of participants found in this study.

As previously mentioned, only the predictor variable, self-efficacy, was significantly correlated with the GPA; still the data revealed some interesting demographic findings. The majority of participants (74.0%) reported that they lived in urban or suburban communities, and working class or middle class families (77%); only 18.4% that they lived in upper middle or wealthy families. This is similar to previous research (Hyers, 2001; Rowley, Chavous & Cooke, 2003) which suggested that students who live in suburban neighborhoods are less likely to struggle academically than students who live below the poverty level in rural neighborhoods.

The correlations among the academic support variables (father, mother, teacher, friend) ranged from .372 to .60 ($p \leq .01$). While academic support has not been examined specifically in Black college students, research from other populations suggested that this construct was important to consider as relevant to academic success (Chen, 2005; Mazer & Thompson, 2011; Sands & Plunkett, 2005).

One of the findings revealed early on in the analyses was the dependent variable, GPA, was considerably narrow in range with 90% (3.0 or higher GPA) with exception of 9 participants. Most of the students were good to outstanding academic performers. While previous research revealed that high achieving Black college students are faced

with common stereotypes about Black Americans and report a low level of self-confidence (Fries-Britt & Griffin, 2007), the current study suggests that this group has developed a high degree of self-efficacy. Black students endure the difficulties and struggles of college life that is, adjusting to college life on campus, integrating into predominantly White campus communities, and developing a sense of belonging. In addition, findings also revealed that with the support of campus administrator, high achieving Blacks are learning to be more resistant in today's academic struggles (Fries-Britt & Griffin, 2007; Harper, 2008).

Demographic Variables and Academic Performance

None of the demographic variables (age, gender, SES, level of parent education, and number of semesters in school) among Black college students significantly predicted academic performance, as measured by self-reported overall GPA. Prior research suggested that these demographics could be important, particularly SES and parents' level of education (Fhagen-Smith et al., 2010; Hyers, 2001; Rowley, Chavous & Cooke, 2003). These variables are often used to capture the "latent" factors often associated with how families perceived and promoted higher education to their children, such that students from lower income and/or less educated families would do more poorly than students from families with higher incomes and higher parent education. Examining the demographics of this sample more closely, it is possible that sample was relatively homogenous with respect to income (less than 6% identified as "poor"; more than 77% as working class or middle class; more than 18% as upper middle or wealthy) and parents' education (more than 73% of mothers and more than 67% of fathers had some college or more) such that any significant variations would not be detectable.

Racial Identity and Academic Performance

Racial identity (as measured by the six sub-scales of the CRIS) did not significantly predict academic performance, as measured by self-reported overall GPA. None of the six subscales significantly correlated with GPA, as suggested in previous literature that examined these variables.

As mentioned in Chapter 2, Harris and Marsh (2010) conducted a study utilizing a five profile model (race neutral or raceless, race similar, race dissimilar, race ambivalent and mild ambivalent) in examined racial identity and educational achievement outcomes and aspirations of Black adolescents. Four specific profiles were mentioned, as Black students who identified themselves in the race profile as Ambivalent (affirm both similarity and dissimilarity) and Similar (being Black is an important reflection in who I am) had much higher achievement than Black students in the race profile Neutral (I don't affirm any measure). Although this racial identity model is not similar to CRIS measure used in this study, it does reflect similar definitive profiles specifically concerned with racial identity and academic success.

Reid (2013) conducted a study utilizing the CRIS measure in examining racial identity attitudes on academic achievement of Black males enrolled as full-time sophomore students at five predominantly White research based universities; other variables included: self-efficacy and institutional integration. The results revealed a significant two-way interaction between Black students with internalized racial identity attitudes (strong value in being Black and high regard for other racial and ethnic groups) and self-reported higher GPA scores of Black male college students. This study also revealed a significant two-way interaction between immersion-emersion (anti-White

identity) and GPA scores, as immersion-emersion had a moderate effect on collegiate achievement of Black students. Overall, among these variables, the study revealed racial identity, self-efficacy, and institutional integration to be significant predictors for improving the educational outcomes and collegiate achievement in Black college students (Reid, 2013). Failure to find similar results may be due to the small sample size or sampling method, via online survey, not being sufficient in representing the diversity in the sampled population that is needed in detecting relationships between the independent variable racial identity and dependent variable self-reported GPA scores.

Academic Support and Academic Performance

Academic support (as measured by the 6-item self-report measure) among Black college students did not significantly predict academic performance, as measured by self-reported overall GPA. However, there were moderately high and significant intercorrelations among the ASS. Students identified the support of (mother/father), (mother/teacher), (mother/friend), (father/teacher), (father/friend), and (teacher/friend) helping in their education. Most students identified parents in having knowledge about education and helping them make educational plans. Example of questions included: a) "If this parent wanted me to attain a certain level of education, then I would try to attain this level of education;" b) "This parent knows how to help me do well in my schoolwork;" c) "This parent has a great deal of knowledge about education;" d) "This parent is the kind of person who could make me feel very good if I followed his or her advice about studying and getting good grades." Students identified teacher/friends as a person who cares and gives good advice about their education. The results of this study found that more than 85% students agreed or strongly agreed in the support of the

mother and more than 79% students agree or strongly agree in the support of the father having “a great deal of knowledge about my education.” Most students more than 89% agreed or strongly agreed in the support of the mother and more than 83% support of father as “this parent is the kind of person who could make me feel very good if I followed his or her advice about studying and getting good grades.” Of the results more than 97% of students agreed or strongly agreed that both mother, father “care about my education.” Of the students more than 90% agreed or strongly agreed mother, teacher, and friend along with father more than 83% “is able to give me good advice about my education.” Results showed that more than 96% of students agreed or strongly agreed and that more than 84% of students agreed or strongly agreed father, friend, and teacher “has motivated me to stay in school.” In respect to educational success, more than 90% of students agreed or strongly agreed in the support of the mother and more than 82% in father and teacher “helping me do well in school.” Of the students more than 83% agreed or strongly agreed both mother and father “has been important in helping me make my educational plans.”

Previous research suggest these variables (mother, father, teacher, friend) as being influential factors and positively linked to high performing or low performing summative evaluation scores (that is, GPA, SAT and ACT standardized testing, and rate of completion; Alfaro et al., 2006; Newman, Lohman, Newman, Myers, & Smith, 2000). This study did not significantly predict academic performance, as measured by self-reported overall GPA. As mentioned in Chapter 2, related literature on Black students has suggested that social support through church and extended family is important (Armstrong, 2000; Newman et al., 2000), but the role of these kinds of supports specific

to academic pursuits has not been directly examined in Black college students. The literature on other college populations suggests that academic support is important. While the results of this study need to be interpreted cautiously, this does suggest that family and friend support do not influence how well academically high performing black students do in school.

