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The Juxtaposition of White Racial Identity Development in Teachers and African American Racial Identity Development in Middle School Students

Abstract

Early adolescence marks the time when African American students begin to develop their racial identity (Phinney & Tarver, 1988; Roberts, Phinney, Masse, Chen, Roberts & Romero, 1999; Tatum, 1997). With school being an important context for this process, it is suggested that a teacher's racial identity developmental status might play a role in assisting African American students with this progression (Helms, 1990, 1994; Howard, 2006; Tatum, 1997). Missing from the research is an examination of White teacher and African American student interactions through the lens of the racial identity development of both. Using a survey design, this quantitative study focused on the White racial identity development stages of teachers who advise African American students. This research explored how the racial identity resolution of White teachers may predict educational, psychological, and social experiences of African American students. The following research question was investigated: Does scoring higher on Helm's White Racial Identity Scale (Helms, 1990) relate to identifying correct answers on vignettes based on early adolescents in Cross' model of Nigresence Racial Identity? Participants responded to three vignettes summarizing typical behaviors demonstrated by African American middle school students in three stages of Cross' Black racial identity development. Teachers took the White Racial Identity Attitude Scale (Helms, 1999) to determine individual racial identity status. A statistical analysis of results determined that there was no correlation between the racial identity status of teachers and their ability to select correct responses to the vignettes. This study gave insight into understanding the importance of the racial identity status of White teachers when working with African American students.

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The Juxtaposition of White Racial Identity Development in Teachers and African
American Racial Identity Development in Middle School Students

By

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Submitted in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the degree
Ed.D. in Executive Leadership

Supervised by

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Ralph C. Wilson, Jr. School of Education
St. John Fisher College

May 2011

Dedication

*“Great is thy Faithfulness! Great is Thy Faithfulness!” Morning by morning new mercies I see;
All I have needed Thy hand hath provided, “Great is Thy Faithfulness,” Lord unto me!*

Hymn, Chisholm and Runyan, 1923

I am blessed with a loving support system filled with family, friends, colleagues, and teachers that were by my side throughout this process.

To my husband Clifton who nurtured, coached, comforted, advised, and patiently cared for me through the simultaneous life-changing journeys of breast cancer, and writing this dissertation - Thank you. You are truly a blessing from God. I love you dearly, and I share this accomplishment with you.

I thank my daughter Nicoya, and grandchildren, Gabrielle and Madison for all of the laughter and hugs provided to me that kept me grounded, strong, and bathed in tender love. Thank you for putting your life on hold to come and help Papa take care of me Nick. You are an amazing daughter and mom.

Idonia Sr., I am blessed to have you as my mother. No matter what my dream, you would simply say, “You can do it”. Your zest for life and love of learning inspired me to do the same. You are reflected in all that I have accomplished.

To my sister Bettie J. and special niece Alia J., you two encouraged me and kept me in stitches on some of my worst days. I love you guys.

To my wonderful dissertation chair, Dr. Montes, who patiently guided me through this process, and truly understood my needs. I learned so much from you! Your support

of me through this scholarly and personal journey constantly inspired me to stay on the path to completion. Thank you for sharing your brilliance, your sense of humor, and for believing in me.

I owe a debt of gratitude to my Fisher professors, to Dr. Ikpeze, and to my group, Iscah. Thank you for being there for me, for the encouragement, the love, the support, and for caring.

To God be the glory for showering me with His tender mercies, and for providing me with all that I needed to complete this journey. Great is thy faithfulness Lord, unto me.

Biographical Sketch

Idonia M. Owens is currently the Principal of School Without Walls in Rochester, New York. Mrs. Owens attended the Boston Conservatory of Music from 1971 – 1978 and graduated with a Bachelor of Music degree in 1978. She attended the Eastman School of Music from 1981 – 1983 and graduated with a Master of Arts degree in 1984. In 1987 she obtained her Certificate of Advanced Study in Educational Administration from Brockport State University. She came to St. John Fisher College in the summer of 2008 and began her doctoral studies in the Ed.D. Program in Executive Leadership. While at St. John Fisher, Mrs. Owens was selected as a recipient of the Rochester Area Colleges Continuing Education (RACCE) Consortium Outstanding Adult Student Award. Mrs. Owens pursued her research in racial identity development under the direction of Dr. Guillermo Montes, and received her Ed.D. degree in August, 2010.

Abstract

Early adolescence marks the time when African American students begin to develop their racial identity (Phinney & Tarver, 1988; Roberts, Phinney, Masse, Chen, Roberts & Romero, 1999; Tatum, 1997). With school being an important context for this process, it is suggested that a teacher's racial identity developmental status might play a role in assisting African American students with this progression (Helms, 1990, 1994; Howard, 2006; Tatum, 1997). Missing from the research is an examination of White teacher and African American student interactions through the lens of the racial identity development of both.

Using a survey design, this quantitative study focused on the White racial identity development stages of teachers who advise African American students. This research explored how the racial identity resolution of White teachers may predict educational, psychological, and social experiences of African American students. The following research question was investigated: Does scoring higher on Helm's White Racial Identity Scale (Helms, 1990) relate to identifying correct answers on vignettes based on early adolescents in Cross' model of Nigresence Racial Identity?

Participants responded to three vignettes summarizing typical behaviors demonstrated by African American middle school students in three stages of Cross' Black racial identity development. Teachers took the White Racial Identity Attitude Scale (Helms, 1999) to determine individual racial identity status. A statistical analysis of results determined that there was no correlation between the racial identity status of

teachers and their ability to select correct responses to the vignettes. This study gave insight into understanding the importance of the racial identity status of White teachers when working with African American students.

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Chapter 1: Introduction

Introduction and Purpose

Racial identity implies a consciousness of self within a particular group.

Embedded in this consciousness is a respect and pride that constitutes the foundation for the development of a healthy self-concept (Akos & Ellis, 2008; Carter, 1995; Helms & Cook, 1999). Conceptually, it refers to a person's parallel thoughts, feelings, behaviors, and psychological response as a member of a racial group, and toward members of other groups (Carter & Goodwin, 1994; Helms, 1990; Wijeyesinghe & Jackson, 2001).

Scholars maintain that early adolescence is the time when racial identity begins to emerge, and that it is a critical component of self-concept and identity (Phinney & Tarver, 1988; Roberts, Phinney, Masse, Chen, Roberts, & Romero, 1999; Tatum, 1997).

Counseling and education literature examine the construct of African American racial identity a great deal. A healthy racial identity provides African American adolescents with a frame in which to interpret and determine their place in their racial group, as well as the larger society (Chavous, Bernat, Schmeelk-Cone, Caldwell, Kohn-Wood, & Zimmerman, 2003). The process of African American racial identity development encompasses the interplay of individual factors that shape identity against the backdrop of society. Confounding this process is the reality that these adolescents face the triple quandary of learning how to integrate and negotiate three different identities that must be defined: mainstream American, minority, and African American.

Research has shown that a positive racial identity in African American early adolescents' fosters school achievement, a healthy self-concept, and constructive behaviors. It is maintained that when African American adolescents have positive racial identities, they experience: (1) higher self esteem and enhanced peer relationships (Constantine & Blackmon, 2002; Phinney, Kantu, & Kurtz, 1997); (2) lower levels of stress and decreased chances of participating in delinquent behavior (McCreary, Best, & Garnezy, 1996); (3) verbal resolution to conflict as opposed to physical fighting (Arbona, Jackson, McCoy, et al.); and (4) higher academic achievement (Wong, Eccles, & Sameroff, 2003). Additionally, research points to the protective mental health function of a strong sense of racial identity that serves to buffer the negative consequences of racism and discrimination. According to Sellers, Caldwell, Schmeelk-Cone, and Zimmerman, (2003), African American adolescents with a low racial identity reported more anxiety, stress, and depression when faced with racism and discrimination than those with a high racial identity.

Teachers, especially those in urban settings of primarily African American students, are charged with developing relationships with their students based on "authentic caring" (Valenzuela, 1999; Noddings, 1992), particularly during the critical stage of early adolescence that marks the search for identity and racial identity. Scholars agree that in order to work effectively with the real issues of the widening achievement gap, race, equity, and social justice, the personal and social dynamics in play between the predominantly White teaching force and students must be examined (Howard, 2006, Helms, 1990). The acknowledgment of, and assistance with these realities fosters authentic conversations that in turn creates a school environment that truly fosters

“authentic caring”, and empowers both African American students and White teachers (Gay, 1994; Howard, 2006; Phinney, 1988).

The successful school framework for early adolescents promotes a culture of care, support, acknowledgement, and guidance. One responsive practice in middle schools that is recommended to address the adolescents’ needs in a proactive manner is a teacher advisory structure (Brazee, 1997; Galassi, Gullege, & Cox, 1997). This structure is generally defined as a school structure that provides a caring and supportive adult to each adolescent. Advisors assist a group of 10-18 students with academic and social/emotional needs through a variety of activities during the school day (Brazee, 1997; Cousins, 2003; Makkonen, 2004). It is maintained that teacher advisory programs are critical for assisting young adolescents with the transition into young adulthood (2003; 2004; 2004). An advisor is one who knows about adolescent development and who comes to know students well as individuals. This relationship increases students’ chances of staying in school, engaging academically, and developing a sense of who they are as individuals (2003). In middle schools, the advisory structure presents an optimal setting through which teachers can support the students with issues related to racial identity. This premise however, becomes perplexing when the race of the student is different than the race of the teacher/advisor.

According to the National Center for Educational Statistics (2009), in 2004, 84% of teachers in urban schools were White, and 52% of students were African American (2009). Over the next few decades, the vast majority of teachers will remain White, while the student population will become more and more diverse, with African Americans representing a large constituency in urban districts. It is likely that an African American

Middle School student will have a White teacher as advisor in schools that have such a structure. White teachers that teach African American students are products of predominantly White neighborhoods, schools, White colleges of teacher education, and whose life experiences and positionality often make it challenging to understand the issues African American students face, as well as the importance of race in identity development (Delpit, 2006; Howard, 2006; Singleton & Linton, 2004; Tatum, 1997). The vastly different backgrounds and life experiences between White teachers and African American students can influence educational outcomes, and perpetuate inequities across racial differences, though unwittingly.

Helms' interaction theory (1994) holds that everyone with whom a child comes in contact in the school environment is also at some stage of racial identity development. Discomfort or misunderstanding of racial issues can interfere with the ability to develop "authentic" relationships. Helms maintains that the child's level of identity in combination with others' identities can result in a qualitatively different educational experience (Helms, 1994). Helms identifies three potential interaction types that can happen in a school setting based on the racial and or ethnic identity of those involved (1994).

The first type, a parallel relationship, is one in which the educator and the student in the interaction are at the same stage of identity development. Here both parties share the same racial attitudes, it is unlikely that the educator can assist the student develop further. A regressive relationship is one in which the educator is less developmentally advanced with respect to racial/ethnic identity development than the student. Here the educator attempts to change the student's thinking and behaviors in directions that feel

uncomfortable and unfair to the student. Students in these types of relationships may engage in acting out and/or passive aggressive behaviors to express their discomfort. Educators, on the other hand, may engage in punitive activities because of their frustrations with students who do not think as they do (1994).

The last interaction type is a progressive relationship. The educator's stage of identity development is more advanced than the student's and therefore, the educator can recognize the racial identity issues of the student and respond appropriately. The educator can also offer experiences and creative role modeling that will help the student consider alternatives to ways of being. Helms noted that because of the teacher's greater power in school, the student is more likely to be responsive to alternative experiences such as interacting with or learning about other cultures, particularly when introduced by the teacher (1994).

White teachers who serve as advisors to African American urban middle school students will likely have advisees who have experienced racism. The literature supports that White teachers need to progress through stages of their own White identity development in order to be consciously aware of the needs of these students, and to be able to respond appropriately (Helms, 1990; Howard, 2006). It is held that the idea of a racially and culturally responsive pedagogy becomes more into focus when viewed through the lens of racial identity development, and if educators have evolved to positive racial identity resolutions (Carter & Goodwin, 1994; Howard, 2006). Additionally, teachers who have examined their own racial identity may be better prepared to apply that knowledge to discriminatory situations in assessing, conceptualizing, and developing

caring and supportive relationships with African American students in an advisory capacity, which in turn fosters academic achievement and social/emotional well-being.

Delpit, (2006), Howard, (2006), Singleton & Linton, (2004), and Tatum, (1997) argue that in order to work effectively with students of color, White teachers need to understand the dynamics of past and present dominance, face how they have been shaped by myth and superiority, and begin to sort out thoughts, emotions, and behaviors relative to race . It is further asserted that the work toward fully understanding racial issues cannot begin unless a personal transformation has happened. This transformation takes place during the process of White Racial Identity Development (Howard, 2006; Helms, 1994).

The role of White teachers' racial identity development has received little attention, and has scantily been addressed in the research. The reviewed literature indicates that over the past thirty years, a call for a multi-cultural approach to education and pedagogy has been in the forefront. However, examinations of how an individual teacher's racial identity impacts knowledge of and interactions with African American students are scarce. Needed is research that explores how the racial identity resolution of White teachers may predict educational, psychological, and social experiences of African American students.

Theoretical Rationale

Racial identity theory enables an understanding of the complexity of interactions of various identity resolutions that exist within groups and among individuals. Cross's model of Nigresence Racial Identity Development (1990) as well as Helms' (1994) model of White Racial Identity Development are theories through which this study will

be investigated. Both provide a theoretical structure for understanding an individual's way of maneuvering through his or her own and other culture, and helps facilitate heightened confidence so that negative messages can be resisted. As a historical construct, Cross's model of Nigrescence Racial Identity Development promotes divergent perspectives that are useful to adolescents in school settings. Additionally, this model provides for learning about racial heritage, and stresses self-healing and ideological unity. Helms' model is useful in assessing the influence of race within cross-racial teacher/student relationships involving White teachers and African American students. This model suggests that White identity development occurs in stages in which the individual moves through stages to overcome individual, institutional, and cultural aspects of racism.

Statement of the Problem

As discussed previously, much has been written about the importance of racial identity development in early African American adolescents. The body of literature reviewed suggests that not only is racial identity development a necessary process for adolescents, but also that a teacher's racial identity development might play a role in assisting adolescents through this process. Scholars agree that the relationship between student and teachers is important, and that an advisory structure in middle schools is an essential component for assisting early adolescents with identity development issues. Though middle school reform models insist that advisories are an essential middle school practice (EL, 2003; Makkonen, 2004; NMSA, 2003) to address the developmental needs of early adolescents, missing is the acknowledgement of the needs particular to African American adolescents. Students become cognitively aware of racism and inequity in their

environment during early adolescence, and middle level teachers cannot create communities of caring students, nor develop empowering relationships if race is excluded (Akos & Marcellus, 2008; Gay, 1994).

Missing from the literature is research that examines White teacher/advisors and student relationships through the lens of the racial identity development of both. While the counseling literature suggests that identity development can affect counselor/client relationships, it has not been determined empirically that the White racial identity development of teachers can affect student/teacher interactions.

Purpose of the Study

This study would examine the implication from the counseling literature that supports the notion that a White counselor with a more developed racial identity profile would be able to determine a client's racial identity needs as determined by his or her racial identity developmental stage, and proceed to help a client accordingly. In the context of education, it can be inferred that a White teacher as advisor with a more developed racial profile can better assist African American students with issues of racial identity. The research question this study would address is: Does scoring high on Helms' White Racial Identity Attitude Scale relate to identifying correct answers on vignettes based on early adolescents in Cross' stage model of Nigresence Racial Identity?

Significance of the Study

This investigation into the degree to which White teacher/advisors are able to interact authentically with African American adolescents as indicated by this research may have a significant impact on further research in education. This research will synthesize interpret and contribute data to research that informs cultural competency practices in schools.

Present gaps in the literature on middle level advisory structures, White racial identity development and culturally responsive pedagogy will also be addressed. It is desired that a deeper insight into understanding interracial educator to student dynamics will be provided, and that discussions on urban education, multicultural education, addressing the achievement gap and pre-service teacher preparation discourses will also benefit from this investigation.

Findings from this study will (a), give insight into understanding educator/student interactions in middle schools, and the importance of the racial identity development of White teachers when interacting with African American students; (b), address the present gap in discourse and research on middle level advisory structures with African American students in urban settings; and (c), contribute to the body of knowledge of urban education, multi-cultural education, the achievement gap, and pre-service teacher preparation.

