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HOW DOES RACIAL IDENTITY EFFECT AFRICAN AMERICAN COLLEGE STUDENTS ABILITY TO ASSIMILATE IN A PREDOMINANTLY WHITE COLLEGE CAMPUSES AND ITS IMPACT ON RETENTION: A MIXED METHOD STUDY

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ABILITY TO ASSIMILATE ON PREDOMINANTLY WHITE COLLEGE CAMPUSES AND
ITS IMPACT ON RETENTION: A MIXED METHOD STUDY

By

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A Dissertation
Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the
Doctor of Philosophy

Department of Curriculum and Instruction
In the Graduate School
Southern Illinois University Carbondale
May 2014

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DISSERTATION APPROVAL

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A Dissertation Submitted in Partial

Fulfillment of the Requirements

for the Degree of

Doctor of Philosophy in Education

In the field of Curriculum and Instruction

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April 9, 2014

AN ABSTRACT OF THE DISSERTATION OF
Janette Howard, for the degree Doctor of Philosophy in CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION,
presented on APRIL 9, 2014 at Southern Illinois University Carbondale.

TITLE: HOW DOES RACIAL IDENTITY EFFECT AFRICAN AMERICAN COLLEGE
STUDENTS ABILITY TO ASSIMILATE ON PREDOMINANTLY WHITE COLLEGE
CAMPUSES AND ITS IMPACT ON RETENTION: A MIXED METHOD STUDY

MAJOR PROFESSOR: Dr. John McIntyre, Examination Committee Chair

The purpose of this mixed-methods study was to determine how racial identity of African American college students can impact their ability to assimilate on predominately White college campuses to the point of hindering their retention. This study was a sequential explanatory mixed method study. Phase one of the study was a quantitative survey consisting of 25 questions that was completed by N=125 African American students attending a Predominately White University in the Mid-West. Phase two of the study was a convenience sample of thirteen African American students living on and off campus. The following research questions were addressed to explore the research topic. (1) How does racial identity impact African American college students' ability to assimilate at a predominately White university with a high enrollment of African American college students? (2) How do African American college students perceive their college/university's commitment to them? (3) How do African American college students perceive their racial identity impacting their lives? The findings of the study showed that the complexities of racism and stereotypical perceptions made the process of assimilating into the college environment holistic, including social, academic, internal and external variables that impacted their ability to assimilate and form relationships needed to have a well-rounded college experience. However, many of the students interviewed felt some of the stereotypical perceptions are sometimes perpetuated by the actions of their Black peers. During a few of the interviews, students (N=7) described their dismay with the behavior that some of their peers exhibited. The participants that were interviewed felt that the students' success should be a

shared responsibility. It should be up to the students to be accountable; one participant stated “too often people want to blame others for things that happen to them.” Furthermore, he explained that he takes full responsibility for the 2.0 grade point he had at the end of the last semester, but he is now looking at a 3.2 for this semester. Many of the students expressed that they did feel the faculty and staff ratio could be more representative of the African American population. The students also felt the administration could do more to bring the students together as a whole, the students of color and the White students. The consensus of the interviews was that Black people as a whole, in the eyes of the boarder society, are not respected nor looked at as assets. Many of the students interviewed felt that if the Black students and the White students had more opportunities to engage outside of the classroom, they may see Blacks beyond the stereotypical perceptions.

DEDICATION

This paper is dedicated to my pastor, teacher and uncle, Dr. Norman S. Greer who always said;

God will give you the VICTORY. RIP

To my wonderful family; you're the reason for the season:

God almighty has brought me;

The love of family has supported me;

The joy of friendship has uplifted me

And with the guidance given by Jesus Christ, I have arrived!

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Statement the Problem

A college education is considered in the main stream of society as the key to success and the way to achieve the American dream. For many African Americans this dream can seem far from being tangible for one reason or the other. Racial identity can be a complex paradigm because for African Americans it's been noted that there are hierarchal stages in which racial identity shifts occur according to situations. Furthermore, many African Americans struggle with the day-to-day issue of being accepted by white society as viable citizens and being seen beyond stereotypical norms. As if coming from low performing schools and low social economically deprived environments was not enough of an obstacle to keep African American College Students (AACS) from achieving degree completion (retention) at four- year universities; having to be continuously judged based on stereotypical stigmas could impact AACSS' ability to be successful. The Journal of Blacks in Higher Education reported the most recent statistics showed that the nationwide college graduation rate for black students stands at an appallingly low rate of 42 percent (2006). They also noted this figure is 20 percentage points below the 62 percent rate for white students (2006). In addition, the report showed in Illinois the graduation rate was 27 percent for black students vs. 59 percent for white students. AACSS will face many challenges as they pursue higher education at Predominantly White Institutions (PWIs). Several variables such as pre-encounters, public regard, private regard and centrality have been identified as dimensions that examine how race normatively defines how a person views herself/himself in respect to his/her race; and how important of a part does their race play (respectively) in different situations (Sellers, Tabbye, Chavous & Cooke, 1998).

Rodger & Summers (2008) reported often black students can experience a disconnect from the overall campus environment, leading to poor retention rates 2008. This disconnect can be directly related to how blacks assimilate and the feelings of belonging to the internal and external campus environment. Sellers, Rowley and Chavous, Shelton, and Smith (1997) argue that racial theory epistemological belief includes the “choices an individual makes are, in part, a function of the extent to which the behavioral choices are related to a salient (or personally relevant) role- identity.” This theory has offered the framework for studying racial identity, which has been researched imperially and vigorously, hypothesizing that there is a direct correlation with racial-identity and AACSS ability to assimilate and be successful attending PWIs (Nasir, McLaughlin & Jones, 2009; Worrell, Vandiver, Schaefer, Cross Jr., & Fhagen-Smith, 2006).

The Significance of the study

The educational attainment of African Americans has been researched to a great extent over the last decade. Sellers, Chavous, and Cooke (1998) did a quantitative study on the role that racial identity paradigms affect the retention of AACSS. Their study used centrality and other scales of measure for the implications of being black as predictors of success for African American college students. Although their study involved AACSS attending PWIs vs. Historically Black Universities (HBC), their findings did conclude that racial centrality (race is important) was positively associated with academic success. They further stated the assimilation process into the college campuses for AACSS was directly related to poor academic performance (Sellers et al. 1998). Much of the past research on the impact of racial identity and retention of AACSS has been done using qualitative or quantitative methods while very few studies have used a mixed methods approach. By using a mixed approach the racial identity of African American

college students can be examined from the quantitative surveys as well as qualitative interviews, allowing for a better understanding of the impact of racial identity Black students

Understanding how African Americans' racial identity impacts their ability to assimilate into the norms of society, more specifically PWIs, can assist educators in helping African American college students become successful and continue their quest for education through to degree complete. When PWIs, in which Blacks are often underrepresented in faculty, administration, do not understand this paradigm they cannot assist AACSS with integrating into college, therefore causing this experience to be somewhat difficult for this group of students and causing African American students to sometimes drop their quest for degrees in higher education. As African American college students assimilate through the college experience, they are often faced with the personal decisions of centrality, meaning what role does being black play in my ability to be successful? More importantly, what matters most too African American college students: feelings of "private regard", which establishes how I feel about myself or those of "public regard" meaning how do -people of different ethnicities feel about me? Why does this impact the life of African American college students? Possibly because blacks sometimes think others see them as ineffective and not having the same intellect as their white college peers.

Racial identity in the context of centrality is a strong predictor of how black students assimilate into the college environment. Often students go off to college leaving friends, family and environments that may not have been conducive to a college atmosphere; however they are expected to assimilate into the college environment and make the adjustment needed to be successful. As they are morphed -into the college environment often they experience an identity crisis attempting to fit in to society norms or deciding how to maintain their inherited blackness and still be accepted.

Many AACSSs come to PWIs every year not knowing what to expect or how they will be perceived by people of the dominant race. They come without knowledge of how life is outside of negotiating through their everyday environments. As they assimilate through PWIs there is a consent question of ‘will I fit in or will I be accepted for who I am’, “Black”? Cole (2011) describes the educational environment as having a significant impact on the educational experience, more importantly the academic success of African American students.

There is a need to be better informed about how racial identity impacts the AACSSs ability to assimilate into PWIs in a way that would lead to better retention for an underrepresented population that struggles with the process of fitting into the dominant culture holistically. Many AACSS students come to PWIs as a choice rather than attending HBC/Us where their comfort level, social and educational environment would make integration less challenging. They come to PWIs not knowing how multifaceted the process of assimilation could be depending on the background or environment that the African American student has come from. Many of them seek out other people of color assuming it’s easier to integrate with people who “look like me.” This research is intended to add to the body of work that calls for a better understanding of how racial identity plays a role in academic success for AACSS at PWIs. Wade (2001) describes how African American students’ racial identity influences their ability to think within or beyond the constraints of race. He explained, although they do not face the discrimination that was once faced by our ancestors, they are placed in voluntary social and cultural integration situations where racial identity can impact their ability to be successful while attending PWIs. The goal of this research is to offer higher education administrators a better understanding of how community integration and other methods could address the retention problems due to the disconnect caused by racial identity challenges faced by AACSS. In addition, this research will

show the need for AACCS to assimilate into PWIs in a more holistic way, so they see the importance of integrating with the dominant group as well as people who “look like them.”

Purpose of the Study

The intent of this study is to examine how racial identity variables impact AACCS ability to assimilate in PWIs and how this paradigm may affect their retention rate. For this research I will be using sequential explanatory design. This design was the best fit for this research because it allows for the use of (1st) quantitative data collection and (2nd) qualitative data collection. The quantitative data is used to develop more in-depth constructs for use with the qualitative method. This research will be done using AACCS from a Mid-Western PWI.

Philosophical and Theoretical Foundation

Allen (1992) writings about how the increased need to offer African Americans a college education became an aggressive push following the decades of Blacks being oppressed. The push to offer Blacks a college education came with much resistance; however, I would propose a question; can PWIs truly afford the loss of tuition money gained from African American students? More importantly, Black students engage in many binaries such as, (1) struggling with racial identity and (2) engaging within a primary White environment. As they assimilate on PWIs understanding how to address the needs of AACCSs and lessening the complexities of these binaries will be the challenge for higher education administrators. Allen’s (1992) research also expressed the need for universities to understand how to effectively understand and sustain the AACCSs by not only offering the needed resources but also by understanding the complex identity challenges faced by AACCSs. Cole (2011) cited racial/ethnic diversity as one of the fundamental issues associated with the intellectual self and underachievement for people of color.