Self-Efficacy Support and Academic Performance

Self-efficacy support (as measured by 17 items subscale assessing GSE and a 6-item subscale assessing SSE) among Black college students did not significantly predict academic performance, as measured by self-reported overall GPA. Prior research identifies the GSE and SSE as being strong predictors of students' motivation to learn, and in particular to this study, in predicting overall academic performance in GPA scores (Bandura, 1977, 1997, 2001; Brady-Amoon, 2009; Edman & Brazil, 2008; Fife et al., 2011; Gore's, 2006; Hsieh, Sullivan, & Guerra, 2007). This variable has been often used as an empirical construct in predicting a student's success in academic performance, such that a student feeling a strong sense of accomplishment within one's self is predicted in being motivational toward one's actions and is more likely to increase one's efforts in producing successful measurable outcomes.

This study originally proposed to conduct a multiple regression using both measures of self-efficacy, GSE and SSE. However, the assessment of internal consistency for SSE was not sufficient to use this measure in the test of this hypothesis. Thus, a simple regression analysis was conducted using GSE as the independent variable. The results revealed a small but significant negative correlation between self-efficacy and GPA, which is contrary to prior literature. Most research suggests that stronger

perceptions of self-efficacy are predictive of academic performance. So, I closely examined the data and discovered three "outliers", that is, students who had very high GPA scores, and very low measures of self-esteem. After excluding these three cases, the correlation was more consistent with previous research. These cases were, in one respect, not surprising, as previous research has shown that high achieving Black college students (students with high GPA's 3.0 and above) can develop a low level of self-confidence. It is thought that these Black students continue to endure the difficulties of stereotypes about Black Americans (Fries-Britt & Griffin, 2007; Harper, 2008).

Religious/Spiritual Support and Academic Performance

Religious/spiritual support (as measured by the 16-item self-report measure) among Black college students did not significantly predict academic performance, as measured by self-reported overall GPA. Prior research has demonstrated the importance of religious/spirituality to African American lives in cultivating communal and collective value. It was thought that Black college students would find religious and spiritual support as important to being successful in school (Constantine, Wilton, Gainer & Lewis, 2002; Constantine, Gainor, Ahluwalia, & Berkel, 2003; Constantine, Miville, Warren, & Lewis-Coles, 2006; Lee & Sharpe, 2007; Mattis, Fontenot, Hatcher-Kay, Grayman, & Beale, 2004; Walker & Dixon, 2002). However, there were no prior studies that specifically examined the effect religiosity and spirituality may have on academic success in Black American college students.

As previously mentioned, this study did not show a significant relationship between religious/spiritual support and academic performance, as measured by self-reported overall GPA. This was likely due to the homogeneity of variance in the

dependent variable and demographics; that is, that religious support does not influence academic performance for high-performing black students. It is noteworthy that the majority of participants identified religious/spiritual support as being helpful in overcoming challenges in life; the results indicated that none of the DSES predictors were statistically significant.

Although the results of this study suggest religious/spiritual support did not significantly predict academic performance, it does suggest the importance to further examine religious/spiritual support as a facet of success in young Black adults.

Limitations of the Study

Survey research has inherent limitations regarding construct, internal and external validity. The methodological premise was that construct validity limitations were mitigated with the use of psychometrically acceptable measures. However, I had no control over the data collection context. Issues of social desirability (e.g., participants who may have been concerned about stereotyping or reporting their true feelings about attitudes) may have arisen in the process of completing the survey. Participants may have tried to guess a "correct response" or over exaggerated their responses on an instrument to seek social acceptance (Creswell, 2009).

In terms of internal validity, this survey research design did not allow the researcher to control variables in order to make inferences about causation. At best, the variables were ordered according to the theoretical and temporal frameworks described in Chapter 2 in order to examine independent/dependent relationships (Creswell, 2009).

Regarding generalizability and external validity, I did not have the ability to randomly select participants, so a convenience sample was used. This method did not

allow for estimation of sampling error and the ability to generalize to a specific population (Bourque & Fielder, 2003; Creswell, 2009)

As mentioned previously, the present study did not get a sufficient sample size or varied sample size of participants, as the sample size was considerably narrow in range. Ninety percent of participants were high academic achievers (3.0 or higher GPA scores). The majority of participants were working class to upper middle class families, with only 5.4% of participants who identified as being poor. Although I chose locations that were more likely to contain the selected population of Black college students that is, participants were recruited from the United Black Student Unions of California via website (www.joinubsuc.com), BSU organizations of various Black colleges, as well other Black organization with in the United States, it is known that online survey designs do not permit the researcher to control the ultimate selection of participants (as they self-select); nor does online surveys allow the researcher in knowing how representative the sample is of the accessible population (Bourque & Fielder, 2003). I can only speculate low sample size may have been due to timing in recruitment of participants; that is, timing was unknown to the researcher, in students enrolled in school by semester plan vs. quarterly plan, not allowing the sampled population sufficient amount of time to participate in the study. In addition to low sample size, survey data was collected from March 3, 2014 until August 31, 2014, and a total of 133 people responded to the invitation. Of the 133 participants, 33 cases were deleted because they had less than 50% of the questionnaire completed. An additional 13 cases reported no longer being enrolled in college. The resulting sample participants (N = 87) responded to at least 85% of the

survey, and all reported being currently enrolled and all completed the online survey questionnaire.

As indicated in the findings, the results of this research study did reveal a small but significant positive correlation between self-efficacy and self-reported GPA scores, as such findings were consistent with previous research (Bandura, 1977, 1997, 2001; Brady-Amoon, 2009; Edman & Brazil, 2008; Fife et al., 2011; Gore's, 2006; Hsieh, Sullivan, & Guerra, 2007; Jaret & Reitzes, 2009; Reid, 2013). What was also discovered in the current study was majority of students were high achievers (3.0 or higher GPA scores), consistent with other studies (Fries-Britt & Griffin, 2007). This suggests that Black college students who are resistant to external and internal stereotypes about their racial identity and have high self-efficacy and a strong sense of self accomplishment are more likely to do well in postsecondary education.

Although the CRIS did not provided a significant positive correlation between racial identity and self-reported GPA scores, findings do show that most Black college students do not have "negative self beliefs that there is nothing positive about being Black," yet on average "holds a strong value in being Black and also has high regard for other racial and ethnic groups." Such findings as reported in previous research (Reid, 2013) suggest Blacks enrolled in mixed or predominately White colleges have learned to integrate into the college campus environment.

