

To the Graduate Council:

I am submitting herewith a dissertation written by John Walter Miller Jr. entitled "Racial Identification Among African American Adolescents." I have examined the final electronic copy of this dissertation for form and content and recommend that it be accepted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy, with a major in Social Work.

Terri Combs-Orme, Major Professor

We have read this dissertation
and recommend its acceptance:

David R. Dupper

John Orme

Edna Brown

George White

Accepted for the Council:

Carolyn R. Hodges, Vice Provost and
Dean of the Graduate School

(Original student signatures are on file with official records.)

Racial Identification Among Rural African American Adolescents

A Dissertation Presented for the Doctor of Philosophy Degree

University of Tennessee

College of Social Work

John Walter Miller Jr., MSW
August 2007

Dedication

This dissertation is dedicated to my 8th grade English teacher Mrs. Robinson. One day when almost everyone in the entire class failed miserably on a writing assignment you gave me an “A” and wrote, “John, you definitely have a way with words” on my paper. Until that day I never thought of myself as “special,” and I’ll never forget you for that.

This dissertation is also dedicated to my mother Alverter “Big Chief” Robinson, my sister Tawanda L. Bryant, and my aunts Frances Mack and Susan Gillians. I would have never made it to this point in my journey without all of your support, love and guidance. I also dedicate this work to all of those ahead of me in the struggle. Thank you for setting a standard of academic excellence by blazing a trail for me to follow. We are DEFINITELY on our way!

Acknowledgements

First and foremost I would like to thank and give praise to my Lord and savior Jesus Christ for ordering each and every step in my life and leading me through each challenge posed to me in the University of Tennessee College of Social Work program.

I would also like to thank Principals Robb Streeter (SC) and Wayne Key (TN) for giving me the opportunity to conduct my research at their schools. You two gentlemen personify class, and I will never forget all of the support and encouragement you provided me throughout the process. Thank you to the Walmart in Moncks Corner, SC for donating a giftcard in support of this research, and I would also like to thank the University of Tennessee Bookstore for donating 125 UT ink pens for study participants.

Special thanks to my dissertation committee: Dr. Combs-Orme – for her consistency, mentorship, and toughness; Dr. Orme – for his availability, and genuine enthusiasm about my project; Dr. Brown – for always only being one email away; Dr. White – for his encouragement and historical expertise, and Dr. Dupper – for his availability and positive energy. Thank you committee for welcoming me into the academy and making sure that I would be strong and ready upon my arrival.

I would also like to thank those who have mentored me during my time at UT – Dr. Stan L. Bowie and Dean Karen Sowers. Dr. Bowie, thank you for your existence. You are a trailblazer and I have learned a so much from you that it's hard to put into words the impact you've had on my life as a scholar and person. Thank you for being one of the ants that helped me eat this Ph.D. elephant! Dean Sowers, thank you for always being available when I needed you. Thank you for your spirit, guidance and sincerity. I would also like to thank John Bailey and Natalie Crippen for all of your administrative support.

Thanks to my doctoral program colleagues Dr. Shakira A. Kennedy and Andridia V. Mapson I love the both of you as sisters and I would have never made it through without you. Thank you Shakira for your intensity, work ethic, and positive energy. Although you are never at a lost for words, your presence really helped me fine tune those qualities about myself that I know will continue to serve me well in the future. Thank you Andridia for your free spirit, work ethic, and determination. There were many times during the program where I would have been comfortable just doing enough to get by, but the standard of excellence that you consistently displayed forced me to come along with you and I am better for that today. Thanks!

Thank you Dr. Monkia R. Alston for simply being the love of my life. You have been there for me at my highest and lowest, and you've consistently been right there beside me when I've needed you most. You are a very strong woman and I thank you for allowing me the privilege of sharing your light and strength. I would also like to thank, my brother from another mother, Dr. Keiron T. Kennedy. Thank you for being a trailblazer. Finally I would like to thank my entire hometown community of Moncks Corner, SC, especially

Moncks Corner A.M.E, Church, for all of your support, encouragement and prayers. I promise that I will not let you down, and all that I work I do is done with you in mind.

Abstract

This dissertation critically examines the influence that environmental racial composition has on the racial identification development of African Americans adolescents. Theoretical models that describe the formation of racial identity are examined chronologically, and research compiled within social work literature on the topic of racial identification is examined. Although previous studies have examined how African American adolescents over the age of 15 deal with the complexities of racial identity development, to date there is no literature that examines how middle school age African American adolescents navigate the same waters. The purpose of this study was to examine the relationship between environmental racial composition and racial identity attitudes of African American adolescents. Specifically, do African American adolescents that live in a predominantly African American community racially identify themselves differently than African American adolescents that live in a predominantly White community? To determine this, the Multidimensional Inventory of Black Identity (MIBI) was given to 101 African American adolescents. A little more than half (57%) of study participants lived in a predominantly African American community in SC and the remaining 43% of participants lived in a predominantly White community in TN. The results from the study suggested that racial environmental composition (location) influenced the racial identity concepts of study participants, as there were significant differences in racial identity attitudes between participants in SC and TN. Results also indicated that the concepts of Ideology, Regard, and Centrality that the MIBI examines may be too complex for adolescents under the age of 15, and a new factor, Self-Importance, was discovered and study participants from SC had higher Self-Importance

scores than participants from TN even when controlling for demographic differences.

Study participants from SC also had greater variability in their Self-Importance scores than participants in TN. Finally, an interaction was found between racial environmental composition and gender pertaining to Self-Importance. Girls in SC had significantly higher Self-Importance scores than girls in TN.

Table of Contents

<i>Chapter 1: Introduction</i>	1
Significance of the Problem	1
Purpose of the Study	3
Study Objectives	4
<i>Chapter 2: Literature Review</i>	5
Introduction	5
Social Inequality Defined	5
The African American Social Inequality Experience	8
Racial Identification Among African Americans	12
Racial Identity versus Ethnic Identity	14
The Social Psychology Behind Racial and Ethnic Identification of African Americans	16
Racial Identification Models	18
The Racial/Ethnic Identity Development of African American Adults	21
Racial/Ethnic Identity Research on African American Adolescents	22
Future Orientation	36
Previous Social Work Research	37
Literature Synthesis	39
<i>Chapter 3: Methodology</i>	44
Description of Participant Communities and Selection Criteria	44
Research Design	45
Institutional Review Board (IRB) Approval	45
Sample	45
Data Collection	46
Measurements	48
Independent Variable	48
Dependent Variables	48
MIBI Scales	49
Centrality	49
Regard	50
Public Regard	50
Private Regard	51
Ideology	51
Assimilation	51
Nationalist	52
Minority	52
Humanist	53
<i>Chapter 4: Results</i>	54
Sample Characteristics	54
Missing Data	55
Reliability and Factorial Structure	57
Self-Importance Scoring and Descriptive Statistics	59
Self-Importance and Location	59
Self-Importance, Location, Gender, Race/Ethnicity Preference, Grade, and Age ...	60

Research Question 1	62
Research Question 2	63
Research Question 3	63
Research Question 4	64
Research Question 5	64
Summary	64
<i>Chapter 5: Discussion</i>	66
Introduction.....	66
Discussion of Results.....	67
“Self-Importance”	67
When race is more than just a category	69
Location Mattered.....	71
Theoretical and Research Implications.....	73
Methodological Limitations.....	75
Research Design.....	75
Sampling Method.....	75
Implications for Social Work Practice and Directions for Future Research.....	76
<i>Reference</i>	79
<i>Appendix A. Tables and Figures</i>	94
Table 1: Historical Overview of Changing Racial Classifications On the U.S. Census From 1870-2000.....	94
Table 2: Descriptive Statistics of Sample Characteristics	95
Table 3: MIBI Item Statistics and Exploratory Factor Analysis (N = 101).....	96
Table 4: Regression of Location on Self-Importance Controlling for Demographic Variables (N = 101)	97
Table 5: Regression Examining Interaction Between Location and Gender on Self- Importance (N = 101)	98
Table 6: Regression Examining Interaction between Location and Race/Ethnicity.....	99
Table 7: Regression Examining Interaction between Location and Grade on Self- Importance (N = 101)	100
Table 8: Regression Examining Interaction between Location and Age on Self- Importance (N = 101)	101
Figure 1: Scree Plot for 29 MIBI items	102
Figure 2: Scree Plot for 18 Self-Importance items	103
Figure 3: Interaction between Location and Gender.....	104
<i>Appendix B: Parental Informed Consent</i>	105
<i>Appendix C: Participant Assent Form</i>	107
<i>Appendix D: Multidimensional Inventory of Black Identity (MIBI)</i>	109
<i>Appendix E: Site Approval Letters</i>	113
Vita.....	115

Chapter 1: Introduction

Significance of the Problem

Collectively, African Americans within the US have the distinction of being a group of people whose entire history within the country has been steeped in a lack of choice. This oppression has surfaced in various forms, including: slavery, segregation, the threat of domestic terrorism via the Ku Klux Klan (KKK), inadequate education, denial of the right to vote, lack of legal protection from state and local governments, police brutality, etc. As a result, many African Americans struggle with the value of their own self-identity compared to the dominant racial population of the US.

The struggle that many African American adolescents endure during their identity development is experienced directly through various forms of Mundane Extreme Environmental Stress (MEES) (Carrol, 1998). Developmental issues surrounding race discrimination, socialization, collective self-esteem, bicultural identity, and the concept of racelessness among African American adolescents are indicative of the daily identification hurdles that many African American adolescents have to endure. The concept of racial identity among African Americans has only been studied for approximately 40 years. Consider for a moment every other aspect of development: self-esteem, gender socialization, depression, juvenile delinquency, etc. All of these developmental aspects affect all children, and African Americans have to navigate all of those challenges in life along with the added pressure of being Black in a country in which the concept of race is an important and often neglected topic of consideration in the assessment of identity and the overall development of African American adolescents.

Racial identity has been viewed as either a personality trait at the individual level, or as an example of a social process associated with group membership (Gaines & Reed, 1994; Shelton & Sellers, 2000; Miehl, 2001; Thompson, 2001). Racial identification models have been created and examined since 1970, mostly by sociologists. These models have been designed to examine how people within different races view themselves individually, within their racial group, and perceived notions of how others outside of their racial category view them.

The recurring theme in all of the reviewed African American adolescent identity development literature is the exclusive examination of adolescents who were over the age of 16 and from urban communities. The principal reason given by researchers for this occurrence is that their studies were conducted as a part of larger federally funded initiatives that primarily focused on older African American adolescents from urban communities (Miller & McIntosh, 1999; Caldwell, Zimmerman, Bernat, Sellers, & Notaro, 2002; Chavous, Schmeelk-Cone, Caldwell, Kohn-Wood, & Zimmerman, 2003).

Another rationale for the repeated use of adolescents over the age of 16 and from urban communities in adolescent racial identity developmental research is that the social environment experienced by that target population is much more multifaceted, hostile, and challenging than rural settings (Miller and McIntosh, 1999; Wong, Eccles, & Sameroff, 2003). Despite these rationales, the population of younger African American adolescents from non-urban communities still exists and they have unique circumstances of their own that need investigation. Furthermore, if researchers contend that older African American adolescents from urban communities are a unique population of their

own, that point itself beckons for parallel research to be conducted about the *other* population of younger African American adolescents from rural locals..

While racial identity studies have been popular among other disciplines, the field of Social Work has mostly ignored the benefits of participating and the potential negative costs to client populations by not examining this topic further. Instead much stock within the social work literature has not been placed in investigating the influence of socio-environmental factors on the mental health and identity development of African Americans, particularly African American adolescents.

Purpose of the Study

Several studies have attempted to address the impact of racial identity on African American adolescents. Although this has occurred, most of the scholarship has focused solely on the racial identity development of African Americans adolescents over the age of 16. There is a twofold purpose for the current study. One purpose is to directly challenge the notion that all African American adolescents, regardless of rearing environment, racially identify themselves in the same way. The other is that by comparing two, socio-economically matched rural communities of African American adolescents between the ages of 11 and 14 this dissertation aims to shed light on a previously ignored population by testing the MIBI, a comprehensive racial identity measure, on one distinct population in two different environments. Once it is known how the racial composition of African American adolescents rearing environments influences the identity development of African Americans, Social Work will be better equipped to

understand, predict, and target individuals that need help during this crucial developmental time period.

The objectives of the current study are thus to:

- I. Test a comprehensive model that will identify identity development differences between African American children reared in primarily African American rural communities to African American children reared in primarily White communities.
- II. Test a comprehensive model that will be able to examine possible SES factors (other than race) that may influence the racial identity development of younger African American adolescents (between the ages of 11 and 14).

Chapter 2: Literature Review

Introduction

An understanding of social inequality is necessary within a discussion about racial identity, and within this chapter the concept of social inequality and its influence on African Americans is addressed. I also discuss how racial identity is developed among African Americans and review studies that have examined racial identity development among African American adults and adolescents.

Social Inequality Defined

To understand *social inequality* it is first necessary to understand *social* environments and how they affect social consciousness. A *social* environment has been defined as the place where all potential attributes of individuals can be expressed and developed fully without prejudice or discrimination (Deranty, 2003; Anderson, 2000). For individuals within social environments competition is inevitable and is used to measure and define societal positions through constant comparison (Deranty, 2003; Anderson, 2000). In a capitalist, industrial society such as the United States, groups or individuals who emerge as dominant are considered so because they have accumulated larger amounts of social value in various forms of material wealth. The legal structures and ideas that correspond to and support the economic basis and economic organization of society help, in part, to form the social consciousness of society (Anderson, 2000; Deranty, 2003). The social consciousness consists of the laws, values, and religious beliefs that support and justify the existing forces and relationships among members within a society (Anderson, 2000; Deranty, 2003).

A byproduct of historical social inequalities is the use of the economically driven social consciousness of a society as the guiding force among all societal subgroups – gender, race, age, economic class, etc. – societal structure, and conflicts among those groups happen within that society (Anderson 2000; Deranty, 2003). From a class perspective, social inequality influences all groups of individuals within a society who are a minority population. In the case of the United States, minority populations are composed of women, nonwhites, children, disabled-individuals, the mentally and physically handicapped and elderly individuals. Social inequality is tied to self-identity vis-à-vis the laws, customs, media promotion, etc., that serve as constant reminders of social inequities that minorities constantly face versus the dominant, White male, population of the United States. Historically, every minority group listed has had their identity shaped by the dominant White male. The effect of historical oppression faced by minority groups at the hands of the dominant, oppressing, White-male-led group of people has had an inevitable influence on self-identity perceptions of minority group members.

The field of sociology has historically dominated the study of social inequality. Sociologists Karl Marx, Max Weber, and Emile Durkheim – all of whom were European males – pioneered the learning on the subject and all focused primarily on economic class as a key marker of social inequalities during the mid to late nineteenth century. “It is striking to note the relative absence of attention paid by Marx, Weber, and Durkheim to race as a key aspect of social inequality” (Allen & Chung, 2000, p.797). However, their contemporary – W.E.B. Du Bois – declared that the most significant problem of the twentieth century was the problem of the color line (Logan & Cohen, 1970; Gaines and

Reed, 1995). Du Bois (1896; 1899), rejected Social Darwinistic arguments that viewed Blacks as inferior to Whites. Furthermore, he argued that human outcomes could be explained best within cultural and social frameworks, rather than individual biological characteristics (Du Bois, 1896; 1899).

In 1967, during the civil rights movement within the United States, a highly influential model in social inequality theory and research was introduced. Blau and Duncan's (1967) *Occupational Attainment Model* set the new standard that scholars would use to analyze social class status and equality. Their model provided empirically testable hypotheses on the origin of a person's social class status. The Occupational Attainment Model was supported by statistical analyses, but like the previous ideas of Marx and Durkheim, it also discredited the relevance of race and made no concessions within its analysis techniques to account for race in the assessment of occupational attainment (Blau & Duncan, 1967; Cocoran, 1992, Allen & Chung, 2000). Although it has been over three decades since the Occupational Attainment Model (OAM) was introduced, its impact is still very much relevant. The OAM has been used to help shape the scope of social science research that has been compiled for the past four decades. The OAM has been widely applied to stratification and social mobility research around the world. Although many countries do not have the same racially divisive history as the United States, the OAM has been used by researchers (Lin, Ensel, & Vaughn, 1981; Slomeczynski, K.M., 1986; Nakao, 2004) to examine the effect of ethnic, within-races, and nationality tensions amongst countrymen in other countries. Current social mobility researchers use expanded versions of the OAM to investigate the impact of social

inheritance, occupational origin, etc., on the eventual occupational destination for minority groups in various settings (Lin, Ensel, & Vaughn, 1981; Nakao, 2004).

The African American Social Inequality Experience

From the moment the first West African person was forced off of a slave ship and onto the land of the future United States, African Americans have been treated and viewed as members of society who were not deemed equal to that of the dominant – European American – culture (Lusane, 2000, Strain, 2003, Zinn, 2000). The enslavement of African Americans set in place the groundwork for future societal norms and assumptions within the United States (Zinn, 2003; Strain, 2003). The White-male-led dominant social group of the United States used slavery to build economic wealth (Zinn, 2003; Strain, 2003). *Surplus value* is the amount of wealth earned by the capitalist/employer, i.e. slave owner, after payment to the worker/employee – in this case slave – once the cost to produce the work is deducted (Anderson, 2000; Deranty, 2003). The use of slavery as a means for the dominant group to accumulate wealth without a fair payment exchange to its workforce inevitably created a huge surplus value. The economy of the southern states, specifically Delaware, Maryland, the Carolinas, Georgia, and Virginia, depended heavily on wealth accumulated from the cash crops slaves grew (Engs, 2005). It has been argued (Livermore, 1901; Fox 1889) that any southern wealth earned via the enslavement of the Negro in America from approximately 1630 to 1860 was spent during the Civil War. Whether the money was spent on the war or not, the fact remains that Negroes were not compensated then, Blacks were not compensated in the

twentieth century, and African Americans have yet to be compensated for the countless hours of labor enslaved Africans compiled.

Another school of thought is that the most valuable wealth earned from the institution of slavery in the U.S. exists in the form of land. After slavery was abolished there was no form of reparation offered to Black American citizens. Because of this many southern Blacks left the land they had lived and worked on for generations without any form of recompense. With very little land ownership in the South in the possession of any involuntary minority group (Blacks, Indians, etc.), southern Whites were able to maintain control of all natural resources that could be used for future business and development (Fortune, 1968). The obliteration of any form of racial capitalistic competition was symbolic of the relationship between Whites and Blacks in the U.S. Blacks settled into the role of being consumer (of land, employment, etc.) and Whites re-settled further into the role of being gatekeepers of service and opportunity (land ownership, employment, opportunity, etc.).

The economic reward of the *surplus value* earned by Whites via the institution of slavery and the slave trade has had a very influential effect on the social construction of race relations and role expectations of both Whites and Blacks in the United States (Zinn, 2003; Anderson, 2000). The exploitative nature of slavery in the United States had bearings on the social construction of racial identity and desirability between racial groups, i.e. Black to White, as well as within individual racial groups.