Understanding racial identity is a complex paradigm, one that has been studied by many scholars

who desire to understand how this paradigm can play a significant role in the everyday lives of African Americans.

Early theorizing of black racial identity attitudes hypothesized the need to establish stage models, as its been researched that racial declarations can be dependent upon the settings (Timble et al., 2003; as sited in Worrel et al., 2006). Racial identity has been researched empirically and vigorously (Nasir, McLaughlin & Jones, 2009; Worrell et al., 2006); most if not all of the research has drawn some conclusion that there is a direct correlation between African American's racial identity and their ability to be successful and balance being "Black". Past research has suggested that there is a direct correlation with racial-identity and AACs ability to assimilate and continue thru degree completion at PWIs (Pascarella, Pierson, Wolniak & Terenzini, 2008; Rogers & Summers, 2008). The challenge of understanding how AACs racial identity impacts retention in higher education could be associated with the social, educational and environmental structure within the institution. More importantly, how is the overall philosophy of the school in line with the academic success of AACs? The convergent variables aforementioned has been studied in AACs however, it is has not been studied using a mixed method research. Many of those variables have to do with the overall culture of the school in terms of academic resources, internal environment (inclusiveness) and external environment (community). These factors are paramount to address retaining AACs in higher education. By using a mixed method approach this would be further revealed through the use of quantitative data and qualitative data.

This study will use a mixed method sequential explanatory design that will involve collecting quantitative data first and then explaining the quantitative results with in-depth qualitative data to answer the following: Research Questions

- 1) How does racial identity impact AACSS ability to assimilate on a predominately white college campus, with a high enrollment of AACSSs?
- 2) How do African American college students perceive their college/university's commitment to them?
- 3) How do African American college students perceive their racial identity impacting their lives?

I will use two tools of measurement to assess how racial identity accounts for the discourse experienced by AACSSs as they assimilate on PWIs: Cross Racial Identity Scale (CRIS) (Vandiver, Cross, Fhagen-Smiw, Worrell, Swim, & Caldwell, 2000; Worrell, Vandiver, & Cross, 2004; Worrell et al., 2006). The CRIS is a six –factor scale inventory based on the NT-E or the Nigrescence profile which was developed in the mid-20th century to begin reinforcement for blacks who were left with negative attitudes towards being black following the many years of being oppressed by the micro-aggressions of white people. The six clusters used in CRIS attempt to bring in understanding of how blacks racial identity develops over time in connection with situational placement as they engage with white people and people of a different culture. Racial identity attitudes measured on the CRIS include; Pre-encounter assimilation, pre-encounter mis-education, pre-encounter self-hatred, immersion-emersion anti-white, internalization Afrocentric, and internalization multiculturalists inclusive (Vandiver & Worrell, 2001; Vandiver et al., 2002). Once the CRIS instrument has been administered, these clusters will be analyzed to see how

groups identify themselves within the stages using cluster analysis (Worrell et al., 2006). This instrument generally uses a Likert scale to draw analytical conclusions.

The Multidimensional Inventory of Black Identity (MIBI) uses seven subscales developed to measure how blacks view themselves as they assimilate within different situations and how important they feel being black plays a role in their ability to assimilate in different situations. The MIBI also was developed to assess how blacks perceive others see them as a credible person in society. The MIBI is comprised of seven subscales: centrality, private regard, public regard, assimilation, humanist items, minority items, and nationalist items. I will not be using both instruments in their entirety but I will use some questions from both instruments because the CRIS assesses attitudes and beliefs that carry over in stages depending upon the attrition of the individual. For example, some people may think that blacks think selling drugs is glamorized and is a good way to make a dollar, when they don't realize the many variables that may have brought that individual to sell drugs. For example, there might not have been a sufficient number of jobs in his neighborhood. He also might have the responsibility of talking care of his family members or he also may have seen other family members engaging in the same practices growing up. That would be a case of the CRIS pre-encounter –mis-education because sometimes we can't see past what is on the surface to get to the truth. MIBI assesses matters of centrality, public regard. Centrality is an understanding of how being black plays a role in who I am and how it ties to everything I do. More importantly, centrality shows a strong regard for being black and being black is an important part of who I am. This is important to my research because how the student feels about his/her Blackness can directly impact the students ability to assimilate within the dominate culture. Public regard is how we internalize feelings about being Black and how I perceive others see Black people, which can impact how we view

ourselves. The aforementioned variables will help to better understand the role racial identity plays in the African American students ability to assimilate on a PWI. The MIBI also uses a Likert scale for analytical conclusions.

For the purpose of my research, I will be using questions from the CRIS that fall under the subscales of Pre-encounter-Assimilation and Pre-encounter-Self-hatred. For the MIBI I will use questions from scales; Centrality items, public regard items and private regard items.

Delimitations

After several attempts for participants to complete the surveys, only 125 participants to completed the surveys out of a population of 748 African American students. For that reason the study cannot be generalized outside of this research site.

Limitations

The decision not to include demographical, social or economic questions on the surveys could have resulted in a lack of further understanding about where the participants came from. Furthermore, having knowledge of their background could have given some insight to the answers given on the surveys. Using SPSS to do a factor analysis on the instrument prior to sending it to participants could have help to better decide what subscales to use in the survey. Which could have led to better validity of the instrument. As a novice researcher the decision to use parts of the MIBI and parts of the CRIS also could have been the wrong choice.

Definition of Terms:

Racial Identity- Having strong ties with the black culture/ the bases for which one exists and identifies with one racial group and influences behavior during different situations. Vam Camp,

Barden and Sloan (2010) defined racial identity as the quality and extent of identification a person has with his or her racial group.

Centrality – How important is being black to a black person; for example, being black is an important part of who I am.

Separatism – A feeling of separation due to a disconnect felt by alienation and non-inclusion with-in the dominant cultural environment.

Assimilate – Having the ability to successfully engage within the dominant culture and maintain a level of comfortability within your self-identity. For example, being able to interact within the white culture and maintain your level of blackness without being judged or having feelings of not fitting in or having to be someone that you're not in order to fit in.

Race Salience – Shifts in self- concepts depending on particular moments when being black is highly relevant to a particular situation (high race salience) or situations where race is not highly relevant (low race salience).

Role Identity- Choices made dependent on your culture and/ or environment.

Private Regard – (MIBI)The way one internalizes his/her feelings about being black. Having high salience in regards to the success and contributions African Americans have made in society.

Public Regard- (MIBI)The way one internalizes how others see blacks in respect to being respected by others and being considered as vital members of society. Fuller-Rowell (2011) described this subscale as the extent individuals feel positive or negative toward African Americans and their membership within that group.

Preencounter –Miseducation- (CRIS) How blacks perceive themselves with respect to group association and the degree that stereotypical information can have a negative impact on how blacks see themselves.

Preencounter –Assimilation- (CRIS) The bases in which race does not play a role in one's identity and race salience is neither high nor low. The individual would prefer to be looked upon as an American vs. being labeled an African American.

Preencounter—Self Hatred-(CRIS) Internalizing negative feelings about being black.

Conclusion

In summary, I have identified how racial identity can impact African American's ability to assimilate in PWIs and how this can further impact their retention. A wealth of research has shown that blacks racial identity plays a significant role in their day to day life and in the decisions they make while assimilating into different situations (Worrell et al., 2006; Van Camp et al., 2010). I also included a brief description of the method I will be using to conduct my research study, a more in-depth description will be found in chapter III. The majority of the studies are quantitative or studies comparing racial identity implications for the success of African American students attending HBCs vs. African American students attending PWIs, however, there were very few studies done on racial identity and its impact on African American students' retention using a mixed methods design. By using a mixed approach the qualitative data can be used to better understand the questions answered in the quantitative phase.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

In Chapter One, I discussed how the paradigm of racial identity impacted the ability of African American College Students (AACSs) to assimilate into Predominantly White Institutions (PWIs) and how this can be associated with their low retention rate at these institutions. I also discussed how racial identity is also based on identity development, which many researchers have concluded happens in stages and can also be impacted by “encountered experiences” (Fuller-Rowell, Burrow & Ong, 2011). This can be in the case of assimilating into a new environment such as PWIs.

In Chapter One, I also identified how Blacks internalize racial identity and how we are guided by identity development in our daily interactions. More importantly, racial identity is often built on the individualistic presumptions of how we see ourselves and how others may perceive us. Racial identity is based on a social construct and can be defined as an understanding of how race plays a role in one’s life and how people connect to a group through cultural experiences. Because racial identity evolves in stages, Blacks often have identity shifts as they encounter other cultural experiences, more specifically, when engaging with the dominant race. Individual identity shifts according to Helms (1990) are based on social encounters that force Blacks to evaluate strategies used during different encounters that involve racial situations, such as identity shifts related to those feelings of disconnection as AACSs assimilate within PWIs.

Objectives

In this chapter, I will draw from a contour of empirical and theoretical research that has:

- (1) explained how racial identity has played a role in the lives of African Americans (past and

present) because it is important to understand the significance by which racial identity has shaped Black Americans view of themselves and how they perceive others see them; (2) described the identity stages (assimilation, private and public regard, centrality and degrees of salience) in the context of how these stages have impacted racial identity of African Americans; (3) showed how these identity stages have played a role in how AACs adjust to the discourse as well as the disconnect that can be experienced as they assimilate into PWIs; and lastly, conclude with research studies that have revealed evidence that there is a possible correlation between AACs' poor retention rate due to their struggles with racial identity as they assimilate into PWIs and possible implications for educators and administrators.

Theoretical Frame Work

Reason (1988) casts the term **critical subjectivity**, which has been described as allowing the researcher to reflect on his/her experience and to include that experience within the context of the research (as cited in Maxwell, 2005). This allows the researcher to use their experience as part of the inquiry process. Maxwell (2005) stated the “**researcher identity memo**” is a technique used to bring the researcher's experience into the study (p.225). The process of bringing the researcher's experience has to be done with caution to avoid over-shadowing or imparting biases that may disrupt the integrity of the study. Figure1 and Figure 2 are researcher identity memos that are expressive of my reflection on how racial identity can cause a disconnect. These identity memos are reflective of my daughter's college experience as well as my own personal struggle with racial identity disconnect. More importantly, these are examples of how being the only Black and having to assimilate in an all-White atmosphere can impact a person's life.