Definition of Terms

Advisory - A school structure that provides a supportive adult to each adolescent in a school. By design, students are valued, cared about, encouraged, coached, and supported.

Authentic Caring – A relationship based on truth and trust.

Early Adolescence – A developmental stage in children between the ages of 11 and 15 years old characterized by biological, social/emotional, and identity changes.

Nigrescence Racial Identity Development - the process of becoming Black that encompasses an ideological, and perceptual metamorphosis.

Racial Identity – A consciousness of self within a particular group, followed by a sense of respect and pride, that constitutes a base for the development of a healthy self-concept.

Racial Identity Development - An attitudinal transformative process through which a person identifies or not with a racial group.

Teacher as Advisor - A teacher in the role of advocate for individual students in an urban middle school.

Urban Middle School - A school that is located in an inner city and populated by students between the ages of 10 – 15 years old.

White Racial Identity Development – The emotional, attitudinal, and behavioral process through which a White person develops a non-racist White identity.

Chapter 2: Review of the Literature

Introduction and Purpose

Early adolescence marks the beginning of a series of physical, psychological, and interpersonal changes for children between the ages of eleven and fifteen (Hall & Brassard, 2008). Entrance into middle school coincides with these significant changes of puberty, and also marks the search for a distinct identity (Erikson, 1968; Kroger, 2007; Marcia, 1980). Kroger describes identity as individual knowledge of who one is, and how biology, psychology, and society interact subjectively to this sense of being genuinely aware of “self” (Kroger, 2007).

Developmentally, the focus on identity increases as adolescents become more involved with peer groups, determine who they are and who their friends will be, examine life goals and belief systems, and ponder a sense of individual purpose (Akos & Marcellus, 2008; 2007). This journey toward identity development, while it can be arduous, represents a necessary step in the natural progression of maturing.

During this period families, schools, peers, and communities play a role as contexts that help to shape adolescent identity development in that they provide social, emotional, and academic experiences that facilitate growth (Kroger, 2007). Middle schools are noted as the appropriate school structure for early adolescents (Galassi, Gullege, & Cox, 1997), especially those that provide responsive practices that support the developmental needs of early adolescence. In particular, the practice of teachers serving as advisors is recommended. Here, teachers are responsible for providing academic,

social/emotional, and developmental support for small groups of students during the school day (1997). By design, the advisor serves as an advocate for his or her advisees, and is charged with getting to know each advisee on an independent and intimate level in an effort to assist each child with developmental and academic issues he or she faces (1997).

For African American early adolescents, while they face the task of deciding who they are in terms of their identity, they must do so in the face of living in a society that has historically devalued their race, and must contend with those dynamics to identity as well. Therefore, for African American adolescents, racial identity is a critical issue in the quest to determine identity (Tatum, 1977). Within the context of school, teachers play a role in racial identity development, and the extent to which this is acknowledged can impact social-emotional well-being, as well as academic functioning of a student (Kroger, 2007).

It is more likely than not that an advisor of an African American urban middle school student will be Caucasian (National Center for Educational Statistics, 2004). With race being such a salient issue for African American adolescents, the notion that these teacher advisors can or do assist with racial issues and African American racial identity development becomes a topic that raises many questions. This chapter will present an overview of the concept of identity development in early adolescence. Additionally, an exploration of the historical and theoretical frameworks of African American racial identity development and White identity development will be examined with supporting empirical evidence.

Early Adolescence

The period of early adolescence represents biological, cognitive, and psychological growth and development between childhood and adulthood (Eccles, 1999; Gay, 1994; Lesco, 2002). The word adolescence comes from the Latin verb *adolescere*, which means, “to grow into maturity” (Kroger, 2007). Scholars agree that adolescence is a process rather than a state, and that it frames young people as ‘not yet finished’ human beings (Bucholtz, 2002). Early adolescence is a journey of expanding horizons, emerging independence, decision-making, and self-discovery that effect future goals, and have lifelong consequences (1999; 1994; 2002). Puberty often amplifies the need for emphasis on personal and social development as the transition represents a significant phase in the life cycle (2007).

The onset of puberty marks the beginning of early adolescence and commences long before any physical signs occur; impacted by biological, psychological, and societal influences (Kroger, 2007). Puberty refers to a complex continuum of biological changes whereby the child becomes a sexually mature adult, capable of reproducing, and assuming the height, weight, body contours, and increased strength and tolerance for the physical activity of adulthood (2007). This gender-specific process is impacted by genetic factors, nutrition, and other environmental agents, as well as hormonal factors (2007; Siskind, 2000). All adolescents undergo puberty, with the exception of those with endocrine disorders (2007). In the United States and most other Western cultures, early adolescence extends roughly between the ages of ten and fourteen years old, although pubertal timing can vary greatly from one individual to another (2000).

Biologically, a continuum of sequences evolves gradually that produce changes in weight, height, sexual maturation, and hormone fluctuations (Kroger, 2007). These changes are not standard or even consistent in one individual.

Psychologically, early adolescents begin to expand relationships beyond family and other adult authority to dependence upon peers for support and guidance (Kroger, 2007). Here, early adolescents often experiment and explore different activities, and begin to differentiate their own needs, attitudes, and attributions from those of significant others (2007; Siskind, 2000). During this time many adolescents report changed relationships with parents, teachers, peers, and others with whom they interact frequently (Granic, Dishion, & Hollestein, 2003). Cognitively, early adolescents begin to make decisions with long-term consequences, engage in logical and abstract reasoning, and comprehend complex problems (2007; 2000). They assert more autonomy than during childhood, assume extra responsibilities, and have more freedom to choose clothing, hairstyles, and extra-curricular and school activities (2000).

For young adolescents, shifting expectations within and across different societal realms also occur. The early adolescent is challenged to pursue avenues to channel the new capacities of 'self' using culturally and socially appropriate forms of expressions (Kroger, 2007). The manner in which society responds to this transformative period also provides critical input to adolescent adjustment or mal-adjustment. It is suggested that pubertal changes and social events and responses may act in concert. Kroger (2007) proposes that if a societal change or negative response occurs at a certain point during puberty, its impact may have a stronger effect than if the change or response had occurred

either before or after puberty. Additionally, the informal ways in which early adolescents socialize each other is reported to have long lasting effects (Bucholtz, 2002).

The interconnectedness of biological, psychological, and social transformations significantly affect adolescents as they mature, and are described by Erikson (1968) as contributors to identity development. The biological changes of puberty, the move to more complex ways of thinking, redefining self within the family structure, developing new forms of relationships with peers, as well as adapting to more complex demands of school systems, all raise important identity considerations for the young adolescent (Kroger, 2007).

Early Adolescent Identity Development

In the search for identity, adolescents struggle to differentiate their own thoughts and feelings from those of parents and significant adults (Kroger, 2007; Marcia, 1980). For decades, scholars (Erikson, 1968; Marcia, 1980) have recognized that identity formation is a key developmental task for early adolescents. Research supports that students with an achieved identity, or those involved in actively exploring one, have higher self-esteem, are more likely to engage in critical and abstract thinking, and are more advanced in moral reasoning (Kroger, 2006). Factors attributed to shaping identity are biological, psychological, and cultural (1968; 1980). According to Erikson, the adolescent is newly concerned with how he/she appears to others and purports that optimal identity development involves finding social roles and niches within the larger community that provide a good “fit” for an individuals’ biological and psychological capacities (1968). Erikson forwards the idea that a person achieves identity by means of a

process of search and commitment, and that failure to achieve an identity can lead to confusion and despair (1968).

Erikson (1968) provided the “Eight Stages of Man” theoretical framework of human development. Here he maintained that individuals progress through eight developmental stages: Trust vs. Mistrust, Autonomy vs. Shame, Initiative vs. Guilt, Industry vs. Inferiority, Identity vs. Role Confusion, Intimacy vs. Isolation, Generativity vs. Stagnation, and Integrity vs. Despair (1968). Each psychological stage has a corresponding ego strength, specifically: hope from trust, will from autonomy, purpose from initiative, competence from industry, fidelity from identity, love from intimacy, care from generativity, and wisdom from integrity (1968).

Erikson postulated that in each of the stages, individuals encounter a psychological crisis that has two opposing outcomes. If the crisis is fully resolved, the ego strength from the stage becomes incorporated into the individual’s personality. Successful resolution of prior psychosocial crises and emergence of the associated ego strengths are conducive to the ascendance of the later ego strengths (Erikson, 1968).

Adolescence occurs during the fifth stage of ‘Identity Versus Role Confusion’. In Erikson’s view, finding resolution to this fifth stage was conceptualized as finding a place on an identity continuum, ranging from high identity achievement to low role confusion (1968). Erikson asserts that the development of identity is a continuous and comparative process involving personal reflection and observation of oneself in relation to others. This process develops and crystallizes over a lifespan, initializing with a young child’s awareness of significant others, and inclusive of a period of exploration and experimentation that typically takes place during adolescence (1968).

According to Erikson's model, during successful early adolescence, time perspective is developed that promotes self-certainty as opposed to self-doubt (1968). Erikson maintains that achieving identity is a fundamental task for adolescents, as a clear sense of personal identity constitutes an aspect of optimal psychological functioning. Critical to Erikson's model is the premise that each stage represents a psycho-social crisis that demands resolution and incorporation into the psyche before the next stage can be satisfactorily entered (1968).

Erikson acknowledged the importance of race, gender, and culture on identity development, but offers only a brief examination of what happens to the identity of oppressed groups. He purports that individuals belonging to an oppressed or exploited minority which is aware of the dominant cultural ideals but is prevented from emulating them, is apt to fuse the negative images held by the dominant majority (1968). His writings in this area have provided a springboard for a closer examination of the influence of race on the process of identity.

Developmental psychologist James Marcia refined and extended Erikson's model, identifying specific identity-related psychosocial tasks specific to early adolescence (1980). Addressing Erikson's notion of identity crisis, Marcia argues that the adolescent stage consists neither of identity resolution nor identity confusion, but rather the degree to which identity is explored and committed in a variety of life domains (Marcia, 1980). Marcia's theory of identity achievement argues that two distinct parts form an adolescent's identity: crisis and commitment (1980). According to Marcia, during crisis an adolescent's values and choices are reevaluated, which lead to a commitment being made to a particular role or value (1980). He provides a four stage model for categorizing

Erikson's 'Identity Versus Role Confusion' stage (Marcia, 1980; Kroger, 2007): achieved identity, moratorium, foreclosed identity, and identity diffusion.

Marcia's identity achieved and foreclosed individuals are both characterized as having made important identity defining commitments (Kroger, 2007). Key differences lie in how each stage is achieved (2007; Marcia, 1980). The identity achieved follows a period of active exploration and critical analysis. Having undergone this period, the individual is committed to his or her choice of ideology (Marcia, 1980). In contrast, the foreclosed identity status is based primarily on identifications with important others, where the individual has not experienced any period of exploration (2007; 1980). Their commitment typically reflects parental beliefs and expectations (1980). Thus, the identity achieved individual actually constructs a sense of their own identity, while the foreclosed have a 'conferred' identity, based on the values of others (1980).

Adolescents in the moratorium stage are characterized as being in a state of exploration without commitment to an ideology (Marcia, 1980). The foreclosed identity status is described as the period in which adolescents express commitment without having experienced any period of exploration. Their commitment typically reflects parental beliefs and expectations, and is not derived from self-choice and exploration (1980). Identity diffusion is characterized by the absence of both exploration and commitment. For adolescents in this state there is a lack of genuine concern about identity issues (1980). Important to Marcia's stage theory is that it is not a sequential process.

Middle school early adolescents are often in a period of foreclosure or diffusion, where they either accept the identity prescribed by authority figures, lack commitment to

a specific group, or avoid the exploration of identity altogether (Marcia, 1980). Scholars hold that this process reflects the natural progression of identity development and is a critical task that cannot be accomplished in isolation. As a psychosocial construct, adolescent identity development is also affected by contextual factors (Kroger, 2007).

Middle school as a context for identity development. With the many biological changes, relational changes raise identity issues and present a time of disequilibrium in relationships with others (Kroger, 2007). Examinations of relationships with parents, schools, teachers, and peers, as well as community groups and cultural norms have shown that each context interacts in multiple ways during the identity formation process (Eccles, Early, Fraser, Belansky, & McCarther, 1997; Youngblade, Theokas, Schulenberg, Curry, Huang, & Novak, 2007). This research demonstrates that parents appear to be the context of primary influence for early adolescent identity development, however, as the quality of conditions for optimal identity development within the family decreases, the impact of other socialization contexts increases (Eccles et al., 1997). The school environment then, emerges as an important context within which adolescents' identity develops (Hall & Brassard, 2008).

Teacher advisory structure. School design that supports this transitional period of early adolescence is characterized as having responsive practices that support the physical and developmental characteristics of youth, as well as understand what is needed to foster positive educational outcomes and identity development (Brazee, 1997).

Therefore, middle school teachers play a significant role in that they are charged with exhibiting the traits of warmth, firmness, acceptance, (Kroger, 2007). These qualities have shown to characterize effective teachers of early adolescents, and are inherent in the

practice of teacher as advisor The relationship between teacher and student developed through the advisory structure between student and teacher increases a student's chances of staying in school, engaging academically, and developing a sense of who they are as individuals (Cousins, 2003; Galassi, Gullege, & Cox, 1997).

Studies indicate that for African Americans and other non-Caucasian groups, racial identity emerges as a salient issue (Branch, Tayal, & Triplett, 2000). Thus, for African American adolescents, the process toward identity formation becomes more complex because race serves as a central theme (Gay, 1994; Phinney, 1990). In addition to developing their identities, African American adolescents must also contend with developing their racial identities.

Racial Identity Development

Scholars define racial identity development as an attitudinal transformative process through which a person identifies or not identifies with a racial group (Gay, 1985; Helms, 1990). Racial identity is integrated into the personality through numerous influences: family, community, society, an individual's own interpretive style, and the manner in which important peers validate, deny, or ignore the racial aspect of an individual's identity (1990).

For Caucasian adolescents, developing a racial identity may not be as important a developmental task as it is for African American adolescents. Research studies on "Whiteness" (Lewis, 2002; Richardson & Villenas, 2000) indicate that when Caucasian youth are asked about their racial identity they usually do not think about how race impacts their everyday lives. As members of the dominant group in the United States, their racial identity is secure and may be taken for granted (2000). In a study conducted

by Martinez and Dukes (1997), it was found that Caucasian participants had the lowest racial identity, but scored highest on measures of well being. Overall, for African American and other non-Caucasian groups, racial identity was more salient (1997). Phinney, Cantu, and Kurtz (1997) surveyed Latino, African American, and Caucasian adolescents on measures of self-esteem, American identity, and racial identity. They found that only Caucasian students identified with their American identity, and most minority adolescents were ambivalent about American identity because they felt it equated to Whiteness (1997).

Racial Identity Development in Adolescence

Racial identity implies a consciousness of self within a particular group. Embedded in this consciousness is a respect and pride that constitutes the foundation for the development of a healthy self-concept (Akos & Ellis, 2008). Conceptually, it refers to a person's parallel thoughts feelings, behaviors, and psychological response as a member of a racial group, and toward members of other groups (Carter & Goodwin, 1994; Helms, 1990; Wijeyesinghe & Jackson, 2001). Racial identity development is complex but necessary for early adolescents to develop in a healthy manner (2008), as well as positively related to other aspects of life (Roberts et al., 1999). A healthy racial identity provides African American adolescents with a frame in which to interpret and determine their place in their racial group, as well as the larger society (Chavous, Bernat, Schmeelk-Cone, Caldwell, Kohn-Wood, & Zimmerman, 2003).

Middle school teachers in advisory capacities are presented with the opportunity to facilitate racial identity development in African American students. Given that most teachers in the United States are White, Howard (2006) maintains that in order to work

effectively with students of color, White teachers need to understand the dynamics of past and present dominance, understand how they have been shaped by myth and superiority, and begin to sort out thoughts, emotions, and behaviors relative to race (2006).

Furthermore, Howard maintains that the work toward fully understanding racial issues unless a personal transformation has happened (2006). This transformation takes place during the process of White Racial Identity Development (2006).