What history has shown to happen repeatedly however is that, “the capitalist may distract the worker from the real interests by focusing on or emphasizing immediate or short term interests, such as the chance for promotion with higher pay, special bonuses

and the like” (Anderson, 2000, p.8). As previously identified, the gatekeeper/consumer relationship between Whites and Blacks established during slavery and reinforced during Reconstruction had several psychological effects within the Black community, one of which was resentment among group members (Jones, 1997). At the commencement of the U.S. institution of slavery African families were split apart for fear that they would communicate and rebel. This practice continued throughout the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries as families were regularly fractured. Sometimes this fracture occurred in the form of dividing the labor of “good” slaves to the house duties of their master. Other times the fracture occurred when families were separated via the slave marketplace and family members were bought and sold to different owners. This mundane, extreme, environmental stress (MEES) experienced by slaves during slavery had residual effects on the collective African American psyche many generations after slavery ended and its residual effects are still felt today (Carroll, 1998). During Reconstruction, the collective self-depreciative label *Uncle Tom* surfaced. The term “Uncle Tom” signified a non-allegiance to the Black community. This insult was hurled towards Blacks who perceivably aligned themselves alongside Whites (culture, ideology) for personal gain. The development of this label was the first documented symptom of racial identity confusion and tension within the African American community (Walters, 1991; Brunnsma and Rockquemore, 2002).

Also during this time the U.S. government enacted policies such as the *one-drop rule*, which reinforced internalized racism. The one-drop rule was a policy enacted by the U.S. government for enumeration purposes that considered any individual with “one drop of *Black* blood” as Black regardless of however much *White, Indian, or Other* blood

they may have had in their ancestry. Due to this, the stage was set for many lighter skinned Blacks to switch their identities to something other than Black if they could.

The United States federal government has played an integral role in the development of socially unequal standards of living and race identification for Blacks when compared to whites. Specifically, the founding document of the United States, the US Constitution, made a concerted effort to socially place Blacks below Whites in terms of social desirability. Article I, Section 2, of the United States Constitution required that,

Representatives and direct taxes shall be apportioned among the several states which may be included within this union, according to their respective numbers, which shall be determined by adding to the whole number of free persons, including those bound to service for a term of years, and excluding Indians not taxed, three-fifths of all other persons. The actual Enumeration shall be made within three Years after the first Meeting of the Congress of the United States, and within every subsequent term of ten years, in such manner as they shall by law direct (U.S Constitution).

All other persons included mainly slaves, and suggested that in order to establish representation in the House of Representatives, free men were counted as one person, and slaves were counted as three-fifths of a person (U.S. Census, 2002). The advent of this medium as a middle ground regarding the preceding language of the U.S Constitution is the result of The Great Compromise (Hodgkinson, 1995). The Great Compromise dealt with how to count slaves for the purpose of Congressional representation in a very subtle way. Representatives from the North realized that southern leaders would demand some counting of slaves in determining the representation of a state. Few southern leaders,

however, had the gall to claim that slaves, who could not vote, should be counted the same as free people. It was decided that all free persons, excluding “Indians not taxed” would count as citizens for the purposes of representation in the House (Zinn, 2003; Hodgkinson, 1995). “All other persons” however, such as slaves, only counted as three-fifths. Through slavery, institutionalized racism, via federal policies such as the one-drop rule, and law, the identification of African Americans has been historically socially constructed as unequal and undesirable.

Racial Identification Among African Americans

Self-identity grows, in part, from how people perceive how others view them. Identity itself is subjective, and the constant relationship among social, political, and cultural realities has a significant effect on how individuals define themselves (Woodward, 1997). “Experiences are structured through the vocabulary, the categories, and metaphors our languages offer us and they define our perceptions” (Freud, 2001, p. 337). Over the course of the past 215 years – since the employment of the first US Census – the racial classification of African Americans has expanded and shrunk much like the body of an accordion. The seemingly whimsical nature of the expansion and deflation of racial categories of all hyphenated American citizens – i.e. Native Americans, Hispanic Americans, etc. – is displayed in Table 1 (all Tables and Figures are in Appendix A).

Miehls (2001) noted the interesting comparison to be made between the way labels and titles are given to minority groups to that of mapmaking. “Map-making and race-making have a strong historical as well as conceptual relationship. The ordering and

labeling of natural terrain, the classifying of natural types and the typologies of natural races emerged simultaneously” (Miehls, 2001, p. 231). Despite the inconsistent racial categories for African Americans, the identity of African Americans has traditionally been viewed as “either a stable trait that is not influenced by situational demands or a meaningless group construct that is influenced by situational demands solely based on the properties of being a group construct” (Shelton & Sellers, 2000 p. 28). This traditional viewpoint appears to contradict the reality of the seemingly whimsical generational changing of racial categorization for every group of American citizens other than Whites. If racial categories were solely based on group construct properties the White racial category would have also seen significant categorization changes over the years, and it has not.

The preceding table on the historical classification of racial categories in the United States serves to illustrate that African Americans have never had the potentially empowering experience of naming themselves that is, creating their own self-identity. Miehls (2001, p.232) explains that “visible difference is the route to classification and therefore knowledge, and yet visible difference threatens the security of claims to know by challenging universal applicability”. If that is so, then African Americans – and all other hyphenated Americans within the US – could be deemed victims of assimilation via silence and the disempowerment of choice. Whether it is choice in labels, class, or status, being denied the opportunity to have an adequate say in where one is placed is disempowering and furthermore disabling. The potent impact of not having choice, like many other handicaps, is only noticed when choice is no longer available. Much like the person who loses a finger never realized its value until its no longer available to him, the

same can be said for choice. For example, many African Americans experience daily perceived *micro aggressions*, i.e. being ignored for service, the assumption of guilt for anything negative that may happen, being stared at because of color, etc. (Carroll, 1998). The existence of a racial and cultural lineage that has been steeped in racism and discrimination is an everyday variable that African Americans did not choose to have to live with.

Racial Identity versus Ethnic Identity

“Much of the discussion of cooperation and conflict between peoples of different backgrounds, be it at an interpersonal, community, or national level, utilizes the concept of *identity* at various levels of abstraction (e.g., personal identity, ethnic identity, national identity)” (Barnes, 2001, p. 32). In essence, identity is the set of behavioral or personal characteristics by which an individual is recognizable as a member of a group. People tend to identify themselves in terms of the roles that have been assigned to them and those that they seek to assume because of the status and or privilege afforded them (Jourard, 1974). “Identity is not static...because different contexts, different life phases, and different political circumstances highlight different categories and thus change our identity” (Freud, 2001, p.335). Bloom (1990) construed identity as a tool for understanding the relationship between an individual’s self-definition and his relationship to societal groups. Bloom also suggested that individuals seek psychological comfort by associating self-worth with the attitudes of important people in their lives, and once their identity has been established they actively protect their developed identity.

Racial identity has been defined as the “feelings of closeness to similar others in ideas, feelings, and thought” (Broman et al., as cited in Miller and MacIntosh, 1990). “Racial group identification refers to an individual's psychological attachment to a social category based on race, skin color, or a common history of oppression and discrimination attributable to skin color” (Thompson, 2001, p.749). Racial identity is a multidimensional concept influenced by both external and internal factors (Gaines and Reed, 1994; Shelton & Sellers, 2000; Miller & MacIntosh, 1999; Miehl, 2001; Thompson, 2001). External factors that potentially could affect the racial identity of an individual are social environment, socioeconomic status, and history. Internal factors that impact racial identity are, self-perception (negative or positive), mental construction of the perception of others, and perceived group acceptance (Wong et al., 2003; Miller and McIntosh, 1999). Arroyo and Zigler, as cited in Miller and MacIntosh, 1999), argued that racial identity has the dual purpose of affecting both the behavioral and psychological states of individuals.

Ethnic identity must be discussed to understand racial identity. Ethnic identity has been defined as “a construct that describes an individual’s self-perception and self-identification with a group of individuals characterized by a shared cultural heritage”(Yasui, Dorham and Dishion, 2004, p. 808). The relationship between the two has been described as ambiguous (Gaines and Reed, 1994; Shelton and Sellers, 2000; Miller and MacIntosh, 1999; Miehl, 2001; Thompson, 2001; Wong et al., 2003). This is so because there is no set agreement amongst scholars regarding the relationship between racial and ethnic identity.

One belief system values the notion that the two entities are inseparable, and the other views racial and ethnic identity as separate and independent of one another (Helms and Talleyrand, 1997; Phinny, 1989). Although there is no agreement between the two camps pertaining to whether or not the terms “racial identity” and “ethnic identity” perpetuate the same ideal, research (Gaines and Reed, 1994; Miller and MacIntosh, 1999; Shelton and Sellers, 2000; Wong et al., 2003) suggests that the terms are used in concert with one another. A phrase such as “the client/student/adolescent was aware of her racial-and-ethnic identity” is commonplace within the research literature.

The Social Psychology Behind Racial and Ethnic Identification of African Americans

“African Americans reside in two worlds (one black, one white), and they must develop the competence to combat the negative conditions (stressors) while adapting to that environment. Adaptive social functioning for African Americans requires the ability to live in the two worlds” (Miller and MacIntosh, 1999, p. 162). The aforementioned *adaptive social functioning* takes literal form in the daily lives of many African Americans via racial socialization, bicultural identity, and the concept of racelessness. *Racial socialization* is, in part, the preparation for African American children on the realities of being an African American in America. These realities include a history steeped in racism, prejudice, and discrimination, and have bearings not only on how many African Americans view themselves, but also how all other racial groups of American citizens view the collective African American experience and psyche. Through the emphasis of cultural pride, racial socialization is used to prepare families for racial discrimination (Mutisya and Ross, 2005). In an attempt to deflect some of the

pressures of being an African American with such an unfavorably weighted history, many African Americans accept a bicultural identity.

Bicultural identity enables many African Americans to deflect the power of racism and potential discrimination while surviving in a social environment that is hostile. Clark's (1991) bicultural identity model identifies and recognizes the dual identity that many African Americans partake. Bicultural identity suggests that dual usage of skills, norms, mores, etc., can be used interchangeably between the "two worlds" of the predominant society and a minority section of society (Clark, 1991; Miller and MacIntosh, 1999). While this may be true in the minds of scholars and certain African Americans, it is not the only tactic used as a device to deflect the pressures of being an African American in the United States. Instead of taking on "dual" identities, some African Americans attempt to live their lives without accepting the mores of any predominant racial group and live their lives "raceless."

Racelessness is a phenomenon that has occurred amongst African Americans in America in an attempt to overcome the collective historical racism and discrimination of African Americans. African Americans who choose to take on a race-less existence do so by distancing themselves from the mass African American population. These individuals strive for assimilation, interaction, and acceptance of the majority racial group (Arroyo and Zigler, 1995; Miller and MacIntosh, 1999; Mutisya and Ross, 2005). Raceless individuals attempt to avoid the recrimination of their families and peers by disguising their abilities.

Also, these individuals tend to believe that negative stereotypes of African Americans are credible, but do not apply to them personally. Raceless individuals also

believe that the American social system overall is fundamentally egalitarian and meritocratic (Arroyo and Zigler, 1995). Another factor that may impact the decision for certain African Americans to identify themselves as raceless could be that the study of racial attitudes in the US has largely focused on white attitudes towards African Americans and policies designed to assist African Americans, as opposed to the use of a more racially inclusive approach that included African American attitudes toward other African Americans (Lopez and Pantoja, 2004).

Racial Identification Models

Racial identity has been viewed as either a personality trait at the individual level, or as an example of a social process associated with group membership (Gaines and Reed, 1994; Shelton and Sellers, 2000; Miehl, 2001; Thompson, 2001). With regard to viewing African American racial identity from the individual level, the *Model of Psychological Nigrescence* – developed by Cross (1971) – describes four stages of racial identity development that Blacks experience as a psychologically healthy Black identity is developed.

The four stages are: 1.) precounter – a stage in which individuals do not believe that race is an important facet of their personality development – 2.) encounter – a stage in which individuals experience a “profound” event, either positive or negative – that they perceive to be linked to their culture – 3.) immersion/emersion – a stage in which African Americans are either pro-Black or anti-White, and 4.) internalization – the stage that is characterized by feelings of satisfaction identified with “being Black” (Cross,

1971, 1991; Resnicow, Soler, Braithwaite, Selassie and Smith, 1999; Shelton and Sellers, 2000; Thompson, 2001).

The Racial Identity Attitudes Scale (RIAS) is the primary instrument used to assess the Model of Psychological Nigrescence. To be effective, the RIAS assumes varying levels of cross-situational consistency in racial identity, and this is evidenced by the use of test-retest reliabilities as a measure of the scale's reliability (Shelton and Sellers, 2000).

With regard to viewing African American racial identity from the group level, feelings of African Americans associated with group rather than individual identity, one of the most popular models used is the Multi-group Ethnic Identity Model (MEIM) which was proposed by Phinney in 1989. The MEIM makes the argument that it is important to examine the universal properties associated with all ethnic groups, thus the MEIM is a single model of racial identity geared towards investigating the identity development of different ethnic groups (Phinney, 1989; Resnicow, Soler, Braithwaite, Selassie and Smith, 1999; Shelton and Sellers, 2000; Thompson, 2001). The MEIM describes four ethnic identity states: 1.) diffuse: the state in which what it means to be a part of a specific cultural/ethnic group has not been explored, 2.) foreclosed: the state in which individuals in this group have not explored their ethnic heritage/identity they have committed themselves to, focusing instead only on the values that they have been exposed to, 3.) moratorium: the state in which an individual actively explores his or her ethnic heritage but does not adopt any of their ways, and 4.) achieved: the state in which an individual has made the *necessary* (*necessary* is an undefined or predetermined amount of time) exploration and has decided to commit to that status group (Phinney,

1989; Resnicow, Soler, Braithwaite, Selassie and Smith, 1999; Shelton and Sellers, 2000; Thompson, 2001).

In 1997, Sellers, Rowley, Chavous, Shelton, and Smith developed the Multidimensional Model of Racial Identity (MMRI) to build on the previous approaches – MPM, MEIM – of understanding racial identity amongst diverse populations. In an attempt to include both stable and situationally dynamic properties of identity into a single model of African American racial identity, the MMRI took a phenomenological approach to the study of racial identity by embracing individuals' perceptions of both the meaning and significance of their race (Resnicow, Soler, Braithwaite, Selassie and Smith, 1999; Shelton and Sellers, 2000; Thompson, 2001). The MMRI is made up of four dimensions: salience, ideology, regard, and centrality. Racial salience accounts for the extent to which race is relevant to the self-concept of an individual in a particular point in time or situation. Racial centrality considers the extent to which an individual normatively defines her/his racial group membership. Racial ideology refers to the attitudes and beliefs that individuals have about how African Americans should act ideally. To capture the essence of racial ideology, four ideological themes (nationalist, oppressed minority, assimilationist, and humanist) were identified. Racial regard is the last dimension within the MMRI and it refers to the affective attitudes towards African Americans that individuals have. Racial regard is divided into the two distinctions of public regard and private regard. Public regard accounts for the degree to which an individual feels the African American community is viewed positively or negatively by others. Private regard, on the other hand, accounts for the degree to which an individual personally feels positively or negatively toward the African American community

combined with how he or she feels about being a member of this community. (Sellers et al, 1997; Sellers et al, 1998; Shelton and Sellers, 2000). Despite its recent development, the fact that research on the MMRI recognizes that individual racial ideology, regard, significance, etc., may change over time and influence social norms, further scholarship is needed (Sellers et al, 1997; Sellers et al, 1998; Shelton and Sellers, 2000). Potentially significant alterations to what is known about the effect of racial identity on all groups of American citizens can be uncovered as more research on this topic matter is conducted.

The Racial/Ethnic Identity Development of African American Adults

Demo and Hughes (1990) examined the social structure processes and arrangements related to racial group identification for a national sample of African American adults. They argued that although previous empirical studies (Ortega, Cruthfield and Rushing [1983]; Broman, Neighbors, and Jackson [1988]) illuminated that demographic variables and SES indicators affected racial identity, no work had been done that addressed how those variables specifically affected identity amongst African Americans. Furthermore, family background and childhood experience as they related to adult racial identity had never been examined (Demo & Hughes, 1990). Demo and Hughes set out to answer two research questions: What are the effects of family background and socialization on the identity of African American, and do family background and socialization variables account for the previously undocumented relationship between SES and African American identity (Demo & Hughes, 1990)?

The researchers used data collected in 1979 and 1980 by the National Survey of Black Americans (NSBA). The NSBA used a multi-staged sampling procedure to

interview 2,107 African Americans eighteen years old and older. The three dependent variables for the study were: black identity, based on feelings of closeness to other blacks; black skepticism, a scale that measured commitment to African culture and the extent to which blacks should confine their social relationships to other blacks, and black group evaluation, an unstandardized measure that evaluated the satisfaction of black people in general. The socialization (independent) variables were: interracial contact, the respondent's level of contact with white people over his or her lifetime; religious involvement, that is self-identified religiousness, and parental socialization, the perceived parental influence of the respondent's parent pertaining to the respondent's racial identity.

Demo and Hughes conducted a stepwise regression analysis and found that all three of their indicators of black identity were positively related to one another. The results of their analysis also showed that for all three indicators of black identity, age and SES of family of origin were unrelated. They also found that interracial contact was also unrelated to the three indicators of black identity. Demo and Hughes concluded that since the three distinct dimensions of black identity they established were all affected differently by predictor variables, it is reasonable to conceptualize that being black is a multidimensional phenomenon. They also concluded that being black means different things to different segments of the black population (Demo and Hughes, 1990).

Racial/Ethnic Identity Research on African American Adolescents

Research revolving around the topics of adolescent educational attainment (Mickelson, 1991; Steele and Aronson, 1995), adolescent psychological adjustment

(Erikson, 1966; Hall, 2001), and adolescent ethnic identity (Cross, 1971; Phinney, 1989; Resnicow, Soler, Braithwaite, Selassie and Smith, 1999; Miller and MacIntosh, 1999; Shelton & Sellers, 2000; Thompson, 2001) have all referenced the notion that perceived group acceptance is an essential component of successful adolescent development.

“Adolescence is a biological and social transition period that is critical in establishing developmental trajectories relevant to psychological adjustment, coping, and identity development” (Yasui et al., 2004, p.808). To demonstrate the type of research that has recently been conducted on African American adolescents, the following research studies are presented.

Rowley, Sellers, Chavous, and Smith (1998) used the Multidimensional Inventory of Black Identity to examine the relationship between racial identity and personal self esteem in a sample of high school and college African American students. The purpose of the study was to specifically examine the way that the different dimensions of the Multidimensional Model of Racial Identity (MMRI) - Ideology, Salience, Regard, and Centrality – interact to influence the personal self esteem of study participants. The research actually was a two part study – study one focused on college students and study two concentrated on high school students. In both studies the relationship between Centrality and Regard was specifically examined. The researchers were interested in finding out whether: 1.) racial centrality was directly associated with personal self-esteem, 2.) there was a direct association between regard (public and private) and personal self-esteem and 3.) racial centrality has a moderating effect on the relationship between public and private regard and personal self-esteem. Racial identity was measured using the MIBI and personal self-esteem was measured using the Rosenberg

Self Esteem Scale (RSE), a 10-item measurement instrument that measures levels of self-esteem among individuals (Rosenberg, 1979).