College Racial Identity

When my daughter entered college it was surprising to see how she had begun to seem somewhat withdrawn as I would communicate with her on the phone. Initially I thought it was because she was attending an Ivy League school and the expectations were much higher than those of the high school. But as she would come home for semester breaks I would inquire about how school is going and she would answer with very short answers and would seem to avoid the question. Eventually she began to speak about joining Black organizations and hanging out with the other Black students. I noticed that she began to say things about how if she spoke slang the students would make fun of her, but on the other hand when she would engage with some of the other blacks and speak proper as she has always spoke, she says the black students would say she sounding white. More importantly, she became so withdrawn I began to worry about her and then she stated that she had begun to speak with the schools psychologist because she was not transitioning well within the school atmosphere. I went to visit my daughter and I notice that all her friends and the organizations she belonged to were Black.

The fact that she had begun to only engage with Black students was not a problem for me but when she was in high school the majority of her friends were either White or international; so seeing her interact with Blacks only was quite surprising. After her second year of attending this school she began to engage with people of different cultures and she seem to be more relaxed with the overall atmosphere.

It wasn't until after my daughter graduated that we had a serious conversation about her overall college experience. I asked her to explain why her college experience seemed to have been somewhat complex when she initially started the school and why did she choose a predominately Black dorm?

Figure 1: Identity Memo

Her Response: College Racial Identity continued

Michelle- coming from a small rural town and now being in a large urban metropolitan city she felt everything had morphed into something different. She felt that she needed to be around people who looked like her because at the surface that was something she could connect with and perhaps they would be experiencing the same things and they could connect through the feelings of disconnect that the new environment would bring. She also felt that she could meet people who might feel the same way she did about where and how to fit into this new environment. Although she was excited about the new opportunities she knew that with the opportunities there were levels of uncertainty about how college life would be. She also thought by living in a predominantly black dorm this would lessen some of the anxieties she was feeling while making her transition into college.

As she formed close relationships with the Black students she realized that many of the Black students would express discontentment with the White students. This was the point that she expressed became an even larger problem because she did not share those feelings about White people due to the fact that she had grown up with mainly White kids and this made assimilating into the overall campus environment more complex. She did express as she continued to speak with the school psychologist this helped her to realize the importance of being herself and if the other Black students were her friends they would except her for who she was. Eventually she did express that she started to engage with students of other ethnicities, however, most of her friends continued to be majority Black.

Figure 1: Identity Memo

Work Place Racial Identity

Never at my age did I think I would experience a challenge with being who I am. I had worked in a department that was extremely diverse with people of all different backgrounds as well as personalities. In this department code switching was a way of life. However, there was never a feeling that I had to adjust who I am or having to adjust certain mannerisms.

However, two years ago I got a position in a department where not only was I the only Black person but the department has an overall Whiteness atmosphere that I have never had the opportunity to experience. Initially I felt as though I had been thrust into an environment that would force me to rethink how I display myself as a Black person. However, I immediately realized that this new department would have to accept me for who I'm and I could not exhibit the cloned Whiteness that was expected of the employees in this department. When I use the phrase "Whiteness" this is indicative of a degree of white superiority that includes the Black staff as well as the White staff members.

The fact is I still struggle with trying to fit in, more importantly, I've come to the realization that ,first, I'm not sure if I want to fit in, and secondly, as I have gotten older it's difficult to be something or someone that I'm not.

The identity disconnects felt by my daughter and me is in part the framework that brought my interest to the paradigm of racial identity and the complexities of fitting into the mold of a predominantly white environment.

Figure 2: Identity Memo

Along with my identity memo I have worked with the university for many years and have had the opportunity to see firsthand how racial identity can impact the Black college students' ability to assimilate into this PWI. I have watched students experience racism and a number of confounding situations that has caused them to leave the university; or they have experienced disconnect that has made their overall experience difficult.

Historical Background

Research on racial identity goes as far back as the early 20th century when a French African poet and statesman, Leopold Senghor charged Blacks and Africans to start an internalized thought process towards positive feelings about being Black after many years of

being enslaved and oppressed by White people (Worrell et al., 2006). He began what was termed the Nigrescence Profiles, a term used to capture the “African American identity search in the U.S. social context” (Worrell et al., 2006, p.520), because following the abolition of slavery, many theorists felt a need to help Blacks internalize what it meant being Black. Furthermore, Nigrescence or NT-E was later revised and expanded (Cross, 1991, 1995) to address the developmental stages of Blacks’ racial identity as well as how those stages are influenced by circumstances and different settings.

According to Cokley (2002), no other topic in the multicultural world of social science has been more comprehensively researched than racial identity. For Blacks, racial identity has always been perplexing and a constant struggle attempting to identify how one should act and how one should speak, specifically when interacting with the dominant groups. According to Helms (1993), “racial identity refers to a sense of group or collective identity based on one’s perception that he or she shares a common racial heritage with a particular racial group” (p.3). This should not be misinterpreted as having a connection based on racial heritage due to being of one particular race over another. Van Camp, Barden, and Sloan (2010) described racial identity as the quality or degree in which one connects to their racial group as well as the dominant culture. They also suggested the extent in which Black students struggle with racial identity to a much larger degree than white students, which is reflective of white students being a part of the dominant group in reference to PWIs (Van Camp et al., 2010).

The paradigm of racial identity for African Americans has always been somewhat complex. Tatum (2004) states that we have a constant dilemma of asking, “Who am I? Who can I be? What does it mean to be a member of my racial group” (p.118)? These questions are in part because according to Vandiver, et al (2001) Blacks are often faced with having to define

their identity based on internalized stereotypes about how African Americans are perceived in the media and other social outlets. For this reason, as AACs transcend on PWIs, the different variations of racial identity stages begin to manifest as they assimilate through PWIs.

The Impact of Stage Models of Racial Identity

Many researchers have conducted a multitude of studies that show African Americans have identity development that moves in stages. Helms (1990) describe the paradox of stage theories as:

“Stage theories (e.g., Cross, 1971; Thomas, 1971) (as cited in Helms, 1990) describe racial identity as a developmental process wherein a person potentially, though not necessarily, moves from one level of identify to another. According to stage theorists, one comes to understand a person’s present behavioral dispositions by analyzing his or her identity at the present time, though the present identity may or may not have long-term implications for the persons’ future characteristics (Helms, 1990, pp. 6)”. These stages are indicative to the environment and settings as Black people navigate through different environments.

African Americans struggle almost daily with how their racial identity may influence how people of the predominant race see them. Earlier I described the Nigrescence model that was developed to understand how African Americans had feelings of discontent towards being members of the United States and feelings of hatred towards being Black, following the oppressed times of segregation. William E. Cross (1971, 1991) expounded on the Nigrescence framework and began work on developmental stages that he framed as “identity conversions” (Rowell et al., 2011, p.1609). He describes these stages as the process where Blacks go from

having unexamined and sometimes low salience about being Black; and then move to high-emphasis and high salience about being Black; and then moves into more internalized feelings towards being Black. According to Cross and Pinney (1971,1991,1989,1990) when Blacks have unexamined feelings about being Black these feelings are identity search or exploration, they further explained that Blacks are attempting to negotiate how their Blackness is playing a role in their successes or failures.

Cross' (1971, 1991) research explained how encounter experiences can cause Blacks to explore how this can impact one's race; such encounter experiences can be AACSS engaging with white people for the first time, which can be problematic at a PWI. When students have unexamined experiences about being Black it's because they have not been faced with systemic racism or the impact of stereotypical views. According to Phinney (1990), their views are based on what has been engraved by authority figures such as parents, teachers and religions. For AACSS coming from predominantly Black environments, they have not been exposed to formally negotiating in predominantly white environments. Therefore once AACSS enter PWIs they began to encounter experiences of racism and they begin to face preconceived stereotypical notions about how they should perform. At that point, AACSS begin identity exploration in an attempt to internalize how being Black comes with stigmas that are not necessarily taught or explained by authority figures, but can be negative intolerance of the dominant race. Baber (2012) explained that even with the increased enrollment of Blacks in PWIs the contribution educational institutions have in reproducing racial hierarchies, which tend to favor those familiar with or from the dominant culture, remains. In addition, she states "as students from traditionally marginalized groups enter institutions, they confront a community that is not value-neutral, but a

place that maintains certain preferences and tendencies which exclude those with dissimilar culture experiences” (p.68).

The CRIS exploration stage, Phinney and Cross go on to explain that Blacks begin to arrive at a better and more internal understanding of what the implications of being Black can mean when enduring racism and stereotyping norms. However, this is not to say following the exploration stage, Blacks move to a total acceptance or understanding of how racial identity stages will inform their ability to connect with the dominant race; but understanding race relations between blacks and the dominant culture will help as AACSS assimilate on PWIs.

Overview of the Cross Racial Identity Scales (CRIS)

Cross’ Nigrescence theory played a significant role in understanding how changes in racial identity formation occurred; which he sometimes phrased as the “Negro-to-Black Conversion Model,” which was an important phenomenon in comprehending the dynamics of racial development in Blacks (Cross, 1991., p. xi). In 2000, Cross and several colleagues revised the Nigrescence theory and developed a scale of multiple identity clusters, The Cross Racial Identity Scale (CRIS) (Vandiver et al., 2000). The revised theory operationalizes the original Nigrescence theory as Cokley (2002) described the developmental stages Blacks went through to obtain a “psychologically healthy Black identity” (p.476). The CRIS has five stages of identity development; pre--encounter- mis-education; pre-encounter—assimilation; pre-encounter-- self-hatred; immersion—emersion anti-white; internalization. The stages developed by Cross have been implemented and used by many scholars who research racial identity constructs of Blacks. Most of the previous research that uses the CRIS and the MIBI use the generated evidence of validity for the instruments. Bailey, Chung, Williams and Terrell (2011) and Cokley (2002) used

the CRIS and both research studies were used to determine the impact of racial identity in some context; Furthermore, they both reported reliability scores above at or above a .70. Sellers et al., (1997) used the MIBI to research African American racial identity at a PWI versus African American attending an HBC; they used the centrality, ideology and regards scales, which I will be using centrality and regards, and they reported reliability scores ranged from .60 to .79.

Cokley (2002) described the contextual implications of the identity encounter stages as three clusters; the pre-encounter-mis-education stage is when Blacks look at the world from a Eurocentric prospective and being Black is viewed as a negative due to stereotypical perceptions about Blacks. Pre-encounter-assimilation is described as a stage when race is colorless and Blacks internalize being American more so than being Black, according to Worrell, et al. (2006) Blacks that identify as being American have excluded themselves from the stereotyping that plagues African Americans by detaching themselves as part of that culture. Pre-encounter-self-hatred is described as having hatred towards being Black because often they have felt or experienced prejudice or racism that has made them have (low salience) negative thoughts about being Black. At emersion-immersion stage, Blacks are immersed in everything Black and they are proud of who they are and have high salience for being Black, meaning being Black is important. The Internalization stage has two separate clusters: multiculturalists inclusive and Afrocentric. They are both stages where being Black has a high salience of importance. However, Multiculturalist is inclusive to understanding and embracing other culture and other races. To be Afrocentric, one believes that it is more important to truly embrace being Black and internalize all that encompasses being Black; this includes stereotypical media representations, prejudices exhibited cultures etc. This is not to say that Blacks have, at this point, developed a tolerance for discriminatory practices; however, their level of intolerance has changed to the

degree that prejudice and racism does not influence behavior to the degree it may have in the earlier days of segregation (Cokley, 2002).