Historical perspective of racial identity. The role of race in the construction of self has its origins in the work of W.E.B. DuBois (1903), who presented a direct discussion of the struggle to reconcile African and American origins in the personal well-being of African Americans. In *The Souls of Black Folk* (1903), DuBois wrote of the intrapersonal struggle that this reconciliation entails. Here DuBois introduced the idea of “Double Consciousness”, a psychosocial model describing the division of consciousness affecting individuals who are, despite their citizenship, largely excluded from the heart of society, and regulated to its margins (1903). DuBois postulated that this disadvantaged social position outside of the dominant culture forced African Americans to live in and navigate between two worlds: the center, and the margins of society. According to DuBois, African Americans are always looking at themselves through the eyes of others and thus, internalizing stereotypes and racial hatred. DuBois maintained that for African Americans to attain a sense of self, they must merge their double self to create a better and truer self. For DuBois, education, and creating communities where African-ness is internalized and celebrated are key to African American’s maintaining a sense of self (1903).

In the history of research on African American racial identity development, scholars have defined and operationalized the concept in many different ways. The earliest sociological research on African American racial identity focused on the racial preferences and self-identification of children. Early studies (Clark & Clark, 1950) used photographs, drawings, or dolls representing Black and White children to study the concept. The child's choice of either a black or white object was taken to indicate a preference for or self-identification with the corresponding racial group. In this early research the authors concluded that Black children had a more negative orientation to their own race than Caucasian children (1950). Clark maintained in his testimony to the United States Supreme Court during the *Brown vs. the Board of Education* case (1954) that his findings were clear that African American children had been harmed by being subjected to an inferior status in society, and that the signs of instability in their personalities were evident.

In the early 1970s, social scientists, psychologists, and other behavioral scientists began developing and refining conceptual models highlighting the role of Black identity development and psychological well-being. Theories and models of Black racial identity development began to appear in the counseling psychology and psychotherapy literature (Helms, 1990; Wijeyesinghe & Jackson, 2001) stimulated, in part, by the social transformations that occurred in Black people in the United States during the 1960s Civil Rights era (1990). Black racial identity theorists attempted to present a framework to explain the various ways Blacks identify, or not, with other Blacks, and adopt or abandon identities resulting from racial victimization (Helms, 1990).

In 1971, Thomas coined the term *negromachy* to describe the condition of adult African Americans who displayed characteristics that paralleled those found in African American children studied by Clark and Clark (1950). According to Thomas (1971), these individuals have a confused self-worth that seemed dependent on White society's approval, and frequently displayed behaviors consistent with compliance, subservience, regressed rage, and oversensitivity to racial issues. Thomas speculated that negromachy could be overcome through a process of racial identity re-definition that gradually separated self value from the majority group evaluation (1971). He saw the end product of this process as individuals being enabled to work against the oppressive social forces in place at the time (1971).

Models of Nigrescence (the process of becoming Black) or Black Racial Identity Development (NRID) emerged in the writings of Cross (1971), Jackson, (1976), and Banks, (1981). Each independently created models of Black identity development that share similarities in that each presents accounts of an ideological metamorphosis, and assumes that the transformation is a liberating process that symbolizes a psychological healthier state of being. In each model are developmental stages that account for movement from a negative to a positive identity (1971).

Though theorists of NRID vary in specifics, each believes that, (1) an ideological and perceptual metamorphosis must occur; (2) the transformation process involves interactions of individuals, groups, and socio-cultural contexts; (3) a series of sequential developmental stages accounts for the movement of individuals from negative to positive; (4) the perceptions individuals have about their ethnicity are projected with their attitudes; and (5) it is a liberating process representing a psychological healthier state of

being (Gay & Baber 1987; Helms, 1990). Each model was constructed on the underlying premise of moving people of color toward resolution of identity issues resulting from the need to survive in a racist culture (Helms, 1990).

Cross' Model of Nigrescence Racial Identity Development

In 1971, Cross developed his initial Negro-to-Black Conversion Experience model. This model was revised in 1991, and expanded in 2001 (Worrell, Vandiver, Cross, & Phagen-Smith, 2004). Despite the revisions, Cross's 1971 model has been cited as a significant influence in the formation of subsequent racial and ethnic identity theories over the past four decades (Banks, 1981; Baldwin, 1984; Helms, 1984; Jackson, 1975; Milliones, 1980; Phinney, 1989; Sellers, Smith, Shelton, Rowley, & Chavous, 1998; Worrell, Vandiver, Cross, Phagen-Smith, 2004). Each emphasizes the important role of racial identity in determining African American psychological well-being. The Cross model has been recognized as the most definitive of all models developed thus far, and remains one of the most influential conceptualizations of the role played by racial identity in African American psychological well-being (Gay, 1985; Helms, 1990).

According to Cross (1971) the attainment of racial identity is a transformative process where the individual moves from externally defined to internally self defined. He describes a five stage model of Nigrescence Racial Identity Development (NRID): *Pre-encounter, Encounter, Immersion/Emersion, Internalization, Internalization/Commitment*, as shown in Figure 1. Each stage is characterized by self-concept issues concerning race, as well as parallel attitudes about Blacks and Whites as reference groups (Figure 2.1).

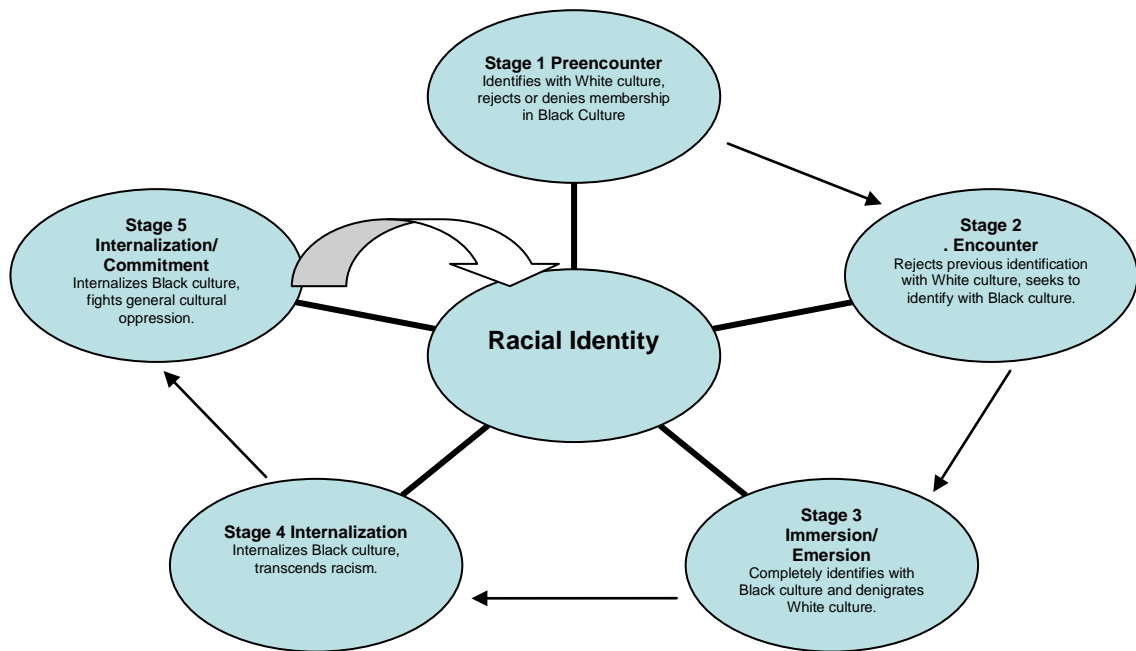


Figure 2.1. Cross' (1990) Model of Nigrescence Racial Identity Development

At the Pre-encounter stage lies the idea that race has little or no personal or social meaning, or is dominated by Euro-American values and conceptions of race. Gay (1995) and Helms (1984) describe this stage as one in which knowledge of race and ethnicity has not been systematically incorporated into a person's reasoning, values, and feelings. In this stage racial identity is subconscious and subliminal (1984), inferring that attitudes and behaviors are not shaped in conscious and deliberate ways (1995). Terminating this stage is a positive or negative encounter or series of experiences that challenges the comfort of this stage, and moves the individual into the Encounter stage (Cross, 1991).

Referred to by Carter and Goodwin (1994) as the most tumultuous and disconcerting, the Encounter stage is one where the person is motivated to begin a deliberate search for the personal meaning and significance of race (1994). Cross emphasized that the encounter entails two steps: (1) experiencing the encounter, and (2) being 'turned around' by it (Cross, 1991). He further asserts that the encounter must have

a personal impact on the person in a powerful way. According to Gay, the event that triggers the Encounter stage can result from the growing awareness of the double standards of acceptability applied to Blacks and Whites in American society (1987). This stage is described as having two steps of consciousness where the person struggles to abandon the Preencounter identity, and embrace the yet unformed Black identity (Carter & Goodwin, 1994; Cross, 1971; Gay, 1995; Helms, 1984). High levels of ambivalence however, may be present as the person vacillates between feeling rage and depression, power and helplessness, pride and shame (Gay, 1985). The search for a different foundation upon which to build racial identity often leads to a withdrawal from everything that represents Euro-American ideology. Nearing the end of this stage, a deliberate effort is made to demolish the old perspective, and a commitment is made to change that signals entry into the next phase (Cross, 1971; Gay, 1985; Helms, 1990).

Described by Cross as a two stage process, in the Immersion/Emersion stage the person initially, psychologically and physically if possible, withdraws into Blackness and the Black world in order to fully experience what his/her notion of Blackness means (1971). During this stage, the tendency to reject, at least superficially, aspects of White culture and become very pro Black (1971). This withdrawal transitions into an Emersion period that moves from the intensity of psychological immersion to a leveling off phase that is facilitated by personal growth (Cross, 1991). According to Cross, the strengths and weaknesses of Blackness are now sorted out. The ego is no longer involved, the emotional intensity subsides, and a more balanced view of the strengths and weaknesses of Black life emerges (Carter & Goodwin, 1994; Cross, 1971). This transitional period leads to an internalization of racial identity.

In Cross's Internalization/Commitment stage of NRID, the individual achieves a sense of inner pride regarding his or her Black identity, and develops a positive personality and sense of security with respect to his or her heritage (Cross, 1971, 1991; Gay, 1985; Helms, 1990). While still using Blacks as a primary reference group, the person moves toward a pluralistic and non-racist perspective where Blacks become the primary reference group to which the individual belongs. However, this sense of belonging is no longer externally determined. As noted by Cross, the internalizing person rejects racism and similar forms of oppression, and is also able to reestablish relationships with individual White associates who merit such relationships. Additionally, the person is able to analyze White culture for its strengths and weaknesses as well (1971).

The final stage, Internalization/Commitment, reflects a behavioral style characterized by social activism. Here, behavior may involve participation in social and political activities designed specifically to eliminate racism and/or oppression regardless of the race of the perpetrators and victims (Cross, 1971). Cross notes that this stage may however, involve performance of everyday activities according to the individual's Black perspective. Cross summarizes his stage as one where *what* the person feels, believes, or thinks, is not as important as *how* the person believes. Furthermore, the Internalized person no longer judges others by their cultural group membership, rather, are concerned with common humanity (Cross, 1971).

An active interest in the role of identity within African American psychology has led to the publication of several additional models. Phinney's (1990) work framed the relationship between African American ethnic identity and psychological well-being

under the parameters of two established mainstream psychological paradigms: social identity development, and ego identity development. Phinney proposes that the incorporation of pride in ethnic group membership, along with establishing a healthy identity during adolescence would lead to a secure sense of self that guides adult development (1990). Phinney maintains that ethnic identity development occurs in three steps, beginning with an unexamined ethnic identity. The second step is an exploratory period in which individuals become increasingly involved in activities that inform and define their subjective understanding of ethnicity. The final step is a secured identity (1990). According to Phinney, the second step typically begins in early adolescence and ends in adulthood (1990). Mirroring previous models of African American racial identity development, Phinney suggests that the third stage of ethnic identity development is associated with the greatest psychological health (1990).

Sellers, Smith, Shelton, Rowley, and Chavous (1997) proposed a multidimensional model for understanding racial identity. The Multidimensional Model of Racial Identity (MMRI) attempts to accommodate the diverse and varying meanings of being African American by drawing upon many pre-existing models of racial identity to form a framework. Three assumptions underlie the MMRI, The first assumption is that identities are stable properties of a person but can be influenced by situations. The second assumption is that individuals have a number of different identities that have different levels of importance to them. The third assumption is that the individual's perception of what it means to be African American is the most valid indicator of racial identity. The MMRI makes no value judgment as to what constitutes a psychologically healthy or unhealthy identity, but instead, focuses on describing the status of an individual's racial

identity at a specific point in his or her life (1997). The MMRI focuses on African American's beliefs regarding the significance of race in how they define themselves, and the qualitative meaning of membership to this racial group (1997). The MMRI delineates four dimensions: racial salience, centrality, ideology, and regard. Salience refers to the extent to which a person's race is a part of his or her self concept at a particular moment. This dimension is reported to be the most relevant to predicting proximal behavioral responses to situations (1997). The centrality dimension is a measure of whether race is a core part of an individual's self-concept. Implicit in centrality is that there is a hierarchical ranking of different identities such as gender and occupation with regard to their proximity to the individual's core definition of self (1997). The dimensions of salience and centrality are related in that the more often racial identity is salient, the more likely it is to become a more normative way in which the person defines him or herself (1997).

Racial ideology describes an individual's beliefs, opinions, and attitudes regarding the way that African Americans should live and interact with society. Racial regard describes a person's affective and evaluative judgment of his or her race. This dimension is divided into two parts: public and private. Public regard refers to the extent to which individuals feel that others view African Americans positively or negatively, and private regard refers to the extent to which African Americans feel positively or negatively toward being African American (1997).

Qunitana (2007) poses several debates regarding the research on racial identity development. He argues that based on the research findings: (1) the convention of using sociocultural terms on the basis of sample demographics may fail to capture the complex

psychological dimensions that are involved in forming a sociocultural identity; and (2) the subtle increases among early adolescents in many of the studies does not match the intensity reflected in the Immersion stage as outlined by Cross (1990). Cross, while maintaining most of his original ideologies, has acknowledged that his original hierarchy was overly restrictive, and in 2001 proposed a revised model that encompasses sub-stages to many of the original five stages. Additionally, Cross proposed a more hybrid approach to the term racial identity that encompasses the aspects of social and cultural identity. He terms the process racial-ethnic-cultural identity development in order to not support the artificial differences of race, ethnicity, and culture (1990).

Early Adolescent Racial Identity Development

Early adolescence is recognized as a time that racial identity begins to emerge, and scholars maintain that it is a critical component of self-concept and identity (Phinney & Tarver, 1988; Roberts, Phinney, Masse, Chen, Roberts, & Romero, 1999; Tatum, 1997). It is maintained that when African American adolescents have positive racial identities, they experience: (1) higher self esteem, and enhanced peer relationships (Constantine & Blackmon, 2002; Phinney, Kantu, & Kurtz, 1997); (2) lower levels of stress and decreased chances of participating in delinquent behavior (McCreary, Best, & Garnezy, 1996); (3) verbal resolution to conflict as opposed to physical fighting (Arbona, Jackson, McCoy, et al.); and (4) higher academic achievement (Wong, Eccles, & Sameroff, 2003).

Additionally, research points to the protective mental health function of a strong sense of racial identity that serves to buffer the negative consequences of racism and discrimination. According to Sellers, Caldwell, Schmeelk-Cone, and Zimmerman,

(2003), African American adolescents with a low racial identity reported more anxiety, stress, and depression when faced with racism and discrimination than those with a high racial identity.

Black racial identity measurement and studies. Several studies draw on the conceptual framework of Cross's model of racial identity development in adolescents. In particular, Phinney and Taver (1988) focused exclusively on adolescents in a study to determine the processes of search and commitment in ethnic identity among twenty-four Black and White eighth grade middle class students. Open ended questions were given to determine both the search for and commitment to racial identity. While no significant differences were found between the two groups, evidence emerged to support the notion that racial identity begins to form as early as eighth grade. Additionally, qualitative analysis of the transcribed interviews revealed the Black students had a better understanding of prejudice and had a greater understanding of their own culture than Caucasians (1988). Significant in these findings is that most students were in some stage of racial identity development.