The researchers hypothesized that there would be a moderate positive relationship between private regard and self esteem. They also hypothesized that racial centrality would moderate the relationship between private regard and personal self esteem. Specifically, they expected a significant positive relationship between private regard beliefs and personal self-esteem for individuals with high racial centrality scores and no relationship between private regard beliefs and personal self-esteem for individuals with low racial centrality scores.

In study one, 176 African American college students were recruited and 173 actually completed the measurement instruments. A one-way Multivariate Analyses of Variance (MANOVA), with gender as the factor and the four scales (PSE, Centrality, Private Regard, and Public Regard) as dependent variables, was used to analyze gender differences. The researchers found that no gender differences existed among the dependent variables. The Centrality ($M = 4.82$) scores among participants suggested that race was a central identity for many of the participants. Study participants also reported positive feelings toward African Americans in general and that was reflected by the high Private Regard ($M = 6.36$) scores among participants. The Public Regard ($M = 3.22$) score indicated that participants felt other groups held somewhat negative feelings towards other African Americans. Bivariate correlation analyses found that private regard was positively associated with both racial centrality and personal self-esteem. That finding indicated that individuals who had more positive feelings towards other African Americans viewed race as a more important part of their own self-definition. That

finding also indicated that those individuals also had higher personal self-esteem. Racial centrality was found to be negatively correlated with public regard scores in a manner that suggested that individuals who viewed race as a central part of their identity felt that other groups had more negative feelings toward African Americans.

Although racial centrality and public regard were negatively correlated, there was no significant relationship determined between racial centrality and personal self-esteem. Linear multiple regression was used by the researchers to examine the direct associations of racial centrality, public regard and public regard on personal self esteem. What they found was that only private regard was a significant predictor of personal self esteem. Centrality was not found to be a moderating influence on the impact of public and private regard on personal self esteem, and level of centrality (high vs. low) did not affect personal self esteem scores, and as with the previous analyses, only private regard was a significant predictor of personal self-esteem. The researchers hypothesises that a relationship existed between racial centrality and personal self-esteem was not supported. There was variability in the way that African American college students viewed race as a central part of their self concept, and the variability was not directly related to their personal self esteem. Race did not translate into higher personal self-esteem among study participants. Their second hypothesis, that private racial regard was positively related to personal self-esteem was supported.

For part two of the study, Rowley et al, replicated the methods used in study one on a group of 72 African American high school students age 13-18 ($M = 15.83$), and found that although significant gender differences existed for the private regard subscale (male $M = 5.00$, female $M = 5.66$), many of the findings were similar to those found in

study one. One noted similarity was that Centrality ($M = 4.72$) indicated that race was just as an important issue among the high school participants as it was for the college participants. The Public Regard ($M = 3.92$) score for this sample was also comparable to the college students' in study one which also suggested their belief that other groups of people have somewhat negative feelings about African Americans. Bivariate correlation analyses found that Centrality was positively correlated to personal self-esteem and Private Regard. They also found that Public Regard was unrelated to both Private Regard and personal self-esteem. When the researchers conducted a multiple regression with Private Regard, Public Regard, and Centrality as predictors neither the overall model nor any of the individual regression coefficients were significant. Just as in study one an analysis was employed to examine the moderating influence of Centrality (by dividing centrality into two groups- high and low-) on the relationship between private regard and personal self-esteem. Similarly to study one, the findings from the regression analysis established that both public and private regard were not predictors of personal self esteem of individuals in the low centrality group. They did find however, that the overall model for the high racial centrality group was significant ($R^2 = .25, p < .05$) with only Private Regard as a significant predictor of personal self-esteem ($\beta = .48, p < .05$).

By using the MMRI via the MIBI to take a multidimensional approach to investigate racial identity, this study presented a viewpoint on the concept of racial identity that previously had been ignored by researchers. That is, the significance an individual places on being a member of a race has bearings on the attitudes and beliefs that an individual has about his or her racial identity. Previous research (Cross, 1971) that presumed that racial identity attitudes of all African Americans were similar solely

because of their “being black” masked the complexities that accompany the relationship between self-esteem and racial identity. Basically, one should not assume that just because two different people are both African American that they will have the same racial identity beliefs or experiences.

However, as the researchers themselves noted, longitudinal research is needed to truly capture the essence of racial identity development across the life span. Moreover, the sample size of the study two was too small to have the statistical power necessary to truly make inferences about the adolescent population studies. The findings of the study that were not significant may be directly due to the small sample size, and one should be cautious when interpreting these findings.

Miller and MacIntosh (1999) investigated protective factors that facilitate resilience among African American adolescents in an urban setting. They hypothesized that educational involvement – which is indicative of resiliency – would be influenced by the cultural protective factors of *racial socialization* and *racial identity*. They defined educational involvement through the following variables: school days attended, reported time spent on homework, and reported participation in school activities. Data were collected using questionnaires administered verbally by African American graduate students to 131 African American adolescents (83 females; 48 males, mean age = 15.9). Participants were selected from urban schools and community programs that provided services to at-risk and disadvantaged youths (i.e. juvenile court boot camps).

The independent variable in the study – stress – was measured in two specific areas, active and general. The Perceived Stress Scale (PSS) (Cohen, Kamarak, & Mermelstein, 1983) measured active stress, and general stress was measured by Gordon’s

(1995) four-item measure of general stress. The extent to which racial socialization influenced the effect of stress on academic achievement was examined by the use of Steven's (1994) Racial Socialization of Adolescent Scale (RCAS). To measure racial identity, Phinny's (1989) MEIM, Arroyo and Zigler's (1995) Racelessness Scale (RS), and Luhtanen and Crocker's (1992) Collective Self Esteem Scale (CSES) were used. The dependent variable of the study – educational achievement – was measured by self-reported grade point average (GPA).

Miller and MacIntosh found significant correlations among several identified stressors, protective factors, and dimensions of educational involvement of the study (Miller & MacIntosh, 1999). Ethnic identity was found to have a positive relationship with GPA, while collective self-esteem also positively significantly correlated with indicators of stress and educational involvement. Furthermore, findings suggested that daily hassles (i.e. perceived discrimination, feelings of belonging to an out-group, etc.) pertaining to racial identity may serve as a significant barrier to academic achievement for adolescents with an ethnic identity not as strong as others (Miller & MacIntosh, 1999). The study also suggested that stronger “ethnic sense” appears to protect some adolescents against obstacles presented by many daily hassles. Most other tested relationships were found to be nonsignificant. They acknowledge that their insignificant findings may be due to the complexities of attempting to test an association between stress and resiliency via educational attainment (Miller & MacIntosh, 1999). Given that GPA was collected by student report in this study, it is hard to know whether these data were accurate. Both students' desires to impress the researchers and difficulties in computing and remembering GPA seem likely.

Wong et al., (2003) investigated the influence of ethnic discrimination and ethnic identification on African American adolescents' school and psychological development. This study was similar to the Miller and MacIntosh research but the larger sample provides more statistical power. The secondary data analysis of Wong et al. used sample data drawn from the Maryland Adolescents Development in Context (MADIC) study. The MADIC was conducted in a county in Maryland where in 1995 51% of the households were African American and 43% were European American (Wong et al., 2003).

Wong et al. (2003) had two research objectives. They were interested in examining if perceived discrimination by teachers and peers is negatively related to academic, socio-emotional, and behavioral signs of psychological stress and adjustment among African American adolescents. The researchers were also interested in investigating the promotive and protective capabilities of ethnic identification against the potential threats posed by experiences of ethnic discrimination. The MADIC study invited all entering 7th grade students in the county to participate from 1990-1992. Data were collected from each cohort at the beginning of the 7th grade (Time 1) and at the end of the 8th grade (Time 2). A total of 629 adolescents (336 AA males and 293 AA females) that participated in both waves of data collection were analyzed. Using a scale developed by the MADIC staff, perceived discrimination by peers and perceived discrimination by teachers were measured at Time 2 (Wong et al., 2003).

Perceived discrimination by peers and perceived discrimination by teachers were negatively related to adolescents' reports of achievement motivation, self-competency beliefs, psychological resiliency, and self-esteem (Wong et al, 2003). With regard to

ethnic group connection, the researchers found interaction effects between connection to ethnic group and perceived discrimination on change in self-competency beliefs, school achievement, perceptions of friends' positive characteristics, and problem behaviors (Wong et al, 2003). Overall, the results of the study indicated that ethnic discrimination and racial identity significantly impacts the psychological development of African American adolescents (Wong et al., 2003). The study also reported that strong connections existed with one's ethnic group heritage. They also found that culture promoted positive development in several domains of functioning (Wong et al., 2003).

The significance of this study is limited by the correlational nature of the findings. Wong et al. acknowledged that the correlation they found does not determine causal flow, thus the results of both the Wong et al. and the Miller and MacIntosh (1999) studies may need the assistance of additional longitudinal studies to substantiate their findings. While it is possible that more positive identity as an African American may result in greater academic achievement, these findings cannot rule out the possibility that higher academic achievement causes students to feel more positive about being African American.

Caldwell, Zimmerman, Bernat, Sellers, and Notaro (2002) investigated the role of racial identity and maternal support in the reduction of psychological distress among 521 African American high school seniors. The researchers cited several reasons in support of their research that focused on the notion that racial socialization and negative perceptions of African Americans within society may lead to negative stereotypes, negative self-acceptance, and mental health problems of African Americans (Caldwell et al., 2002). Four research questions were examined: 1.) Is maternal support associated with different dimensions of racial identity among study participants? 2.) Will maternal

support and different dimensions of racial identity reduce psychological distress? 3.)

Will different racial identity attitudes mediate the relation between maternal support and psychological distress, and 4.) Are relations between maternal support and psychological distress (i.e., depression, anxiousness), and racial identity attitudes and psychological distress mediated by perceived stress (Caldwell et al., 2002)?

The 521 study participants, 247 (47%) male and 274 (53%) female; approximately 83% Black and 17% White, were selected from four inner-city high schools in a Midwestern state. Study participants also had to have been enrolled in the school district upon entering the ninth grade and have a cumulative GAP below 3.0 (Caldwell et al., 2002). Data were collected during one-hour, face-to-face interviews conducted by project staff during school hours. After the interview, students were given a self-administered questionnaire about several developmental related issues that included; alcohol and drug use, sexual behavior and racial identity (Caldwell et al., 2002).

To measure racial identity, the researchers used shortened versions of the private regard and centrality subscales of the MMRI (Sellers et al., 1997). To measure maternal support, the researchers modified a previously developed parental support scale developed by Procidano and Heller (1983). To measure mental health affects (depression, anxiety, and perceived stress), the researchers used the Brief Symptom Index developed by Derogatis and Spencer (1982) and an 11-item scale (untitled) developed by Cohen, Kamarck, & Mermelstein, (1983).

Analyses found that there was a significant, but small positive relationship between maternal support and both private regard and centrality. A single significant inverse association was found between private regard and perceived stress. Centrality

however was not correlated with perceived stress, and neither centrality nor private regard was significantly associated with depressive symptoms or anxiety (Caldwell et al., 2002).

By using centrality and private regard as starting points on the road of attempting to figure out how the African Americans studied view their environment, the researchers acknowledged that racial identity is too complex of a topic to just lump all study participants together as one group having one starting point for how they perceive society. Although the topic is beyond the scope of this literature review, absent fathers is a significant problem in the African American community that may have bearings on how African American youth perceive and handle stress, racism, and racial identity. Fifty-two percent of the participants in the study were products of single parent homes; however, researchers did not specify what percentage of those single parent homes were headed by females or males. Given the increasingly high number of African American fatherless-led households, the maternal support angle used by Caldwell et al. will hopefully spark new research in the area of fatherless households in the African American community and what effect that has on racial identity of African American adolescents.

The exclusive use of only African American students that had a cumulative GPA under 3.0 is problematic and places both the internal and external validity of the results gathered from those subjects into question. By only examining the effects of maternal support and perceived stress on adolescents who have previously performed at an academic level below their peers, the researchers have left open the door for the scrutiny

that their results are not generalizable to the larger African American adolescent community.

Chavous, Bernat, Schmeelk-Cone, Caldwell, Wood, & Zimmerman, (2003) investigated the relationship between racial identity and academic attainment among a group of 606 African American high school seniors. The study was similar to the Caldwell et al., study and used the same original sample used in the previous study. This time however, the researchers specifically examined how the importance of race (centrality), African American group affect (private regard), and African American perceptions of societal beliefs (public regard) influenced the future academic success of study participants. Cluster analyses were used to create racial identity profiles that combined individual racial identity beliefs (centrality, public/private regard) with academic beliefs, performance, and subsequent higher education attainment.

The aims of the study were to 1.) examine differences among youth across different dimensions of racial identity and 2.) to explore within-group differences in school attitudes and emotional adjustment for youth with different patterns of racial identity beliefs (Chavous et al., 2003). The sample used in the research was 606 African American students during their 12th-grade year. Just as with the Caldwell et al., (2003) study, the students selected to participate were students who had a cumulative GPA under 3.0 entering the ninth grade, and the demographics of the schools used was 80 percent African American.

Data were collected in two waves, Time 1 and Time 2. Time 1 was during the senior year of high school and Time 2 was data was collected 2 years later. For Time 1 the data was collected during face-to-face interviews in which after the interview,

students were given a self-administered questionnaire that asked questions related to their social and academic development as well as their racial identity attitudes. Of the original 606 that participated in Time 1, 437 (72%) also participated in Time 2. The educational belief assessment was measured using four components: school attachment, school relevance, school efficacy, and school importance. Racial identity was measured by using shortened versions of the centrality, private regard, and public regard subscales created in the Multidimensional Inventory of Black Identity (Sellers, Rowley, Chavous, Shelton & Smith, 1997).

School outcomes for Time 1 were gathered by study participant self-report of school status (in school, out of school), and school records provided the participants' GPA in 12th grade. For time 2, study participants gave a self-report of the highest level of schooling they obtained. Correlation and multivariate analyses were used to examine the relationships of centrality and public/private regard on academic attitudes and achievement outcomes for the study participants enrolled in school during time 1 (n = 543). Public regard was positively related to school attachment and school relevance. Data analyses also found that all educational belief variables: school attachment, school relevance, school efficacy, and school importance were positively related to private regard. Positive relationships were also found between racial centrality and school efficacy, and school relevance. 12th grade GPA however was not significantly correlated with any of the racial identity variables (Caldwell et al., 2003).

Of the 437 participants who were assessed during time 2, 168 (28%) reported attending a college or university. Centrality and private regard were higher for participants that were enrolled in either a four year college or a junior/community

college compared to those participants that did not attend college. Also the post hoc analysis found that public regard was not significantly related to educational attainment, and there were also no significant differences between study participants who did not earn a high school diploma and their counterparts on any of the racial identity variables; centrality, public/private regard, (Chavous, et al., 2003).

Chavous et al. also created and analyzed racial profile groups to determine how relationships between centrality and academic outcomes were affected by other racial identity variables, i.e. public/private regard. Four clusters were created: buffering/defensive (BD) (n = 175, 29%), low-connectedness/high affinity (LCH) (n = 127, 21%), idealized (I) (n = 188, 31%), and alienated (A) (n = 116, 19%), and each cluster was characterized by different levels of racial identity variable beliefs (i.e. high/low centrality, public, and private regard). For example, the low-connectedness/high affinity cluster was comprised of individuals with low race centrality, high public regard, and low private regard, thus this cluster could be described as one that thought highly of African Americans in general and also thought that African Americans are not valued highly in society. What the investigators found was that all clusters significantly differed from one another on racial centrality, public regard, and private regard.

Chavous et al. also used chi square analyses to explore if racial identity profiles were predictive of in-school status during Time 1. Results showed that the alienated (A) group had the highest frequency and largest percentage of its cluster participants not enrolled in school, and the buffering/defensive (BD) had the lowest total and smallest proportion of each. For Time 2, later educational attainment, chi-square analysis results

were similar to those for Time 1. Study participants in the BD group displayed the highest frequency and largest percentage of current college enrollment. Next was group I followed by the LCH cluster and lastly group A (Chavous et al., 2003).

The Chavous et al. research shared some of the same strengths (i.e. use of a multidimensional model (the MIBI), and an analysis of racial identity that stressed the importance of using separate racial profiles) and weaknesses (internal/external validity concerns, exclusive use of *at risk* students) of the Caldwell et al study. The Chavous et al. research however, was strengthened by the creation of racial profile clusters. By creating homogeneous profiles the researchers were able to disseminate how different racial identity beliefs relate to achievement values and outcomes. Another strength was the analysis of how academic attitudes affect academic outcomes. Although previous studies (Miller and McIntosh, 1999; Caldwell et al., 2002) investigated the relationship between racial identity attitudes, centrality, regard, etc., and GPA, they did not investigate the extent to which educational attitudes mediated the relationship between racial identity and academic performance.

Future Orientation

Future orientation has been defined as “how people see their future in terms of goals, hopes and expectations” (Kerpelman & Mosher, 2004). The future orientation of adolescents has been predicted in several studies (Kerpelman and Mosher, 2004; Adams and Marshall, 1996) to be positively associated with identity development. Adolescents that feel they have more control over their life outcomes are more likely to have a more positive outlook about the future. By having this acquired positive attitude, adolescents

are more enabled to realize their future potential (Kerpelman & Mosher, 2004). While future orientation is an essential developmental hurdle for all adolescents, it is of particular concern for African American adolescents. This may be so because many African American adolescents are often categorized as “at risk” youth. The factors used to categorize many African American adolescents as “at risk” include low socioeconomic status and low expectations for the completion of lifetime goals and overall success. When SES is examined as a factor in the prediction of adolescents’ future orientation, family income and parent education levels are used as proxies (Kane & Kyyro, 2001; Caldwell et al, 2002; Kerpelman & Mosher, 2004). The impact of perceived level of internal control, that is the belief that one has control over one’s life experiences, was studied by Finch, Shannahan, Mortimer, & Ryu (1991), and O’Brien and Feather (1990), and in both cases it was found that adolescents’ sense of control and responsibility may account for some variability in their perceived future success.

Previous Social Work Research

Social work has focused its attention on the effects that multi-ethnic and bi-racial classifications have on the well being of clients who are multi-ethnic and/or biracial. Recent research (Herman 2004; Hall, 2001; Barnes, 2001; McRoy, Zurcher, Lauderdale & Anderson, 1982) within social work has focused on issues pertaining to: self-esteem, racial identity, multiethnic parenting, and stress associated with racial choice within the multi-ethnic and biracial communities. Much stock within the social work literature has not been placed into investigating the influence of socio-environmental factors on the mental health and identity development of African Americans.

Decarlo (2005) aimed to provide empirical evidence for the notion that social workers should consider identity issues in African American adolescents as a focus in the development of interventions to be used with the population. Particularly, Decarlo looked at the relationship(s) between the development of African American adolescent identity development and aggression. Part of his rationale for conducting his research was his belief that “African American adolescents have historically been expected to be responsive to western European culture and their own black culture, while at the same time confronting ecological constraints, image denigration and racism” (Decarlo, 2005 p.36). Because of this, he argued that the experience of the African American adolescent, vis-à-vis identity formation, is a very complex developmental stage for African American adolescents.