Recommendations for Further Research

The purpose of the present study was to examine the relative strength of racial identity, religious/spiritual support, self-efficacy, academic support, and demographic variables (age, gender, socioeconomic status, level of parent education, and number of

semesters in school) to predict academic performance in Black college student population. There is considerable research on the relationship of academic success to factors beyond academic aptitude. These include demographics variables (e.g., age, gender, socioeconomic status, level of parent education, and number of semesters in school), academic support, spiritual beliefs, and self-efficacy (Alfaro, Umaña-Taylor & Bámaca, 2006; Bandura, 1977, 1997, 2001, 2006; Brady-Amoon & Fuertes, 2009; Carey, 2004; Carter et al., 1997; Constantine, Miville, Warren, Gainor & Lewis-Coles, 2006; Fhagen-Smith et al., 2010; Fife et al., 2011; Hyers, 2001; Massey, 2004; Orfield & Lee, 2005; Parham & Helms, 1985; Rowley, Chavous & Cooke, 2003). There is also a growing body of evidence that racial identity plays a role in the success of Black Americans in school and career (Constantine, Miville, Warren, & Lewis-Coles, 2006; Fortunato, 2011). However, limited research has attempted to look at and measure the relative strength of racial identity and other psychosocial variables to predict academic success in Black college students.

As previously mentioned, the results of this study failed to significantly support the proposed hypothesis. This section is to provide further insight, guidance, and direction for future research in further evaluation of these potential variables.

In testing the first research question, results indicated that none of the demographic variables (age, gender, socioeconomic status, level of parent education, and number of semesters in school) were significantly correlated with GPA; however, among the independent variables, the level of mother's and father's education was highly correlated, as most of the students had both parents who had some college, graduated and/or obtained a professional degree. There was a high correlation between father's

education level and a student's standing in school (attended at least 3 to 4 semesters or higher). Additional research could further explore the roles of both mother's and father's level of education as being a supportive resource in the academic success of Black college students. The highly correlated variables included mother's and father's education ($r = .613$, $p < .001$), father's education with standing in school ($r = .818$, $p < .001$), father's education with age ($r = .370$, $p < .001$), and standing in school with age ($r = .491$, $p < .001$). As mentioned in chapter 2, parents level of education can help students in education planning; encourage education and career planning beyond high school, undergraduate, and graduate level. Parent level of education can provided information about educational opportunities, scholarships, and educational outcomes.

In testing the second research question, the results indicate that none of the CRIS subscales were significantly correlated with GPA. Further research could conduct a study with a much larger and more diverse sample of GPA, SES, type of community, and type of college. Purposive or stratified sampling strategies are suggested for use in future studies. Most importantly, future research could continue to examine the relative strength of racial identity and social factors in predicting academic success in Black college students.

Regarding the construct of academic support, future research could compare the experience of academic support for high and low achieving Black college students. In addition, it is suggested that qualitative efforts be pursued to better understand the experience of academic support in Black college students, to see if concepts (e.g., coping, resilience) beyond those measured by the ASS emerge.

Finally, prior research has demonstrated the importance of religious/spirituality to African American lives in respect to communal and collective values, (Constantine, Gainor, Ahluwalia, & Berkel, 2003; Mattis, Fontenot, Hatcher-Kay, Grayman, & Beale, 2004). While this study's results were none significant, it would still be worthwhile to pursue this construct in future studies. A purposive or stratified sampling effort could compare students who do and do not have a strong religious or spiritual connection.

Implications for Positive Social Change

The current study only found one of the independent variables (self-efficacy) to be a significant predictor of academic performance. Self-efficacy is defined as an individual's perceived belief in having self-competence in the ability to act upon completing a task, succeed in reaching potential ambitions and goals, and cope with unexpected problems (Bandura, 1977, 1997, 2001, 2006; Brady-Amoon & Fuertes, 2009; Fife et al., 2011). This variable has important implications to positive social change in helping educators understand the importance and influential effect self-efficacy has on creating a positive college experience, particularly in the advancement of African American students pursuing higher education and successful careers. The findings from this study could have implication that will contribute to aide educators, school counselors, and other scholar practitioners by increasing their knowledge and awareness in the cultivation of Black identity as Black students learn to adjust to college life and integrate onto predominantly White or Black college campus communities.

In working with Black students in an era that stresses the importance of a college education in building a successful adult life, educators can be encouraged to understand African American cultural history, view young Black Americans as a resilient and

diverse group of individuals with different self-efficacy beliefs, racial identity attitudes and resources of support. The findings will allow educators to proactively provide Black students with the essential tools needed in overcoming societal and academic adversities. Findings suggest African American students perceiving self-efficacy (low self-efficacy or high self-efficacy) and Black racial identity attitudes could lead to different academic outcomes in students, more importantly, for less high achieving academic Black students. College campuses can help foster campus environments that focus on cultivating African American student's self-efficacy and Black racial identity attitudes in ways that help Blacks adjust to the difficulties of college life. In accomplishing this objective, college administration can offer faculty seminars, the facilitation of faculty learning and discussion groups, or the development of learning communities (Reid, 2013) that provides a safe and fostering environment where peers can connect with one another in multicultural groups in discussion of their own development of self-efficacy and Black racial identity attitudes.

Educators and counselors can get parents involved in the support of their children, even if parents are not college educated. College campus communities can help promote positive social change in being more proactive in the facilitation of faculty support through formal and informal interaction with students and social integration of Blacks into college campus communities.

The dissemination in the findings of this study, via published work and PowerPoint presentations, could encourage the development of social awareness regarding to the diverse cultural and historical experiences of Black people in America as such experiences are prominent in the lives of most African Americans. Church

organizations can utilize the findings from this study in understanding Black racial identity and the important role self-efficacy for those church members pursuing postsecondary education.

Conclusion

The purpose of the study was to examine the relative strength of racial identity and social factors based on the literature in determining whether these variables were significant predictors of the dependent variable academic performance, defined as overall GPA. The present study assessed racial identity, religious/spiritual support, self-efficacy, academic support and selected demographic variables (age, gender, socioeconomic status, level of parent education, and number of semesters in school), to determine whether these variables could significantly predict overall GPA in Black college students.

Though results in previous literature show that these variables are strong predictors in the academic performance and success of Blacks students, results in this study determined "self-efficacy" to be the only significant predictor of academic performance. Unfortunately, the sample sized used in this study was homogenous, not sufficient in size and variance.

According to Shell (2011), Black people in the United States are not a homogenous group, as there are clear preferences and degrees of racial and ethnic cultural identification; such preferences and degrees of one's racial identity help shape an individual's interest and ability to integrate into the dominant culture. Postsecondary academia represents both an educational and acculturational experience of the dominant culture. It is suggested that Black racial identity may contribute to the academic success in Black college students. Previous studies strongly suggest that racial identity is an

important predictor of academic success, and that the population of Black college students had not been sufficiently examined. Future research could further evaluate the relative strength of racial identity and other social factors in predicting academic success in Black college students.

In review of previous literature, this researcher could not find within other studies that experienced the same issues of non-sufficient in sample size and variance, as literature shows most quantitative sample size ranging from 107 to 1407 participants (Constantine et al., 2006; Fhagen-Smith et al., 2010; Fife et al., 2011; Helm's, 2002; Lee & Sharpe, 2007; National Center for Education Statistics, 2010; Worrell, Vandiver & Cross, 2004). Nevertheless, this study provides a door of opportunity for future research in addressing an ongoing area of concern for educators and Black communities in better understanding the relative strength of Black racial identity and in determining what variables are influential in predicting academic performance and success in Black students.