In a study conducted by Chavous, Bernat, Schmeelk-Cone, Caldwell, Kohn-Wood, and Zimmerman (2003), the relationship between racial identity and academic outcomes for 606 African American adolescents was examined over a three year period beginning with the subjects ninth grade year. Racial identity was measured using three aspects of the Multidimensional Inventory of Black Identity (MIBI) scale: The MIBI was created to (1) assess the extent to which being African American was central to respondents definition of themselves; Centrality, (2) assess respondents affective group beliefs; Regard, and (3) assess the adolescents positive or negative feelings toward

African Americans and their membership in that group: Private Regard (2003). Findings indicated that high centrality, strong group or private regard, and positive beliefs about society's views of African Americans or public regard were related to more positive academic beliefs, and stronger attachment to school (2003). Moreover, this study suggested that not only does racial identity differs across youth, but also that racial identity belief systems may relate to different pathways to educational and career attainment (2003).

The interrelationships among racial discrimination, racial identity, and psychological functioning were examined in a sample of 314 African American adolescents in a study conducted by Sellers, Copeland-Linder, and Martin (2006). Using the MIBI-T, constructed for use with adolescents, researchers investigated whether racial identity attitudes, as measured by centrality, private regard, and public regard beliefs, serve as resilient factors against the impact of racial discrimination and psychological functioning. African American adolescents between the ages of eleven and seventeen years old recruited from different public middle schools in a medium-sized city in the mid-western United States were given sub-scales of the MIBI-T to assess racial identity attitudes.

Participants, on average, reported that race was a central identity and had positive attitudes toward being African American. The racial identity variables were related such that individuals with higher levels of centrality also had more positive attitudes toward African Americans and these positive attitudes were related to lower levels of depression. Additionally, it was found that more positive attitudes toward African Americans were associated with more positive psychological outcomes regardless of the level of

discrimination the adolescent reported (2006). These findings are consistent with other studies that have found a link between positive attitudes toward one's racial group and positive psychological functioning and well-being, particularly feeling less depression, and having higher self-esteem (Caughy, Nettles, O'Campo, Lohrfink, 2006; Greene, Way, & Pahl, 2006; Sellers, Smith, Shelton, Rowley, & Chavous, 1997).

Helms' Model of White Identity Development

Helms (1990) developed a model of White racial identity based on the premise that it is impossible to be a white person in the United States without having a sense of basic entitlement that comes with being a member of the socioeconomic and politically dominant group (1990; Howard, 2006). Helms maintains that a Caucasian person can choose to be oblivious to race and the differential effects of how individuals are perceived and treated by society at large, or become fixated at one of two identity phases: Phase I begins with the Contact and ends with the Reintegration stage, and Phase II begins with the Pseudo-Independent stage and ends with the Autonomy stage (Figure 2.2).

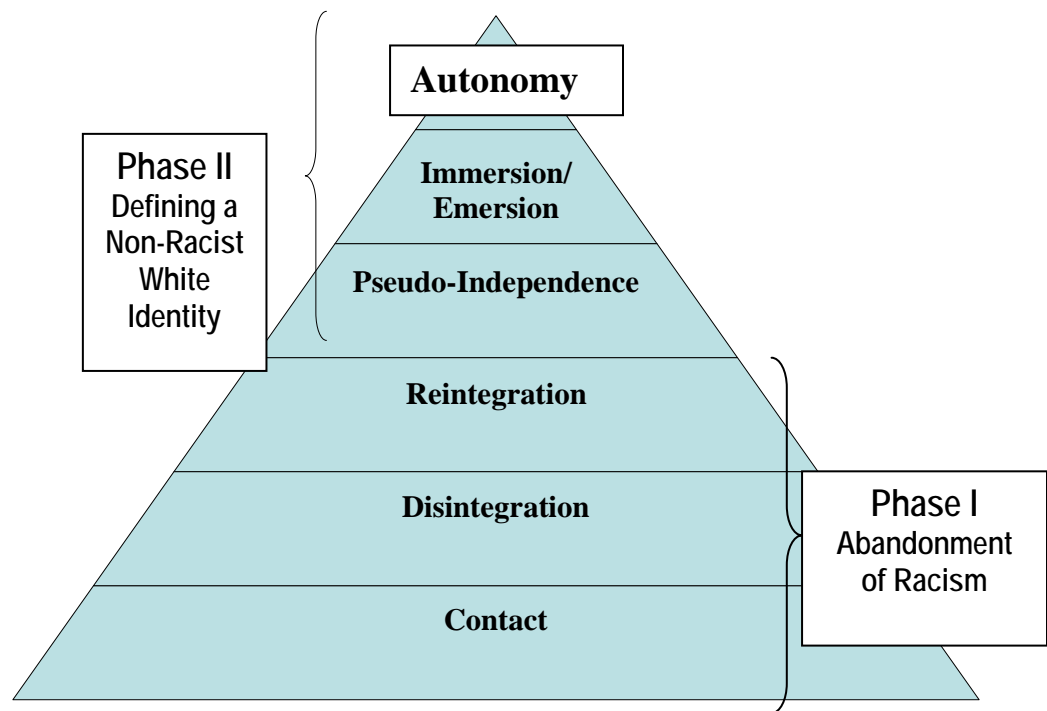


Figure 2.2. Helms' (1990) Stages and Phases of White Racial Identity Development

Helms purports that as soon as a Caucasian person encounters the idea or actuality of a Black person, he or she has entered the Contact stage. Here a person automatically benefits from institutional and cultural racism without being aware that he or is necessarily doing so (1990). At this stage, White racial identification is subtle and he or she evaluates Blacks according to White physical appearance, or other attributes without awareness that other criteria are possible. Behaviors at this stage are characterized as having limited social or occupational interactions with Black people, unless the interaction is initiated by Blacks who “seem” White except for skin color or other “Black” physical characteristics (1990). In interactions with an African American person, the Caucasian person uses comments such as “You don’t act like a Black person”, or “I don’t notice that race a person is” (1990). Longevity in the Contact stage depends upon

the kinds of experiences an individual has with African Americans in respect to racial issues. If the person in the Contact stage continues to have interactions with African Americans, it is theorized that sooner or later the Contact person will have to acknowledge that there are differences in how African Americans and Caucasians are treated in the United States (2006).

Entry into the disintegration stage implies acknowledgement of Whiteness, and triggers a moral dilemma associated with being White. Accompanying the conflicted White identification is a questioning of racial realities that person has been taught to believe (Helms, 1990). Here, a belief in the American principles life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness may come into conflict with the growing awareness of the unfair and unequal treatment of African Americans and other people of color (Howard, 2006). Confronted with the difficult emotions of this stage, the person may begin to reevaluate previous attitudes of values, or blame racial others for the confusion and become angry with them (2006).

According to Howard, because this stage is so emotional, a person may seek out ways to calm those emotions. Some Whites may choose to withdraw from future contact with people of color, while others may attempt to change the views of other White people regarding people of color (2006). Others still may attempt to recruit support of the illusion that racism is not so destructive, from African Americans and Caucasians alike (1990; 2006). According to Helms, the alternative that is chosen depends upon the extent to which the cross-racial interactions are voluntary (1990). As the reshaping of the person's cognitions or beliefs occurs, he or she will enter the Reintegration stage.

In the Reintegration stage, the person consciously acknowledges a White identity. In the absence of contradictory experiences, the person accepts the belief of White superiority (Helms, 1990; Howard, 2006), and racism is rationalized as a natural result of the inherent inferiority of people of color. Behaviorally, people in the reintegration stage may express their beliefs and feelings either passively or actively. Passive expression involves deliberate removal or avoidance of the environments in which encounters with African American's may occur. Passive Active expression may include treating African Americans as inferior, and even involve acts of violence or exclusion designed to protect White privilege (1990). The most important quality of this stage is that it raises a consciousness level whereby the person begins to question his or her previous definition of race. With this questioning, the person has begun movement into the Phase II (1990).

The Pseudo-Independent stage marks the first stage of redefining a positive White identity. In this stage, the person begins to actively question the proposition that African Americans are innately inferior to Whites (Helms, 1990; Howard, 2006). Attempts to abandon racism in this stage are usually characterized as the desire to "help" people of other racial groups, rather than to systematically change the dynamics of dominance (2006). There is an attempt to give up negative feelings about Whiteness, but a White racial identity has not been established. The pseudo-independent person feels a rather marginal existence where race and racial issues are concerned. Other Whites will treat the pseudo-independent person as if he or she has violated racial norms, and Blacks will treat the person with suspicion. The over identification with Blacks and the person's White identity leads to discomfort. As the pseudo-independent person receives personal rewards (e.g., self-esteem, monetary compensation, etc.), and if they are great enough, a positive White identity is likely strengthened. This continued strengthening of a positive White identity allows the

person to begin a quest for the positive facets of Whiteness that are unrelated to racism. As the quest continues for a better definition of Whiteness, the person enters into the immersion-emersion stage (Helms, 1990). In this stage the reexamination occurs at an intellectual level, with the deeper emotional issues still unresolved (2006).

The final two statuses, Immersion/Emersion and Autonomy, involve the development of a positive racial identity for Whites that is free of racism. According to Helms (1990), race is no longer a threat, and has been acknowledged on a personal, cultural, and institutional level (1990). The person no longer feels a need to oppress, idealize, or denigrate people on the basis of group membership characteristics such as race, because race no longer symbolizes a threat to him or her (1990). Since the person no longer reacts out of rigid world views, at the Autonomy stage, there is an abandonment of cultural, institutional, and personal racism (2006).

The different stages of Helms' model affect attitudes, behaviors, and emotions, but it is likely that these attitudes, behaviors, and emotions do not develop at the same rate. (Helms, 1990). It is suggested by Helms (1990) that attitudes may change faster than do behaviors. This observation explains in part why discomfort occurs for persons whose attitudes, emotions, and behaviors are not in sync (Howard, 2006). According to Helms (1990), Whites vary in their understanding of race for themselves and for people of color.

Helms' White racial identity model was one of the first White racial identity models to be developed. What is unique about this model is that she considers the cognitive and emotional complexities of defining self (Helms, 1990). Helms' model is also helpful in outlining racial experiences as triggers to promote or at least initiate development of one's racial identity. Problematic in this model is Helms' identification of how White racial identity occurs. That is, what a White person experiences in the way of

racial identity is based primarily on the person's perceptions, feelings, and behaviors as catalysts for change rather than the development and consciousness of an actual White racial identity. The person simply moves from racist to non-racist without any real self-actualization (1990).

Rowe, Bennett, and Atkinson purport that Helms' model is the wrong approach to take in understanding the experience of the racially dominant culture. They express that this approach does not focus on White identity per se, but on *how* Whites develop sensitivity to and appreciation of other cultures (1994). They also maintain that Helms' model is not developmental because it allows for the possibility of skipping stages and backward movement through the stages. Additionally, it is their view that the model is faulted for focusing exclusively on White-Black relationships to the exclusion of White interactions with other races (1994).

White identity measurement and studies. Helms' model prompted the development of the White Racial Identity Attitude Scale (WRIAS) to assess attitudes related to the five White identity statuses in her model. The premise of Helms' scale is that attitudes about Whiteness and Blackness trigger the person's racial identity development. Each stage is characterized by attitudes about Whites and the individual as a White person, and attitudes about African Americans and the individual's relationship to them (Helms, 1990). The WRIAS measures attitudes hypothesized to come from each of the statuses. The WRIAS consists of five sub-scales of ten items each that measure each stage of White racial identity development. The Contact subscale measures Whites' lack of awareness of their racial group membership and the minimization or avoidance of racial issues. The Disintegration sub-scale taps Whites' emerging awareness of their own racial group membership. The Reintegration sub-scale assesses Whites' idealization of their racial group,

the denigration and intolerance of other racial group, and their acceptance of the personal implications of being White. The Pseudo-Independence subscale measures Whites' intellectual acknowledgement of racism and ways in which they may have perpetuated it. Finally, the Autonomy sub-scale assesses Whites' internalization of a positive racial identification through their intellectual and emotional appreciation of racial similarities and differences (Constantine, 2004; Helms, 1990).

A study conducted by Constantine (2004), investigated the relative contributions of prior multicultural training, racism attitudes, and White racial identity attitudes to self-reported multi-cultural counseling competence. Ninety-nine school counselor trainees that identified themselves as White completed several surveys, inclusive of the WRIAS, the New Racism Scale (NRS) that measures Whites' attitudes towards Blacks, and the Multi-cultural Counseling Knowledge and Awareness Scale (MCKAS) that assesses dimensions of multi-cultural counseling competence. Findings indicated that, (1) more multi-cultural counseling training was associated with greater levels of self-reported multi-cultural counseling competence; (2) higher Disintegration racial attitudes were associated with lower self-reported multicultural counseling competence; and (3) NRS scores were associated with levels of multicultural counseling competence. An important implication of these findings is that White school counselors who complete multi-cultural counseling that deal with White racial identification as well as racial identity issues of students of color may be more knowledgeable and aware of salient racial issues in others as well as themselves, and more able to counsel students from diverse backgrounds. This study also implies that White counselors who possess racist attitudes and beliefs toward students of color may compromise the emotional and developmental well-being of these students (Constantine, 2002).

Carter, Helms, and Juby (2004) examined how racial identity profiles were related to racist attitudes. Based on the contentions of previous researchers over the past thirty years

that racist beliefs have not actually disappeared but have taken on a more subtle or covert form, and that Whites cannot simply be racist or not, Carter, Helms, and Juby set out to investigate whether or not there are varying types of racial attitudes for White Americans (2004). Using the WRIAS, Helms proposed a new way of scoring that would inspect an individual's constellation of racial identity attitudes and yield a more accurate reflection of the complexity of his/her racial identity schemas.

A sample of 279 White college students was given the NRS and the WRIAS. Of these, seven profiles were used to conduct an analysis. Findings indicated that the most frequently occurring profile type in the sample was the flat type or undifferentiated type, meaning that no one racial identity status dominated in an individual profile. The researchers maintained that the undifferentiated profile occurs in other psychological measures, and that it is possible that this type of profile emerged because the sample was comprised of young college-age students whose psychological resolution regarding race had not yet fully formed (Carter, Helms, & Juby, 2004). Whites that held the undifferentiated types scored the highest in racism using the NRS. The researchers maintain that one way to understand the undifferentiated profile's significance is to refer to the social psychological Ambivalence theory of modern racism which holds that Whites simultaneously hold both positive and negative attitudes toward Blacks, and that ambivalence results in polarized attitudes toward Blacks (Carter, Helms, & Juby, 2004). Additionally, it was found that individual White racial identity attitudes related significantly to racial attitude scores as indicated on the NRS.

While most of the discussion, research, and empirical evidence regarding racial identity development are found within the realm of counseling, implications can be useful in education, specifically in application to teachers. Howard (2006) forwards the notion that White teachers need to examine their racial identity development in order to heighten

knowledge and awareness of what race implies in relation to others who do not share White racial membership. For the White teacher in an urban school setting, Helms' model ignites the consciousness of racial issues for people of other races, and places these teachers in a stronger position to effectively interact with African American students (2006).

Racial Identity and Interactions in Middle School

The literature overwhelmingly supports the educational and emotional need to assist African American early adolescents' racial identity development. Middle schools play a role in helping students navigate this tumultuous period. It follows that for middle school educators, understanding the process through which early adolescent African American students come to view themselves as belonging to a particular racial group can have a tremendous bearing on their academic achievement and identity development (Phinney, 1988).

In advisory programs, the critical element is the close bond between advisor and student. As discussed, an added dimension for African American students is the triple quandary of learning how to integrate and negotiate three different identities: mainstream American, minority, and African American identities. The help that teachers as advisors can give to assist students in navigating these different realms of existence may be critical to their identity development as well as school success (Gay, 1994; Howard, 2006). It is maintained that the type of caring, supportive, and empowering relationships needed between student and advisor cannot develop with African American students if the adult does not assist with clarifying racial identity (1994; 2006).

According to Helms, (1994), everyone with whom a child comes in contact with in the school environment is also at some stage of racial identity development. Helms' interaction theory hypothesizes that the child's level of identity in combination with others' identities can result in a qualitatively different educational experience (Helms, 1994). Helms identifies three potential interaction types that can happen in a school setting based on the racial and or ethnic identity of those involved (1994). The first type, a parallel relationship, is one in which the educator and the student in the interaction are at the same stage of identity development. Helms believes that because both parties share the same racial attitudes, it is unlikely that the educator can assist the student develop further. A regressive relationship is one in which the educator is less developmentally advanced with respect to racial/ethnic identity development than the student. Here the educator attempts to change the student's thinking and behaviors in directions that feel uncomfortable and unfair to the student. Students in these types of relationships may engage in acting out and/or passive aggressive behaviors to express their discomfort. Educators, on the other hand, may engage in punitive activities because of their frustrations with students who do not think as they do (1994).