The study had two goals: 1.) to explore the interrelationships among ego, racial, and ethnic identity of African American adolescents, and 2.) to explore to what extent African American adolescent identity status was predictive of aggressive behavioral characteristics. This was done in an attempt to highlight the usefulness of identity assessment in prospective treatment/intervention plans. The participants in the study were 110 randomly selected African American adolescents (59 males and 51 females) that ranged in age from 14 to 16.

Decarlo (2005) found that several aspects of racial, ego, and ethnic identity were interrelated. He concluded that racial, ethnic, and ego identity development were all under-developed in this sample of adolescents. This is so because individuals do not self-examine their level of intra-personal commitment while identifying themselves (DeCarlo, 2005). Because of this, DeCarlo suggests that many African American adolescents may

participate in several seemingly adverse behavior patterns such as: 1.) reluctance to directly deal with and cope with problems, 2.) the preference of identifying with another ethnic group while perceiving social dynamics of their own race as a nuisance, and 3.) acceptance of various aspects of Black culture while simultaneously withdrawing from interactions with other ethnic groups. The major finding of the research was that underdeveloped identity (ego, racial, ethnic) is the strongest predictor of aggressive behavior in all situations.

The DeCarlo study used proven racial/ethnic measures to examine relationships between African American adolescents and race. The study also gave a detailed analysis of associations among different components of identity development, i.e., ego, racial, and ethnic. For example, DeCarlo revealed that among adolescents, ethnic pride and feeling good about one's ethnic background might be part of a heretofore-unidentified advanced form of identity development.

Literature Synthesis

One of the major tenets of social work practice addresses the person-in-environment. However, social work has yet to adequately address the complexities of identity development for African Americans who live in the historically hostile environment of the US. More so than any other group of minority citizens, the historical plight of the African-in-America is one filled with civil rights violations, separate and unequal treatment, cultural mistrust, and uncertainty (DuBois, 1896; Dirilik, 1991; Gaines & Reed, 1995). As a result, many African Americans struggle with the concept of

racial identity and are forced to cope – either consciously or subconsciously – with the development of bicultural identities or viewing themselves as raceless.

The concept of racial identity has come a long way since Cross (1971) first developed the *Model of Psychological Nigrescence*. Cross' model was very influential because it took into account how life experience can have either a positive or negative impact on the identity development of African Americans. Furthermore, the development of the Racial Identity Attitudes Scale (RAIS), the primary investigative instrument used in Cross' model, provided a standardized, replicable, measure to be used by fellow researchers. The development of the RAIS is especially significant because without the standardized replication that the measurement provided, critics of the examination of racial identity among African Americans as a mental health concern could dismiss the Model of Psychological Nigrescence as purely conceptual.

Cross' influential racial identity research was expanded over the next twenty-five years by researchers who extended the concept of measuring the influence of identity development toward the lives of all people. Phinney (1989) made the contribution of extending the barriers of identity development research by developing the Multigroup Ethnic Identity Model (MEIM). The inclusive nature of the MEIM influenced future research by expanding the barriers of racial identity conceptualization and measurement. Demo and Hughes (1990) concluded that family background and socialization were also associated with the racial identity development of African Americans. Perhaps the most significant contribution their research provided was their scholarly speculation that being *Black* meant different things to different Blacks. Previous researchers (Cross, 1971; Ensel & Vaughn, 1981; Phinney, 1989) had focused their attention on attempting to

quantify how certain environmental, social, and historical factors affected *all* African Americans.

Research conducted after 1990 however (Sellers et al, 1997; Rowley et al, 1998; Miller and McIntosh, 1999; Wong et al., 2000; Caldwell et al, 2002; Chavous et al., 2003) built on the work of Demo and Hughes and investigated how African Americans with different environmental, familial, and societal worldviews racially socialize differently. Researchers also noted how and what effects the afore-listed concerns may have had on the racial identity of different individuals. Beginning with Rowley et al (1998) and continuing with Miller and McIntosh (1999), the trend of almost exclusively studying older African American adolescent children in an urban setting in the investigation of the influence of racial identity formation is evident. Miller and McIntosh (1999) focused their attention on the examination of the relationship between resilience and school achievement among African American adolescents. Wong et al. (2003) also used an exclusively urban sample to examine how positive racial identity formation buffers the impact of racial discrimination. The researchers examined reports of achievement motivation, self-competency beliefs, psychological resiliency, and self-esteem, of the study participants. Caldwell et al. (2002) also used an exclusively urban sample of African American adolescents over the age of 15 in their investigation of the relationships among racial identity, perceived discrimination, and maternal support among high school students. Chavous et al. (2003) conducted a parallel study that used the same sample population of Caldwell et al. (2002). This investigation however was more complex, via its use of identity cluster profiles, and attempted to decipher how centrality and regard (both public and private) among individuals influenced their racial

identity and their ability to navigate social systems. Finally, Decarlo (2005) added his contribution to the literature by addressing the linkage between African American adolescent identity development and aggression.

The recurring theme in all of the reviewed African American adolescent identity development literature is the exclusive examination of urban children. The primary reason given for this focus is that the research was conducted as a part of a larger federally funded initiative that primarily focused on urban youths (Caldwell et al., 2002; Chavous et al., 2003). Another rationale for the repeated use of urban youth in adolescent developmental research is that the social environment experienced by urban youth is much more multifaceted, hostile, and challenging than that in rural settings (Miller and McIntosh, 1999; Wong et al., 2003). Despite these rationales, the rural African American adolescent population still exists and may have own unique circumstances that need investigation. Furthermore, if researchers contend that urban children are a unique population of their own, that point itself beckons for parallel research to be done to the *other*, rural, population.

Instead of focusing primarily on very general differences (i.e. urban vs. rural), scholars should begin to investigate the matter of racial identity on more specific variables. Variables such as community SES and county racial demographics should also be taken into consideration. How one views himself or herself is as much a product of their physical environment (geographic locale, physical condition of daily environment) as their social (family support, perceived security environment (Zimmerman, 1995; Algeria and Williams, 2003).

The previously cited scholarship in this essay places most of its attention on the identity developmental concerns of African American adolescents that are over the age of 15 and from urban environments. This is of concern to this researcher because by omitting the population of African American adolescents that are younger adolescents and from non-urban environments from racial identity scholarship, any assertions made about the identity developmental patterns of African American adolescents assume that those from said group develop exactly the same as the older adolescents from more urban locals.

There are a multitude of factors that have the potential to differentiate the developmental factors of adolescents reared in a more rural environment compared to those reared in a more urban setting. The amount of exposure a developing child has to: different races of people, industry, institutions of higher education, commerce, public transportation, greater diversity of social perspectives, etc. has the potential to greatly impact the eventual racial identity development of that budding adolescent. As research continues to grow on rural African American adolescents, it is important to consider the role that community racial composition has on the identity development of these children. Therefore, there is a need for scholarship that addresses the impact of racial composition differences among various communities.

Chapter 3: Methodology

This chapter reviews the procedures that were used in the African American Rural Identity Study (AARI). A detailed description of Institutional Review Board (IRB) procedures used in the AARI also is discussed in this chapter. The selection criteria and description of each community chosen for participation, the proposed sample, data collection, measurements, research design, and data analysis are discussed in detail.

Description of Participant Communities and Selection Criteria

AA adolescents were recruited for participation from two rural, Southeastern, US towns. Each town was selected on the criteria that the town: 1.) be rural (at least 40 miles from a metropolitan city), 2.) have a population of no more than 6,000 residents, 3.) have a different majority racial population (i.e. one town must consist of a majority White population and the other must be predominately African American). The predominantly African American town that was selected for the AARI study is located approximately 50 miles northwest of Charleston, SC. According to the 2000 US Census, the town has 601 residents. Out of those, 55.6 percent are African American, 59.7 percent of residents have obtained at least a high school diploma, the median household income is 28,083 annually, and 65.3 percent of the residents are in the labor force (US Census, 2006).

The predominately White town selected for the AARI study is located approximately 50 miles southwest of Knoxville, TN. According to the 2000 US Census, the town has 5,586 residents. Out of those, 89.7 percent are White, 67.5 percent of residents have obtained at least a high school diploma, the median household income is

28,323 annually, and 58.3 percent of the residents are in the labor force (US Census, 2006).

Research Design

A cross sectional design was employed in this study. Data were collected from 101 African American adolescents from two different towns, a predominantly African American town in SC, and a predominantly White town in TN over a period of 27 days.

Institutional Review Board (IRB) Approval

University of Tennessee Institutional Review Board (UT-IRB) approval (See Appendix) was obtained on December 11, 2006.

Sample

The research was conducted using a purposive sample. Participants were African American adolescents age 11 to 14 recruited from junior high schools in SC and TN. A letter of support (Appendix) was obtained from each school principal that granted permission for data collection. There were a total of 132 African American adolescents between the ages of 11 and 14 recruited for participation for the study. Of those, 101 actually participated, providing a response rate of 76.5%. Of the 101 participants, 58 were from SC and 43 were from TN.

Data Collection

Data were collected January 9, 2007, to February 1, 2007. The researcher was granted permission from each school principal to visit students in their homeroom classes to ask potential, eligible participants if they would like to participate in the AARI study. During the homeroom visit, the researcher described the purpose and description of the study, described the incentives that were being offered for their participation, answered all questions raised, and distributed parental informed consent forms. Emphasis was made that participation in the study was completely voluntarily, and that the research being conducted was being done completely independently of each school district. The researcher informed students that he would collect parental consent forms weekly, and students who have returned their signed parental consent forms to their homeroom teachers would be invited to participate in the study.

To encourage students to return their parental consent forms, students were offered a chance to have their names entered into a raffle drawing for a one-hundred dollar gift card at Wal-Mart™ upon the return of their signed parental consent form. Both students and parents were informed that there was no “requirement to participate clause” in the raffle drawing. Even if students who turned in their parental consent form with permission to participate in the AARI study eventually chose not to give assent to participate in the study, their names remained in the raffle drawing just for turning in the permission slip (See Appendix 2). Also, there was a place on the parental consent form for parents to decline permission of their children to participate. As long as the parental consent form was signed and returned, each child was entered into the raffle drawing regardless of his or her parent’s permission decision. All students received a five-dollar

McDonald's[™] gift certificate and a University of Tennessee ink pen upon their completion of the study questionnaire. A total of 48 parental consent forms were distributed at the school in TN and 84 forms were distributed at the school in SC.

The time and location that the participants were asked to complete the MIBI and a brief demographic questionnaire was based on the discretion of the principal of each school, and in both study locations the cafeteria was chosen as the test site. The researcher served as the administrator of the measurement instrument to all participants at both sites. He gave verbal instructions, asked participants for their assents, distributed, and monitored students as they completed the measure. The Flesch-Kincaid (Klare, 1985), reading level of the questionnaire is 6th grade. Although there was no time limit for completion of the MIBI, students were instructed that the survey should only take about 20 to 45 minutes to complete. Along with the MIBI, participants also were asked to fill out a four-item demographic questionnaire (age, race, gender and grade level). No identifying information on individual participants was requested. After completion of the survey, participants were asked to place their completed MIBI and demographic questionnaires into sealed envelopes and raise their hands so that the researcher could come by and collect the materials. The 43 students who completed the questionnaires at the school in TN did so in 20 to 35 minutes, and the 58 who participated at the school in SC did so in 20 to 40 minutes. There were very few questions of clarity asked during completion of the MIBI. When vocabulary comprehension questions were posed, the researcher answered each question by offering synonyms of the words in question.

Measurements

Independent Variable

Location is the independent variable for this study. For the purpose of the AARI, the location variable represents the distinct racial composition of each town that participated in the research. Location has been used in previous research (Sellers, et al, 1997), to compare differences in Multidimensional Inventory of Black Identity (MIBI) subscale scores between African Americans attending a predominantly White university and African Americans students at a historically Black college.

Dependent Variables

The four dependent variables that were selected for this study are 1.) Public regard, 2.) Private Regard, 3.) Centrality, and 4.) Assimilation. Each dependent variable is a subscale of the Multidimensional Inventory of Black Identity (MIBI), and each participant in the study has an averaged score for each dependent variable. The conceptual framework of the Multidimensional Model of Racial Identity (MMRI) is designed to articulate the multifaceted levels of significance that African Americans may place on race in defining themselves (Sellers, Smith, Shelton, Rowley, & Chavous, 1998). The MIBI instrument that is being used in this study works in conjunction with the MMRI. It was created to test levels of centrality, private regard, public regard, assimilation, humanist, minority, and nationalist themes among individuals. The four related dimensions of the MMRI are salience, centrality, ideology and regard. For the purposes of this study, only the centrality (8 questions), private regard (6 questions),

public regard (6 questions), and assimilation (9 questions) themed subscales were examined among participants.

MIBI Scales

The Multidimensional Inventory of Black Identity (MIBI; see Appendix 2) measures the three stable dimensions of the MMRI (Sellers et al., 1997). It is comprised of three scales (Centrality, Regard, and Ideology). Participants are asked to respond regarding the extent to which they agree with the items using a 7-point Likert scale, from 1 (strongly disagree) to 7 (strongly agree), (Sellers, Smith, Shelton, Rowley, & Chavous, 1998).

Centrality

The Centrality scale ($\alpha = .77$) consists of 8 items measuring the extent to which being African American is central to the respondents' definition of themselves. Racial centrality refers to the extent to which an individual normatively defines his or her racial group membership, and it is a measure of how much race is a part of the core of an individual's self-concept (Sellers et al., 1998; Rowley et al., 1998). The following are examples of questions in the MIBI that test centrality: 1.) In general, being Black is an important part of my self-image, and (conversely) 2.) Overall, being Black has very little to do with how I feel about myself. Computing the mean item score is used to attain all MIBI subscales, and higher scores on each of the subscales indicate greater Centrality, Public Regard, Private Regard, etc. For example, if the Centrality score for participant "A" was 4.5 and the Centrality score for participant "B" was 6.0, participant "B" would have greater Centrality. Based on that hypothetical scenario, one could deduce that

participant “B” has a greater sense of racial group ownership and is more comfortable with his or her racial identity than participant “A”. This subscale item has been used in the analysis of every study that used the MIBI as a measurement instrument.

Regard

The Regard scale consists of two 6-item subscales – Public Regard ($\alpha = .78$) and Private Regard ($\alpha = .78$). Racial regard refers to individuals’ affective attitudes towards African Americans. It is divided into two components—public regard and private regard. This subscale has been used in the analysis of every study that used the MIBI as a measurement instrument (Sellers et al., 1998; Rowley et al., 1998).

Public Regard

Public regard refers to the extent to which an individual feels others view the African American community positively or negatively. This aspect of Regard has been associated with the premise that perceptions of others affect the self-perception of an individual (Rowley et al., 1998). The following are examples of questions in the MIBI that test Public Regard: 1.) Overall, Blacks are considered good by others, and (conversely) 2). Most people consider Blacks, on the average, to be less effective than other racial groups. For example, if the Public Regard score for participant “A” was 4.5 and the Public score for participant “B” was 6.0, participant “B” would have greater Public Regard. Based on that hypothetical scenario, one could deduce that participant “B” is more sensitive, and thus more susceptible, to the viewpoints of others towards African Americans than participant “A”.

Private Regard

Private regard refers to the extent to which an individual feels positively or negatively toward the African American community as well as how he or she feels about being a member of this community (Sellers et al., 1998). The following are examples of questions in the MIBI that test Private Regard: 1.) I feel good about Black people, and (conversely) 2.) I often regret that I am Black. For example, if the Private Regard score for participant “A” was 4.5 and the Private Regard score for participant “B” was 6.0, participant “B” would have greater Private Regard. Based on that hypothetical scenario, one could deduce that participant “B” has stronger feelings, positively or negatively, about being a member of the African American community than participant “A”.

Ideology

The 36-item Ideology scale consists of four subscales (9 items each) that measure attitudes about the way Blacks should act. The four subscales are Assimilation (alpha = .73), a Nationalist (alpha = .79), a Humanist (alpha = .70), and a Minority (alpha = .76) subscale (Sellers et al., 1998; Rowley et al., 1998). This subscale has been used in the analysis of every study that used the MIBI as a measurement instrument.

Assimilation

The following are examples of MIBI questions that examine the Assimilation subscale: 1.) A sign of progress is that Blacks are in the mainstream of America more than ever before, and 2.) Because America is predominantly white, it is important that Blacks go to White schools so that they can gain experience interacting with Whites. For example, if the Assimilation score for participant “A” was 4.5 and the Assimilation score

for participant “B” was 6.0, participant “B” would have greater Assimilation. Based on that hypothetical scenario, one could deduce that the viewpoints of participant “B” appear to be more assimilated with the viewpoints of the dominant society than participant “A”.

Nationalist

The following are examples of MIBI questions that examine the Nationalist subscale: 1.) It is important for Black people to surround their children with Black art, music and literature, and 2.) Black students are better off going to schools that are controlled and organized by Blacks. For example, if the Nationalist score for participant “A” was 4.5 and the Nationalist score for participant “B” was 6.0, participant “B” would have greater Nationalist viewpoints. Based on that hypothetical scenario, one could deduce that participant “B” appears to have a stronger sense of Black Nationalism than participant “A”.

Minority

The way the Minority subscale is examined within the MIBI is exemplified within the following sentences: 1.) Blacks should learn about the oppression of other groups, and 2.) Black people should treat other oppressed people as allies. For example, if the Minority score for participant “A” was 4.5 and the Minority score for participant “B” was 6.0, participant “B” would have greater Minority viewpoints. Based on that hypothetical scenario, one could deduce that participant “B” appears to have a stronger sense of being attached to other minorities than participant “A”.

Humanist

The following are examples of MIBI questions that examine the Humanist subscale: 1.) Blacks should have the choice to marry interracially, and 2.) Black people should not consider race when buying art or selecting a book to read. For example, if the Humanist score for participant “A” was 4.5 and the Humanist score for participant “B” was 6.0, participant “B” would have greater Humanist viewpoints. Based on that hypothetical scenario, one could deduce that participant “B” appears to have a higher sense of identifying his or herself as a human being rather than identifying themselves in terms of racial group membership than participant “A”.

Chapter 4: Results

The results of the AARI study are discussed in this chapter. A summary of the findings along with sample characteristics, measurement reliability, bivariate and multivariate analyses are presented.

Sample Characteristics

A purposive sampling method was used to obtain a sample of 101 African American 11-to-14 year old participants. A complete breakdown of all sample characteristics can be found on Table 2. The mean age of all participants was 12.70 with the median age being 13.00 ($SD = 1.02$). A little more than half of the participants were from the predominantly African American town in SC and the other participants were from a predominantly White town in TN. In SC about two-thirds of the participants were female, and in TN a little more than half of the participants were female. A little less than half of all participants were in the seventh grade. About 40% were in the eighth grade, and nearly 10% of participants were sixth graders. When asked for their racial/ethnic preference, nearly half of the participants identified themselves as “Black”; approximately one-third identified themselves as “African American”; a little less than 10% of participants identified themselves as “Mixed”; a little more than 5% identified themselves as “Negro”, and 2% identified themselves as “Black American” (See Table 2).