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Appendix A: Informed Consent Form

CONSENT FORM

You are invited to take part in a research study on Black racial identity and challenges in academic success of many African American students. You were invited to participate in this study because you are a Black male or Black female at least 18 years of age, currently living in the United States and enrolled as an undergraduate in college as a matriculating student, and have completed at least one term.

If you identify yourself as being Black (i.e., African American, or a Black person born in or outside the U.S.), you are invited to participate in this study. This form is part of a process called "informed consent" to allow you to understand this study before deciding whether to take part.

This study is being conducted by a researcher named Jonathan M. Hudson Sr., who is a doctoral student at Walden University.

Background Information:
The purpose of this study is to examine the dimensions of Black racial identity and social psychological factors that contribute to academic success.

Procedures:
If you agree to be in this study, you will be asked to complete an online survey consisting of the items covering the following areas: demographics; racial identity; academic support; self-efficacy; religious and/or spiritual support.

Most of the survey questions ask you indicate how much you agree or disagree with a statement using a numeric scale (1 = strongly disagree to 7 = strongly agree); or alphabetic scale (A = disagree strongly to E = agree strongly).

The online survey should take approximately 20 minutes to complete. You may decline in answering any questions that may cause discomfort.

Here are some sample questions:
An example of one survey questionnaire is "As an African American, Life in America is good for me" (1 = strongly disagree to 7 = strongly agree). Other examples of a survey questionnaire may state "My negative feelings toward White people are very intense" and "I sometimes have negative feelings about being Black." (A = disagree strongly to E = agree strongly).

Voluntary Nature of the Study:
This study is voluntary. Everyone will respect your decision of whether or not you choose to be in the study. Neither this researcher nor anyone at Walden University will

treat you differently if you decide not to be in the study. If you decide to join the study now, you can still change your mind later. You may stop at any time.

Risks and Benefits of Being in the Study:
Being in this type of study involves some risk of the minor discomforts that can be encountered in daily life, such as some questions might appear to be offensive and make you feel uncomfortable and become upset. Being in this study would not pose any further foreseeable risk to your safety or wellbeing. However, should you experience any distress or discomfort that would benefit from assistance from a mental health professional, please call:

- For Alameda County, call 1-800-309-2131
- For Merced County, call 1-800-273-8255
- For Los Angeles County, call 1-800-854-7771
- For Santa Clara County, call 1-855-278-4204

Although there are no potential direct benefits to you for your participation, the information from this study my benefit others in understanding Black racial identity and factors that influence academic success in African American Black college students in the twenty-first century.

Payment:
There will be no payment for your participation in this study.

Privacy:
Any information you provide will be kept confidential. The researcher I will not use your personal information for any purposes outside of this research project. Also, the researcher I will not include your name or anything else that could identify you in the study reports. Although online surveys assure confidentiality of all collected data, data will be kept secure by securing a protected password preventing any unauthorized person in gaining access to the data. The securely stored online data will only be accessible by Researcher Jonathan M. Hudson and Dissertation Chair Dr. Susan H. Marcus, Ph.D. and Committee Member Dr. Marlon Sukal, Ph.D. In addition, a lock security safe will be used in storing any printable copies of collected data. Data will be kept for a period of at least 5 years, as required by the university.

Contacts and Questions:
You may ask any questions you have now. Or if you have questions later regarding results of the study, you may contact Researcher Jonathan M. Hudson via telephone: (209) 675-0140 or by e-mail: jhudson6450@gmail.com . If you want to talk privately about your rights as a participant, you can call Dr. Leilani Endicott. She is the Walden University representative who can discuss this with you. Her phone number is 1-800-925-3368, extension 3121210. Walden University's approval number for this study is **3-25-14-0187024** and it expires on **March 24, 2015.**

You can print or save this consent form for your records

Statement of Consent:
I have read the above information and I feel I understand the study well enough to make a decision about my involvement. By clicking next, I understand that I am agreeing to the terms described above and give consent to participate in this study.

Appendix B: Invitation to Participate

INVITATION TO PARTICIPATE

In a research study about the role of racial identity, religious/spiritual support, self-efficacy, and academic support of Black students' college performance.

- **Are you a Black student currently enrolled in college and have completed at least one term?**
- **Are you over 18 years of age?**

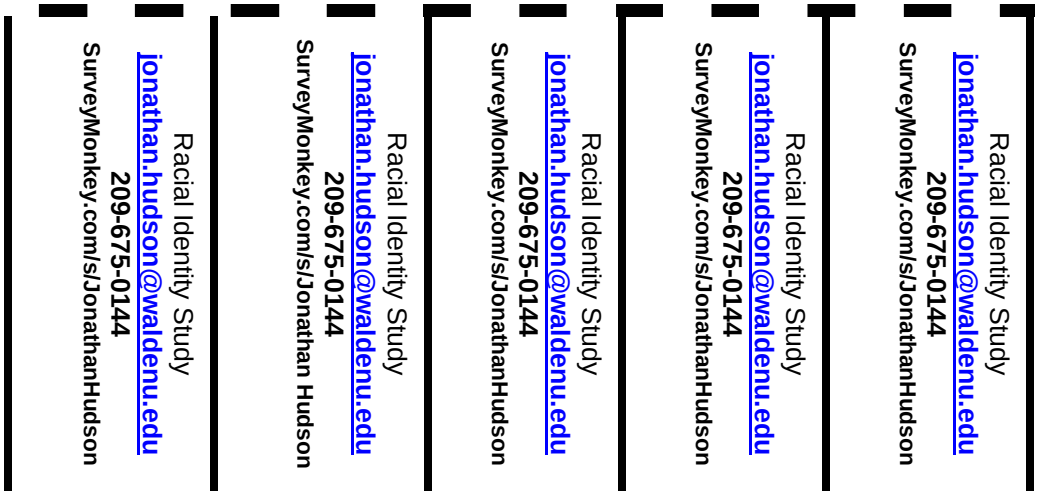
If you answered YES to both questions, you may be eligible to participate.

The purpose of this research study is to understand Black identity and the factors that contribute to Academic struggles and success of Black college students in the United States.

- There are no potential direct benefits or cost to you for your participation.
- Participation includes a 20 to 30 minute online Survey Questionnaire.
- Your voluntary participation may benefit others in understanding Black racial identity and factors that influence academic success in African American Black college students in the twenty-first century.

This study is being conducted by a doctoral student at Walden University. The study has been approved by Walden University IRB **3-25-14-0187024** .

If you agree to participate in this study please go to the following site www.SurveyMonkey.com/s/JonathanHudson. Please contact Jonathan M. Hudson at **jonathan.hudson@waldenu.edu** or **209-675-0144** for additional information.