The last interaction type is a progressive relationship. The educator's stage of identity development is more advanced than the student's and therefore, the educator can recognize the racial identity issues of the student and respond appropriately. The educator can also offer experiences and creative role modeling that will help the student consider alternatives to ways of being. Helms noted that because of the teacher's greater power in school, the student is more likely to be responsive to alternative experiences such as

interacting with or learning about other cultures, particularly when introduced by the teacher (1994).

Conclusion

As discussed in this chapter, the research substantiates the importance of racial identity development in early African American adolescents. The body of literature reviewed suggests that not only is racial identity development a necessary process for adolescents, but also that a teacher's racial identity development might play a role in assisting adolescents through this process. Scholars agree that the relationship between student and teachers is important, and that an advisory structure in middle schools is an essential component for assisting early adolescents with identity development issues. Missing from the literature is much discussion of, and examinations of advisory teacher and student relationships through the lens of the racial identity development of both.

Though implications for White identity development appear in the counseling literature, it has not been found that teachers as advisors can benefit, or not, by the advisor's White identity development process. While much research that explores the role of race in education focuses on children of color, this research will focus on the predominantly White teaching force who educates them. It is the goal of this research to gather information that will lead to a deeper understanding of the personal and social dynamics in play between African American students and White teachers in urban schools. A study is proposed to investigate the following research question: Does scoring higher on Helm's White Racial Identity Scale (Helms, 1990) relate to correctly classifying children in Cross' stage model of Nigresence Racial Identity.

Cross's model of Nigresence Racial Identity Development (1990) as well as Helms' (1994) model of White Racial Identity Development are suggested as theories through which this question can be investigated. Both the original and revised version of Cross' model are effective in defining the stages in which African Americans manifest their racial identity. This model provides a theoretical structure for understanding an individual's way of maneuvering through their own and other cultures, and helps facilitate heightened confidence so that negative messages can be resisted. Additionally, this model provides for learning about racial heritage, and stresses self-healing and ideological unity. As a historical construct, this model promotes divergent perspectives that are useful to adolescents in school settings.

Helms' model can be useful in assessing the influence of race within cross-racial teacher/student relationships involving White teachers and African American students. White teachers who serve as advisors to urban middle school students will likely have advisees who have experienced racism. The literature supports that White teachers need to progress through stages of their own White identity development in order to be consciously aware of the needs of these students, and to be able to respond appropriately. Additionally, teachers who have examined themselves based on Helms' model may be better prepared to apply that knowledge to discriminatory situations in assessing, conceptualizing, and interacting with African American students in a caring and supportive manner where the race of each is openly discussed and students are able to further their identity development in a realistic school environment.

The literature examined indicates a need for more studies in these areas. Further research will not only contribute to the body of knowledge, but also further develop and

refine pro-active strategies used in the context of urban middle schools for African American early adolescents.

Chapter 3: Research Design Methodology

Introduction and General Perspective

This quantitative study focused on the White racial identity development stages of teachers who advise African American early adolescents. This study gave insight into understanding educator/student interactions in middle schools, and the importance of the racial identity status of White teachers when working with African American students. A survey design was selected as the means to investigate this research question.

A survey design provides a quantitative description of characteristics such as trends, attitudes, or opinions of a population. In a survey design, the goal of the researcher is to describe respondents as they naturally exist without intervention (Cotrell & McKenzie, 2005; Creswell, 2009; Orcher, 2007). A cross-sectional survey design was selected as an appropriate means to determine whether or not there is a relationship between the theoretical frameworks of White Racial Identity Development (Helms, 1990) as it pertains to White middle school teachers who also serve in the role of advisors, and Nigresence Racial Identity Development (Cross, 1978) as it pertains to African American early adolescents. The results gave the researcher a glimpse into the White racial identity attitudes of the sample at the time of the study. This design also permitted comparisons to be made between variables found in the selected sample (Cotrell & McKenzie, 2005).

In-service teachers participated in this study. The research commenced with teacher/advisors responding to four vignettes describing situations during advisory sessions that might be encountered when working as Advisors of African American

middle school students. Each vignette presented a scenario of a different stage of adolescent racial identity development as described in Cross' model of Nigresence Racial Identity Development. Participants were asked to select a response that best matched how they would react in each situation.

Secondly, participants who self-identified as White were given subscales of the White Racial Identity Assessment Scale (Helms, 1990). These subscales determined the individual participant's stage of racial identity. Finally, statistical analyses determined whether or not there were relationships between a White teacher's racial identity developmental status and his or her ability to correctly choose the answers to the vignettes that affirmed the African American student's racial identity development stage. This study involved teachers from multiple sites comprised of public and charter middle schools belonging to the Expeditionary Learning Schools (EL) network who attended the National Expeditionary Learning conference in February, 2010.

This chapter will discuss the following: (a) the research context (b) the research participants (c) the instruments used for data collection (d) procedures used for data collection (d) data analysis, and (e) summary of methodology.

The Research Context

The study involved teacher/advisors from multiple schools in the Expeditionary Learning (EL) schools network. The EL model is currently implemented in more than 150 schools in 30 states, reaching 45,000 students and 4,300 teachers (EL, 2008). The majority of schools are located in low-income communities; one-third being elementary schools; one-third middle schools, and one-third high schools. EL builds on the

educational insights of [Kurt Hahn](#), (1886-1974), a German-British educator who created schools in Germany and Scotland based on his experiences during World War I.

Hahn's intention was to create a more just society by providing real experiences for children, training in the habits of inquiry, and use of the imagination to solve real problems. In the 1930s, Hahn's schools followed seven key principles, known as the "Salem" principles:

1. Self-discovery
2. Triumph and defeat.
3. Self-effacement in the common cause
4. Periods of silence
5. Imagination
6. Making games important
7. Freeing the sons of the wealthy from the sense of privilege (EL, 2008)

The influences of Hahn's "Salem" principles are clearly articulated in the comprehensive school reform package of EL, which was launched in 1993. The schools that belong to the EL network have either adapted, or were established with the following EL Design Principles at their core:

1. Self-discovery
2. Having wonderful ideas
3. Responsibility for learning
4. Empathy and caring
5. Success and failure
6. Collaboration and competition

7. Diversity and inclusion
8. The natural world
9. Solitude and reflection
10. Service and compassion (EL, 2008)

In addition to the above Design Principles, each EL school operates on a set of five common Core Practices that describe EL schools in practice. Each Core Practice is comprised of a series of benchmarks that provide a comprehensive overview of the EL model, and serve as a planning guide for teachers and leaders, as well as a framework for designing professional development and evaluating program implementation. The Core Practices and corresponding benchmarks work in concert, and are what teachers, school leaders, students, families, and partners do to promote high achievement. These Core Practices are as follows:

1. Learning Expeditions
2. Active Pedagogy
3. Culture and Character
4. Leadership and School Improvement
5. Structures (EL, 2008)

Of particular focus to this study was the practice of Building School Culture and Fostering Character. Built into this practice are the benchmarks of knowing students well, and providing a structure for at least one adult to serve as an advocate for individual students' academic and social/emotional progress. According to the National Middle School Association (2003), an effective middle school is one that provides students with a caring adult that supports academic and social/emotional development at a critical time

when students need guidance, support, and stabilizing influences in their lives. In the EL model, students are placed in small groups known as ‘crews’, with a teacher serving as an advisor to each individual student. Crewmembers, including the school-based adult at the helm of each crew, often remain consistent throughout their term at a school, providing academic and emotional support for one another during those transitional years.

The crew experience is designed to make the student's experience of school more personal and meaningful. Each crew engages in group activities that promote team building, character development, and individual growth. Additionally, through crew and advisory each student develops a relationship with a teacher/advisor that involves regular check-ins via journal writing, and one on one conferences at regular intervals. During these individual conferences, topics of discussion may range from academics to personal issues a student might be experiencing. The promotion of positive academic and social/emotional growth and a strong relationship with an advisor are key elements in an advisory structure.

The study examined a sample of seventh and eighth grade teacher/advisors from fully implemented EL schools that have advisory structures in place. These teachers in the EL schools network were optimal for this research because of the inherent advisory structures each teacher participated in, and consistency in school practices and intra-school structures. Additionally, EL schools are nationally recognized in many independent research studies as a school reform model that is successful in producing favorable results in raising academic achievement and creating a positive school culture. Finally, needed for this study were middle school teachers in which the researcher had access, and could conduct the study in the winter of 2010.

The Research Participants

The primary concern with this study was with the behaviors of teacher/advisors; therefore, the sample was White seventh and eighth grade teachers in the EL schools network who served in the role of Advisors to African American students. Both male and female volunteer subjects were used. These subjects taught in schools geographically spread across the United States, but had several common characteristics: (a) each self identified as a teacher/advisor to a group of 12 or more predominantly African American seventh or eighth grade students, (b) each espoused the value of diversity in teaching, as indicated by his/her choice to teach in an EL school, (c) each held at least a bachelor's degree in education, and (d) each demonstrated a willingness to participate in this study.

Instruments Used in Data Collection

Several instruments were used for this study. First, a series of three vignettes were developed with the assistance of a panel of experts in Black racial identity development and adolescent behavior. Each vignette provided a descriptive summary of typical behaviors demonstrated by African American middle school students in stages of Black racial identity development that might be encountered by seventh and eighth grade teacher/advisors. Each vignette stated the age and gender of the student, then described a situation involving the student behaving in a manner consistent with the Encounter and Immersion/Emersion stage, of Cross' model of Nigresence Racial Identity Development (Cross, 1990). Teacher/advisors were be asked to read each vignette, and select a response from a series of multiple choice items that best matched how he or she would respond in each situation. These items had one correct answer and two plausible distracters (Orcher, 2007). The vignettes were used to determine whether a

teacher/advisor was able to respond appropriately based on the needs of the student's racial identity developmental stage. Vignettes can be found in Appendices A, B, and C.

Secondly, a demographic questionnaire was used to obtain the professional and personal information about the participants needed for statistical analysis. Participants were asked to provide the following: gender, race, age range, highest degree, current teaching setting, years of teaching experience, and years of teaching/advising African American students. The information gathered from the demographic questionnaire was used to describe the variables of the sample (see Appendix C).

Lastly, the WRIAS was given to each participant who self-identified as White. This scale, developed by Helms and Carter (1990), is a 50-item, 5-point Likert scale (1 = *strongly disagree*, 5 = *strongly agree*) that assesses White racial identity attitude statuses as proposed by Helms (1984). The WRIAS measures the attitudes in Helms' theory of White racial identity and five statuses: contact, disintegration, reintegration, pseudo-independence, and autonomy. Given the nature of this study, used for the survey was a modified version of the WRIAS consisting of four items from each subscale with the highest factor loads. As described by Constantine (2004), the contact subscale measures a Whites person's lack of awareness of his or her own racial group membership and the minimization of racial issues. The disintegration subscale measures a White person's awareness of race on a personal level. The reintegration subscale assesses a White person's idealization of his or her racial group along with acceptance of the personal implications of being White. The pseudo-independence subscale measures the ability of a White person to intellectualize Black culture and the unfair benefits of growing up White. Lastly, the autonomy subscale assesses a White person's internalization of a positive

racial identity through intellectual and emotional appreciation of racial similarities and differences. Scores were obtained by adding the point values for each scale, then dividing them by four. High scores on a particular subscale represent a person's attitudes and determine status in the subscale, and phase of White racial identity development.

Instruments used in research must be valid and reliable (Cottrell, 2005; Creswell, 2009; Orcher, 2007; Patten, 2007). An instrument is valid to the extent that it measures what it is designed to measure and reliable if it yields consistent results. A jury of experts established the validity of the vignettes. This jury was identified based on the following criteria: (a) knowledge of African American adolescent stages of racial identity development, (b) willingness to serve on the jury, and (c) ability to complete the task in the time frame provided by the researcher (Cottrell & McKenzie, 2005). The construct validity of the WRIAS has been affirmed by Helms and Carter (1990), who found it to be related to other racial and cultural constructs such as: racist attitudes (Silvestri & Richardson, 2001); and cognitive processing of racial information (Gushue & Carter, 2000). They report validity coefficients of .67 for the Contact scale, .75 for the Disintegration scale, .82 for the Reintegration subscale, and .65 for the Pseudo-Independence subscale, and .65 for the Autonomy subscale (1990). Regarding reliability, prior studies report coefficient alphas for the WRIAS subscales ranging from .55 to .80 (e.g., Helms & Carter, 1990, 1991). In a previously published study, Constantine, Warren, and Miville, (2005), also report adequate internal consistency for the subscales. Their research conveys Cronbach's alphas for the WRIAS subscales of Contact, Disintegration, and Autonomy as .60, .81, and .62 respectively. Items used from each subscale are located in Appendix E.

All instruments were pilot tested by participants not in the study. Pilot testers were asked to provide “think alouds” for items on each scale. These “think alouds” were used to determine whether or not the vignettes were ambiguous, needed other adjustments, or were too difficult. The WRIAS and demographic items were pilot tested to provide information regarding the amount of time needed to complete the survey.

Procedures Used in Data Collection

Middle school teachers from EL schools who attend the 2010 EL National Conference held in Kansas City Missouri from February 24th to February 27th, 2010 were solicited for participation via cards distributed over the three day conference session. These cards gave general information about the study, outlined risks and benefits, and disclosed how confidentiality was protected. A confidential protocol was used in which the information and records of this study were kept in the strictest confidence. No reference was made in oral or written reports that could link a participant to the study. Data was stored in a secure, locked file box with only the researcher possessing a key. A designee not associated with this research or the field of education, and who was unfamiliar with any of the scales, electronically collected the responses. All documents were destroyed at the completion of the research.

Teacher/advisors were asked to go to a pre-determined room and sit at pre-set up computer stations. Clicking on an electronic link directed them to an informed consent page. Continuing to another link implied informed consent, which led to a pages containing three vignettes, and a demographic survey. Participants who identified as non-White were thanked for participating in the survey. The participants who self-identified

as White took the subscales of the WRIAS. After receiving the responses, the researcher entered all data into the SPSS program for analyses.

Data Analysis

SPSS was used for all data analysis. To determine the demographic profile of the sample, a data file was created representing participants and responses to variables on the questionnaire. The demographic data was analyzed to determine the percentages of gender, race, age ranges, educational level attained, teaching setting, and years of experience as a teacher, and teacher/advisor to African American students. Each participant's response to the vignettes was scored as either a correct or incorrect in the data file. Scores from each subscale were calculated by adding the point values of the responses marked by the respondents, and dividing the total by 4 to determine the status and phase of respondents. The status and phase of each participant was then entered into the data file.

This correlation study was designed to determine whether scores in the vignettes were related to scores on the WRIAS. To determine any relationship, an inters-scale correlation analysis was performed using the subscale statuses of each participant on the WRIAS and the scores on the vignettes. The Spearman coefficient was used to illustrate any direct relationship between each. A multivariate analysis of variance was conducted to determine if participants differed significantly in their responses to the vignettes based on race, gender, age, education, and years as teachers/advisors to African American students.

Summary of Methodology

This chapter summarized a quantitative method of inquiry that is appropriate for using an unbiased approach to investigate two theories of racial identity development

(Creswell, 2009). This investigation into whether the White racial identity stage of a teacher was related to his or her ability to assist an African American student with stages of Black racial identity development issues will assist with forwarding the educational discourse on racial issues, and educational reform.

Chapter 4: Results

The Research Question

As stated in Chapter 1, this quantitative study examined whether or not scoring high on Helms' White Racial Identity Attitude Scale relates to correctly responding to vignettes based on early adolescents in Cross' stage model of Nigresence Racial Identity. Following is a discussion and visual displays of the data analysis and findings that emerged because of this study.

Demographics

Table 4.1 presents a summary of the demographic characteristics of the sample. Participants provided their gender, age, highest degree, current teaching setting, years of teaching/advising experience, years of teaching/advising African American students, and their race. Percentages by category represent the total number of respondents for each question, not the total number of survey respondents.

Seventy-one percent of participants were female and 52% were between the ages of twenty-five to thirty-four. Sixty-seven percent of participants had obtained master's degrees. Fifty-eight percent taught in an urban setting, with 78% of participants having between zero and eleven years of teaching experience. Eighty-nine reported having between zero and five years teaching experience in an urban setting. Seventy-seven percent of participants identified themselves as White.