Overview of the Multidimensional Inventory of Black Identity (MIBI)

The MIBI will be used in part, but not in its entirety, to address how-identity stage scores represent the changes in racial identity. However, some or all of the terminology may be used throughout this research to convey the depth in which AACSSs can experience a discourse when assimilating on PWIs leading to poor retention. Therefore, I will briefly explain the purpose and constructs of this instrument that is used to measure the strength of African American's racial identity.

The MIBI offers a convergent degree of ratios in which different identity stage scores can represent the changes in racial identity more precisely, allowing the researcher to have a better understanding of how certain identity stages interact (Sellers et al., 1997). The MIBI was created as a measure of the three stable dimensions (centrality, ideology, regard) it has a 20- item scale that consists of eight items to measure centrality, six items to measure private regard, and six items to measure public regard (Sellers et al., 1997). The centrality scale indicates a high salience for being Black, which indicates that being Black is an important reflection of who I am. The ideology scale has four subscales; assimilation, humanist, oppressed minority and nationalist. These subscales are associated with the way African Americans perceive the overall climate of the “political-economic issues, cultural-social issues, intergroup relating and attitudes toward the dominant group” (Sellers et al., 1997, p.809).

Both instruments have several items that arrive at similar conclusions. However, the MIBI offers three scales of measurements that are important to explore for the purpose of my research. First I believe centrality is important to understand how the AACSSs see being Black is

an important role in their ability to be successful college students at a PWI. More importantly, centrality in regards to racial identity places races at a level of high salience (Rowell et al., 2011). Secondly, public regard will indicate how AACSS perceive how others see them and how they privately regard Blacks and being Black actively will play a role in their ability to assimilate and be successful at a PWI. More importantly, the CRIS examines the development of racial identity using stage clusters and the MIBI measures the strength or degree of importance race plays in our everyday existence.

My choice to use parts of both instruments was based on several conclusions. Moreover, several of the CRIS subscales immersion-emersion, multiculturalism and nationalist items had reliability scores ranging from low .60 to mid-.80 (IEM); nationalist and the multinationalist had reliability scores ranging from .40 to .50 (Worrel et al., 2002). Worrel also stated those stage cluster are in “experimental examination for continued evaluation of its relevance as a viable theoretical and empirical constructs” (p.73), He did state the subscales could be used for experimental purposes but further research is being conducted to assess more variability on how those dimensions impact African American’s racial identity.

More precisely, Cross (1971, 1991) expounded on the Nigrescence theory and developed the CRIS to assess the identity conversions experienced by Blacks following being oppressed, it was then that he noted the stages of identity development for Blacks. More importantly, the identity shifts (of Blacks) that have occurred in today’s society has led to a need to re-examine the aforementioned cluster. I also felt the above subscale questions were somewhat complex and may be difficult for undergraduate students to comprehend.

Sellers et al., (1997) stated the MIBI will allow researchers to gain a better understanding of African American racial identity and the results formulated can be “interpreted

within the context of existing research on universal processes associated with group identity and with the existing literature that specifically focuses on African American racial Identity” (p.807).

My decision not to use all the clusters on the MIBI was due to the lengthiness of the instrument. The MIBI is comprised of eight subscales and 56 questions, which would have made for a very long and time consuming survey. Moreover, Rowell et al. (2011) conducted a study using the centrality scale, public and private regards scale and reported an internal reliability of .70 to .80. I choose to mix the two instruments because I thought some subscales from the CRIS offered more in terms of understanding the racial identity of Blacks because it looked for into how we developed our racial identity over time. The MIBI looks at shifts in racial identity depending on the situation or event; therefore, I thought by mixing the two they could both give better insight into the paradigm of how racial identity can impact African American college students’ ability to assimilate.

Implication of Racial Identity for African America College Students

The quest for post-secondary degrees by African American students has increased at a significant rates, according to the National Center for Education Statistics. Enrollment for African American college students went from 9.4 percent in 1976 to 14.5 percent 2010 and that number is expected to rise. The difficulty facing AACSS as they assimilate on PWIs continues to draw concerns about how they can embrace their Afrocentricity and be accepted by their peers. Torres (2009) stated that even with the increased enrollment of AACSS they still face difficulties building relationships and engaging with their white peers, Allen (1992) noted that Black students often form exclusive culture networks (other Black students) in order to fulfill the feelings of exclusion that may be present at a PWI. This usually is when Black students tend to

gravitate to people who look like them and have similar behavior styles. Because not all Black people or White people have the same behavior styles.

Racial Identity can play a significant role in how AACSS engage within PWIs. Baber (2012) established “racial identity represents how students entered postsecondary education with established dispositions of African American culture” (p.72). She also contended these dispositions were rooted with memorable experiences, both good and bad, from previous experiences. The reencounter experiences can lead to reflectivity that causes a reevaluation of race centrality and race salience due to the connectedness of the experience and how it is internalized to affect self-concepts (Baber, 2012). To expound on Baber’s construct, one example is when Blacks engage with white peers and then change their dialect when speaking to Black peers, to avoid the ‘acting white’ cliché. The reevaluation of race centrality materializes because the AACSS has to decide how important being Black is at any given time. What Baber, and many other theorists, suggest is that race centrality is a hierarchy ranking sense of racial identity and it is based on how one values being Black. Furthermore, race salience is based on situational events and is influenced by encounters; in other words, salience describes how African Americans feel about being Black at a particular time. For example, when we are faced with stereotypical situations that can make us feel negative about being Black, it can cause one to have low salience towards being Black. According to Shelton and Sellers (2000), they described when situations become race salient; individuals are more likely to be influenced in their interpretation of how those events impact race. They further assert that “racial salience is how relevant race is to one’s self-concept temporarily, and racial centrality is a stable manifestation of how significant race is in the individual’s definition of self across numerous situations” (p.34). To put that in the context of AACSS as they assimilate in PWIs they face several challenges

attempting to negotiate the complexities of racial identity and fit into the dominant culture; not just language but how they dress, how they wear their hair, the foods they eat and anything that is different from what is ascribed to by the dominant race.

The Implication of CRIS Identity Development Stages for AACSS

Cross's Racial Identity Scale (CRIS) is an exploration of how racial identity development stages are altered and influenced by events and encounters during one's life (Worrell et al., 2006). Those stage clusters include: Pre-encounter—Mis-education; Pre-encounter—Assimilation; Pre-encounter—Self-hatred; Immersion—Emmersion Anti-White; Internalizing Multiculturalist Inclusive; Internalization Afrocentric. For the purpose of my research, I will examine how these stage clusters can explain shifts in racial identity as AACSS assimilate in PWIs.

Cluster 1. Pre-encounter – Mis-education. This stage is the focus of how stereotypical views are placed in the context of how we see ourselves and how others see us. For example, one question under this cluster states..... Too many Blacks “glamorize” the drug trade and fail to see opportunities that don't involve crime. This question establishes mis-education because this premise is based on stereotypical views, not researched facts (like what factors went into the choices that was made, i.e. selling drugs), especially when the questions are proposed to the dominant groups. Robertson and Mason (2008) noted that stereotypical assumptions are often part of the poor attrition rate of African American students, especially Black male students. Hopkins (1997) stated Blacks believe there are expectations from a society that they want to do well. This is in retrospect of all the negative stereotypical views that precede AACSS as they enter into college.

However, the social construction of this reality leads to the conclusion that stereotyping Black students is primarily negative. Steel (1999) postulated what he called the “stereotype threat”. He described this as a situational setting where Black students are evaluated by white peers or teachers and they tend to do poorly because of feelings of being devalued (p.3). Mis-educated can also play a negative role in the lives of Blacks. More importantly, Black people who are mis-educated sometimes get caught up in their inability to see that the choices we make are sometimes not conducive to our intellect, nor does it do the Black community any justice, but what this does is perpetuate the stereotypical views that the dominant cultural have already concluded. Mis-education, in this context, is ascribed to when the Black cultural cannot figure out that there are many choices in life that exist beyond selling drugs or living a life of crime, although many times those particular choices are based on social economical environments. A student once brought to the attention of the administration that he felt the University police were often watching the Blacks when they came into the campus convenience store, more so than the white students. Joe the administrator responded by saying to the young man that because it is the Blacks that they have to most often arrest for stealing, it becomes a case of stereotyping all Blacks who look suspicious. Stereotyping, due to mis-education or ignorance, can cause AACSSs to feel a disconnect within the PWI environment and often leads to feelings of exclusion.

Harrison, Stone, Shapiro, Yee, Boyd and Rullan (2009) suggested that when people are the target of stereotyping, it can be a threat to their identity and it “may consume their psychological resources that people need to overcome the potential negative characterizations” (p.80). Bailey, Bailey-Johnson, Valentine, Cervero and Bowles (2009) noted that AACSSs continue to have a different college experience which is shaped by mis-educated stereotypical views.

Cluster2. Preencounter – Assimilation. In this stage, Blacks see themselves as Americans and do not subscribe to the stereotypical images of Blacks portrayed in the media and other social outlets (Worrell et al., 2006). One of the questions under this cluster asks.... I think of myself as an American, and seldom as a member of a racial group. Blacks who have a high presence in this cluster tend to look at their surroundings from an inclusive perspective. They feel they play an equal role in society and being Black is somewhat secondary to how they assimilate into PWIs. This cluster becomes somewhat problematic because it can suggest a degree of color blindness, by expressing that I'm American and being Black does not play a role in how one assimilates in a predominantly white environment can be naïve and in denial of race relations. Nevile, Roderick, Lee, Duran and Browne (2000) cited a pamphlet published by the APA showing strong support for the many years of research that has concluded that 'we cannot be, nor should we be color blind' (p.60). They further describe the article to state that to perpetuate color blindness is to simply ignore the role that race plays in our everyday attitudes and behaviors, even when we engage with people of the dominant race who seem to have good intentions (Nevile et al., 2000). More importantly, as noted by Cabrera (2011), institutions of higher education of the dominant race acts to both reinforce and sometimes challenge systemic racism; therefore, the pre-encounter stage can be counterproductive for AACSSs because they need to understand the impact and challenges of systemic racism and prejudices.