Appendix C: The Cross Racial Identity Scale

Code: _____

CROSS SOCIAL ATTITUDE SCALE

Beverly J. Vandiver, William E. Cross, Jr., Peony E. Fhagen-Smith, Frank C. Worrell, Janet K. Swim, & Leon D. Caldwell.

Section I

(a) Male □ Female □F

(b) How old are you? _____

(c) Please indicate your ethnic background **by circling the answer** that applies to you. Choose **only one** category.

a. African	e. Hispanic Black
b. African-American	f. Mixed /
c. Black	g. Other
d. West Indian/Caribbean Black	

(d) If you are **currently** a student, are you a high schooler □ an undergraduate □ or a graduate student □t

(e) Name of School: _____

5b. City where school is located: _____

(f) What is your semester standing in the school you listed in #5? _____

(g) What is the racial composition of the school listed in #5? Mostly Black □ Mixed □ Mostly White □h

(h) What is your current grade point average? _____

(i) If you are attending college, what is your major? _____

(j) If you are **no longer a student**, what is the highest education level obtained? Circle one.

a. Elementary school	d. Business or trade school	g. Bachelor's or four-year degree
b. Some high school	e. Some college	h. Some graduate/professional school
c. High school diploma/equivalent	f. Associate or two-year degree	i. Graduate or professional degree

(k) If you are **no longer a student**, what is your current occupation? _____

(l) What religious affiliation do you hold? _____

(m) How often do you attend religious services? Seldom □ Sometimes □ Often □O

(n) How important is your religion to you? Not Important □ Somewhat Important □ Very Important □m

(o) What is the best estimate of your/your family's yearly income before taxes? Circle "Y" for yours and "F" for family.

Code: _____

a. Less than $10,000	Y	F	d. Between $30,000 and $40,000	Y	F
b. Between $10,000 and $20,000	Y	F	e. Between $40,000 and $60,000	Y	F
c. Between $20,000 and $30,000	Y	F	f. Over $60,000	Y	F

(p) How would you describe the primary community in which you were raised?

Rural ☐ Suburban ☐ Urban ☐ Other _____

(q) What is the racial composition of the community listed in #16? Mostly Black ☐ Mixed ☐
Mostly White ☐h

(r) Are you a United States citizen ☐ a permanent resident of the US ☐or Other ☐ _____?

(s) How many ethnic organizations do you belong to? 1 2 3 4 5 5+

(t) What is the highest education level obtained by your mother (or female guardian) and father (or male guardian)?
For mother, circle the "M" in the appropriate box; for father, circle the "F."

a. Elementary school	M	f. Associate or two-year degree	M
b. Some high school	M	g. Bachelor's or four-year degree	M
c. High school diploma or equivalent	M	h. Some graduate or professional school	M
d. Business or trade school	M	i. Graduate or professional degree	M
e. Some college	M		

(u) How would you describe your family's socioeconomic status?

Poor ☐ Working Class ☐ Middle Class ☐ Upper Middle ☐
Wealthy ☐W

(v) How would you describe your current physical health?

Very Poor ☐ Poor ☐ Fair ☐ Good ☐
Very Good ☐o

(w) How would you describe your current mental health?

Very Poor ☐ Poor ☐ Fair ☐ Good ☐
Very Good ☐o

Section II

Instructions: Read each item and indicate to what degree it reflects your own thoughts and feelings, using the 7-point scale below. There are no right or wrong answers. Base your responses on your opinion at the present time. **To ensure that your answers can be used, please respond to the statements as written**, and place your numerical response on the line provided to the left of each question**.**

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Strongly Disagree	Disagree	somewhat disagree	Neither agree nor Disagree	somewhat agree	agree	strongly Agree

_____1. As an African American, life in America is good for me.

_____2. I think of myself primarily as an American, and seldom as a member of a racial group.

_____3. Too many Blacks "glamorize" the drug trade and fail to see opportunities that don't involve crime.

_____4. I go through periods when I am down on myself because I am Black.

Code: ____

_____5. As a multiculturalist, I am connected to many groups (Hispanics, Asian-Americans, Whites, Jews, gays & lesbians, etc.).

_____6. I have a strong feeling of hatred and disdain for all White people.

_____7. I see and think about things from an Afrocentric perspective.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Strongly Disagree	Disagree	somewhat disagree	Neither agree nor Disagree	somewhat agree	agree	strongly Agree

_____8. When I walk into a room, I always take note of the racial make-up of the people around me.

_____9. I am not so much a member of a racial group, as I am an American.

_____10. I sometimes struggle with negative feelings about being Black.

_____11. My relationship with God plays an important role in my life.

_____12. Blacks place more emphasis on having a good time than on hard work.

_____13. I believe that only those Black people who accept an Afrocentric perspective can truly solve the race problem in America.

_____14. I hate the White community and all that it represents.

_____15. When I have a chance to make a new friend, issues of race and ethnicity seldom play a role in who that person might be.

_____16. I believe it is important to have both a Black identity and a multicultural perspective, which is inclusive of everyone (e.g., Asians, Latinos, gays & lesbians, Jews, Whites, etc.).

_____17. When I look in the mirror at my Black image, sometimes I do not feel good about what I see.

_____18. If I had to put a label on my identity, it would be "American," and not African American.

_____19. When I read the newspaper or a magazine, I always look for articles and stories that deal with race and ethnic issues.

_____20. Many African Americans are too lazy to see opportunities that are right in front of them.

_____21. As far as I am concerned, affirmative action will be needed for a long time.

_____22. Black people cannot truly be free until our daily lives are guided by Afrocentric values and principles.

_____23. White people should be destroyed.

_____24. I embrace my own Black identity, but I also respect and celebrate the cultural identities of other groups (e.g., Native Americans, Whites, Latinos, Jews, Asian Americans, gays & lesbians, etc.).

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Strongly Disagree	Disagree	somewhat disagree	Neither agree nor Disagree	somewhat agree	agree	strongly Agree

Code: ____

_____25. Privately, I sometimes have negative feelings about being Black.

_____26. If I had to put myself into categories, first I would say I am an American, and second I am a member of a racial group.

_____27. My feelings and thoughts about God are very important to me.

_____28. African Americans are too quick to turn to crime to solve their problems.

_____29. When I have a chance to decorate a room, I tend to select pictures, posters, or works of art that express strong racial-cultural themes.

_____30. I hate White people.

_____31. I respect the ideas that other Black people hold, but I believe that the best way to solve our problems is to think Afrocentrically.

_____32. When I vote in an election, the first thing I think about is the candidate's record on racial and cultural issues.

_____33. I believe it is important to have both a Black identity and a multicultural perspective, because this connects me to other groups (Hispanics, Asian-Americans, Whites, Jews, gays & lesbians, etc.).

_____34. I have developed an identity that stresses my experiences as an American more than my experiences as a member of a racial group.