Table 4.1

Demographic Characteristics of the Sample (N = 31)

Item	Total	<u>n</u>	<u>%</u>
<i>Gender</i>	31		
Males		9	29.0
Females		22	71.0
<i>Age</i>	31		
21-24		2	6.5
25-34		16	51.6
35-44		5	16.1
45-54		5	16.1
55-63		3	9.7
<i>Highest Degree</i>	30		
Bachelor's Degree		10	3.3
Master's Degree		20	66.7
<i>Current Teaching Setting</i>	31		
Urban		18	58.1
Suburban		4	12.9
Rural		9	29.0
<i>Years of Teaching Experience</i>	31		
0-5		14	45.2
6-11		10	32.3
12-17		2	6.5
18-23		4	12.9
24+		1	3.2
<i>Years of Experience Teaching/Advising African American Students</i>	28		
0-5		15	53.6
6-11		9	32.1
12-17		1	3.6
18-23		3	10.7
24+		0	0.0
<i>Race/Ethnicity</i>	31		
Black		4	12.9
Latino		3	9.7
White		24	77.3

Note. Percentages based on total respondents per category.

Demographic data of vignettes. Each participant was asked to respond to three vignettes that provided descriptive summaries of typical behaviors demonstrated by African American early middle school students according to Cross' stage model of Nigrescence Racial identity development that might be encountered by seventh and eighth grade teacher/advisors. These vignettes were validated by jury of teachers and college professors with knowledge of Cross' model. Each vignette stated the age and gender of the student, then described a situation where he/she behaved in a manner consistent with the Encounter and Immersion-Emersion stages of Cross' model of Nigrescence Racial Identity Development (Cross, 1990).

Teacher/advisors read each vignette, and selected a response from a series of multiple-choice items with one correct answer and two plausible distracters (Orcher, 2007) that best matched how he or she would respond in each situation. In Vignette 1 (see Appendix B), participants were presented with the scenario of a fourteen year old in the first phase of the Encounter stage (1990). Characteristically, the early adolescent pursued without prompting, an exploration of the Black presence and significance in US history (Carter & Goodwin, 2008). The correct response to this vignette was C: "Have a discussion with Roshon about how history often omits people of color and their historical contributions, and direct him to resources based on his expressed interests". This is Table 4.2 lists the percentage of correct responses to Vignette 1 in each demographic category.

Eighty-seven percent of male participants answered Vignette 1 correctly, while 75% of females answered correctly. Participants between the ages of twenty-five and thirty-four were the largest age group to answer correctly at 86.7%. Participants with bachelor's degrees received a 100% correct response rate, while respondents with

master's degrees responded correctly 66.7% of the time. Urban and suburban teachers averaged correct answers 74.15% of the time, lower than rural teachers whose answer rate was 88.9%. Participants with an average 0-5 years teaching/teaching advising African American students had an 88.7% correct response rate. White teachers garnered an 85.7% correct response rate, while Black teachers correct answer rate was 33.3%.

Vignette 2 (see Appendix C), presented a scenario of a twelve-year-old seventh grade student in the second phase of the Encounter stage (Cross, 1990). Characteristic of this stage and phase, this student had a high sense of personal regard and faced a situation that challenged this high regard (Carter & Goodwin, 1994). She expressed frustration with salespeople following her in a mall clothing store that has a predominantly White clientele. The correct answer to the vignette that affirms her racial identity stage is: "Tell Shirley that she probably is being followed because she is Black". Table 4.3 lists the percentage of correct responses to Vignette 2 from participants in each demographic category.

Twenty-two percent of male participants answered Vignette 2 correctly, while 19% of females answered correctly. Participants between the ages of twenty-five and thirty-four were the largest age group to answer correctly at 26.7%. Urban and suburban teachers averaged correct answers 18.4% of the time, lower than rural teachers whose answer rate was 33.3%. Participants with an average 6-11 years teaching and teaching/advising African American students had a 40% correct response rate. White teachers correct response rate was 17.4%, while Black teachers was 33.3%.

In Vignette 3 (see Appendix D), participants were presented with the scenario of a fourteen-year-old eighth grade student in the Immersion-Emersion stage (1990). It was

reported by a White teacher that this student displayed hostility, refused to follow directives, and was defensive and belligerent. The student reports to you that he hates to be in that particular teacher's classroom because the teacher is prejudiced. The correct response to the student that affirms his stage of racial identity development was C: "Tell Taylor that his perceptions of the teacher could possibly be right. Table 4.3 lists the percentage of correct responses to Vignette 3 from participants in each demographic category.

Eighty-nine percent of male participants answered Vignette 3 correctly, while 75% of females answered correctly. Participants between the ages of forty-five and sixty-four were the largest age group to answer correctly at 20%. Urban and suburban teachers averaged correct answers 15% of the time, higher than rural teachers who had a zero response rate. Participants with an average 6-11 years teaching/teaching advising African American students had a 13.35% correct response rate. White teachers garnered a 39.77% correct response rate, while Black teachers correct answer rate was 33.4%.

Table 4.2

Demographic Characteristics of Responses to Vignette 1 (N=31)

Item	Total	<i>n</i>	% Correct	% Incorrect
<i>Gender</i>				
Male	28	8	87.5	12.5
Female	28	20	75.0	25.0
<i>Age</i>				
21-24		1	100.0	.0
25-34		15	86.7	13.3
35-44		5	80.0	20.0
45-54		5	80.0	20.0
55-63		2	.0	100.0
<i>Highest Degree</i>				
Bachelor's Degree	27	9	100.0	.0
Master's Degree		18	66.7	33.3
<i>Current Teaching Setting</i>				
Urban	28	15	73.3	26.7
Suburban		4	75.0	25.0
Rural		9	88.9	11.1
<i>Years of Teaching Experience</i>				
0-5	28	12	83.3	16.7
6-11		10	80.0	20.0
12-17		2	100.0	.0
18-23		3	33.3	66.7
24+		1	100.0	.0
<i>Years of Experience Teaching/Advising African American Students</i>				
0-5	26	14	92.9	7.1
6-11		9	77.8	22.2
12-17		1	100.0	.0
18-23		2	.0	100.0
24+		-	-	-
<i>Race/Ethnicity</i>				
Black	28	3	33.3	66.7
Latino		4	75.0	25.0
White		21	85.7	14.3

Note: Percentages based on total respondents per category.

Table 4.3

Demographic Characteristics of Responses to Vignette 2 (N=31)

Item	Total	<u>n</u>	% Correct	% Incorrect
<i>Gender</i>	30			
Male		9	22.2	77.8
Female		21	19.0	81.0
<i>Age</i>	30			
21-24		2	.0	100.0
25-34		15	26.7	73.3
35-44		5	20.0	80.0
45-54		5	20.0	80.0
55-63		3	.0	100.0
<i>Highest Degree</i>	29			
Bachelor's Degree		9	22.2	78.8
Master's Degree		20	20.0	80.0
<i>Current Teaching Setting</i>	30			
Urban		17	11.8	88.2
Suburban		4	25.0	75.0
Rural		9	33.3	66.7
<i>Years of Teaching Experience</i>	27			
0-5		14	7.7	92.3
6-11		10	40.0	60.0
12-17		2	.0	100.0
18-23		4	25.0	75.0
24+		1	.0	100.0
<i>Years of Experience Teaching/Advising African American Students</i>	27			
0-5		14	21.4	78.6
6-11		9	33.3	66.7
12-17		1	.0	100.0
18-23		3	.0	100.0
24+		-	-	-
<i>Race/Ethnicity</i>	29			
Black		3	33.3	66.7
Latino		4	25.0	75.0
White		22	17.4	82.6

Note. Not every respondent answered the questions so categories do not total 31. Percentages based on total respondents per category.

Table 4.4

Demographic Characteristics of Responses to Vignette 3(N=31)

Item	Total	<u>n</u>	% Correct	% Incorrect
<i>Gender</i>	29			
Male		9	11.1	88.9
Female		20	5.0	95.0
<i>Age</i>				
21-24		2	.0	100.0
25-34		16	6.2	93.8
35-44		5	.0	100.0
45-54		5	20.0	80.0
55-63		1	.0	100.0
<i>Highest Degree</i>	28			
Bachelor's Degree		10	.0	100.0
Master's Degree		18	11.1	89.9
<i>Current Teaching Setting</i>	29			
Urban		17	5.9	94.1
Suburban		4	25.0	75.0
Rural		8	.0	100.0
<i>Years of Teaching Experience</i>	29			
0-5		14	.0	100.0
6-11		9	11.1	88.9
12-17		2	.0	100.0
18-23		3	33.3	66.7
24+		1	.0	100.0
<i>Years of Experience Teaching/Advising African American Students</i>	26			
0-5		15	6.7	93.3
6-11		8	12.5	87.5
12-17		1	.0	100.0
18-23		2	.0	100.0
24+		-	-	-
<i>Race/Ethnicity</i>		29		
Black		3	.0	100.0
Latino		4	25.0	75.0
White		22	4.5	95.5

Note. Percentages based on total respondents per category.

Table 4.5 describes the percentages of correct and incorrect responses to the vignettes by teacher/advisors. Vignette 1 garnered the highest correct response rate at 85.7%. Vignette 3 had the lowest correct response rate at 4.5%. This finding was

consistent with the progression of the vignettes from easy (Vignette 1) to difficult (Vignette 3).

Table 4.5

Teacher/Advisor Responses to Vignettes (N=23)

Vignette	<u>n</u>	% Correct	% Incorrect
1	21	85.7	14.3
2	23	17.4	82.6
3	22	4.5	95.5

White racial identity attitude scale. Participants who self-identified as White then took the WRIAS. This scale, developed by Helms and Carter (1990), is a 50-item, 5-point Likert scale (1 = *strongly disagree*, 5 = *strongly agree*) that assesses White racial identity attitude statuses as proposed by Helms (1984). The WRIAS measures the attitudes in Helms' theory of White racial identity and five statuses: contact, disintegration, reintegration, pseudo-independence, and autonomy. Four items from each subscale with the highest factor loads were compiled for the survey. Scores on each subscale ranged from 1.0 to 5.0. High scores on a particular subscale represent a person's schema, status, and phase of White racial identity development.

Appendixes E through I detail the highest score on each subscale by the demographics of the participants. Participants received the highest scores on the Pseudo-independence and the Autonomy subscales, with scores falling between 3.50 and 4.75 in all demographic categories. The lowest scores were found in the Disintegration and the

Reintegration subscale with scores ranging from 1.75 to 3.25. The Contact subscale scores fell in the middle of all subscales, ranging between 3.25 and 4.25.

One-hundred percent of participants who had between twelve and seventeen years of teaching experience scored either a 4.0 or 4.50 on the Pseudo-Independence or Autonomy subscale and 1.75 or below on the Disintegration, Reintegration, and Contact subscales. Urban teachers scored the highest in the Pseudo-Independence subscale with scores distributed between 3.75 and 4.75. Suburban teachers scored between 3.75 and 4.50 on the Autonomy subscale.

The following resulted after calculating the means of the WRIAS subscales for all participants in order to determine the central tendencies of each. Table 4.6 shows the mean and standard deviations for each of the WRIAS subscales. The Autonomy scale had the highest mean ($M=4.01$, $SD .423$), indicating that most of the participants were in the Autonomy phase of racial identity development followed by the pseudo-independence scale ($M=3.75$, $SD .423$). The disintegration scale mean was 2.21 points lower than the Autonomy scale's mean.

Table 4.6

Mean of WRIAS Subscale Scores

Subscales	<u>n</u>	<u>M</u>	<u>SD</u>
Contact	21	3.18	.598
Disintegration	22	1.80	.454
Reintegration	23	2.00	.517
Pseudo-Independence	23	3.75	.423
Autonomy	23	4.01	.423

Note. Subscales were comprised of items with highest factor loads.

Appendix J shows the participant's individual WRIAS subscale scores and dominant and secondary White racial identity development profiles. Fifty-two percent of participants had a dominant profile of Autonomy. Thirty-nine percent had a dominant profile of Pseudo-Independence, and 8.7% had a dominant profile of Contact. The secondary profiles descended in the same order with 39.1% in the Autonomy stage, 34.8% in the Pseudo-Independence stage, and 26.9% in the Contact stage. No participants scored either their highest or lowest scores in the Disintegration or Reintegration stages. One participant obtained scores that did not significantly differ across stages, and therefore, whose profile emerged as undifferentiated. Thus, for this study, the dominant White racial identity stage was Autonomy. These findings are consistent with the means and standard deviations noted above.

This study focused on the White racial identity development stages of teachers who advise African American early adolescents. The research question addressed was:

Does scoring high on Helms' White Racial Identity Attitude Scale relate to identifying correct answers on vignettes based on early adolescents in Cross' stage model of Nigresence Racial Identity? Table 4.12 displays results of a Spearman rho correlation coefficient, calculated to determine the relationship between the scores on the WRIAS subscales and the scores on the vignettes. Findings indicated no significant positive correlations ($p < .1$). Scores on the subscales were not positively related to scores on the vignettes. This finding indicates that higher scores on subscales were not related to answering vignettes correctly.

While no consistent clear patterns emerged, detected were several negative moderate correlations between the Contact and Reintegration stages and Vignette 1, $p = -.483$ and $p = -.399$. These negative correlations indicate that high scores on these subscales were moderately negatively correlated with answering Vignette 1 correctly. Surprisingly, a moderate negative correlation was detected between the Pseudo-Independence subscale and Vignette 3, $p = -.246$, indicating that participants who scored high in the Pseudo-Independence subscale were less likely to answer Vignette 3 correctly.

Table 4.7

Spearman's Rho Correlations between Subscale Scores and Vignette Scores

Vignettes	Contact	Disintegration	Reintegration	Pseudo-Independence	Autonomy
1 <i>N</i>	-.483* 18	.037 20	-.399* 20	.161 20	-.274 20
2 <i>N</i>	.004 20	-.143 21	-.32 22	.000 22	.104 22
3 <i>N</i>	-.175 19	.183 20	-.076 21	-.246* 21	-.019 21

Note. $p < .1$ (two-tailed). Subscales were comprised of highest factor loaded items.

Chosen because of the small size of the sample, the Mann-Whitney U test further illustrated the lack of any direct relationship between the vignettes and the WRIAS subscale scores. Table 4.13 shows that there was no significant relationship between any of the correct answers on the vignettes and the means of any of the WRIAS subscales. As shown in the bar charts found in Figures 4.1, 4.2, and 4.3, there were no significant relationships answering the vignettes correctly and the means of the WRIAS subscales.

Table 4.8

Mann-Whitney U Test Means Rankings and U between Subscales and Vignettes

Subscales	Vignettes					
	1		2		3	
	<u>M</u>	<u>U</u>	<u>M</u>	<u>U</u>	<u>M</u>	<u>U</u>
Contact	8.62	2.0	10.0	30.0	14.0	5.0
Disintegration	10.59	24.0	9.25	27.0	15.0	5.0
Reintegration	9.56	9.5	9.75	29.0	9.0	8.0
Pseudo-Independence	10.88	19.0	11.50	36.0	4.5	3.5
Autonomy	9.85	14.5	12.88	30.5	10.5	9.5

Note. $p < .01$. Subscales comprised of items with highest factor loads.

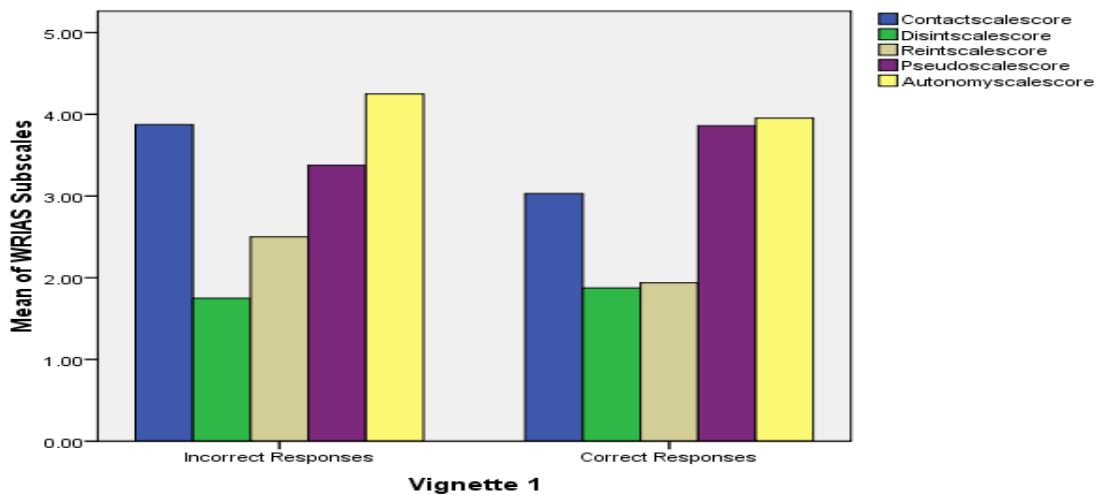


Figure 4.1. Mann-Whitney U Test of Vignette 1

The Mann-Whitney U Test illustrated the distribution of Vignette 1 incorrect and correct responses to subscale means. Subscales were comprised of items with highest factor loads.