Furthermore, to say that being Black does not matter creates several implications; (1) are we ashamed of whom we are (low salience for being Black)? (2) Are we afraid to admit the important role being Black plays in our ability to assimilate in PWIs? This is, at best, a discourse that Blacks may experience to avoid having to represent the Black culture. This could also be an attempt to avoid stereotypical stigmas. Nevertheless, this discourse can interrupt Black's ability

to be successful at achieving academic accomplishments. If because if you are uncomfortable being yourself (Black) the dual identity that the person has to create in order to sustain in the white environment, without being comfortable within him/herself can cause a disconnect, hindering their academic ability.

Coard, Raskin and Breland (2001) describe the pre-encounter stage as a time when Blacks depend on white society for approval and they tend to have anti-Black feelings. This is in correlation with pre-encounter assimilation because under this cluster Black students become disconnected with the implications of being Black, while assimilating into PWIs, possibly the need to “fit in” as a college student supersedes their struggles with trying to identify how race will play a role in the quest to “fit in.”

Students who place high in this cluster will need to reexamine the role that being Black plays in academia. When we consider where, or more importantly, who created the whole pedagogical educational paradigm (white society) it is clear who is in control of our academic curriculum and it is important to understand this because the reflectivity of this paradigm will assist in knowing how to be a better student academically. For example, some textbooks can be racially biased and mainly cover the achievements of whites or are contextually designed to articulate a whiteness philosophy. By understanding how the educational system was established or by whom, students can reflect on the exclusiveness within the education system but not to the degree that it hinders his/her ability to accomplish good grades; because of the questions that may form concerning where do Black people fit into the grand scheme of academic curriculum and books? They may be able to understand the minimum role Blacks play within the literary context of school books as well as the under-representation of Black faculty, administration and staff; this is not to say it becomes acceptable but the better understanding could help the AACCS

understand the exclusiveness that exists among race, because the dominant race controls the educational system.

More importantly, whiteness in education is about fulfilling self-prophecies and epistemological beliefs that we as “Americans” should speak a certain way, carry yourself a certain way, and follow the pedagogical system as established by White America. Prendergast (2003) described “racial group identification” as having a profound effect on how schools were perceived as well as how language is perceived (p. 85). He discusses a narrative about a professor who was doing research on desegregation in many Southern states. The researcher had “positioned herself as the ethnographer” (p. 85). She also began to describe how some of the Blacks would speak broken language, such as; “We don’t talk to our chil’rn like you folks do”. The researcher began to have thoughts about her own racial identification as it would affect her ability to be the ethnographer and the impact her language development would play as she translated what was being said by the Black people. Although the researcher had grown up around Blacks and was somewhat familiar with the dialect, she could not get away from how she was taught to speak. More importantly, when AACSS enter the classroom they are expected to speak what has been established by white society as “Proper English” otherwise they get looks of disapproval.

Pre-encounter assimilation causes AACSS to rethink how they will intellectually engage with the dominant white race, since at this stage, they have decided to disconnect from their Black race. For example, language has dualistic complexities, because if you alter your language to appease the dominant culture you jeopardize returning to your neighborhood and having your friends make remarks such as “you’re talking white” or “you think you’re smart just cause you’re in college.” Last semester a PhD colleague and I worked on a research article and when

he met with the group of students participating in the surveys at the dorm, the students began taking the survey. As they began to read the questions, one of the Black students stated that one of the questions was “perplexing” and he was unsure how to answer it. Another Black student commented on the fact that the other young man used the word “perplexing” and accused the young man of talking “white”. As Blacks assimilate in PWIs perceptions of how we verbally articulate is only one of the many racial identity paradigms we struggle with when we are engaging with not only the dominant culture but other Blacks as well.

Cluster 3. Pre-encounter—Self-hatred. Self-hatred is an identity stage when Blacks have feelings of hate towards being Black. This is different from the assimilation stage because here they are not looking for validation from Whites, the feelings of exclusiveness, prejudice and stereotypical views that can be present on PWIs, and are felt by AACSS cause feelings of mental hate towards being Black. Self-hatred is one of the stages reflective of the original Nigrescence theory, which was originally created to give Blacks positive feelings about being Black after many years of being enslaved. Worrell, Denton, Telesford, Simmons and Martin (2011) describe this stage as being the most negative because “these attitudes reflect unhappiness with being African American and having physical characteristics reflecting an African heritage”,(p.639). They further explain the psychological adjustment is related to poor self-esteem creating resentment towards being Black due to being oppressed and dehumanized.

When students place high in this profile they are said to have low race salience towards being Black (Worrell et al, 2006). Sellers et al. (1998) defines race salience as “the extent to which one’s race is a relevantly high or low part of one’s self-concept at a particular moment or in a particular situation” (p. 24). For example, AACSS will face many challenges when assimilating on PWIs but it can be even more complex if they are having feelings of hate towards

being Black. The lack of self-esteem and feelings of hate towards being Black can cause a disconnect in the student's ability to focus and have a productive educational experience. Lewis and Mckissic (2009) did a qualitative study that included 40 typed interviews from Black students attending a PWI, these interviews may give some credence to why Black students may experience some self-hatred towards being Black. One of the students interviewed recalled hearing negative comments from the professors about how the school had lowered their standards to allow the Black students in, which he took as a code for "why are they here?" (p.274). They went on to describe the student saying he heard comments such as they (the Black students) talk, eat, dress and sit different and they do not wish to be a part of the rest of the school community (White), so again "why are they here?" (p.274). More importantly, as the student would attempt to respond to negative comments made by White students the professors would accuse the student of being overly aggressive and not allowing the White students to speak their opinions (Lewis & Mckissic, 2009). These kinds of interactions can cause a student to have negative thoughts about being Black, because intellectual self-concept can be explored through a hierarchical cognitive domain that can be a predictor of academic success. Cole (2011) noted that the academic deficiencies in African American students could be directly related to their ability to connect to the college environment having difficulties with intellectual self-concept precluding inefficiencies in academic success. More importantly, having low intellect can directly impact the Black student ability to do well academically.

When self-hatred is placed in the context of higher education, inclusivity should be made paramount to the PWIs strategic plan for retaining AACSSs because feelings of self-hatred are ensured when Blacks are perceived to be treated unfairly because they are Black. Rogers and Simmons (2008) suggest that college campuses should continuously examine campus climate to

insure perceived perceptions are the perceptions intended to represent the school. For example, many schools have mission statements that include some type of statement that ascribes to their promise of inclusiveness; however, this does not always mean that they are truly inclusive. In higher education inclusiveness must include a plan to insure all students have equal opportunities of being successful. I attended a Black male round table discussion given at a PWI and the consensus of the group was that the school did not do a good job at making Black male students feel welcome. It was also noted during the discussion that Black people overall were brought to the school for monetary gain, but neither the professors nor the administration took a vested interest in their overall success. The young men at the discussion felt as though the attention (e.g. inclusiveness) is geared towards the White and international students. The discourse of not feeling included speaks to the profile of self-hatred because Black students see the separateness of treatment as the result of their Blackness (e.g., racism) – this can infuse thoughts of “I wish I was White”. Ladson-Billings and Tate (1999) theorized that “education systems are sometimes riddled with racialized racist cultural constructs and demarcations” (p.96); they further explained that critical race scholars are “challenging the dominant ideologies that support radicalized inequalities stemming from hegemonic educational practices” (p.96).

Cluster 4. Immersion- Emersion Anti- White. Immersion- emersion is the stage that explores how Blacks individualize their likes and dislikes for white people. Worrell et al. (2006) describe these somewhat complex profiles as the “attitudes about anti-white fixations (immersing), or it can reflect a state of emersion when a person is moving from myopic attitudes to more nuanced views of the Black and white community” (p. 522). As AACSS assimilate on PWIs they have preconceived (pre-encounters) opinions about how they are going to be viewed in retrospect to the dominant culture in the campus atmosphere. The immersion of those

preconceived perceptions can cause narratives to surface that can have a direct impact on the student's ability to be successful. The immersion progression takes the student to the realization of racism and injustices caused by the dominant culture having control over power and privilege. These feelings include thoughts of how society has an establishment that is designed for the dominant race to succeed, while people of color struggle with the everyday placement of being underrepresented in the workforce (Black faculty) and higher education (student population). Cokley (2002) describes these stages as a time when Blacks embrace all that is Afrocentric, but on the other hand, they have very negative feelings towards white people.

These are internalized situational emotions that occur over a period of time because immersion is a manifestation of occurrences, rather than something that will occur without thought of the complexities apparent through systematic racism. For example, we think of today's racism in the context of Blacks being dehumanized and marginalized by White people; we immerse those thoughts with individual experiences of racism, therefore, causing a fixation on anti-white.

The perception some professors have about Black's academic ability is that they are under achievers; many scholars have studied this in depth (Banks, Mcquater, & Hubbard, 1977; Gurin, 1971; Kaplan & Maehr, 2000). McWhorter (2000) describes African American's academic struggle as being problematic because African Americans, "pursuit of intellectual activities in academic excellence are not incorporated into African American culture because they are associated with the oppressive White culture" (p.25). More importantly, it is for this reason when Black students assimilate into PWIs they may begin to interact with the dominant culture and at times feel a strong sense of being dehumanized and or marginalized. This can

manifest thoughts of hatred for White people and people having power and privilege, causing a disconnect within the PWIs and therefore hindering the AACSS ability to be successful.

There is also the ‘Pro- Blackness’ side of immersion –emersion. From this perspective, the focus is on Afrocentric and the appreciation one has for being Black and the Black culture. Vandiver (2001) describes this stage of the identity profile as a transformation or a total reevaluation of one’s self-image (Blackness). He further stated that, “immersion affects almost every facet of their lives and manifests itself in many ways (e.g., change in name and clothing, exclusive involvement in Black activities)” (p.166). At this stage, a person has a high salience for being Black because many of the paradoxical profiles (e.g., mis-education, assimilation, and self-hatred) have, for the most part, been worked through. More importantly, at this point the individual has accepted and internalized his/her Blackness and is proud of who he/she is.

In context of the AACSS this is an important stage because having pride in who you are builds on having a positive self-esteem and having a positive ethnic identity Furthermore, the AACSS can form buffers against the negative stereotypical perceptions and other discourses that may be present at a PWIs, which can provide for a more successful educational experience.