_____35. During a typical week in my life, I think about racial and cultural issues many, many times.

_____36. Blacks place too much importance on racial protest and not enough on hard work and education.

_____37. Black people will never be free until we embrace an Afrocentric perspective.

_____38. My negative feelings toward White people are very intense.

_____39. I sometimes have negative feelings about being Black.

_____40. As a multiculturalist, it is important for me to be connected with individuals from all cultural backgrounds (Latinos, gays & lesbians, Jews, Native Americans, Asian-Americans, etc.).

Appendix D: Daily Spiritual Experience Scale

The list that follows includes items which you may or may not experience, please consider how often you directly have this experience, and try to disregard whether you feel you should or should not have these experiences. A number of items use the word God. If this word is not a comfortable one for you, please substitute another idea which calls to mind the divine or holy for you

	Many Times a Day	*Everyday*	*Most Days*	*Some Days*	*Once in a While*	*Never or Almost Never*
I feel God's presence	1	2	3	4	5	6
I experience a connection all life	1	2	3	4	5	6
During worship, or at other times when connecting with God, I feel joy, which lifts me out of my daily	1	2	3	4	5	6
I find strength in my religion or spirituality	1	2	3	4	5	6
I find comfort in my religion or	1	2	3	4	5	6
I feel deep inner peace or harmony	1	2	3	4	5	6
I ask for God's help in the midst of daily activities	1	2	3	4	5	6
I feel God's love for me directly	1	2	3	4	5	6
I feel God's love for me through	1	2	3	4	5	6
I am spiritually touched by the beauty of creation	1	2	3	4	5	6
I feel thankful for my blessings	1	2	3	4	5	6
I feel a selfless caring for others	1	2	3	4	5	6
I accept others even when they do things that I think are wrong	1	2	3	4	5	6
I desire to be closer to God or in union with	1	2	3	4	5	6

	Not Close at All	Somewhat Close	Very Close	As Close as Possible
In general, how close do you feel to	1	2	3	4

Scoring

The first 15 items are usually scored together as a full scale score – the score is kept continuous. Item 16 is scored separately.

Dr. Underwood requests that researchers link to her website, http://www.dsescale.org/ for more information on the most current articles concerning the scale. Please also see http://www.dsescale.org/OrdSpirExper.pdf for more information on Scoring.

Table 1. Daily Spiritual Experience Scale (with item numbers added). Introduction: "The list that follows includes items you may or may not experience. Please consider how often you directly have this experience, and try to disregard whether you feel you should or should not have these experiences. A number of items use the word 'God.' If this word is not a comfortable one for you, please substitute another word that calls to mind the divine or holy for you."

		Many times a Day	**Every day**	**Most days**	**Some days**	**Once in a while**	**Never or almost Never**
1*	I feel God's presence.						
2	I experience a connection to all of						
3	During worship, or at other times when connecting with God, I feel joy which						
4*	I find strength in my religion or spirituality.						
5*	I find comfort in my religion or spirituality.						
6*	I feel deep inner peace or harmony.						
7	I ask for God's help in the midst of daily activities.						
8	I feel guided by God in the midst of daily activities.						
9*	I feel God's love for me directly.						
10*	I feel God's love for me through						
11*	I am spiritually touched by the beauty						
12	I feel thankful for my blessings.						
13	I feel a selfless caring for others.						
14	I accept others even when they do things I think are wrong.						
15*	I desire to be closer to God or in union						

		Not close	**Somewhat close**	**Very close**	**As close as Possible**
16	In general, how close do you feel to				

* signifies items that were used to form part of the BMMRS 6 item scale, DSE domain. 4 and 5 was combined: "I find strength and comfort in my religion." And 9 and 10 was also combined: "I feel God's love for me directly or through others." These form part of the 6 item DSES referred to in the text Self-Efficacy Scale

Appendix E: Self-Efficacy Scale

Instructions: This questionnaire is a series of statements about your personal attitudes and traits. Each statement represents a commonly held belief. Read each statement and decide to what extent it describes you. There are no right or wrong answers. You will probably agree with some of the statements and disagree with others. Please indicate your own personal feelings about each statement below by marking the letter that best describes your attitude or feeling. Please be very truthful and describe yourself as you really are, not as you would like to be.

Mark: A If you **Disagree Strongly** with the statement
B If you **Disagree Moderately** with the statement
C If you **Neither Agree nor Disagree** with the statement
D If you **Agree Moderately** with the statement
E If you **Agree Strongly** with the statement

1. I like to grow house plants.
2. When I make plans, I am certain I can make them work.
3. One of my problems is that I cannot get down to work when I should.
4. If I can't do a job the first time, I keep trying until I can.
5. Heredity plays the major role in determining one's personality.
6. It is difficult for me to make new friends.
7. When I set important goals for myself, I rarely achieve them.
8. I give up on things before completing them.
9. I like to cook.
10. If I see someone I would like to meet, I go to that person instead of waiting for him or her to come to me.
11. I avoid facing difficulties.
12. If something looks too complicated, I will not even bother to try it.
13. There is some good in everybody.
14. If I meet someone interesting who is hard to make friends with, I'll soon stop trying to makes friends with that person.

15. When I have something unpleasant to do, I stick with it until I finish it.

16. When I decide to do something, I go right to work on it.

17. I like science.

18. When trying to learn something new, I soon give up if I am not initially successful.

19. When I'm trying to become friends with someone who seems uninterested at first, I don't give up easily.

20. When unexpected problems occur, I don't handle them well.

21. If I were an artist, I would like to draw children.

22. I avoid trying to learn new things when they look too difficult to me.

23. Failure just makes me try harder.

24. I do not handle myself well in social gatherings.

25. I very much like to ride horses.

26. I feel insecure about my ability to do things.

27. I am a self-reliant person.

28. I have acquired my friends through my personal abilities at making friends.

29. I give up easily.

30. I do not seem capable of dealing with most problems that come up in my life.

Scoring instructions: Answers are converted to numbers (A = 1, B = 2, etc.). Items marked **R** are reversed in scoring (A = 5, B = 4, etc.). Items marked **Filler** are not scored. Items marked **GSE** contribute to the General Self-efficacy Subscale. These are summed to produce the General Self-efficacy Subscale score. Items marked **SSE** contribute to the Social Self-efficacy Subscale. These are summed to produce the Social Self-efficacy Subscale score. The General and Social Self-efficacy Subscale scores are not summed to give an overall score.

Instructions: This questionnaire is a series of statements about your personal attitudes and traits. Each statement represents a commonly held belief. Read each statement and decide to what extent it describes you. There are no right or wrong answers. You will probably agree with some of the statements and disagree with others.

Please indicate your own personal feelings about each statement below by marking the letter that best describes your attitude or feeling. Please be very truthful and describe yourself as you really are, not as you would like to be.

Mark: A If you **Disagree Strongly** with the statement.