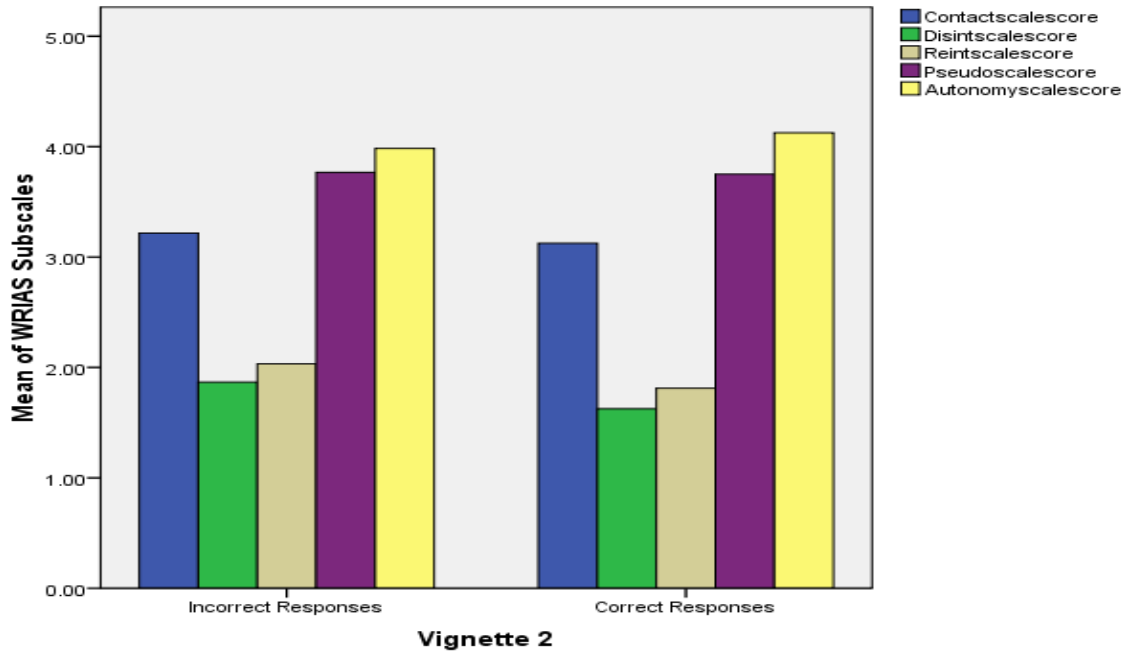


Figure 4.2. Mann-Whitney U Test of Vignette 2

The Mann-Whitney U Test illustrated the distribution of Vignette 2 incorrect and correct responses to subscale means. Subscale comprised of items with highest factor loads.

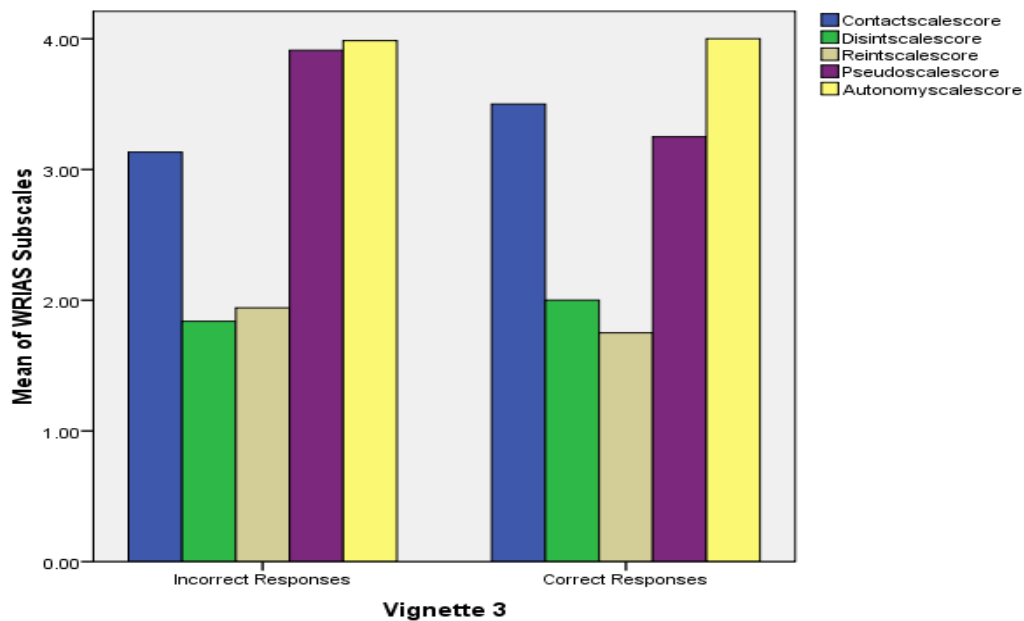


Figure 4.3. Mann-Whitney U Test of Vignette 3

The Mann-Whitney U Test illustrated distribution of Vignette 3 incorrect and correct responses to subscale means. Subscales comprised of items with highest factor loads.

For a more detailed analysis, a Spearman's rho correlation between the individual items on the WRIAS subscales and the vignettes was calculated. Consistent with the findings thus far, there were no significant correlations ($p < .1$). Items on the subscales of the WRIAS were not related to scores on the vignettes. Because this study is underpowered, correlations were examined that were greater than .3. Several potentially weak indirect correlations were found between Vignette's and items on the subscales. One moderate negative correlation ($p = -.547$) was found between Vignette 1 and item 8 (For most of my life I did not think about racial issues).

Table 4.9

Spearman's Rho Correlations between Subscale Items and Vignettes

Subscale Items	Vignette		
	1	2	3
1. I hardly think about what race I am.	-.061	-.117	.328*
2. I do not understand what Blacks want from Whites.	.200	-.059	.234
3. I feel as uncomfortable around Blacks as I do around Whites.	.236	.130	-.368*
4. I feel depressed after I have been around Black people.	-.197	-.241	-.103
5. I enjoy watching different ways in which Black people and White people approach life.	.035	-.090	.127
6. I think it is exciting to discover the little ways in which Black people and White people are different.	-.030	-.042	-.022
7. I'd rather socialize with Whites only.	-.313*	.301*	-.133
8. For most of my life I did not think about racial issues.	-.547*	-.188	-.053
9. It is possible for Blacks and Whites to have meaningful social relationships with each other.	-.167	.211	.103
10. There are some valuable things that White people can learn from Black people that they can't learn from other White people.	.079	.039	-.175
11. I am curious to learn in what ways Black people and White people differ from each other.	-.174	.131	-.020
12. Society may have been unjust to Blacks but it has also been unjust to Whites.	-.212	.156	-.098
13. I am comfortable wherever I am.	-.215	.076	.110
14. When I must interact with a Black person, I usually let him or her make the first move.	.335*	.075	.086
15. I think I understand Black people's values.	.142	-.098	.098
16. Blacks and Whites can have successful intimate relationships	-.343*	.161	-.233
17. I believe that Blacks are inferior to Whites.	.096	-.103	-.050
18. I believe I know a lot about Black people's customs.	.141	.010	-.039
19. When I am the only White in a group of Blacks, I feel anxious.	-.380*	-.295	-.020
20. I don't understand why Black people blame White people for their social misfortunes.	.048	-.248	-.046

Note. $p < .1$, (two-tailed). WRIAS comprised of items with highest factor loads from each subscale.

Summary of Results

Participants for this study were recruited among teacher/advisors who attended the National Expeditionary Learning Conference held in Kansas City, Missouri in February, 2010. Here, teachers gathered from urban, suburban, and rural schools throughout the United States. Study participants were recruited by responding to informational cards asking conference attendees to take a short survey based on racial interactions with students. The sample consisted of thirty-one participants. Of those, 71% were White females between the ages of twenty-five to thirty-four with master's degrees. Fifty-eight percent of participants taught in an urban setting, with an average of five years teaching predominantly African American students.

The anonymous electronic survey included three vignettes based on stages of African American racial identity development in adolescents, and a demographic questionnaire. Additionally, participants who self-identified as White (N=23) took Helms' White Racial Identity Attitude Survey (1984). For this study Helms' original scale was modified from fifty items to a twenty item scale, using items with the highest factor loads from each of the original subscales.

Using SPSS, for all data analyses, demographic profiles were created for the participants, as well as descriptive statistics for the responses to the variables on the questionnaire, the responses to the vignettes, and the answers to the subscales of the WRIAS. Eighty-seven percent of participants answered Vignette 1 correctly, while Vignette 3, which was the most difficult, had only a 4.5% correct answer rate. After calculating the scores for the WRIAS, it was determined that 52% of White participants were at the autonomy level of White racial identity development. A Spearman's rho

correlation coefficient determined no relationship between the answers to the vignettes and the WRIAS scores. Because of the small size of the sample, the Mann-Whitney U test was calculated which further illustrated no direct relationship between the vignettes and WRIAS subscale scores.

While data revealed no significant positive correlation between scores on the WRIAS and the ability to select correct answers on vignettes, a few moderate and/or weak negative correlations emerged. These negative correlations, though not strong, indicate that high scores on some subscales were associated with low scores on vignettes. Additionally, though 52% of participants had attained the Autonomy level of racial identity development, which according to Helms (1990), indicate that they have internalized a positive, nonracist White identity; they were not able to select correct responses on the vignettes that affirmed the student's stage of Black racial identity development. The following chapter will present a more detailed summary and discussion of the findings.

Chapter 5: Discussion

Introduction

The purpose of this study was to examine the relationship between the interdependent constructs of White racial identity development and African-American racial identity development within the context of middle school between teacher/advisors and early adolescents. The research question explored was: Does scoring high on Helms' White Racial Identity Attitude Scale (WRIAS) relate to identifying correct answers on vignettes based on adolescents in Cross' model of Nigresence Racial Identity Development. Major findings from this study indicate that there is no relationship between any stage of White racial identity development and the ability to select correct answers on vignettes based on African American adolescent racial identity stages. This chapter will present an interpretation and implications of the findings as they relate to the research question. Presented also will be a discussion of the limitations of the study, as well as recommendations for further research.

Implications of Findings

Inferred throughout the literature is the notion that upon attaining the Autonomy stage in White racial identity development – the highest stage, an intellectual and internal acknowledgement of institutional racism has occurred (Helms, 1990). In this stage, one would begin to draw connections between racism and other forms of inequity and dominance, and communicate authentically with persons from another race (Howard, 2006; Tatum, 2003). Theoretically, it follows that a person in the Autonomy stage would

select the correct answer for the vignettes, based affirming the racial identity of the African American adolescent.

Findings that resulted from this research did not support the above stated premise. Data revealed no significant positive correlation between scores on the WRIAS and the ability to select correct answers on vignettes describing African American early adolescents at various stages of Black racial identity. The inability to identify the correct answers on the vignettes was inconsistent with the Autonomy status. There are several possible explanations for the inconsistency.

First, the participants may have chosen the socially desirable answers on the WRIAS, rather than reveal personal biases. Second, most White teacher/advisors who participated in the study might be post-racial in their thinking. Both of the above explanations could also account for 87% of the sample scoring in the Autonomy or Pseudo-Independence stages, and only 1.3% scoring in lowest stage of Contact.

Multicultural, diversity, and cultural sensitivity training has become a part of most teacher training. This could account for high racial identity scores in the Autonomy and Pseudo-Independence stages for teacher/advisors in this study that represented the largest demographic; ages twenty-five to thirty four with up to eleven years teaching experience.

Several unanticipated results emerged in the findings. Although these teacher/advisors were able to select answers on the subscales of the WRIAS that affirmed a high level of racial sensitivity toward themselves and others, they were not able to apply them in a practical and authentic manner. Males selected correct answers to the vignettes at a higher percentage rate than did females, and African American participants had the lowest percentage rate of correct responses. The latter two findings are

inconsistent with proponents of solely African American teachers for African American students (Milner & Howard, 2002), however, strengthens the issues around concern for the lack of male teachers at the middle school level (New York state United Teachers, 2007).

Some findings in this study are consistent with other research regarding White racial identity development: First, WRIAS scores do not differ significantly by gender. Men and women scored similarly across all stages of White racial identity. Further, WRIAS scores do not vary significantly with age. Mean by age groups did not differ across age groups in the current study (Carter, Helms, and Juby 2004). Most participants in the above study obtained an undifferentiated or flat White racial identity profile in which no status dominated for any individual. However, findings from the current study clearly profiled participants in dominant and secondary racial identity categories, with most participants rating in the Pseudo-Independent phase or the Autonomy phase. One explanation for this result is that participants in this study were all from Expeditionary Learning schools where an emphasis is placed on diversity and inclusion as one of the Design Principles (Expeditionary Learning, 2008).

Teachers in Expeditionary Learning schools have an understanding of diversity, and forward diversity initiatives in their schools. Furthermore, these schools provide opportunities for ongoing diversity training. It follows that Expeditionary Learning schools teachers would have the intellectual knowledge to select the answers on the WRIAS that speak to issues of diversity, understanding, and acceptance.

Limitations of the Study

The proposed study provided valuable information concerning White racial identity development in teachers and its impact on African American adolescents, however, limitations emerged that could have affected the results. First, as with all quantitative studies, missing from the findings was qualitative component that would have given insight into the related thinking behind the participants choices, and would have brought clarity and depth to the issues.

Secondly, the sample provided several limitations. Only teachers in attendance at the Expeditionary Learning National Conference were invited to participate. Though this population produced a sample of convenience, it presented a small survey size with low statistical power. A larger sample size could produce correlations that were not evident within this small sample.

Thirdly, participants took the survey on computers that were set up in a main hallway, allowing for distractions while answering the questions. A more private forum with fewer distractions would have given participants the time to settle down to take the survey. Fourth, it will not be known whether participants selected responses to survey questions based on honest feelings, or those determined to be more 'socially desirable'. As with any self-report instrument, especially one that deals with race, there is always the concern that people will answer in socially desirable ways, even when their answers are confidential. Finally, participants may have received diversity training prior to this study.

Recommendations

The findings from this study provide a number of recommendations for further research, the field of education, and institutes of higher learning. Additionally, there are

considerations for changes in organizational procedures and practices. Researchers have questioned the efficacy of the construct of White racial identity development as proposed by Helms, and the WRIAS as a measure of this construct. Prior studies suggest that it may more appropriately measure racism and prejudicial attitudes, while other studies dismiss the theory all together (Behrens, 1997; Behrens & Rowe, 1997; Helms, 1997, 1999). As the debate continues, needed still is empirical evidence regarding the impact of the predominantly White teaching force on the social emotion well-being and academic achievement of African American students. To this end, further research using another theoretical framework and measurement scale such as the Oklahoma Racial Attitude Scale (Choney & Behrens, 1996) might prove adequate in determining correlations between Black racial identity and White racial identity. Based on Rowe, Bennett, & Atkinson's theory of White racial identity development, this scale measures White racial consciousness as defined by a person's awareness of being White, and what this awareness implies in relationship to those who are not White.

The implications from this research study and future potential research further suggests that colleges and universities play a critical role in preparing teachers to teach students of different races. Though multi-cultural curriculums abound, this study brought to light the need for more of an 'authentic' approach, based on vignettes or case studies, as these would allow for open dialogue and processing of concepts. Additionally, more psycho-social adolescent development and behavior courses, coupled with year-long field work and student teaching experiences would assist in preparing aspiring teachers to proceed knowledgably into teaching careers.