Cluster 5. Internalization Multiculturalists Inclusive. At this stage the individual has internalized the ideology of inclusiveness and no longer experiences a disconnect from the dominant race. Ford and Harris (1997) asserted that interaction with other cultures would lessen feelings of isolation for AACSS. The realization at this stage is that Blacks can have high salience within the Black culture and still experience a connectedness with other nationalities. Worrell et al. (2006) describes this profile as the identity process when “individuals reject

negative stereotypes about both Blacks and whites, and have a strong Black identity alongside the willingness to work with other groups” (p. 538).

The implications for AACSS are, once they reach this stage, they can then work towards a multicultural education by interacting with people of different cultures. This can also foster closer relationships between White faculty and Black students; more importantly, the closer relationships between student and teachers can provide a more positive educational experience. Bean and Eaton’s (2002) model for impacting retention suggested the congruency between the AACSS needs and a sense of belonging can significantly impact their retention. Delpit (2006) described the importance of making a personal connection with Black students and the importance of understanding the environment the student comes from, which can yield better communication and less negative binaries for the Black students as they attempt to comprehend the knowledge teachers are attempting to teach. Delpit also explained the difficulties of communicating across culture differences, and any situation of “unequal power” (2006, p. 135), which can be synonymous in the case of Black students and white teachers. Cole (2011) concluded that African American student’s contact with faculty outside of class was particularly important in shaping their intellectual self-concept and academic performance. Undoubtedly, at this stage, the connectedness between the AACSS and the PWI environment can prove to be conducive to the retention of AACSSs.

Cluster 6. Internalization Afrocentric. At this stage, the individual is processing the ideology of an Afrocentric perspective holistically, meaning that he/she is embracing being Black not just from an African American perspective, but from the African heritage culture. Worrell et al. (2006) “describes these individuals as having low self-hatred and reject the negative stereotypes about Blacks” because the willingness to work across cultures supersedes

negative perceptions about Black people. Through coalition building, Afrocentricity can be better understood if the focus is a concerted effort between both African American students and White students they can better understand one another. Ford and Harris (1997) suggest “that multicultural education infused into the education of all students holds promise for academic success” (p.9). When AACSS embrace their Afrocentricity they will be able to assimilate on PWIs with the pride and confidence needed to have a successful college experience. Understanding this can offer a clearer perspective to AACSS identity what the history of being Black means. As valuable as the CRIS stages are for understanding the limitations of Blacks there are aspects that it does not address; therefore, I will be using parts of the MIBI.

The Implication of The Multidimensional Inventory of Black Identity (MIBI) scales for AACSS

The Multidimensional Inventory of Black Identity scales (Sellers et al., 2011) focuses on the status of the individuals’ racial identity rather than the stage-based development of the person’s identity, such as in the case of the CRIS instrument. For the purpose of this study, I will examine two out of the five dimensions of racial identity taken from the MIBI: centrality and public regard. The centrality scale refers to how much Blacks internalize what being Black has to do with how they feel about themselves (is it a core value). For example, does being Black define who I am and if so is it at a level of high salience or low salience? Private regard and public regard establishes how we internalize the way we see the Black culture and the way we perceive how others see us.

It is important to understand how centrality plays a role in the lives of AACSS because if being Black is core to your existence, it could hinder the AACSS ability to be successful because, when they are faced with negative stereotypical interactions during the pre-encounter stages, it

can be difficult for the AACCS to focus on their academics due to the binaries caused by the stereotypical interactions with the dominant race. Schmader (2002) found that stereotype threats can be characterized as a psychological quandary in which individuals are repressed from performing to their potential by the “recognition that possible failure could confirm a negative stereotype that applies to their in-group and, by extension, to themselves” (p. 194).

AACCSs feelings of private and public regard can be counterintuitive depending on how the student internalizes Blacks as a whole in addition to how the student internalizes how others or primarily the dominant culture sees Blacks as positive contributors to society as well as respected members of society. Sellers et al., (2011) suggests that the status one connects to his/her racial identity is important; consequently, if the AACCS has negative internalized emotions about public and private regard for Blacks, this can impact his/her ability to assimilate within a PWIs because, psychologically, they could have feelings of separation from both Blacks and whites. According to Chung, Williams, Singh and Terrell (2011), this can be classified as internalized racial oppression where Blacks accept stereotypical views and become suppressed by the dominant race’s stereotypical views, as well as rejecting Afrocentric views. On the other hand, the AACCS could have a high regard for private and public regard, in this case the student can internalize positive thoughts about Black people as well as having positive thoughts about how the dominant race may view Blacks as respected contributors of society.

AACCS Racial Identity and Impact on College Retention

As African Americans come to white schools there are several dynamics they have to face. (1) They must experience being judged by other African Americans, who will judge if they are acting “white” or being themselves; (2) They are going to be judged by white people in the

context of social abilities; can they engage with people outside of those that look and speak like them? (3) As they go into the classrooms they are judge by the professors and their peers and the test of intellectual abilities apply; can they contribute to the class discussion on the same level as their white peers? Cole (2011) affirmed that African Americans sometime have a low salience to intellectual ability because it can be seen as acting “White” (p. 261). The difficulties of racial identity then forces the student to rethink how these disconnect of acting white or not acting white will impact the discourse of his/her feelings of exclusion.

Some AACS come to PWIs without ever having had any daily interaction with people outside of the Black race. For AACSs that come from low social economical areas this can be a difficult situation, especially if they are going to be judge by their peers and professors as they negotiate in a PWI. As they assimilate into PWIs, they face a constant concern of can I fit in or will I be accepted for who I am, “Black?” Cole (2011) affirmed that African Americans sometimes have a low salience to intellectual ability because it can be seen as acting “White” (p. 261). The ‘acting white’ paradigm can cause the AACS to reflect on their racial identity and the feelings of disconnect to the academic environment becomes increasingly unmanageable, adding to the retention rate of AACS.

Chickering and Reisser (1993) (as cited in Watt 2006) described a stage theory of psychosocial growth experienced by college students. Their theory consisted of seven vectors; developing competence, managing emotions, and moving through autonomy toward independence, developing mature interpersonal relationships, establishing Identity, developing purpose, and developing Integrity. They describe these vectors as ways for Black students to move from intolerance of differences with the dominant culture and move to a more cohesive understanding for building relationships. Their study also includes the use of understanding

racial identity using the CRIS stages of pre-encounter, encounter, emersion/immersion and internalization. Their participants included 46 African American college students from a PWI and it was founded that the PWI offered similar resources to the AACSS that were offered at Historically Black Colleges. Which led to the conclusion that the maladjustment the AACSS were experiencing was more psychological based problems due to environmental adjustments rather than lack of school resource. Watt claimed that the vector stages explored by Chickering and Reisser's could help to close the adjustment problems experienced by AACSS.

A complicated binary for AACSS can be the fact that some of them are engaging with whites for the first time. Racial identity can play a significant role in deciding what behaviors to exhibit while interacting with the dominant culture. Part of the problem stems from how Blacks are portrayed in the media. Nasir, McLaughlin and Jones (2009) described the media portrayal of Blacks as stereotyping them in such a way we are perceived as "potentially dangerous, anti-intellectual and downtrodden" (p.25). When Blacks assimilate on PWIs, there is an internal need to proceed with caution because we know there are preconceived notions of who they are as a culture. The disconnect felt can preclude AACSS motivation to be successful especially when there are already difficulties attempting to navigate outside of their comfort zone. More importantly, being away from home and the environment they grew up in; it is challenging having to navigate in a different environment with people who have preconceived notions of who they are and how well they will perform academically. This can cause a disconnect for many Black college students causing them to sometimes give up the quest for higher education.

Delpit (1995) ascertains several qualities that could be noted as good tools for teaching underrepresented populations; (1) challenging all students and making sure there are resources to help them meet those challenges; (2) insure that all students can grasp the curriculum. This may

be difficult in higher education, however a good professor can make sure he is available to students outside of class and show genuine concern for the student's success; (3) connect learning to real life experiences; (4) teach students to make their own decisions; and most important for Black students (5) communicating and building a connection to better understand their cultural background.

Jones (2001) suggested that if retention plans for underrepresented populations were to be successful the campus initiative must take a holistic approach and not an approach that simply "pays lip" service to diversity retention initiatives. He also pointed out the need for administrators to recognize changes in society's new environments (integrated neighborhoods), different value systems and awareness of one's minority status. These are the situational encounters that add to the dynamics of racial identity that must be incorporated within retention programs as well as a deeper understanding of the situational encounters by faculty and administrators if they are to help retain AACs.

Summary

This chapter has discussed racial identity and how it has impacted the lives of African Americans since the early days of segregation. More importantly, in this chapter I draw from a variety of empirical and theoretical research that has established that there is to some degree of conclusiveness, a direct impact on the racial identity of African American college students and their ability to assimilate on predominantly white college campuses and continue through to degree completion. I also set the framework for my research and explained the reasons for using both the MIBI as well as the CRIS, to research the impact of racial identity. More importantly for Blacks attending a university that has a high ration of Blacks, especially Black male students.

CHAPTER 3

RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

Statement of the Problem

More often black students experience a disconnect from the overall campus environment, therefore, leading to poor retention rates (Rodger & Summers 2008). This disconnect can be directly related to how blacks assimilate and the feelings of belonging to the internal and external campus environment. Sellers, Rowley and Chavous, Shelton, and Smith (1997 p.805) argue that racial theory epistemological belief includes the “choices an individual makes are, in part, a function of the extent to which the behavioral choices are related to a salient (or personally relevant) role- identity”; which is better defined by African Americans behavior choices as they engage in predominantly White environments. This theory has offered the framework for studying racial identity, which has been researched empirically and vigorously, hypothesizing that there is a direct correlation with racial-identity and AACSS ability to assimilate and be successful attending PWIs (Nasir, McLaughlin and Jones, 2009; Worrell, Vandiver, Schaefer and Cross Jr., Fhagen-Smith, 2006).

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of my research will be to study the impact of racial-identity of African American college students and how this may affect the way in which they assimilate into the college environment as well as possibly hindering their retention.

Many AACSS come to PWIs every year not knowing what to expect or how they will be perceived by people of the dominant race. They come without knowledge of how life is outside of negotiating through their everyday environments. As they assimilate through PWIs there is a consent question of ‘will I fit in or will I be accepted for who I am’, ‘Black’? Cole (2011)

describes the educational environment as having a significant impact on the educational experience, more importantly the academic success of African American students.