Chi-squared tests were used to examine if participants in the two locations were different in terms of gender, race/ethnicity preference, and grade. There was no statistically significant difference for gender [$X^2(1) = 1.37, p = .241, phi = .12$]. There

was a statistically significant difference for grade [$X^2(2) = 15.03, p = .001$, *Cramer's V* = .39], with TN having more 6th graders than SC (See Table 1). Given the small number of participants who selected *Mixed* ($n = 9$), *Negro* ($n = 7$), or *Black American* ($n = 2$), it was necessary to collapse responses to these three categories into one category, *Other* ($n = 18$), prior to conducting the chi-squared test for this variable. It was then found that there was a statistically significant difference in race/ethnicity preference [$X^2(2) = 20.30, p = .001$, *Cramer's V* = .448], with more participants in TN choosing the *Mixed* racial category than SC (See Table 1).

Finally, a *t*-test for independent groups was used to examine whether participants in the two locations differed in age. There was not a statistically significant difference between the mean age for participants in SC ($M = 12.83, SD = .94$) and TN ($M = 12.54, SD = 1.12$) ($t(99) = -1.43, p = .157$, two-tailed, $r_{pb} = .14$). However, Levene's test indicated greater variability in age among participants in TN than in SC ($F = 4.48, p = .037$, two-tailed). However, given that the sample sizes in of the two locations were similar this violation of the homogeneity of variance assumption is not problematic. The fact that this is not problematic also is evidenced by the fact that a *t*-test that does not assume equality of variances ($t(81) = -1.39, p = .169$, two-tailed, $r_{pb} = .14$) was virtually identical to the *t*-test that does assume equality.

Missing Data

There was very little missing data at the item level for MIBI items. Nearly half of the items had no missing data, slightly over a third had only one missing response, about 7% had two missing responses, and about 3% had three missing responses. There also

was very little missing data at the case level for MIBI items. Nearly 90% of cases had no missing data, about 9% had missing data for one item, 1% had missing data for three items, and 1% had missing data for five items (See Table 2). Missing MIBI item values were imputed using Expectation-Maximization (EM), and SPSS was used for this imputation. All 29 MIBI items were used for imputation. The imputed values were rounded to the nearest whole number for analyses. This complete data set for MIBI items was used in subsequent analyses.

The Expectation-Maximization (EM) algorithm estimates the means, covariances, and Pearson correlations of quantitative variables (Little & Rubin, 1987; Cohen, Cohen, West, & Aiken, 2003). The process is iterative and involves two steps. The first step, the E step, computes expected values while assuming the observed data and the current estimates of the parameters. The second step, the M step, calculates maximum-likelihood estimates of the parameters based on values that are computed in the E step (Little and Rubin 1987). The estimation, by default in the SPSS software used in this analysis, assumes that the data being analyzed are normally distributed (Little & Rubin, 1987).

There were several other options available for handling the miniscule amount of missing data. I will briefly review two of them (complete case analysis and mean substitution) and explain why they were not used. Complete Case Analysis (CCA) is used in situations where samples are large and the percentage of cases with missing data is small (less than 5%), and oftentimes those cases are simply dropped from the analysis. Although there was very little missing data within the AARI data set, the sample size of 101 participants was not large enough to consider complete case analysis via dropping

cases. Also the loss of information and potential loss of statistical power presented by CCA further lessened the desirability of that option (Little & Rubin, 1987).

Mean substitution was not used in the missing values analysis due to the reduction in the variance of the variable that it provides. With a sample size of only 101 it was especially important to not attenuate variances. Another factor that contributed to the decision that mean substitution would not be used is the assumption it carries that data are missing completely at random. Given the sensitive nature of the questions on the MIBI there may have been trends in the potential missing values that mean substitution would have not accounted for given that assumption (Little & Rubin, 1987).

Reliability and Factorial Structure

Internal consistency reliability of each of the four MIBI subscales used in this study was examined using coefficient alpha. Cronbach's alpha is a measure of the mean inter-correlation among items weighted by variances, in conjunction with the number of items. Cronbach's alpha is used to measure the reliability of a psychometric instrument, and it will generally increase as correlations among items increase. It also indicates the extent to which a set of test items can be treated as measuring a single latent variable (Allen & Yen, 2002). Coefficient alpha for the MIBI subscales used in this study were as follows: Public Regard = .42; Private Regard = .61; Centrality = .38; and Assimilation = .61.

Given the poor internal consistency reliability of the four MIBI subscales an exploratory factor analysis (EFA) of the 29 items from these four subscales was conducted to examine whether one or more dimensions underlie the item scores. Unweighted least squares was used to extract factors because it leads to a consistent

estimation of model parameters without the assumption that the observed variables have a particular distribution (Fabrigar, Wegener, MacCallum, & Strahan, 1999). Many of the item distributions were skewed, although some were relatively normal.

Bartlett's test of sphericity is used to test the null hypothesis that the variables in the population correlation matrix are uncorrelated. If the observed significance level is $< .05$, it is considered small enough to reject the hypothesis and proceed with a factor analysis (Fabrigar, Wegener, MacCallum, & Strahan, 1999; Gorsuch, 1983; Loehlin, 1998). The Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) measure of sampling adequacy is an index used to compare the magnitudes of the observed correlation coefficients to the magnitude of the partial correlation coefficients. KMO values near 1.0 usually indicate that a factor analysis may be practical, whereas values less than .50 indicate that a factor analysis most likely would not be useful (Fabrigar, Wegener, MacCallum, & Strahan, 1999). A scree plot is a line segment plot that displays the fraction of total variance in the data as explained or represented by each potential factor (Cohen et al, 2003). A scree plot was used in the current analyses to get a preliminary idea of how many factors to extract.

Bartlett's test of sphericity [X^2 ($df = 406$, $p = .000$)] and the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin measure of sampling adequacy (.59) supported the suitability of these 29 items for factor analysis. The scree plot suggested a one-factor solution (See Figure 1), and 18 of the 29 items had loadings on this factor that were $\geq .34$.

A second factor analysis was conducted with the 18 items identified in the first analysis. Bartlett's test of sphericity [X^2 ($df = 153$, $p = .000$)] and the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin measure of sampling adequacy (.66) supported the suitability of these 18 items for factor analysis.

The scree plot suggested a one-factor solution (see Figure 2). All factor loadings were $\geq .34$ (see Table 3), and an examination of these 18 items suggested a meaningful factor. This factor will be referred to as “Self-Importance.” The internal consistency reliability of the 18 Self-Importance items was examined, and coefficient alpha was .80. All corrected item-total correlations were $\geq .29$ (See Table 3). This scale, not the original four MIBI subscales, will be used in subsequent analyses.

Self-Importance Scoring and Descriptive Statistics

A total score was computed for the Self-Importance scale by computing the mean item score. This scale has a potential range of values from 1 through 7, and higher scores indicate greater Self-Importance. The mean Self-Importance score was 5.27 ($SD = .76$) and the median was 5.28 (Interquartile Range = 4.75 to 5.92). The distribution of the Self-Importance total scores is relatively normal ($skew = .08$, $SE = .24$ and $kurtosis = -.34$, $SE = .48$).

Self-Importance and Location

A t -test for independent groups was used to examine if participants in the two locations differed in Self-Importance scores. There was a statistically significant difference in the expected direction between the mean Self-Importance score for participants in SC ($M = 5.42$, $SD = .84$) and TN ($M = 5.07$, $SD = .60$), ($t(99) = -2.31$, $p = .023$, two-tailed, $r_{pb} = .23$).

Levene’s test indicated greater variability in Self-Importance scores among participants in SC than in TN ($F = 7.06$, $p = .009$, two-tailed). However, given that the sample sizes of the two locations were similar this violation of the homogeneity of

variance assumption is not problematic (Fabrigar, Wegener, MacCallum, & Strahan, 1999). The fact that this is not problematic also is evidenced by the fact that the t -test that does not assume equality of variances ($t(99) = -2.42, p = .017$, two-tailed, $r_{pb} = .23$) was virtually identical to the t -test that does.

Self-Importance, Location, Gender, Race/Ethnicity Preference, Grade, and Age

A series of research questions were examined to explore whether the relationship between location and Self-Importance was due to differences in demographic characteristics by location or moderated by demographic characteristics. More specifically, multiple linear regression (Cohen et al, 2003) was used to examine the following research questions:

1. Is location related to self-importance after controlling for demographic characteristics?
2. Does the effect of location on self-importance differ by gender?
3. Does the effect of location on self-importance differ by race/ethnicity preference?
4. Does the effect of location differ by grade?
5. Does the effect of location differ by age?

Multiple linear regression models the relationship between two or more explanatory variables and a continuous response variable by fitting a linear equation to observed data (Cohen et. Al., 2003). It was used for the purpose of examining potential relationships between each the demographic variables identified in the study and participant location. Multiple linear regression was determined to be the best form of analysis because the dependent variable in this study is continuous and has a relatively normal distribution. In

regression analyses, the amount of variance accounted for in a dependent variable is judged by the standard that 2% is considered small, 13% is considered medium, and 26% is deemed large. The standards for correlations are different however and correlation strengths of .10, .30, and .50 are considered small, medium, and large, in that order (Cohen et al., 2003).

Since location, via the *t*-statistic, was determined to be a significant predictor of Self-Importance scores. Multiple linear regression was used to control for the impact that the selected demographic variables may or may not have on the effect of location on Self-Importance scores.

In examining questions one and three, the three category race/ethnicity preference variable (i.e., Black, African American, Other) was dummy coded. Dummy coding, also referred to as treatment coding, is a procedure used to code categorical variables for use in multiple regression and other statistical models. In regression analyses, dummy coding uses a “1” to reflect the presence of a feature and “0” to represent its absence. Black was used as the reference (feature; coded as “0”) category, and African American and Other (not featured; coded as “1”) variables were entered into the regression analyses. In examining questions two through five, cross-product variables were constructed and used in the analyses (e.g., cross-product of location and gender) to test for interactions. In these analyses location was the focal variable, and the demographic variables were moderator variables.

In each of these analyses the distribution of studentized residuals was examined for normality. Studentized residuals identify normal distribution outliers that do not appear to be consistent with the rest of the data (Cohen et al., 2003). A scatterplot of predicted

values and studentized residuals was examined to determine if there was reason to believe that there was a problem with the homogeneity of variance assumption. Studentized residuals and Cook's D were examined to determine if influential outliers were present. None of these problems existed in any of these analyses.

Also, in each of the analyses tolerance levels were examined to detect problematic levels of multicollinearity. Tolerance is $1 - R^2$ for the regression of an independent variable on all the other independents, ignoring the dependent. When identifying tolerance there are as many tolerance coefficients as there are independents. The higher the intercorrelation of the independents, the more the tolerance will approach zero. Generally speaking, tolerance levels less than .20 indicate a problem with multicollinearity (Cohen et al., 2003). Nearly all tolerance levels were comfortably over .20 (average tolerance = .84). The only tolerance levels that were below .20 are grade X location (tolerance = .007), age X location (tolerance=.006), and AA X location (tolerance =.186), and it is not unusual for tolerance levels to be low for cross-product terms (Cohen, 2003).

Research Question 1

To examine whether location is related to self-importance after controlling for demographic characteristics, the set of demographic characteristics was entered into the regression equation first, and location was entered second. Results of this analysis are shown in Table 4.

Demographic characteristics, individually and as a set, did not have a statistically significant relationship with Self-Importance. There was a statistically significant

relationship between location and Self-Importance after controlling for demographic characteristics. Specifically, participants from SC had higher Self-Importance scores than participants from TN, as expected.

Research Question 2

To examine whether the effect of location on self-importance differs by gender, gender was entered into the regression equation first, location second, and the cross product of location and gender third. Results of this analysis are shown in Table 5.

There was not a statistically significant relationship between gender and Self-Importance. There was a statistically significant relationship between location and Self-Importance when controlling for gender and this relationship was in the expected direction. However, there was a statistically significant interaction between location and Gender. As shown in Figure 3, there was a strong relationship between location and Self-Importance in the expected direction for females, but virtually no relationship between location and Self-Importance for males.

Research Question 3

To examine whether the effect of location on self-importance differs by race/ethnicity preference, African American and Other were entered first, location second, and the cross-product of location by African American and location by Other third. Results of this analysis are shown in Table 6.

There was not a statistically significant relationship between race/ethnicity preference and Self-Importance. There was a statistically significant relationship between location and Self-Importance when controlling for race/ethnicity preference, and this

relationship was in the expected direction. There was not a statistically significant interaction between location and race/ethnicity preference.

Research Question 4

To examine whether the effect of location differs by grade, grade was entered into the regression equation first, location second, and the cross product of location and grade third. Results of this analysis are shown in Table 7.

There was not a statistically significant relationship between grade and Self-Importance. There was a statistically significant relationship between location and Self-Importance when controlling for grade and this relationship was in the expected direction. There was not a statistically significant interaction between location and grade.

Research Question 5

To examine whether the effect of location differs by age, age was entered into the regression equation first, location second, and the cross-product of location and age third. Results of this analysis are shown in Table 8.

There was not a statistically significant relationship between age and Self-Importance. There was a statistically significant relationship between location and Self-Importance when controlling for age, and this relationship was in the expected direction. There was not a statistically significant interaction between location and age.

Summary

Given the weakness of the Centrality, Public Regard, Private Regard, and Assimilation scale internal consistency reliability, an exploratory factor analysis was conducted and a new factor, Self-Importance, was discovered. MIBI scale items appear

to form only one factor instead of multiple factors for the age group of this study. An examination of Self-importance as a dependent variable found that a statistically significant relationship existed between Self-importance and Location, and students from SC were found to have higher self-importance scores than participants from TN. An unexpected, but significant finding was that there was more variability in the self-importance scores for SC participants than TN participants. Location had an effect on self-importance scores even when controlling for other factors: age, grade, and gender. Furthermore, as shown in Figure 3, an analysis of the interaction between location and gender on Self-Importance scores revealed that location had a major effect on the Self-Importance scores of girls, but not boys. More specifically, girls in SC had higher Self-Importance scores than girls in TN.

Chapter 5: Discussion

Introduction

This chapter includes a discussion of the African American Racial Identity (AARI) study objectives, original hypotheses, research questions, results, limitations of the study, the contribution of this study to the current literature, and discusses implications of study findings to social work practice.

Everyday, social workers provide services to African American adolescents in a variety of settings, from schools to juvenile court systems, to adolescent pregnancy prevention programs. Most practitioners would agree that effective services to any group of adolescents must be based upon an understanding of their developmental needs and levels. Nevertheless, and despite the large numbers of services being delivered to AA youth, little knowledge guides the social worker in the specific developmental needs of AA adolescents. The concept of race in America is important, and it is not something that a child begins to realize after the age of 16. Therefore more work on the racial identity development of younger adolescents is severely needed.

The way African American adolescents racially identify themselves has been associated with several factors that include: gender role socialization (Ingram, 1989; Bassow, 1999), personal self-esteem (Phinney, 1989), and cultural messaging (Brown & Gilligan, 1992). That being said, there is no general consensus that suggests which of these factors most directly influences the racial identity development of African American youths. As mentioned in the introduction of this dissertation, the impact of Mundane Extreme Environmental Stress (MEES) (Carroll, 1998) needs to be taken under consideration when factors that influence racial identity development are analyzed, and it

is towards that end that environmental racial composition was the primary factor of focus within this research.

Discussion of Results

The aim of the African American Adolescent Racial Identity (AARI) study was to investigate what, if any, impact environmental racial composition has on the racial identity development of African American adolescents. As previously asserted there has been very little research done that addresses the topic of racial identity among African American adolescents, and within that scarce literature there aren't any studies that examine adolescents as young as the 11 to 14 year olds that were recruited to participate in this study. I used non-directional hypotheses because the Multidimensional Inventory of Black Identity (MIBI) had not been previously used in the analysis of racial identity attitudes of adolescents as young as those who participated in the study. Since that was the case, results in either direction would have been of importance. However, upon analysis of the AARI data set, it was found that the internal consistency reliability of each of the four MIBI subscales was not reliable enough for further analysis. An exploratory factor analysis (EFA) was conducted and a new factor, "Self-Importance", was discovered. The fact that only one factor emerged from the EFA as reliable for the target population suggests that the concepts examined via the MIBI (Centrality, Ideology, and Regard) may be too complex for adolescents under the age of 15 to comprehend.

"Self-Importance"

The discovery of Self-Importance may be the most significant finding of this research endeavor. This is so because Self-Importance truly epitomizes the notion that is

at the center of the Multidimensional Model of Racial Identity (MMRI). The MMRI stresses that racial identity development is multi-leveled, and there is heterogeneity in the way African Americans use race to define themselves as well as in their definitions of what it means to be Black.

Previous research on the MMRI used its test instrument, the MIBI, to examine the multi-dimensional implications of the model on older adolescents and adults, but has not specifically examined the influence that age has on the model. Although the concepts of Regard, Ideology, and Centrality are considered stable dimensions of the model for the older adolescents and adults who have been previously assessed, the point that all three of those dimensions were found to be unreliable for the younger adolescents that participated in the AARI study should not be dismissed. What makes the Multidimensional Model of Black Identity such an interesting and palpable new take on the theory of racial identity development is its inclusive nature. In many ways, the results of the study indicate that the study participants, much like the developers of the MMRI, reject preconceived notions of factors that impacted their racial identity. The 11 to 14 year old study participants in SC and TN appear to be declaring (via their dismissal of the Ideology, Regard, and Centrality as stable racial identity indicators for their age group) that they too deal with the process of racial identity and it does impact their overall development. It may also be that reason the MIBI subscales were unreliable for the younger adolescents studied in the AARI is because they are dealing with more fundamental and possibly less conceptually complex issues, in keeping with their earlier stage of development.

The new factor was named Self-Importance because each of the items within the factor challenged the study participants' beliefs about how they felt about themselves individually along with how they felt about their environment as a whole. Items of the Self-Importance factor address the two-part dynamic of both "self" (individual-level) and "importance" (group-level) dynamic of the new factor. The "self" portion of Self-Importance measures the role that being Black, or being considered Black by others, plays in racial identity development. The "importance" aspect of Self-Importance on the other hand is more geared towards environmental factors that affect the study participant. The amount of concern that the study participant places towards how the world views his or her *Blackness*, and the feelings he or she may have about what it means to be Black are addressed within the "importance" component of Self-Importance.

When race is more than just a category

African American adolescents in SC had higher Self-Importance than those in TN. Study participants in SC also had greater variability in their levels of Self-Importance than their peers in TN. After making that discovery, the fact that the town in SC is a predominantly African American community that has a greater spectrum of African American achievement within the community, gave me some insight into why that may have been. Proportionately speaking, there is almost three times the number of African Americans in the SC town than there is in the TN town. That being said, there is also three times the amount of African Americans within the community who are: business owners, teachers, professionals, stay at home parents, and coaches, etc. So much so, that it may be that the variability displayed in the Self-Importance scores among

SC participants exemplifies the role that racial environmental composition has in the perceptions that adolescents have of their potential. Conversely, the lack of variability of Self-Importance scores among participants in TN may suggest that since there is such a small number of African Americans in that environment, the spectrum of achievement is smaller and thus lower variability among Self-Importance scores should be expected. If that was the case, it may be due to an assumption that the roles of African Americans are not varied and thus pigeonholed into a smaller set of criteria and expectations of what it means to be African American.