School districts need teachers who can understand and recognize students' cultural background and urban conditions; have the capacity to care enough to persevere, and act on the potential of every student regardless of their race. The selection process for teachers needs to extend beyond technical knowledge. Given that schools are microcosms of the larger society, tests of diversity attitudes, racial identity development, and the ability to develop relationships with students would serve students well. Urban districts in particular need to consider using these types of instruments for potential teacher candidates to determine their suitability for teaching in urban schools. Putting the right people in schools is one component to closing the achievement gap where too many children of color reside.

Conclusion

Assisting African American adolescents with understanding how to navigate the racial realities of their lives is increasingly becoming one of the responsibilities of teachers. With the predominantly white teaching force present in today's schools, understanding their own place as racial beings could have an effect on how they interact with African American students. Scholars agree that each person with whom African American adolescents comes in contact within the context of school has an opportunity to affirm or deny their racial identity, and help them navigate the system of institutionalized racism through which they must learn how to navigate. This study was an examination into the racial identity developmental stages of White teachers and their relationship to African American adolescent racial identity. By using several statistical tests, it was determined that teachers who had higher racial identities were not able to select correct answers to vignettes based on African American racial identity. Used as theoretical

frameworks were Helms' (1990) theory of White racial identity development, and Cross' model of Nigresence racial identity. Though the current research did not reveal any statistically significant relationship between the two constructs, it raised many questions. These findings present opportunities for further research, pre-service and in-service teacher development, course offerings for colleges and universities that prepare teachers, and policies that govern teacher hiring practices.

Most of the literature and empirical studies regarding racial identity development is found in the field of counseling, revolving around the client/therapist relationship. It is long overdue for the field of education to recognize and bring to the forefront the role of racial identity development in the classroom. This study contributes to the small body of knowledge on racial identity development in education, and presents pro-active strategies that can assist in the understanding this construct.

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Appendix A

Demographic Questionnaire

Please check the appropriate responses or fill in the blank.

1. GENDER:

Male ____ Female ____

2. AGE:

21-24 ____ 25-34 ____ 35-44 ____ 45-54 ____ 55-63 ____ 64-74 ____

3. HIGHEST DEGREE:

Bachelor's Degree ____ Master's Degree ____ Doctorate Degree ____

Other _____ (Specify)

4. CURRENT TEACHING SETTING

Urban ____ Suburban ____ Rural ____

5. Please select one of the answers from each row even if it is the same:

A. YEARS OF TEACHING EXPERIENCE:

0-5 ____ 6-11 ____ 12-17 ____ 18-23 ____ 24+ ____

B. YEARS OF EXPERIENCE TEACHING/ADVISING AFRICAN-AMERICAN STUDENTS:

0-5 ____ 6-11 ____ 12-17 ____ 18-23 ____ 24+ ____

6. RACE/ETHNICITY:

Asian American ____ Native American ____ Black ____ Pacific Islander ____

Latino (a) ____ Multi-racial ____ White ____ Other _____ (Specify)

Appendix B

Owens Vignette 1

Circle the response that best matches what you would do in each scenario.

Eighth grader RoShon, a 14 year old African American male student is your advisee. During a conference, he tells you that he is failing Social Studies because his paper on the Revolutionary War unit was only about the enslavement of Black people during that time. His Social Studies teacher commented on the paper that he needed to move ‘beyond that’ and open up to the events of that time that helped build this country. This student usually receives superior grades.

You would:

A. Have a discussion with RoShon about the need to pass the class and encourages him to redo the assignment to the teacher’s specifications.

B. Have a discussion with RoShon about the importance of learning about the Revolutionary War events that the teacher is teaching because it is important to understand US History.

C. Have a discussion with RoShon about how history very often omits people of color and their historical accomplishments and contributions, and direct him to further resources based on his expressed interests.

Compiled by Idonia M. Owens, Doctoral Candidate, St. John Fisher College, Rochester, New York, December, 2009

Appendix C

Owens Vignette 2

Circle the response that best matches what you would do as the student's teacher/advisor in this scenario.

During an individual conference, seventh grader Shirley, aged 12, expresses frustration about shopping at a particular clothing store in a local mall with a predominantly White clientele. Shirley explains that whenever she goes to the store, she is followed by the sales people, and that even though it is never said, she knows that they look at her suspiciously because she is Black and they expect her to steal. You have shopped in that store also and have had nothing but positive shopping experiences.

You would:

- A. Tell Shirley that from your experience the people there are really nice and that she is probably being too sensitive.
- B. Tell Shirley that there is a high theft rate among teenagers and that merchants do what they have to do to protect their interests.
- C. Tell Shirley that she probably is being followed simply because she is Black.

Compiled by Idonia M. Owens, Doctoral Candidate, St. John Fisher College, Rochester, New York, December, 2009

Appendix D

Owens Vignette 3

Circle the response that best matches what you would do as the student's teacher/advisor in this scenario.

It has been reported to you by another teacher that your advisee Taylor, a 14 year old African American eighth grade male, is a disruption in this teacher's class. He uses the "n" word in daily conversations with peers and teachers, and is more apt to react negatively and angrily when given a directive by the teacher, than to comply. The teacher reports that when she confronts Taylor about his misbehaviors, he becomes defensive and belligerent, telling the teacher to "back off" him. You have not seen any of these behaviors from Taylor, but as his Advisor have been asked to talk to him. When you have the conference with Taylor, he tells you that the teacher is prejudiced, doesn't understand Black people, disrespects him, and that he hates being in his classroom so he plays around.

You would:

1. Tell Taylor that his perceptions of the teacher could possibly be right.
2. Other students have reported that this teacher is fair and you inform Taylor of this.
3. Tell Taylor that you would like specific evidence of how this teacher is prejudiced.

Appendix E

Subscale Items with Highest Factor Loads from the White Racial Identity Attitude Scale (Helms, 1990)

Use the scale below to respond to each statement. Beside each item number, write the number that best describes how you feel.

1-Strongly Disagree 2-Agree 3-Uncertain 4-Disagree 5-Strongly Agree

1. I hardly think about what race I am.
2. I do not understand what Blacks want from Whites.
3. I feel as uncomfortable around Blacks as I do around Whites.
4. I feel depressed after I have been around Black people.
5. I enjoy watching the different ways that Black people and White people approach life.
6. I think it is exciting to discover the little ways in which Black people and White people are different.
7. I'd rather socialize with White's only.
8. For most of my life I did not think about racial issues.
9. It is possible for Blacks and Whites to have meaningful social relationships with each other.
10. There are some valuable things that White people can learn from Blacks that they can't learn from other Whites.
11. I am curious to learn in what ways Black people and White people differ from each other.

12. Society may have been unjust to Blacks but it has also been unjust to Whites.
13. I am comfortable wherever I am.
14. When I must interact with a Black person, I usually let him or her make the first move.
15. I think I understand Black people's values.
16. Blacks and Whites can have successful intimate relationships.
17. I believe that Blacks are inferior to Whites.
18. I believe I know a lot about Black people's customs.
19. When I am the only White in a group of Blacks, I feel anxious.
20. I don't understand why Black people blame White people for their social misfortunes.

Appendix F

Percentages of Highest Contact Scale Scores by Demographics

Item	n	% Scores				
		3.25	3.50	3.75	4.0	4.25
<i>Gender</i>	21					
Male			25.0			25.0
Female		17.6	11.8		11.8	
<i>Age</i>	21					
21-24						50.0
25-35		16.7	16.7		16.7	
35-44						
45-54			33.3	33.3		
55-63		50.0		50.0		
<i>Highest Degree</i>	20					
Bachelors		25.0	12.5	16.7	8.3	12.5
Masters			16.7			
<i>Current Teaching Setting</i>	21					
Urban		16.7	8.3	8.3	8.3	8.3
Suburban		50.0	50.0			
Rural			14.3	14.3	14.3	
<i>Years of Teaching Experience</i>	21					
0-5						
6-11			8.3		16.7	
12-17		33.3	16.7	33.3		8.3
18-23						
24+		50.0	50.0			
<i>Years of Experience Teaching/Advising African American Students</i>	21					
0-5			9.1	9.1	9.1	
6-11		40.0	20.0	20.0		
12-17						
18-23		100.0				
24+						

Note. Percentages in columns do not all total 100 due to omission of scores below 3.25 in this table. Subscale was comprised of highest factor loaded items.

Appendix G

Percentages of Highest Disintegration Scale Scores by Demographics

Item	n	% Scores				
		1.75	2.0	2.25	2.50	2.75
<i>Gender</i>	22					
Male		75.0			25.0	
Female		11.1	33.3			11.1
<i>Age</i>	22					
21-24		50.0	50.0			
25-35		18.2	27.3		9.1	
35-44						
45-54		40.0	20.0			20.0
55-63			50.0			
<i>Highest Degree</i>	21					
Bachelors		25.0	25.0		12.5	15.4
Masters		23.1	23.1		9.1	
<i>Current Teaching Setting</i>	22					
Urban		36.4	27.3			91.1
Suburban		25.0	25.0			25.0
Rural			28.6			
<i>Years of Teaching Experience</i>	22					
0-5		18.2	36.4			28.6
6-11		28.6			9.1	
12-17		100.0	14.3			
18-23						
24+			50.0			
<i>Years of Experience Teaching/Advising African American Students</i>	20					
0-5			50.0		10.0	
6-11		10.0	14.33		14.3	
12-17		28.6				
18-23						
24+		100.0				

Note. Percentages in rows do not all total 100 due to omission of scores below 1.75 in this table. Empty cells indicate 0%. Subscale was comprised of highest factor loaded items.

Appendix H

Percentages of Highest Reintegration Scale Scores by Demographics

Item	n	% Scores				
		2.25	2.50	2.75	3.0	3.25
<i>Gender</i>	23					
Male						5.3
Female		15.8		10.5	5.3	4.3
<i>Age</i>	21					
21-24						
25-35		16.7		8.3	8.3	8.3
35-44						
45-54		20.0				
55-63				50.0		
<i>Highest Degree</i>	22					
Bachelors					7.1	7.1
Masters			21.4	7.1		
<i>Current Teaching Setting</i>	21					
Urban		25.0			8.3	8.3
Suburban		50.0				
Rural				28.6		
<i>Years of Teaching Experience</i>	23					
0-5		33.3		8.3	8.3	8.3
6-11		66.7		14.3		
12-17						
18-23						
24+						
<i>Years of Experience Teaching/Advising African American Students</i>	20					
0-5		9.1		9.1	9.1	9.1
6-11		14.3		14.3		
12-17		100.0				
18-23		100.0				
24+						

Note. Percentages in columns do not all total 100 due to omission of scores below 2.25% in this table. Empty cells indicate 0%. Subscale was comprised of highest factor loaded items.

Appendix I

Percentages of Highest Pseudo-Independence Scale Scores by Demographics

Item	<u>n</u>	% Scores				
		3.75	4.0	4.25	4.50	4.75
<hr/>						
<i>Gender</i>	22					
Male		25.0		25.0	25.0	
Female		36.8		15.8	10.5	5.3
<hr/>						
<i>Highest Degree</i>	21					
Bachelors		37.5		12.5		7.1
Masters		35.7		7.1		
<hr/>						
<i>Current Teaching Setting</i>	23			25.0	16.7	8.3
Urban		33.3				
Suburban		50.0		14.3	14.3	
Rural		28.6				
<hr/>						
<i>Years of Experience Teaching/Advising African American Students</i>	20					
0-5		27.3				
6-11		42.9		18.2	18.2	
12-17				14.3		14.3
18-23					100.0	
24+		100.0				

Note. Percentages in rows do not all total 100 due to omission of scores below 3.75 in this table. Empty cells indicate 0%. Subscales comprised of items with highest factor loads.

Appendix J

Percentages of Highest Autonomy Scale Scores by Demographics

Item	n	% Scores				
		3.50	3.75	4.00	4.25	4.50
<hr/>						
<i>Gender</i>	23					
Male				50.0	25.0	25.0
Female			21.1	21.1	21.1	21.1
<hr/>						
<i>Age</i>	23					
21-24					50.0	50.0
25-35			33.3	16.7	25.0	8.3
35-44				50.0		50.0
45-54				60.0	20.0	20.0
55-63					50.0	
<hr/>						
<i>Highest Degree</i>	22					
Bachelors				12.5	37.5	37.5
Masters			21.4	35.7	14.3	14.3
<hr/>						
<i>Current Teaching Setting</i>	23					
Urban			16.7	25.0	25.0	
Suburban			25.0	25.0	25.0	8.3
Rural			14.3	28.6	14.3	25.0
<hr/>						
<i>Years of Teaching Experience</i>	23					
0-5			8.3	25.0	25.0	16.7
6-11			42.9	14.3		28.6
12-17				100.0	14.3	
18-23				50.0	50.0	
24+						100.0
<hr/>						
<i>Years of Experience Teaching/Advising African American Students</i>	20					
0-5			9.1	27.3	27.3	9.1
6-11			42.9		14.3	42.9
12-17						
18-23					100.0	
24+						

Note. Percentages in rows do not all total 100 due to no presentation of scores below 3.50. Empty cells indicate 0%. Subscale was comprised of items with highest factor loads.

Appendix K

Individual WRIAS Subscale Scores and Profile

Item	Subscale Scores					Profile	
	1	2	3	4	5	Dominant	Secondary
1	2.25	1.50	1.50	4.50	4.50	4-5	1
2	3.75	2.00	2.75	2.50	4.50	5	1
3	3.50	2.50	1.75	3.0	4.0	5	1
4	2.50	1.25	1.75	3.75	4.50	5	4
5	3.50	2.00	1.75	3.25	4.00	5	1
6	2.25	1.75	2.00	4.50	4.00	4	5
7	2.25	1.75	1.25	3.25	3.75	5	4
8	3.25	2.75	1.75	2.75	3.75	5	1
9	4.00	2.00	2.75	4.75	4.00	4	1-5
10	2.50	1.25	1.75	3.75	4.50	5	4
11	4.25	1.75	1.50	3.75	4.00	1	5
12	3.75	2.75	2.25	2.75	3.00	1	5
13	3.25	1.25	2.00	3.75	4.25	5	4
14	3.25	1.25	2.25	4.75	3.75	4	5
15	3.00	1.50	2.00	3.75	4.25	5	4
16	3.00	-	3.00	2.75	3.00	Flat Profile	Flat Profile
17	-	1.75	2.00	3.75	4.25	5	4

18	3.00	2.00	3.25	3.75	3.25	4	3-5
19	3.50	1.75	1.75	4.25	3.75	4	5
20	4.00	1.50	2.25	4.25	4.00	4	1-4
21	2.25	2.00	1.50	3.50	3.25	4	5
22	3.00	2.00	1.75	4.50	4.25	4	5
23	-	1.25	1.50	3.75	4.50	5	4

Note. 1 = Contact, 2 = Disintegration, 3 = Reintegration, 4 = Pseudo-Independence, 5 = Autonomy. Subscales comprised of items with highest factor loads.

Appendix L

From: Mosca, Jamie [jmosca@sjfc.edu]
Sent: Monday, March 01, 2010 10:42 AM
To: Owens, Idonia M.
Cc: Montes, Guillermo
Subject: IRB Approval

Dear Ms. Owens:

Thank you for submitting your research proposal to the Institutional Review Board.

I am pleased to inform you that the Board has approved your Full Review project, "The Juxtaposition of White Racial Identity Development in Teachers and Black Racial Identity Development in African American Middle School Students." The Board considers your project adequate to protect the rights and welfare of human subjects as well as meeting the standards for informed consent.

As principal investigator, you are responsible for promptly reporting (in writing), through your department head, the following:

- The location where the signed consent forms will be kept on file for a period of three years.
- Progress reports of the research will be sent to the Board annually. If the research is not concluded within a year's time, you will need to petition the Board for a one-year renewal.
- Any injuries to human subjects.
- Any unanticipated problems that involve risks to the human research subjects or others.
- Changes in a research activity.
- Changes in research during the period for which the Board approval has already been given shall not be initiated by research investigators without the Board review and approval, except where necessary to eliminate apparent immediate hazards to the subject. In such occurrences, the Board is to be notified as soon as possible.

Following federal guidelines, research related records should be maintained in a secure area for three years following the completion of the project at which time they may be destroyed.

Should you have any questions about this process or your responsibilities, please contact me at 385-5262 or by e-mail to emerges@sjfc.edu or if unable to reach me, please contact the IRB Administrator, Jamie Mosca, at 385-8318, e-mail jmosca@sjfc.edu.

On behalf of the Board, I wish you success with your research project.

Sincerely,

Eileen M. Merges, Ph.D.

Chair, Institutional Review Board