Design and Methodology

The intent of this research is to examine how racial identity variables impact African American College Students' ability to assimilate in Predominately White Institutions and how this paradigm may affect their retention rate as they pursue degrees in higher education at a Midwestern University. This chapter describes the research design used to attempt to answer the research questions listed below. I also will provide an in-depth detail on the mixed method approach that was conducted for this study, sequential exploratory design. This chapter will provide the step-by-step method for collecting both the quantitative data and the qualitative data. In addition to that, this chapter describes the instruments and participants that were used for this research. Research Questions

This study used a mixed method explanatory sequential design that involves collecting quantitative data first and then explains the quantitative results with in-depth qualitative data to answer the following:

- 1) How does racial identity impact African American College students' ability to assimilate on a Predominately White Institution that has a high percentage of Black students?
- 2) How do African American students perceive their college's/university's commitment to them, having a high percentage of Black students?
- 3) How do African American college students perceive their racial identity impacting their lives?

Participants and Their Profile

The participants were (N=125) out of 748 undergraduate African American college students attending a predominately white university in the Mid-West with high Black enrollment. The demographic background for the participants were: Ages 42% = 18-20; 45% = 21-29; 6% = 30-39; 6% = 40-49. There were 30.4%(N=38) first generation college students with 60% male and 40% female.

For the qualitative phase II, a convenience sample of (N=13) undergraduate African American college students was chosen for conducting interviews with one student at a time. These students were living in the dorms that I'm in charge of. Although, I was in charge of the dorm the students were made aware that they were not obligated to help with my research. As I engaged with the students (daily) I requested their participation in the qualitative interviews when they came into my office. A couple of the students were sent emails requesting their participation.

Research Design

The mixed method research design is a sequential explanatory design (see figure 1.4 for the step by step description of the design and see figure 1.5). Using this design allows the researcher to have a broader scope of data to help verify his/her findings. To address the questions of this research, the initial quantitative instruments gain the information necessary to assess the identity development of the African American college students and the qualitative interviews allow for a more in-depth understanding of some of the answers given in the questionnaire. With sequential explanatory design, the qualitative phase is used to explain the quantitative results.

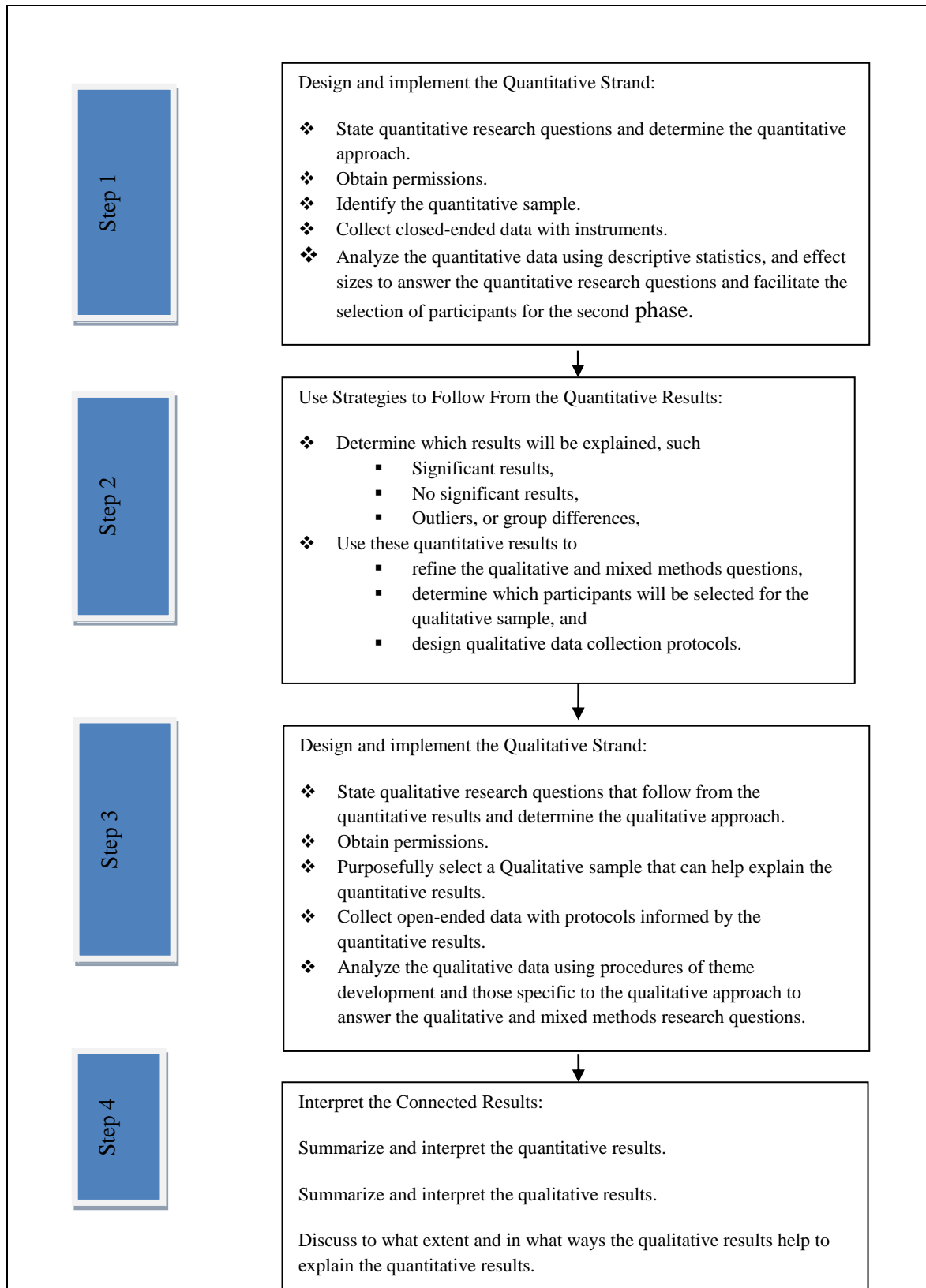


Figure 3: Sequential Explanatory Implementation Design

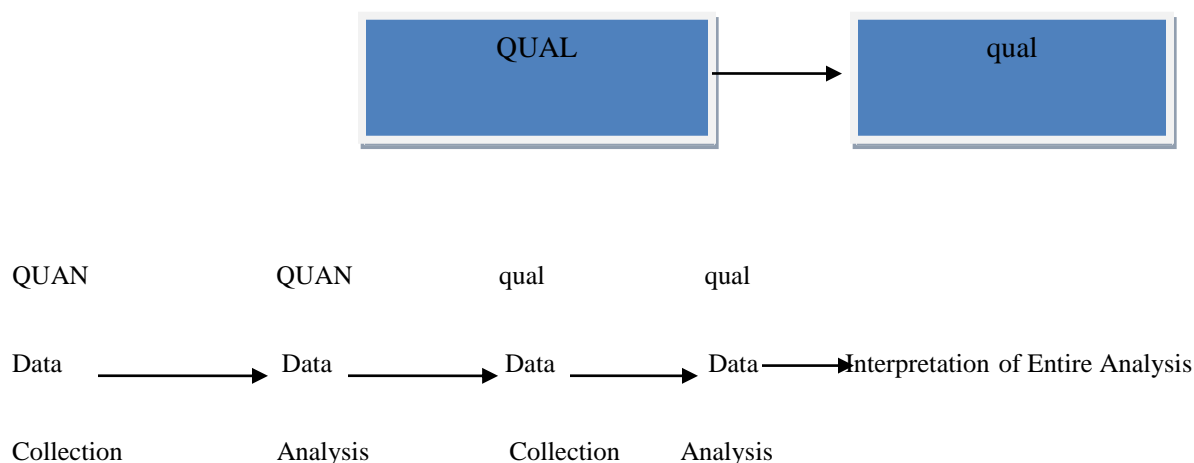


Figure 4: Sequential Explanatory Designs

Advantages of using this design

The advantage of sequential explanatory design is that it appeals to the quantitative researchers in the respect that it leads to more in-depth information about a phenomenon. It also has a two-phase structure that makes it straight-forward to implement. In addition, the final report can be written in two-phases with quantitative results followed by a qualitative section. Furthermore, it is emergent in nature as the qualitative phase can be designed based on results from the quantitative phase which leads to a more in-depth understanding for the readers.

Challenges in using this design and how they will be addressed

The challenge of explanatory sequential design is that it requires a lengthy amount of time to implement both phases gathering data for both the quantitative phase and the qualitative phase. It can also be difficult to secure permission from the Institutional Review Board (IRB) because the researcher must request to implement two different sets of data collection and soliciting participants for two separate sets of data. The initial research project was going to be quantitative. Therefore, in order to do the mixed method and include interviews a complete description of the emerging follow-up phase had to be written in details and an addendum had to

be sent to the IRB requesting permission to do the interviews for the qualitative phase. Other challenges include deciding on which quantitative results need to be further explained which should correspond to the proposed research questions and deciding who to sample for the second phase can cause some validity issues. However, for this study the same participants was used for both phases. Although, it could have been problematic because some of the students may no longer be attending the university to complete the second phase. Instrument Reliability and Validity

Quantitative. Cross's Racial Identity Scale (CRIS) is an exploration of how racial identity development stages are altered and influenced by events and encounters during one's life (Worrell et al., 2006). Those stage clusters include: Pre-encounter—Mis-education-; Pre-encounter—Assimilation; Pre-encounter—Self-hatred; Immersion—Emmersion Anti-White; Internalizing Multiculturalist Inclusive; Internalization Afrocentric. All the stages include a 5 item inventory and generally use a Likert style survey process. Previous reliability estimates for the CRIS scores have been in the medium to high range with intercorrelations not exceeding | .30 | and subscale items loading on unique factors show internal consistency estimated subscale scores at or above .80 (Cronbach alpha).(Worrell et al, 2006). Vandiver et al., (2002) did a correlational analyses between the CRIS and the MIBI and supported the convergent validity of the CRIS.

The Multidimensional Inventory of Black Identity scales (Sellers et al., 2011) focuses on the status of the individuals' racial identity rather than on the development of the person's identity, such as in the case of the CRIS instrument. The MIBI is a 3 scale inventory; centrality, regard, Ideology and also includes for subscales directly relating to the inventory scales; private and public regard (regard scale), assimilation, humanist, oppressed minority, and nationalist, are

all subscales for ideology. Each scale consists of an 8- item inventory of questions to choose from, some are scored in reverse order for proper scoring. Sellers et al. (1997) completed a study of 474 AACS from a PWI using the MIBI and found that the inter-scale correlations suggest that the MIBI is internally valid. Convergent validity was established with selected subscales of the Multidimensional Inventory of Black Identity (MIBI; Sellers et al., 1998), and correlations between subscale scores on both instruments were in the appropriate directions $Mdn = .34$. For the purpose of this study, I examined two dimensions of racial identity taken from the MIBI: Centrality and public regard. The centrality scale refers to how much Blacks internalize what being Black has to do with how they feel about themselves (is it a core value). For example, does being Black define who I am and if so is it at a level of high salience or low salience? Private regard and public regard establishes how we internalize the way we see the Black culture and the way we perceive how others see us.