The preceding point may also be associated with some of the differences of racial/ethnic preference between participants in the two sites. On the demographic questionnaire attached to the MIBI participants were asked to give their racial/ethnic preference, that is how they prefer to refer to their race. The five choices that the participants had to choose from were: *Black*, *African American*, *Black American*, *Negro*, or *Colored* (See Table 1). There was also a fill-in-the-blank option for participants who were not comfortable with any of the given racial categories, and this researcher found it of note that only participants from TN actually wrote in another racial category in the fill-in-the-blank space. Furthermore, each of the participants who wrote in their racial category chose “*Mixed*” as his or her racial self-classification. It may be that the racial classification “*Mixed*” has some form of social capital in that environment, or may also be that the term “*Mixed*” was chosen by the participants to disassociate themselves from being classified as African American. If that was so, that premise of thought lends may give a little more insight into the lack of variability in the Self-Importance scores among participants in the predominantly White environment. It may have also been that the

participants who chose “*Mixed*” did so because they did not want to dismiss their ancestral heritage. Although it was a requirement that participants considered themselves to be African American to participate in the study, those who chose “*Mixed*” may have a mother, father or grandparent that is some race other than *Black, African American, Black American, Negro or Colored*.

Location Mattered

Even when taking into consideration the combined effect of the gender, racial preference, age, and grade of study participants, location still played a significant role in participants’ feelings of Self-Importance, with participants from SC reporting higher feelings of racial Self-Importance. As previously asserted, the drastically different racial environmental composition of the two communities, may exhibit such a strong force that it affects participants’ racial identity over and above other influences. This point lends credence to Sellers et al’s assertion (1998) that racial identity is heterogeneous in its development and has the ability to be molded by the environment that an individual is within during any given time. The primary difference between the participant site locations was racial environment composition and the results of the regression analyses support the hypothesis that it would be the source of difference in the racial identity development of study participants. That being said, I acknowledge that although I did match the towns chosen to participate in this study by a series of SES indicators, I did not account for every possible difference between each community and it may be that other factors that I did not measure (e.g. adaptive social functioning) played a role in the lower feelings of Self-Importance among TN participants. The lower Self-Importance among

TN participants does not necessarily imply that there are negative environmental cues about African Americans in the East TN community. The lower Self-Importance among TN participants does indicate however, that the lack of African American diversity in the environment may be influencing the study participants' perceptions of their racial identities. That point is also underscored by the substantially higher amount of variability in the Self-Importance scores of SC study participants when compared to that of TN participants.

The influence of gender varied between the two communities, but even when the influence of gender was accounted for, location still significantly influenced Self-Importance among study participants. A strong relationship emerged between location and Self-Importance for females, but virtually no relationship existed between location and Self-Importance for males (See Figure 3). In short, girls in SC had significantly higher Self-Importance scores than Girls in TN. This finding may suggest that racial environmental composition has a greater impact on the Self-Importance of African American girls than African American boys.

The fact that girls in the predominantly white town in TN apparently perceive their racial identity less positively than girls in the predominantly African American town in SC may be due the racial environmental composition of each community. Research suggests (Buckley, 2005), that Black girls who depend on White standards to self-identify themselves may have negative feelings about being Black and have lower self-esteem than those who do not depend on the same set of standards. That may also give some insight into why the only study participants who filled in "*Mixed*" as their racial/ethnic preference on the demographic questionnaire were from TN.

Surprisingly, the racial/ethnicity preference of study participants did not have an impact on their Self-Importance scores. Due to the unexpected finding that a significant proportion of study participants from TN filled in “*Mixed*” as their racial/ethnic preference as opposed to any of the other five category choices I expected that a relationship between racial preference and Self-Importance would surface. Upon further analysis however, when the fact that demographics did not influence the adolescents’ feelings of Self-Importance is taken under consideration, it appears evident that the “*Mixed*” racial/ethnicity preference may be an indicator of the racial environmental stresses that the adolescents in TN face that make it desirable to somewhat disassociate themselves from claiming: Black, African American, Black American, Negro, or Colored as their racial preference.

Theoretical and Research Implications

Although the Multidimensional Model of Racial Identity (MMRI) is a conceptual framework designed to articulate the heterogeneity in the significance that African Americans place on race in defining themselves as well as in their definitions of what it means to be Black, prior to this study the MIBI has not been used on adolescents under the age of 16 (Sellers et al 1998; Rowley et al 1998). In uses with older adolescents and adults, the emergence of 3 subscales (Centrality, Regard and Ideology) supports the theory that African Americans’ racial identity is multi-faceted and complex.

The primary theoretical implication that was established via this research is that it appears that this may not be the case for younger adolescents, whose racial self-identities seem to revolve around only one factor. That factor, which has been named, “Self-

Importance” appears to focus the attention towards what adolescents between the ages of 11-14 see in terms of their racial environment composition as a factor of their racial identity development (See Table 3).

Another theoretical implication that the results of this study suggests is that there needs to be shift in the ideology of how racial identity development is considered among African American adolescents. Developers of the MMRI developed the model to further advance the study of racial identity and advance the scholarship beyond previous racial identity development assertions that racial identity was directly associated with self-esteem. One of the flaws of previous racial identity development models [*The Model of Psychological Nigroscence* (Cross, 1971), and *The Measurement of Ethnic Identity Model* (Phinney, 1989)] was that the conceptual ideas explored in those theoretical models did not extend beyond the idea that positive racial identity development among African Americans was associated with individual-level self-esteem (Rowley et al, 1998). One of the most important contributions of the MMRI is that it specifically challenges that notion by stating that racial identity development among African Americas is multi-faceted and multi-leveled and capable of change depending on the environmental stimuli over time (Sellers et al, 1997, Sellers et al, 1998, Rowley et al 1998, Sellers et al., 2003).

Interestingly enough, it appears that the factor established through this research, Self-Importance, is similar to the one dimension of the MMRI that has been deemed unstable and therefore not integrated into the MIBI as a psychometric measurement that is Salience. Racial salience refers to the extent to which race is relevant to the self-concept at a particular point in time or in a particular situation (Sellers et al., 1997). Self-Importance is very similar to Racial Salience in the way that both concepts attempt to

address the role of environmental stimuli has on the racial identity development of an individual. Given the results of this study that suggests that Self-Importance is directly influenced by the racial environmental stimuli of African American adolescents between the ages of 11-14, the concept of Self-Importance appears to actually measure Racial Salience. The findings of this dissertation suggests that further research is needed to determine if and how the more complex notion of Self-Importance in older adolescents evolves from the simpler one you found in younger adolescents.

Methodological Limitations

Research Design

A cross-sectional design was used in this study, and cross sectional designs provide a snapshot of the influences of a small number of factors on individuals at one point. To that end, the use of a cross-sectional design was good for an exploratory research endeavor such as this, but a significant weakness of cross-sectional research designs is that cause and effect relationships cannot be determined (Rubin & Babbie, 2003). Although there may be a significant relationship between racial environmental composition and Self-Importance in younger adolescents, this cross-sectional design was not equipped to determine how racial environment or any other factor may act over time to influence adolescents' racial identity.

Sampling Method

A purposive sampling method not related to size was used in this study. In purposive sampling the researcher attempts to obtain a sample that appears to be representative of the population being represented by the sample (Rubin & Babbie,

2003). Purposive sampling is often used in exploratory research. A weakness of the method however, is representativeness. Purposive sampling is a non-probability sampling technique and cannot account for the unidentified members of the population that did not participate in the study (Rubin & Babbie, 2003). It is possible that those that did not participate in the study may have views that are contradictory of those that did participate, and one should take this into consideration when interpreting the findings of this study.

Sample Size

Although nearly eighty percent ($n = 101$ out of a possible 132) of all potential subjects actually participated in this study, an increase in sample size would have improved the statistical power of the results presented in this research. Statistical power represents the probability of rejecting the null hypothesis when the alternative hypothesis is true (Cohen et al., 2003). In the case of this study, increased power would have increased the likelihood that the found difference in Self-Importance between participants in TN and SC was actually due to racial environment composition (location) and not chance.

Implications for Social Work Practice and Directions for Future Research

Based on the results of this study there are a few implications for social work practice that will be recommended by this researcher. This researcher would like to suggest is that we as social workers take the findings from this study and literally incorporate them into our pursuit of *going where the client is*. The results of this study suggest that environmental racial composition (represented here by location) has an effect

on the Self-Importance of African American adolescents. Specifically, study participants in the predominantly White environment reported lower feelings of Self-Importance scores than those in the predominantly African American environment. If these findings are replicated, social work scholars and practitioners should be aware of young AA adolescents' emerging racial identity issues and take them into account when providing services or conducting research with African American adolescents. The results of this study can help provide social workers with more insight into the complexities of racial identity development of African American adolescents. Gender differences in self-identity should also be studied more thoroughly, especially in the context of the many programs designed to prevent adolescent pregnancy. The results of this study also strongly suggest that racial environmental composition has a stronger impact on the Self-Importance attitudes of African American girls than it does for their male counterparts. African American adolescent girls in predominantly White settings may need greater access to African American culture to increase their Self-Importance. Social workers should be sensitive to this finding and work to develop interventions geared towards targeting this issue.

Future research is needed to investigate if there are associations between Self-Importance and the mental health outcomes, delinquency, and life expectations of African American adolescents. Specifically, a replication of the current study with different samples from the same and, perhaps, different populations (e.g., young adolescents in urban areas) would be beneficial to determine if the substantive results obtained are the same as those found in this dissertation. Also, a replication of the current study with samples from the same and different populations would be needed to

examine the validity of Self-Importance as a racial identity factor. To that end, further analysis of Self-Importance is needed to distinct the construct from other possibly related constructs (e.g., self-esteem). Finally, the development of racial identity needs to be examined longitudinally. With longitudinal research, researchers will be able to examine whether racial identity increases in complexity over time or changes in ways that have yet to be discovered over time.

Although African Americans have had US Census racial categories given to them since 1790 (US Census, 2000), the concept of racial identity development has only been investigated by researchers for approximately 35 years. The exploratory nature allowed this researcher to survey the thoughts of a population that has yet to have its racial identity development investigated. In many ways, this research endeavor was the attempt of answering the social work stance of *going where the client is* by asking them where they were. Much of the research done by scholars could be improved by taking that recommended, apparently simple but not often used, approach, and advancement of research on the racial identity development of African American adolescents is dependent upon it. The problems that African Americans face will not be corrected through one study or for that matter an entire series of studies that focus on racial identity. What we as social workers need to comprehend, however, is that the struggle for African Americans in the United States of America is not over, and racial identity among African Americans needs much more, thorough examination. Research on this topic is in its infancy and it is the hope and aim of this scholarship to continue the movement forward toward the goal of adequately examining racial matters among the African American community.

REFERENCE

Abromovitz, M. (1998). Social work and social reform: An arena of struggle. *Social Work*, 43 (6), 512-526.

Allen, M.J., & Yen, W. M. (2002). Introduction to Measurement Theory. Long Grove, IL: Waveland Press.

Algeria, M., Perez, D. & Williams, S. (2003). The role of public policies in reducing mental health status for people of color ; Public policies can improve the social conditions underlying the mental health disparities among minority populations. Retrieved January 21, 2005 from <http://web.lexis-nexis.com/universe/printdoc>

Allen, W. & Chung, A. (2000). “Your blues ain’t like my blues”: Race, ethnicity, and social inequality in America. *Contemporary Sociology*, 29 (6), 796-805

Almeida-Filho, N., Lessa, I., Magalhaes, L., Araujo, M, Aquino, E., James, S., & Kawachi, I. (2004). Social inequality and depressive disorders in Bahia, Brazil: Interactions of gender, ethnicity, and social class. *Social Science & Medicine*, 59, 1339-1353

Alston, R & Bell, T. (1996). Cultural mistrust and the rehabilitation enigma for African Americans. *Journal of Rehabilitation*, 16-20

American Psychological Association. (2002). Publication manual of the American Psychological Association (5th ed.). Washington, DC: Author.

- Anand, S. (1999). Using ethnicity as a classification variable in health research: Perpetuating the myth of biological determinism, serving socio-political agendas, or making valuable contributions to medical sciences. *Ethnicity & Health*, 4 (4), 241-244
- Anderson, M. (2000). Studying across Difference: Race, class and gender in qualitative research. In M. B. Zinn, P. Hondagneu-Sotelo, & M. Messner (Eds.), *Gender through the Prism of Difference* Second Edition (pp. 75-83). Boston, MA: Allyn and Bacon.
- Archibold, W.P. (1976). Face-to-face: The alienating effects of class, status and power divisions. *American Sociological Review*, 41 (5), 819-837.
- Arroyo, C. & Zigler, E. (1995). Racial identity, academic achievement, and the psychological well-being of economically disadvantaged adolescents. *Journal of Personality & Social Psychology*, 69 (5), 903-914.
- Barnes, D. (2001). Multiethnic parentage: A potentially valuable resource in the quest for social cohesion. *Journal of Ethnic & Cultural Diversity in Social Work*, 10 (3), 31-47.
- Bassow, S.A. (1999). Gender influences on adolescent development. In N.G. Johnson, M.C. Roberts, & J. Worrell (Eds.), *Beyond appearance: A new look at adolescent girls* (pp. 25-52). Washington, DC: American Psychological Association.
- Blau, P.M. & Duncan O.D. (1967). *The America occupational structure*. New York: Wiley.
- Bloom, W. (1990). *Personal identity, national identity, and international relations*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press

- Boardman, J.D., Powers, D., Padilla, Y., & Hummer, R.A (2002). Low birth weight, social factors, and developmental outcomes among children in the United States. *Demography*, 39 (2), 353-368.
- Broman, C.L., Neighbors, H.W., & Jackson, J. (1988). Racial group identification among black adults. *Social Forces* 67, 146-158.
- Brown, LM & Gilligan, C (1992) Meeting at the crossroads: Women's psychology and girl's development. Cambridge, MA, Harvard University Press.
- Buckley, T.R. & Carter, R.T. (2005). Black adolescent girls: Do gender role and racial identity: Impact their self-esteem? *Sex Roles: A Journal of Research*. 53, 9-10.
- Burnsma, D.L. & Rockquemore, K.A. (2002). What does black mean? Exploring the epistemological stranglehold of racial categorization. *Critical Sociology* 28 (1/2), 101-122.
- Caldwell, C., Zimmerman, M., Bernat, D., Sellers, R., & Notaro, P. (2002). Racial identity , maternal support, and psychological distress among African American adolescents. *Child Development*, 73 (4), 1322-1336
- Carroll, G. (1998). Mundane extreme environmental stress and African American families: A case for recognizing different realities. *Journal of Comparative Family Studies* 29 (2). Retrieved November 29, 2005 from Infotrac Onefile database.
- Chavous, T.M., Debra, H.B., Schmeelk-Cone, K., Caldwell, C.H., Kohn-Wood, L., & Zimmerman, M. (2003). Racial identity and academic attainment among African American adolescents. *Child Development*, (74) 4, 1076-1090.
- Clark, M. L. (1991). Social identity, peer relations, and academic competence of African

- American adolescents. *Education and Urban Society*, 24, 41-52.
- Corcoran, M. (1992). Background, earnings, and the American dream. *Contemporary Sociology*, 21 (5), 603-609
- Cohen, J, Cohen, P. West, S.G., & Aiken, L.S. (2003). Applied multiple regression/correlation analysis for the behavioral sciences. Third Edition. Mahwah: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, Inc.
- Cross, W.E. (1971). The Negro-to-black conversion experience: Toward a psychology of black liberation. *Black World*, 20, 13-27.
- Decarlo, A. (2005). Identity matters: A new intervention threshold for social work practitioners working with African □merica□ adolescents. *Social Work*, 22 (1).
- Demo, D. H. & Hughes, M. (1990). Socialization and racial identity among black □merica□□. *Social Psychology Quaterly* 53 (4), 364-374.
- Deranty, J.P. (2003). Conceptualizing social inequality: Redistribution or recognition? [Electronic version] *Social Inequality Today*, 12, 1-10
- Dirlik, A. (2001). All the colors of the rainbow, and many shades in between: Putting racism in its place. *Amerasia Journal* 26 (3), 5-19
- Du Bois, W.E.B. (1896). The suppression of the African slave trade to the United States of America, 1638-1870. Boston: Harvard University Press.
- Du Bois, W.E.B. (1899). The Philadelphia negro: A social study. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press.
- Ellis, C. (1997). Census and the complex issue of race. *Society*, 34 (6), 9-14.
- Engs, R. F. (2005). The missing catalyst: In response to essays on reconstructions that might have been. *Civil War History* 51 (4), 427-431.

Espiritu, Y.L. (1999). Disciplines unbound: Notes on sociology and ethnic studies.

Contemporary Sociology, 28 (5), 510-514.

Fabrigar, L. R., Wegener, D. T., MacCallum, R. C., & Strahan, E. J. (1999).

Evaluating the use of exploratory factor analysis in psychological research.

Psychological Methods, 4(3), 272-299.

Fellin, P. (2000). Revisiting multiculturalism in social work. *Journal of Social Work*

Education, 36 (2)

Fox, W. (1899). Regimental loss in the American civil war: A treatise on the extent and

nature of the mortuary losses in the union regiments, with full and exhaustive

statistics compiled from the official records on file in the state military bureaus

and at Washington. Albany, NY: Albany Publishing Company

Freud, S. (2001). New identities for the new century. *Families in Society: The Journal*

of Contemporary Human Services, 82 (4), 335-344

Gaines, S., Reed, E. (1995). Prejudice: From Alport to Dubois. *American Psychologist*

50 (2) 96-103.

Garcia, B. & Van Soest, D. (1997). Changing perceptions of diversity and oppression:

Msw students discuss the effects of a required course. *Journal of Social Work*

Education, 33 (1), 119-130

Glassner, B. (2000). When meanings get constructed. *Contemporary Sociology*, 590-594

Hall, R. (2001). Biracial sensitive practice: Expanding social services to an invisible

population. *Journal of Sociology and Social Welfare*, 27 (2), 23-35

Hawkins, J. D., Catalano, R. F., & Miller, J. Y. (1992). Risk and protective factors for

alcohol and other drug problems in adolescence and early adulthood:

Implications for substance abuse prevention. *Psychological Bulletin*, 112, 64-105.

Helms, J.E. & Talleyrand, R. M. (1997). Race is not ethnicity. *American Psychologist*, 52, 1246-1247.

Herman, M. (2004). Forced to choose: Some determinants of racial identification in multiracial adolescents. *Child Development*, 75 (3), 730-748

Hodgkinson, H. (1995). What should we call people? *Phi Delta Kappan* 77 (2), 173-179.