B If you **Disagree Moderately** with the statement

C If you **Neither Agree nor Disagree** with the statement

D If you **Agree Moderately** with the statement

E If you **Agree Strongly** with the statement

31. I like to grow house plants. **Filler**

32. When I make plans, I am certain I can make them work. **GSE**

33. One of my problems is that I cannot get down to work when I should. **R GSE**

34. If I can't do a job the first time, I keep trying until I can. **GSE**

35. Heredity plays the major role in determining one's personality. **Filler**

36. It is difficult for me to make new friends. **R SSE**

37. When I set important goals for myself, I rarely achieve them. **R GSE**

38. I give up on things before completing them. **R GSE**

39. I like to cook. **Filler**

40. If I see someone I would like to meet, I go to that person instead of waiting for him or her to come to me. **SSE**

41. I avoid facing difficulties. **R GSE**

42. If something looks too complicated, I will not even bother to try it. **R GSE**

43. There is some good in everybody. **Filler**

44. If I meet someone interesting who is hard to make friends with, I'll soon stop trying to makes friends with that person. **R SSE**

45. When I have something unpleasant to do, I stick with it until I finish it. **GSE**

46. When I decide to do something, I go right to work on it. **GSE**

47. I like science. **Filler**

48. When trying to learn something new, I soon give up if I am not initially successful. **R GSE**

49. When I'm trying to become friends with someone who seems uninterested at first, I don't give up easily. **SSE**

50. When unexpected problems occur, I don't handle them well. **R GSE**

51. If I were an artist, I would to draw children. **Filler**

52. I avoid trying to learn new things when they look too difficult to me. **R GSE**

53. Failure just makes me try harder. **GSE**

54. I do not handle myself well in social gatherings. **R SSE**

55. I very much like to ride horses. **Filler**

56. I feel insecure about my ability to do things. **R GSE**

57. I am a self-reliant person. **GSE**

58. I have acquired my friends through my personal abilities at making friends. **SSE**

59. I give up easily. **R GSE**

60. I do not seem capable of dealing with most problems that come up in my life. **R GSE**

Appendix F: Academic Support Scale

This is the 5-item measure of parents' ability to help with academics from Plunkett & Bamaca-Gomez, 2003

Please answer how much you agree or disagree that EACH of the following people have helped you in your education.		**Strongly Disagree**	**Disagree**	**Agree**	**Strongly Agree**
This parent knows how to help me do well in my schoolwork	Mother	1	2	3	4
	Father	1	2	3	4
This parent has a great deal of knowledge about education	Mother	1	2	3	4
	Father	1	2	3	4
This parent is the kind of person who could make me feel very good if I followed his or her advice about studying and getting good grades.	Mother	1	2	3	4
	Father	1	2	3	4
If this parent wanted me to attain a certain level of education, then I would try to attain this level of education	Mother	1	2	3	4
	Father	1	2	3	4
This parent has been important in helping me to make my educational plans.	Mother	1	2	3	4
	Father	1	2	3	4

This is the 7-item academic support scale from Plunkett & Sands, 2005

Please answer how much you agree or disagree that EACH of the following people have helped you in your education.		**Strongly Disagree**	**Disagree**	**Agree**	**Strongly Agree**
This person has helped me do well in school.	Mother	1	2	3	4
	Father	1	2	3	4
	Teacher	1	2	3	4
	Friends	1	2	3	4
This person has motivated me to stay in school.	Mother	1	2	3	4
	Father	1	2	3	4
	Teacher	1	2	3	4
	Friends	1	2	3	4
This person has been important in helping me to make my educational plans.	Mother	1	2	3	4
	Father	1	2	3	4
	Teacher	1	2	3	4
	Friends	1	2	3	4
This person has encouraged me to continue my education beyond high school.	Mother	1	2	3	4
	Father	1	2	3	4
	Teacher	1	2	3	4
	Friends	1	2	3	4
This person is able to give me good advice about my education.	Mother	1	2	3	4
	Father	1	2	3	4
	Teacher	1	2	3	4
	Friends	1	2	3	4
This person cares about my education.	Mother	1	2	3	4
	Father	1	2	3	4
	Teacher	1	2	3	4
	Friends	1	2	3	4

On both of these scales, you just average the responses for each person (i.e., mother, father, teacher, friends) to get a scale score. Thus, higher scores indicated higher help or support from the significant other.

Appendix G: Permission To Use The Cris

Subject : **Re: Fw: Cross Racial Identity Scale (CRIS)**

Date : Mon, Jun 04, 2012 08:50 AM CDT
From : **Frank C Worrell <frankc@berkeley.edu>**
To : Jonathan Hudson <jonathan.hudson@waldenu.edu>

Attachment : CRIS_TM_2nd_Edition.pdf

Dear Mr. Hudson,

Thanks for your interest in using the Cross Racial Identity Scale (CRIS). I am writing on behalf of the CRIS Team to give you permission to use the instrument in your research. The technical manual is attached to this email and the scale is available in the appendix of the manual.

There are several studies of the psychometric properties of CRIS scores in the literature by members of the team: Vandiver et al., 2002 (*Journal of Counseling Psychology*), Worrell et al., 2004 (*Journal of Black Psychology*); Gardner-Kitt and Worrell, 2007 (*Journal of Adolescence*), Simmons et al., 2008 (*Assessment*), Worrell & Watson, 2008 (*Educational and Psychological Measurement*), and Worrell et al., 2011 (*Journal of Personality Assessment*).

There is no cost for using the scale. However, if you are willing, we would appreciate you sharing your CRIS data with us upon completion of your study, as we are in the process of collecting CRIS data for large-sample analyses.

There are separate citations for the scale and the manual, which are included on p. 17 of the manual. In addition, the citation for the expanded nigrescence model, on which the CRIS is based is as follows:
Cross, W. E., Jr., & Vandiver, B. J. (2001). Nigrescence theory and measurement: Introducing the Cross Racial Identity Scale (CRIS). In J. G. Ponterotto, J. M. Casas, L. M. Suzuki, & C. M. Alexander (Eds.), *Handbook of multicultural counseling* (2nd ed., pp. 371-393). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
Descriptions of the original, revised, and expanded nigrescence models and the differences among them can be found in the Vandiver et al. (2002), the manual, and several studies in the extant literature, including Worrell (2008, *Journal of Black Psychology*) and Worrell et al., (2006, *The Counseling Psychologist*).

One final note: The CRIS and the expanded nigrescence model which it operationalizes are considered attitudinal rather than developmental. This topic is addressed in Worrell (2008) in the *Journal of Black Psychology*. You should also check out the cluster work that has been done using the instrument (Chavez-Korell & Vandiver, in press, *The Counseling Psychologist* (available online); Whittaker & Neville, 2010, *Journal of Black Psychology*; Worrell et al., 2006, *The Counseling Psychologist*).

Feel free to contact me if you have questions and best wishes for the successful completion of your project.