Howard, J. (2000). Social psychology of identities. *Annual Review of Sociology*, 26, 367-393

Jaret, C., Reid, L.W., & Adelman, R. (2003). Black-white income inequality and American Indian socioeconomic structure. *Journal of Urban Affairs*, 25 (3), 305-333

Jones, R. (1997). Individualism: Eighteenth century origins – Twentieth century consequences. *The Western Journal of Black Studies* 21 (1), 20-32.

Jourard, S. (1974). *Healthy Personality*. New York: Macmillan.

Kagle, J & Cowger, C. (1984). Blaming the client: Implicit agenda in practice research? *Social Work*, 347-351

Kaplan, H.B. & Xiaoru, L. (2001). Adolescent self-rejection and adult social action: a conditional relationship. *Social Science Quarterly*, 82 (4), 701-715

Kane, E. & Kyyro, E. (2001). For whom does education enlighten? Race, gender,

- education, and beliefs about social inequality. *Gender & Society*, 15 (5), 710-733
- Kerpelman, J. & Mosher, L.S. (2004). Rural African American adolescents' future orientation: The importance of self-efficacy, control and responsibility, and identity development. *Identity: An International Journal of Theory and Research*, 4 (2), 187-208
- Kipinis, A. (2004). Anthropology and the theorization of citizenship. *The Asia Pacific Journal of Anthropology*, 5 (3), 257-278
- Klare, G. R. (1985). How to write readable English. Hutchinson.
- Krieger, N. & Williams, D. (2001). Changing to the 2000 standard million: Are declining racial/ethnic and socioeconomic inequalities in health real progress or statistical illusion? *American Journal of Public Health*, 91 (8), 1209-1213
- Krieger, N., Williams, D.R., & Moss, E. (1997). Measuring social class in US public health research: Concepts, methodologies, and guidelines. *Annual Review Public Health*, 18, 341-378
- Lin, N., Ensel, W.M., & Vaughn, J.C. (1981). Social resources and strength of ties: Structural factors in occupational status attainment. *American Sociological Review* 46 (4), 393-405.
- Little, R.J.A. & Rubin, D.B. (1987) *Statistical analysis with missing data*. J. Wiley & Sons, New York.
- Livermore, T. (1957). Numbers and losses in the civil war in America 1861-65. Indiana University Press.
- Logan, R. & Cohen, I. (1970). The American Negro. New York: Houghton and Mifflin.

- Lopez, L. & Pantoja, A.D. (2004). Beyond black and white: general support for race-conscious policies among African Americans, Latinos, Asian Americans and whites. *Political Research Quarterly*, 57 (4), 633-645
- Loury, G.C. (2003). Racial inequality and developmental affirmative action. *The Western Journal of Black Studies*, 27 (1), 15-19
- Lusane, C. (2000). Black no more: Race construction and the 2000 census. *National Political Science Review* 2000 8, 151-170.
- McRoy, R.G., Zurcher, L.A., & Anderson, R.N. (1982). Self-esteem and racial identity in transracial and inracial adoptees. *Social Work*, 522-526.
- McMahon, S.D. & Watts, R.J. (2002). Ethnic identity in urban African American youth: Exploring links with self-worth, aggression, and other psychological variables. *Journal of Community Psychology*, 30 (4), 411-431.
- Midgley, C., Maehr, M. L., & Urdan, T. (1993). *Manuals for the Patterns of Adaptive Learning Survey (PALS)*. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan
- Miehls, D. (2001). The interface of racial identity development with identity complexity in clinical social work practitioners. *Clinical Social Work Journal*, 29 (3), 229-244.
- Miller, D.B. & McIntosh, R. (1999). Promoting resilience in urban African American adolescents: Racial socialization and identity as protective factors. *Social Work Research*, 23 (3), 159-170.
- Musterd, S. (2003). Segregation and integration: A contested relationship. *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies*, 29 (4), 623-641.
- Mutisya, M. P. & Ross, L. E. (2005). Afrocentricity and racial socialization among

- African American college students. *Journal of Black Studies*, 35 (3), 235-247.
- Nakao, K. (2004). Social resources and occupational status attainment: Comparison of Japanese and American employees' personal networks. *International Journal of Japanese Sociology*, 13.
- Ortega, S.T. & Rushing, W.A. (1984). The interaction of structural variable and discretion in individual outcomes: The case of length of stay for mental patients. *Sociological Quarterly* 25 (4), 496-510.
- Procidano M.E., & Heller, K. (1983). Measures of perceived social support from friends and from family: Three validation studies. *American Journal of Community Psychology*, 11, 1-24.
- Phinney, J.S. (1989). Stages of ethnic identity development in minority group adolescents. *Journal of Early Adolescents*, 9 (1-2), 34-49.
- Ratcliffe, P. (1999). Race, education and the discourse of exclusion: a critical research note. *Race Ethnicity and Education*, 2 (1), 149-155.
- Resnicow, K., Soler, R.E., Braithwaite, R., Selassie, M.B., & Smith, M. (1999). Development of racial and ethnic identity scale for African American adolescents: The survey of black life. *Journal of Black Psychology*, 25 (2), 171-188.
- Robinson, C.J. (2001). The inventions of the Negro. *Social Identities*, 7 (3), 329-358.
- Rowley, S. J., Sellers, R.M., Chavous, T.M., and Smith, M.A. (1998). The relationship between racial self identity and self-esteem in African American college and high school students. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*. 74 (3), 715-724.
- Rubin, A. & Babbie, E (2003). *Research Methods for Social Work*. Belmont: Wadsworth.

- Schiele, J.H. (1997). The contour and meaning of afrocentric social work. *Journal of Black Studies*, 27 (6), 800-819.
- Schmitt, M., Behner, R., Montada, L., Muller, L., & Mueller-Fohrbrodt, G. (2000). Gender, ethnicity, and education as privileges: Exploring the generalizability of the existential guilt reaction. *Social Justice Research*, 13 (4), 313-337.
- Sellers, R.M, Rowley, S.A., Chavous, T.M., Shelton, J.N., and Smith, M. (1997). Multidimensional inventory of black identity: A preliminary investigation of reliability and construct validity. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 73 (4), 805-815.
- Sellers, R. M., Smith, M.A., Shelton, J. N., Rowley, S. A., & Chavous, T. M. (1998). Multidimensional model of racial identity: A reconceptualization of African American racial identity. *Personality and Social Psychology Review*, 2 (1), 18-39.
- Sellers, R. M. & Shelton, J.N. (2003). The role of racial identity in perceived discrimination. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*. 84 (5), 1079-1092.
- Shelton, J.N. & Sellers, R.M. (2000). Situational stability and variability in African American racial identity. *Journal of Black Psychology*, 26 (1), 27-50.
- Sinclair, S. & Levin, S. (1998). The interface between ethnic and social system attachment: The differential effects of hierarchy-enhancing and hierarchy-attenuating environments. *Journal of Social Issues*, 54 (4), 741-757.
- Slomczynski, K.M. (1986). The attainment of occupational status: A model with multiple indicator constructs. *International Journal of Sociology* 16 (1/2), 78-105.
- Smith, R.A. (2002). Race, gender and authority in the workplace: Theory and research.

Annual Review Sociology, 28, 509-542.

Strain, T. (Director). (2003). *Race: The power of an illusion* [Film]. California Newsreel Corporation

Taylor, R.D., Casten, R., Flickinger, S.M., Roberts, D., & Fulmore, C.D. (1994).

Explaining the school performance of African-american adolescents. *Journal of Research on Adolescence*, 4 (1), 21-44.

Thompson, V. (2001). The complexity of African American racial identification.

Journal of Black Studies, 32 (2), 155-165.

Tsang, A. (2001). Representation of ethnic identity in North American social work

literature: A dossier of the Chinese people. *Social Work*, 46 (3), 229-243.

Uehara, E.S., Sohng, S.S., Bending, R.I., Seyfried, S., Richey, C.A., Morelli, P., Spencer,

M., Ortega, D., Keenan, L., & Kanuha, V. (1996), *Social Work* 41 (6), 613-621.

U.S. Bureau of Labor and Statistics. (1996, June). A cps supplement for testing methods

of collecting racial and ethnic information: May 1995 (BLS Statistical Notes

Publication No. 40). Retrieved February 15, 2004 from:

<http://www.bls.census.gov/cps/racethn/1995/stat40rp.htm>

U.S Census Bureau. (1988, October). How census information is used. Census '90 press

release. U.S. Department of the Commerce. Washington, DC.

U.S. Census Bureau. (2002, April). *Measuring America: The decennial censuses from*

1790 to 2000. (Publication No. POL/02-MA). Retrieved January 26, 2004 from

U.S. Census Bureau Reports Online: <http://www.census.gov/prod/www/abs/gen-ref.html>

U.S. Census Bureau. (2000, May). *History and organization of the census* (Publication

No. CFF-4). Retrieved January 26, 2004 from Factfinder for the Nation Online:

<http://landview.census.gov/population/www/cen2000/briefs.html>

U.S. Census Bureau. (1997, July). Recommendations from the interagency committee for the review of the racial and ethnic standards to the office of management and budget concerning changes to standards for the classification of federal data on race and ethnicity (3110-01). Retrieved January 26, 2004, from U.S. Census Bureau online:

http://www.census.gov/population/www/socdemo/race/Directive_15.html

U.S. Census Bureau. (1997, August). Report to congress. The plan for census 2000.

Department of Commerce. Retrieved March 3, 2004, from U.S. Census Bureau online: http://www.census.gov/main/www/stat_activities.html

U. S. Constitution, Art. I, § 2.

Walby, S. (2000). Analyzing social inequality in the twenty-first century: Globalization and the modernity restructure inequality. *Contemporary Sociology*, 29,(6), 813-818.

Walters, P.B. (2001). Educational access and the state: Historical continuities and discontinuities in racial inequality in □merica□ education. *Sociology of Education*, 74 (extra issue), 35-49.

Warren, K. (2000). “As white as anybody”: Race and the politics of counting as black. *New Literary History*, 31, 709-726.

Waters, M.C. (1991). The role of lineage in identity formation among black Americans. *Qualitative Sociology* 14 (1), 57-76.

Winston, C.E., Rice, D.W., Bradshaw, B.J., Lloyd, D., Harris, L.T., Burford, T.I.,

- Clodimir, G., Kizzie, K., Carothers, K.J., & Burrell, J. (2004). Science success, narrative theories of personality, and race self complexity: Is race represented in the identity construction of □merica □merica□ adolescents? *New Directions For Child and Adolescent Development* 106, 55-77.
- Wong, C.A., Eccles, J.S., & Sameroff, A. (2003). The influence of ethnic discrimination and ethnic identification on African American adolescents' school and socioemotional adjustment.
- Woodward, K. (1997). *Identity and difference*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Yamashita, R. C. & Park, P. (1985). The politics of race: The open door, ozawa and the case of the □merica□ in □merica. *Review of Radical Political Economics* 17(3), 135-156.
- Yasui, M., Dorham, C., LaRue, D., & Thomas J. (2004). Ethnic identity and psychological adjustment: A validity analysis for European American and African American adolescents. *Journal of Adolescent Research*, 19 (6), 807-825.
- Zimmerman, M. A. (1990). Taking aim on empowerment research: On the distinction between psychological and individual conceptions. *American Journal of Community Psychology*, 18, 169-177.
- Zimmerman, M. A. (1995). Psychology empowerment: Issues and illustrations. *American Journal of Community Psychology*, 23, 581-600.
- Zinn, H. (2003). *A people's history of the united states: 1492-present*. New York: Harper Collins.

APPENDIXES

Appendix A. Tables and Figures

Table 1: Historical Overview of Changing Racial Classifications On the U.S. Census From 1870-2000

Year	Classifications
1870	White, Black, Indian
1880	White, Black, Indian
1890	White, Black, Mulatto, Quadroon, Octoroon, Indian, Chinese, Japanese
1900	White, Black, Indian, Chinese, Japanese
1910	White, Black, Indian, Chinese, Japanese, Other
1920	White, Black, Indian, Chinese, Japanese, Other
1930	White, Negro, Mexican, Indian, Chinese, Japanese, Filipino, Hindu, Korean, Other
1940	White, Negro, Indian, Chinese, Japanese, Filipino, Hindu, Korean, Other
1950	White, Negro, American Indian, Chinese, Japanese, Filipino, Other
1960	White, Negro, American Indian, Chinese, Japanese, Filipino, Hawaiian,, Part Hawaiian, Aleut, Eskimo, Other, etc.
1970	White, Negro or Black, Indian (American), Chinese, Japanese, Filipino, Hawaiian, Korean, Other
1980	White, Black or Negro, Indian (American), Chinese, Japanese, Filipino, Vietnamese, Asian Indian, Hawaiian, Guamanian, Samoan, Eskimo, Aleut, Other
1990	White, Black or Negro, Indian (American), Eskimo, Aleut, Asian or Pacific Islander, Chinese, Japanese, Filipino, Hawaiian, Korean, Vietnamese, Asian Indian, Samoan, Guamanian, Other
2000	White, Black, African American or Negro, American Indian or Alaska Native, Asian Indian, Japanese, Native Hawaiian, Chinese, Korean, Guamanian or Chomorro, Filipino, Vietnamese, Samoan, Other Asian, Other Pacific Islander

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, *Measuring America: The Decennial Censuses from 1790 to 2000*.

Table 2: Descriptive Statistics of Sample Characteristics

Gender	Location		Total
	South Carolina	Tennessee	
Male	32.8% (n = 19)	44.2% (n = 19)	37% (n = 38)
Female	67.2% (n = 39)	55.8% (n = 24)	63% (n = 63)
Total	100.0%(n = 58)	100% (n = 43)	100% (n=101)
Race/Ethnicity			
Black	48.3% (n = 28)	51.2% (n = 22)	49.5% (n= 50)
African American	46.6% (n = 27)	14.0% (n = 6)	32.7% (n= 33)
Mixed	0% (n = 0)	20.9% (n = 9)	8.9% (n = 9)
Negro	1.7% (n = 1)	14.0% (n = 6)	6.7% (n = 7)
Black American	2.0% (n = 2)	0% (n = 0)	2.0% (n = 2)
Total	100% (n = 58)	100% (n = 43)	100%(n= 101)
Grade			
6 th	0% (n = 0)	23.3% (n = 10)	9.9% (n = 10)
7 th	51.7% (n = 30)	41.8% (n = 18)	47.5% (n = 48)
8 th	48.3% (n = 28)	34.9% (n = 15)	42.6% (n= 43)
Total	100.0% (n = 58)	100.0% (n = 43)	100.0% (n = 101)

Table 3: MIBI Item Statistics and Exploratory Factor Analysis (N = 101)

Item	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	Factor Loadings	Alpha if Item Deleted	Corrected Item-Total <i>r</i>
Overall, being Black has very little to do with how I feel about myself.	5.46	1.60	0.51	0.78	0.47
My destiny is tied to the destiny of other Black people.	4.49	1.83	0.51	0.79	0.32
I have a strong sense of belonging to Black people.	5.47	1.51	0.51	0.79	0.35
Blacks should judge Whites as individuals and not as members of the White race.	5.82	1.40	0.50	0.79	0.42
Being Black is an important reflection of who I am.	5.71	1.77	0.49	0.79	0.39
I am happy that I am Black	6.30	1.38	0.45	0.79	0.32
I feel that Blacks have made major accomplishments and advancements.	5.71	1.60	0.44	0.79	0.44
I am proud to be Black.	6.37	1.22	0.44	0.79	0.32
I feel that the Black community has made valuable contributions to this society.	5.56	1.45	0.43	0.79	0.40
Overall, Blacks are considered good by others.	4.40	1.80	0.42	0.79	0.43
In general, others respect Black people.	4.26	1.90	0.40	0.79	0.41
In general, other groups view Blacks in a positive manner.	4.48	1.87	0.39	0.78	0.48
Society views Black people as an asset.	5.00	1.68	0.38	0.79	0.38
Blacks should strive to be full members of the American political system.	5.33	1.49	0.37	0.79	0.32
Blacks should try to work within the system to achieve their political and economic goals.	5.19	1.50	0.37	0.78	0.45
Blacks should try to integrate all institutions which are segregated.	5.06	1.67	0.37	0.79	0.32
Blacks should view themselves as Americans first and foremost.	5.51	1.53	0.37	0.79	0.29
The plight of Blacks in America will improve only when Blacks are in important positions within the system.	4.59	1.53	0.34	0.79	0.30
% Variance			0.43		

Table 4: Regression of Location on Self-Importance Controlling for Demographic Variables (N = 101)

Variable	<i>B</i>	<i>SE B</i>	β	R^2	ΔF
Step 1					
Age	.195	.138	.263		
Grade	-.233	.225	-.198		
Gender ^a	.259	.159	.165		
AA	.175	.179	.108		
Other	.105	.211	.053	.053	1.062
Step 2					
Location	.438	.175	.285*	.112	1.982

^aGender: 0 = *male*, 1 = *female*.

^bLocation: 0 = *TN*, 1 = *SC*.

* $p < .05$. ** $p < .01$.

Table 5: Regression Examining Interaction Between Location and Gender on Self-Importance (N = 101)

Variable	<i>B</i>	<i>SE B</i>	β	<i>R</i> ²	ΔF
Step 1					
Gender ^a	.233	.156	.148	.022	2.227
Step 2					
Location ^b	.325	.151	.212*	.066	3.473
Step 3					
GenderXLocation	.638	.304	.409*	.107	3.862

^aGender: 0 = *male*, 1 = *female*.

^bLocation: 0 = *TN*, 1 = *SC*.

p* < .05. *p* < .01.

Table 6: Regression Examining Interaction between Location and Race/Ethnicity Preference on Self-Importance ($N = 101$)

Variable	<i>B</i>	<i>SE B</i>	β	R^2	ΔF
Step 1					
AA ^a	.143	.172	.088		
Other ^b	.125	.211	.063	.008	.403
Step 2					
Location ^b	.423	.168	.275*	.069	2.385
Step 3					
AAXLocation	-.085	.397	-.049		
OtherXLocation	.878	.515	.196	.100	2.103

^aAA = African American

^bOther = Negro, Black American, Mixed

^{b1}Location: 0 = TN, 1 = SC.

* $p < .05$. ** $p < .01$.

Table 7: Regression Examining Interaction between Location and Grade on Self-Importance (N = 101)

Variable	<i>B</i>	<i>SE B</i>	β	<i>R</i> ²	ΔF
Step 1					
Grade ^a	.022	.118	.019	.000	.035
Step 2					
Location ^b	.368	.157	.240*	.053	2.755
Step 3					
GradeXLocation	-.225	.249	-1.100	.061	2.104

^aGrade: 1 = 6th, 2 = 7th, 3 = 8th.

^bLocation: 0 = TN, 1 = SC.

p* < .05. *p* < .01.

Table 8: Regression Examining Interaction between Location and Age on Self-Importance (N = 101)

Variable	<i>B</i>	<i>SE B</i>	β	R^2	ΔF
Step 1					
Age	.065	.075	.088	.008	.769
Step 2					
Location ^a	.335	.152	.218*	.054	2.812
Step 3					
AgeXLocation	.036	.149	.300	.055	1.876

^aLocation: 0 = *TN*, 1 = *SC*.

* $p < .05$. ** $p < .01$.