Frank
****
At 2:11 PM -0700 6/3/12, William.Cross@unlv.edu wrote:

Dear Frank,
Send him CRIS Packet. Thanks
BC

William E. Cross, Jr., PhD.
Professor, Coordinator Counselor Education & Coordinator of CEP Graduate Studies
University of Nevada at Las Vegas [UNLV]
School of Education, Department Educational and Clinical Studies [ECS]
4505 S. Maryland Parkway Box 453014
Las Vegas, Nevada 89154
702-895-3185 --- FAX: 702-895-5550

Appendix H: Permission To Use The DSES

Subject : **Re: Re: DSES/MMRS (Multidimentional Measures of Religiousness and Spirituality)**

Date : Thu, May 31, 2012 11:20 AM CDT

From : Lynn Underwood <lynnunderwood@researchintegration.org>

To : Jonathan Hudson <jonathan.hudson@waldenu.edu>

Attachment : DSES_registraton_form.doc

> Dear Jonathan,
> You have my permission to use Underwood's Daily Spiritual Experience
> Scale if:
> 1) You return the attached registration form to me.
> 2) You include: © Lynn G. Underwood and the citation: Underwood,
> L.G. (2006) Ordinary Spiritual Experience: Qualitative Research,
> Interpretive Guidelines, and Population Distribution for the Daily
> Spiritual Experience Scale. Archive for the Psychology of Religion
> 28:1, 181-218. www.dsescale.org on any copies of the scale you print
> and in your results.
> 3) You keep me informed of results from your work and publications
> and presentations that come from your work using the scale.
> <!--[if !supportEmptyParas]--> <!--[endif]-->
> The best source for information on the scale, which I try to keep
> updated is: www.dsescale.org
> A pre-print of the 2006 Archive paper is available there, and a
> downloadable accurate copy of the scale. A link to a recent review
> paper on the scale is also there. Both contain scoring information.
> Each part of the MMRS is authored by a different author. I suggest
> you contact the authors of the subscales you are interested in to
> ask for permission.
> In each section of the booklet it also refers to scales that exist
> out there for each of the constructs.
> Best wishes to you in your life and in your work,
> Lynn
> Lynn Underwood PhD
> lynnunderwood@researchintegration.org
> www.researchintegration.org
> www.dsescale.org

Daily Spiritual Experience Scale
© Lynn Underwood
Registration Form

Name: **Jonathan M. Hudson**

In affixing your name to this form you agree to include:

© Lynn G. Underwood and the citation: Underwood, LG, Ordinary Spiritual Experience: Qualitative Research, Interpretive Guidelines, and Population Distribution for the Daily Spiritual Experience Scale, *Archive for the Psychology of Religion/ Archiv für Religionspsychologie*, Volume 28, Number 1, 2006, pp. 181-218. www.dsescale.org

on any copies of the scale you print and in your results. This article, found on www.dsescale.org contains an accurate form of the scale.

And you agree to keep Lynn Underwood informed of results from your work and publications and presentations that come from your work using the scale. lynnunderwood@researchintegration.org

Your email address: **jonathan.hudson@waldenu.edu**

Title and Address: **Social Worker IV, MSW, ACSW, Post PhD student; Address: 235 N. 1st Street, Los Banos, CA 93635**

College/University/Other Organization: **Walden University**

Date: **5/30/2012**

Reason for use of the scale and/or study description. Give details of study. **The purpose of this quantitative study is to understand Black Identity and the factors that contribute to academic struggles and success, as well as develop an understanding of other factors that may moderate academic success. A non-experimental survey research design is proposed to assess the relationship between racial identity, religious/spiritual support, self-efficacy, academic support in the African American student population of Black college students in the United States. It is hoped that the results of this study can be used by Universities to improve academic success of Black students.**

For quantitative data analysis, the researcher will use the Cross Racial Identity Scale (CRIS) that has an Afro-centricity subscale in measuring ethnic identity (Cross, Flagen-Smith, Worrell, & Vandiver, 2002). The Multidimensional Measure of Religiousness and Spirituality scale (MMRS) or Daily Spiritual Experience Scale (DSES) will be applied in identifying a student's religious/spiritual support (Smith & Hopkins, 2004, Underwood, 2002). The Self-efficacy Scale will be used (Bandura, 2006; Cross et al. 2002). Academic performance will be measured by student's college GPA

scores (Bahrassa, Syed, Su, & Lee, 2011; Baker, 2008; Brady-Amoon & Fluertes, 2011).

Work supported by a Research Grant or other support? **No**

Is your work for profit? **No**

How did you find the scale and my contact information? **Thru Fetzer Institute website.**

Which language version of the scale are you using? **English**

How many individuals do you expect to administer the scale to? **Convenience sample of 350 participants.**

Why have you picked this particular scale give details?

Recent research has identified how cultural identity plays a role in academic success. In particular, the work of Shell (2011) revealed that Black Identity is multifaceted and diverse, i.e., there is no uniform "Black" identity. The literature also suggests that other factors may moderate academic success, including religious/spiritual support, self-efficacy, and academic support (Constantine, Miville, Warren, Gainor & Lewis-Coles, 2006; Murrell, 2002; Smith & Hopkins, 2004).

Appendix I: Permission To Use The Self-Efficacy Scale

Subject : **RE: TIRR RHBA**

Date : Thu, May 31, 2012 10:12 AM CDT

From : **"Sherer, Mark" <Mark.Sherer@memorialhermann.org>**

To : jonathan.hudson@waldenu.edu <jonathan.hudson@waldenu.edu>

Attachment : Self-efficacy_Scale.doc
Self-efficacy_Scale_-_scoring.doc

Jonathan,

I am replying to your request to use the Self-efficacy Scale. I am happy to
give you permission to use the scale. I have attached the scale and scoring
instructions. According to Google Scholar, the original article that presented
the scale has been cited 1453 times so you should have plenty of literature to
review.

Mark Sherer, Ph.D., ABPP, FACRM
Senior Scientist, Director of Research
TIRR Memorial Hermann
Clinical Professor of Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation
University of Texas Medical School at Houston
Baylor College of Medicine
1333 Moursund
Houston, TX 77030

713-799-7007
713-799-7049 (fax)

Learn more about TIRR Memorial Hermann

Appendix J: Permission To Use The Academic Support Scale

Reply | Reply All | Forward | Delete | Move to Folder | Add to

Subject : Re: [Academic Support Scale
Date : Tue, Mar 11, 2014 11:15 PM CDT
From : "Plunkett, Scott W" <scott.plunkett@csun.edu>
To : Jonathan Hudson <jonathan.hudson@waldenu.edu>

Dear Jonathan Hudson:

This email is an official confirmation that you have my permission to use the academic help from parent scale cited in Plunkett and Bamaca-Gomez (2003) and/or the academic support from significant others scale cited in Sands and Plunkett (2005). I created both of the scales, and have full authority to grant permission. If I can help in any way, please let me know.

Sincerely,
Scott W. Plunkett, Ph.D.
Professor, Department of Psychology
Sierra Tower #316
http://www.csun.edu/plunk
scott.plunkett@csun.edu

18111 Nordhoff St.
California State University Northridge
Northridge, CA 91330-8255