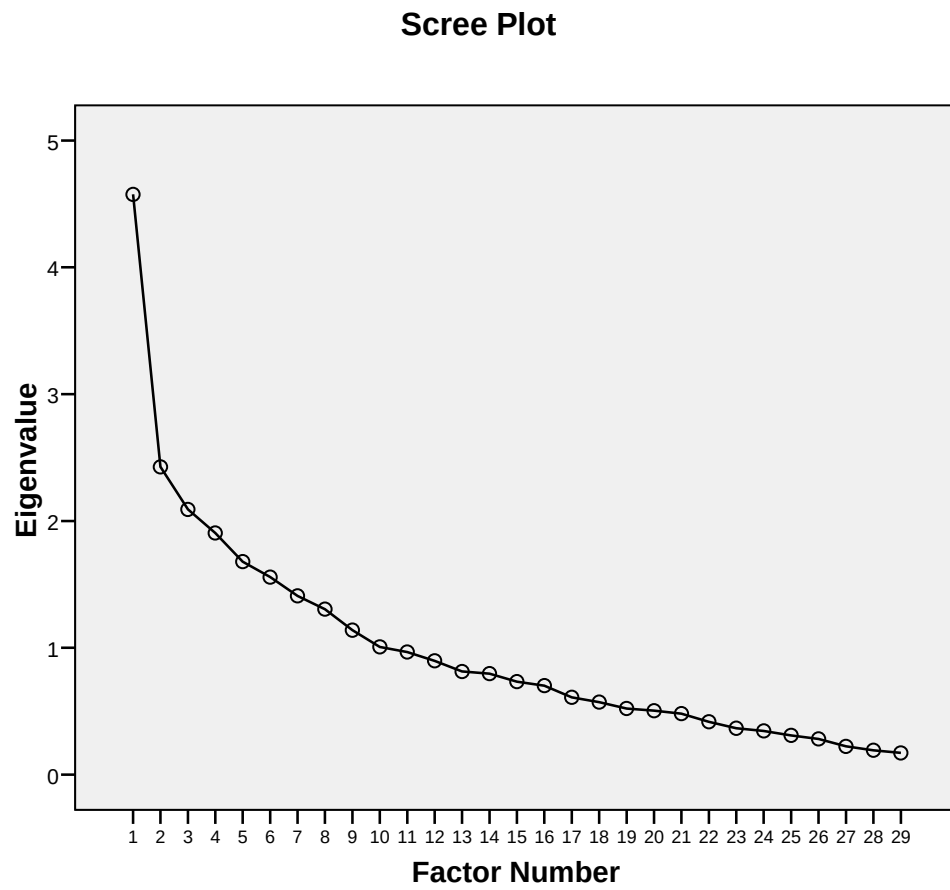


Figure 1: Scree Plot for 29 MIBI items

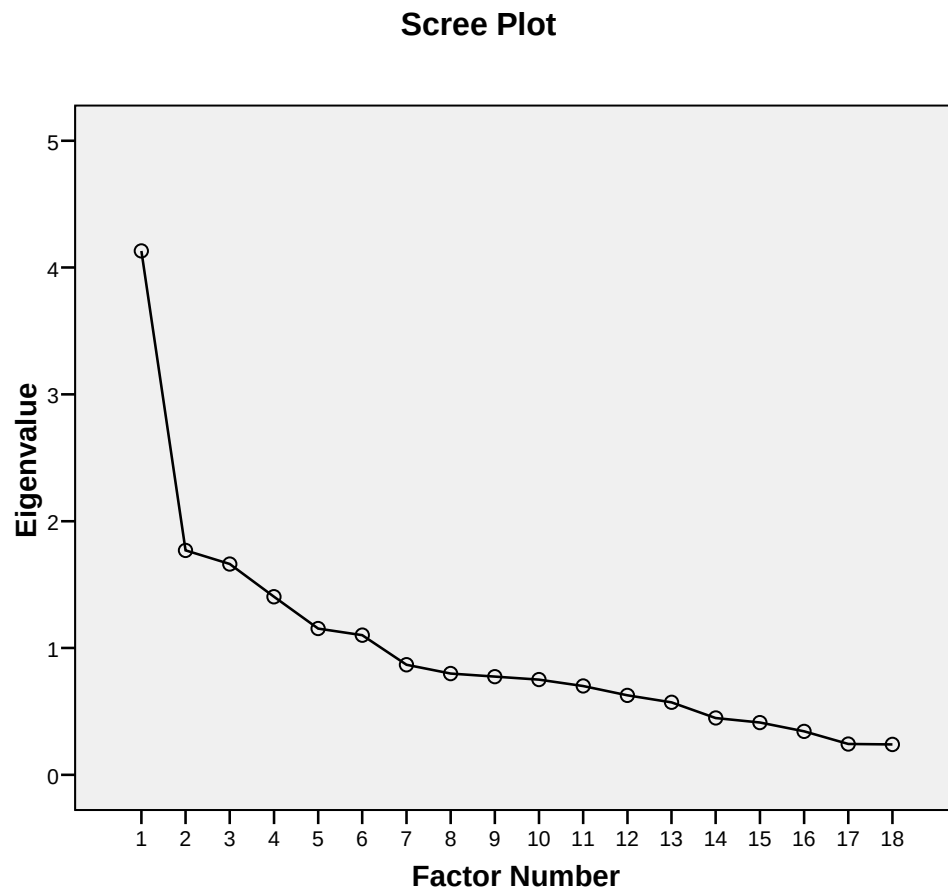


Figure 2: Scree Plot for 18 Self-Importance Items.

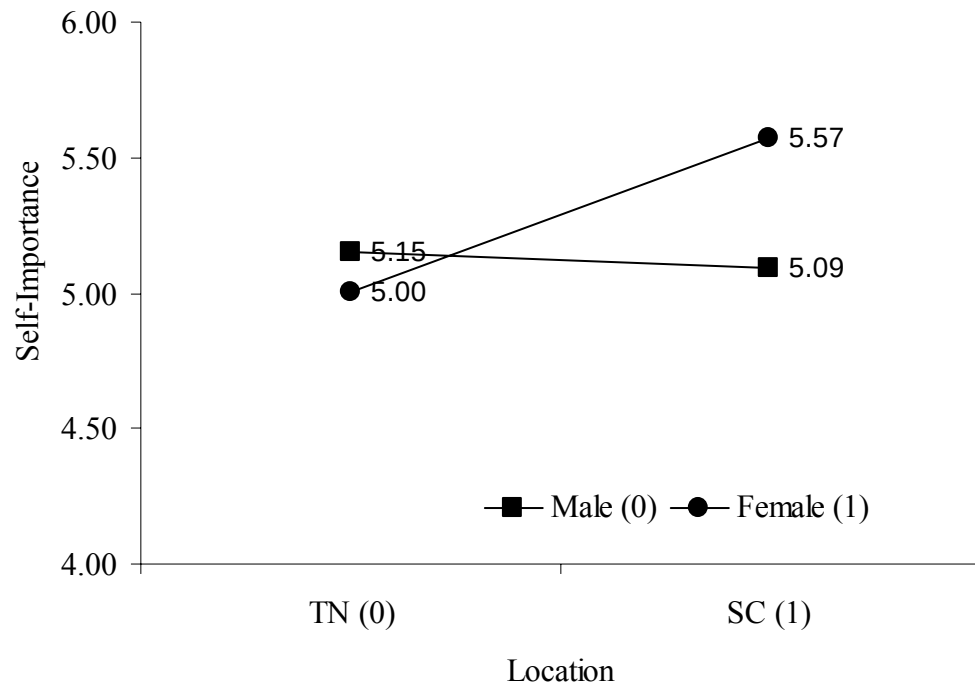


Figure 3: Interaction between Location and Gender

Appendix B: Parental Informed Consent

Parental Consent Form

Project Title: The Racial Identity of African American Adolescents Research Study

My name is John Miller and I am a PhD. Candidate in Social Work at the University of Tennessee. Your child is invited to be in a research study about how African American adolescents racially identify themselves. Approximately 125 students are being invited to participate in this study. If you agree to allow your child to participate in this study, he or she will be asked to complete a brief survey that asks questions about their views on race.

Risks and benefits: There are no identifiable risks in this study. Your child will only be asked to voluntarily complete a brief survey. If your child does not want to complete the survey at any time he or she will be able to stop. There are no benefits to you or your child if he or she takes part in the study.

Compensation: Each child who agrees to help in the study will receive a five-dollar McDonalds gift certificate and a University of Tennessee ink pen. Your child will receive the gifts even if he or she stops before finishing the survey. Also, each child that returns their signed parental consent form will be entered into a raffle drawing for a \$100.00 gift card at Wal-Mart™. There will only be one winner of the Wal-Mart™ gift card. Even if you do not agree that your child can participate, he or she will still be entered into the raffle drawing for returning the parental consent form.

Confidentiality: The records of this study will be kept private. A brief questionnaire distributed along with the survey will ask only for grade level, gender, age, and race and will not include your child's name. It will not be possible to figure out your child's answers. Survey results will be kept confidential in a locked file cabinet and password protected computer in Rm 3 Henson Hall at the University of Tennessee.

Voluntary Participation: Your child's participation in this study is completely voluntary. Your child may skip any questions he or she doesn't feel comfortable answering. Your decision whether or not to allow your child to take part will not affect your current or future relationship with your child's school. If you decide to allow your child to take part, your child is free to not do the survey or to skip any questions. You are free to withdraw your child at any time without affecting your relationship with the University of Tennessee or your child's school.

The researcher for this study is John W. Miller Jr., MSW. You may reach him at 865-971-9134 or jmille44@utk.edu. Please feel free to ask any questions you have now, or at any point in the future. If you have any questions or concerns about your child's rights as a research subject, you may contact the University of Tennessee Office of Research at

865-974-1529. Please sign and return one copy of this form and keep another for your records.

Please sign one of the following choices.

I have read this form. I agree that my child can be asked to help in the study.

Your child's name: _____

Your signature _____

Date _____

I have read this form. I would NOT like my child to participate in the study.

Your child's name: _____

Your signature _____

Date _____

This consent form will be kept by the researcher for at least three years beyond the end of the study and was approved by University of Tennessee Institutional Review Board

Appendix C: Participant Assent Form

Adolescent Assent Form
Frequently Asked Questions about this Research Study

Who is doing this study?

Hi, my name is John Miller and I am a student at University of Tennessee. The University of Tennessee is located in Knoxville, TN. This study is part of the schoolwork I need to complete before I graduate.

Why am I being asked to help in this study?

This is a research study. Only people who choose to take part are included in research studies. You are being asked to take part in this study because you are an African American between the ages of 11-14.

Why is this study being done?

This study is being done to find out how you and others like you think about yourselves when it comes to race. For example, are you always comfortable when you think about your skin color? Do you always feel the same, or are there times when you have different attitudes about how you classify yourself and others that look like you?

What do I have to do to participate?

Complete a brief survey that asks you questions about how you view the world. There are no right or wrong answers on this survey. I am only interested in getting your opinion (how you really feel about each question). If you really agree with a question, please let me know. If you really disagree with a question, also let me know. Feel free to answer each question as honestly as you can.

How long will I be in this study?

This study is a one-time event. The only thing you have to do is complete the survey. The survey should only take you between 20-45 minutes to finish.

Will the study help me?

Other than giving you a chance to think about how you view yourself, there aren't any other benefits for your completion of this survey. As mentioned earlier, the purpose of this survey is to get your opinion. Remember there are no right or wrong answers to the questions on the survey.

Will the study hurt me?

There are no risks for your completion of this survey. As mentioned earlier, the purpose of this survey is to get your opinion. Remember there are no right or wrong answers to the questions on the survey.

Will I get paid to be in the study?

You will receive a five-dollar McDonalds gift certificate and a University of Tennessee ink pen for your participation in this study. Also, one person from your school won a 100.00 Wal-Mart TM gift card for turning in their parental consent form to participate in the study.

Will my answers be kept private?

Yes. I am the only person that will have access to the completed surveys. Also, I will not ask you to place your name on the survey. The only other information I will get from you will be your age, gender (male or female), grade-level, and race.

Do I have to be in the study?

No one will be upset if you do not want to participate, or if you change your mind later and want to stop. You can also skip any of the questions you do not want to answer.

What if I have questions?

You can ask questions now or whenever you wish. You may contact me, John Miller, at (865) 974-9134 if you have questions after you complete the survey. If you have any questions or concerns about your rights as a research subject, you may contact the University of Tennessee Office of Research at 865-974-1529.

Appendix D: Multidimensional Inventory of Black Identity (MIBI)

Instructions:

Circle the number that best describes how you feel about each statement. Please answer each question honestly. There are no right or wrong answers on this survey. This survey is not timed. Thank you for participating!

	Strongly Disagree		Neutral		Strongly Agree		
56. Overall, being Black has very little to do with how I feel about myself.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
57. It is important for Black people to surround their children with Black art, music and literature.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
3. Black people should not marry interracialy.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
4. I feel good about Black people.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
5. Overall, Blacks are considered good by others.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
6. In general, being Black is an important part of my self-image.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
7. I am happy that I am Black.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8. I feel that Blacks have made major accomplishments and advancements.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
9. My destiny is tied to the destiny of other Black people.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
10. Blacks who believe in separatism are as racist as White people who also believe in separatism.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
11. Blacks would be better off if they adopted Afro centric values.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
12. Black students are better off going to schools that are controlled and organized by Blacks.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
13. Being Black is unimportant to my sense of what kind of person I am.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
14. Black people must organize themselves into a separate Black political force.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

	Strongly Disagree		Neutral		Strongly Agree		
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
15. In general, others respect Black people.							
16. Whenever possible, Blacks should buy from other Black businesses.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
17. Most people consider Blacks, on the average, to be less effective than other racial groups.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
18. A sign of progress is that Blacks are in the mainstream of America more than ever before.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
19. I have a strong sense of belonging to Black people.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
20. The same forces which have led to the oppression of Blacks have also led to the oppression of other groups.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
21. A deep knowledge of Black history is very important for Blacks today.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
22. Blacks and Whites can never live in true harmony because of racial differences.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
23. Black values should not be inconsistent with human values.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
24. I often regret that I am Black.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
25. White people can never be trusted where Blacks are concerned.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
26. Blacks should have the choice to marry interracially.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
27. Blacks and Whites have more commonalties than differences.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
28. Black people should not consider race when buying art or selecting a book to read.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
29. Blacks would be better off if they were more concerned with the problems facing all people than just focusing on Black issues.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

	Strongly Disagree		Neutral			Strongly Agree	
30. Being an individual is more important than identifying oneself as Black.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
31. We are all children of a higher being, therefore, we should love people of all races.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
32. Blacks should judge Whites as individuals and not as members of the White race.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
33. I have a strong attachment to other Black people.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
34. The struggle for Black liberation in America should be closely related to the struggle of other oppressed groups.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
35. People regardless of their race have strengths and limitations.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
36. Blacks should learn about the oppression of other groups.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
37. Because America is predominantly white, it is important that Blacks go to White schools so that they can gain experience interacting with Whites.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
38. Black people should treat other oppressed people as allies.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
39. Blacks should strive to be full members of the American political system.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
40. Blacks should try to work within the system to achieve their political and economic goals.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
41. Blacks should strive to integrate all institutions which are segregated.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
42. The racism Blacks have experienced is similar to that of other minority groups.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
43. Blacks should feel free to interact socially with White people	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

	Strongly Disagree		Neutral		Strongly Agree		
44. Blacks should view themselves as being Americans first and foremost.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
45. There are other people who experience racial injustice and indignities similar to Black Americans.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
46. The plight of Blacks in America will improve only when Blacks are in important positions within the system.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
47. Blacks will be more successful in achieving their goals if they form groups with other oppressed groups.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
48. Being Black is an important reflection of who I am.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
49. Blacks should try to become friends with people from other oppressed groups.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
50. The dominant society does not value anything not White male oriented.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
51. Being Black is not a major factor in my social relationships.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
52. Blacks are not respected by the broader society.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
53. In general, other groups view Blacks in a positive manner.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
54. I am proud to be Black.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
55. I feel that the Black community has made valuable contributions to this society.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
56. Society views Black people as an asset.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

CROSS HIGH SCHOOL
1293 OLD HWY. 6
CROSS, SOUTH CAROLINA 29436
PHONE - (843) 899-8900
FAX - (843) 899-8910

J. Robb Streeter, Jr. - Principal Specialist
Anthony Rose - Assistant Principal
James Waring, Jr. - Athletic Director



Brenda Bines - Guidance Director
Eric Denton - Curriculum Facilitator
Terri Siders - Curriculum Specialist

June 8, 2006

John W. Miller, Jr.
3700 Sutherland Ave.
Apt. P-13
Knoxville, TN 37919

Dear Mr. Miller,

Cross High School will be happy to be involved in your dissertation research. As a rural southern school we fit just the profile you are looking for in your study. Although our students live in the "country" they are not isolated from the world around them and I am curious to review your ultimate findings on their perceptions of themselves.

Please coordinate all activities regarding this through me so I can assure complete cooperation.

Sincerely,

J. Robb Streeter, Jr.

C: Dr Wanda Whatley
Dave Barrow



Sweetwater Junior High School
1013 Cannon Avenue
Sweetwater, TN 37874
Telephone: (423) 337-7336
Fax: (423) 337-7360

Wayne Key
Principal
July 10, 2006

Dr. Terri Combs, Professor
UT College of Social Work
University of Tennessee
Knoxville, TN 37916

Subject: Coordinating approval

Dear Dr. Combs, or To Whom It May Concern:

We at Sweetwater Jr. High School will be happy to collaborate with Mr. John Miller in the conduct of his study in fulfillment of his graduate school requirement. The topic is of interest, and he seems genuinely concerned for the audience and for the value to this and other related research. We have met with him and examined the instrument he plans to use, the design of his approach, and the anticipated demands it will take to do the study. We are prepared to support this effort as we all proceed in a consortium of effort to educate our students.

If I may be of further help or information, please do not hesitate to call, fax, or write. We are hopeful that the intended results will be met.

Sincerely,

Wayne Key
Wayne Key

Cc: Keith Hickey, Director
Larry Stein, Supervisor of Instruction

VITA

John W. Miller Jr., from Moncks Corner, SC, graduated from Berkeley High School in 1997. He earned a BA in Experimental Psychology with a minor in Criminal Justice from the University of South Carolina in 2001. His social work experience began as a school social worker in Allendale, SC via the Family Guidance Program in 2001. He then earned a Master of Social Work from the University of South Carolina in 2003. In 2003 he enrolled into the doctoral program in the College of Social Work at the University of Tennessee.

He presented his research focused on the influence of US Census racial categories on the identity of African Americans and other US minorities at the 2005 Council of Social Work Education (CSWE) Annual Program Meeting and the 2006 National Communication Association (NCA) Annual Convention. His article “Reinforcing the Divide: The Influence of the US Census on American Identity Development” was published in the *Journal of Human Behavior in the Social Environment* in 2007. Dr. Miller has also written two books of poetry: *Not Afraid of Greatness* in 2001 and *Words of Encouragement* in 2003. Dr. Miller earned his doctorate from the University of Tennessee in August 2007.