Both the CRIS and the MIBI instruments examine how racial identity roles are salient at a particular time in life or African Americans, dependent upon the situation; those subscales include: Assimilation into other groups; Oppressed groups; Centrality being black is important; Public and Private regard how we feel about ourselves and how we feel we are perceived by others (Cross et., al 1997). These subscales are emergent variables that can assist in explaining poor retention rates for AACS. The questionnaire will be designed using the Likert scale and questions will range from (1) strongly agree to (5) strongly disagree. The student participants were emailed and asked to participate in the research. Depending on the number of responds an additional request for participation were sent out two weeks following the initial request for participation in the research. The analysis of the quantitative data was done using Quasi frequency analysis rather than using a SPSS statistical application. Once the data was collected

and analyzed the responses were viewed in-depth to decide what questions need further explanation and was going to be used in the qualitative follow-up.

My choice to use parts of both instruments was based on several conclusions. Moreover, several of the CRIS subscales immersion-emersion, multiculturalism and nationalist items had reliability scores ranging from low .60 to mid-.80 (IEM); nationalist and the multinationalist had reliability scores ranging from .40 to .50 (Worrel et al., 2002). Worrel also stated those stage clusters are in an “experimental examination for continued evaluation of its relevance as a viable theoretical and empirical constructs” (p.73) He did state the subscales could be used for experimental purposes but further research is being conducted to assess more variability on how those dimensions impact African American’s racial identity.

More precisely, Cross (1971, 1991) expounded on the Nigrescence theory and developed the CRIS to assess the identity conversions experienced by Blacks following being oppressed, it was then that he noted the stages of identity development for Blacks. More importantly, with the identity shifts (of Blacks) that have occurred in today’s society has led to a need to re-examine the aforementioned clusters. I also felt the above subscale questions were somewhat complex and may be difficult for undergraduate students to comprehend. Therefore, I left out the following scales; Immersion-emersion anti-White, internalization Afrocentric and internalization multiculturalist inclusive, in addition, adding those subscales would have made the survey too long.

Sellers et al., (1997) stated the MIBI will allow researchers to gain a better understanding of African American racial identity and the results formulated can be “interpreted within the context of existing research on universal processes associated with group identity and with the existing literature that specifically focuses on African American racial Identity” (p.807).

My decision not to use all the clusters on the MIBI was due to the lengthiness of the instrument. In addition, some the scales were similar for both instruments. The MIBI is comprised of eight subscales and 56 questions which would have made for a very long and time consuming survey. Moreover, Rowell et al. (2011) conducted a study of African Americans following the election of President Obama using the same subscales I've chosen for my research and he also throughout the question on public regard.

Data Collection

Quantitative Data Collection

Once I gained approval from the IRB and received the email address of 748 undergraduate students, which was obtained through the office of freedom of information an e-mail was sent requesting participation in my research; however approximately two hundred emails were undeliverable (N=548) for reasons unknown. Of the 548 surveys sent out 33 students responded: a second request was sent and an additional 22 students responded (N=55) with a %10 response rate Surveys were set up through SurveyMonkey.com and the participants were able to access the link through the email that was sent out. The email also included information letting the participants know that the project has been approved by the HSC/IRB. I also informed them that participation is strictly voluntary. I also let the participants know there may be a follow- up email sent within two weeks depending on how many people responded to the surveys. I included in the email that I was looking for African American college students to participate. In addition to that, I explained that this included African Americans that were of biracial heritage.

Survey Monkey has a system designed to collect and analyze the data to configure the direct response percentage rate per question. To Access my data from Survey Monkey (SM) I logged into my account and the features within SM gives you several options. Of those options there are many costly up grades that can be used to analyze and transmit the data to different programs such SPSS. For my research I utilized the standard free option which offers data collection and frequency analysis percentages. Initially there were 38 responses to the survey (3 responses were omitted because the participants stated he/she was White N=35). After one month, a second email request was sent and I received an additional 22 response (N=55). Because of the low participation rate using (N=55/% 10 response rate out of 548) Survey Monkey, I decided to explore other options for more participants. I gained permission to solicit for participants at the campus recreation center. At the recreation center I did a convenience sample and gained an additional 70 participants (N=125).

Qualitative Data Collection

The qualitative data was collected using interviews from a convenience sample of African American college students (N=13). The participants were chosen out of the students that lived in the dorm buildings that I work with. As I interacted with the students when they came into my office I asked if they would agree to participate in phase II of my research project, my intention was to only have ten interviews for the qualitative phase, however, a couple of the students solicited their friends so this brought the total to 13 participants. All thirteen students took the survey for the quantitative phased (not include in the 125 participants). However, they did not take the surveys until after the interviews. I decided it may be better to give the surveys following the interviews to avoid them having any preconceived perceptions developed (biases) due to the questions asked on the survey. Also this gave me the opportunity to see if there were

any significant shifts in their answers on the survey versus what was said during the interviews. I would also have an opportunity to ask for explanations when their survey answers were contradictory of their answers given during the interviews. Conducting the interviews in this way did not take away from the fact that this is an explanatory mixed method study because the questions for the qualitative phase were still derived from the quantitative surveys. The questions for the qualitative phase were based on the interpretations of the quantitative data.

A second coder was solicited to check for coding validation and trustworthiness of the codes. He found that two of the questions (1 and 2) were somewhat dichotomous in context. However, for question 2 there were 3 participants that answered with a yes or no response. The qualitative phase is important to this research because it allows the student participants to give further detail about how they perceive the college environment and engaging with peers, professors, and how connecting with student groups has helped to impact their college experience.

The participants were asked to sign a consent waiver prior to being interviewed. The consent form provided information about the research project and it explained to the students that the research was confidential and voluntary. The participants were interviewed one student at a time. The interviews were held at the conference room located in my office building, which is also where the students dining hall is located; I wanted to make it convenient for the participants. Interviews were tape recorded for better accuracy of their response. I also took notes on the interview script if I needed to follow up on any of the questions. The interviews were open-ended questions that directly address how the participants perceive their racial identity impact their ability to adapt and engage with the dominant culture of the university. As well as how they felt racial identity may impact their lives as they become productive investors of society.

The interviews took on average 20 to 30 minutes. Following the interviews the tape recordings and notes were kept in a secured location.

Maxwell (2008) and Creswell (2011) set the framework and guidance for the interpretation of the qualitative data analysis. The responses were analyzed by coding the themes within the interviews. The interviews were coded using a nominal scale along with tables to show the percentages of response and any significance in between responses.

Data Analysis

Quantitative Analysis

For phase I quantitative survey data was analyzed using descriptive statistics and frequency analysis to tabulate the percentage of responses. My choice to use descriptive statistics rather than inferential statistics was based on the not expecting a normal distribution so it was not really appropriate to use inferential statistics. More importantly, it was better to use descriptive analysis with no claims to generalizability. Cushinery (2011) completed a emergent mixed method study using descriptive statistics with tables and narratives to analyze his quantitative data, this also helped to guide my decision to use this method. The surveys were designed using a Likert nominal scale 1=strongly agree thru 5= strongly disagree.

The surveys were completed through the use of Survey Monkey were broken down to include the amount of responses as well as the rate of responses; for example, question (1) stated, being black has very little to do with how I feel about myself . Survey Monkey displays the question as well as how many responses were given to the question and the percentage rate of the response (in the example above 23 participants strongly agreed with the question which was 18.4% (23/125%) of the participants. Theoretically, Survey Monkey does the collection of the

data and the analyses; it's a matter of transferring the data to a spread sheet or some kind of word document. The surveys that were taken at the campus recreation center were analyzed by placing all the categories in a excel spreadsheet and tallying all the responses to the questions and then diving the response by the total number of participants. Prior to dividing the responses for percentage rates I had to include the results that were computed by Survey Monkey; those results had to be added to the surveys collected from the recreation center. Essentially I had to add the two sets of data together and tally the results (number of responses /total participants). I also used frequency analysis to show any significant differences within the questions. Any percentages that showed significance in the response rate were highlighted with the use of pie charts. For example, under public regard, out of the five responses 41.9% (strongly disagreed) of the participants (N=125) felt that Blacks were not considered to be good people by other races; which placed a higher percentage rate than any other of the categories response.

Qualitative Analysis

The interviewees for my research were a convenient sample of African American undergraduate students (N=13) living on and off campus. I selected participants by asking them during face-to-face conversations because the students either worked or lived in the dorms I was in charge of. The students were informed that they were under no obligation to participate in my research. The interviews took place the second semester of the school year after the students had a chance to form some opinions about how they perceived the university is committed to their overall success. The students were interviewed one at a time and the interviews took 20 to 30 minutes each.

The qualitative data was analyzed using a constructivist grounded theory approach. According to Glaser (2002) the constructivist “orientation is that data is constructed with interacting interpretations” (p.9). Which is the process of my interpreting the tape recorded interviews of the participants and trying to keep an unbiased approach; while understanding the how the real life paradigm in this case racial identity can impact one’s life. The tape recorded interviews were written down in a note book and pseudonym names were given to each participant. Interviews were code by reading the statements and a main category was given to each participant’s response. At that point any emerging themes were written down and those became the subcategories. Once the sub-categories were established the data was analyzed for codifying themes which were words or statements to each question that were repeated by the participants thought-out the interview process. For example, one of the participants said she felt the RSO groups and her Residence Assistance (RA) have made her college experience good so far. That was interpreted as follows.

Category: College Experience

Subcategory 1: Organizational Groups

Coded Themes:

Registered Student Groups

Resident Assistants

Feeling Excepted

The codifying of the themes reflects reoccurring themes that had been said by all the participants for a particular question. Strauss (1987) described this process as way to arrange

data systematically and to parts of the data collected into classification and categories. He defined codifying as the process that “permits data to be ‘segregated, grounded, regrouped and relinked in order to consolidate meaning and explanation’ (Grbich, 2007, p. 21) (as cited in Struass, 1987, p. 8). An additional coder was used to show reliability and trustworthiness of the coded themes. Narratives are also include in the analysis chapter to further describe the statements that were made by the students and to include more in debt conclusions of the African American students perceptions of how racial identity impacts their lives.

Chapter 4 will describe a complete breakdown of data collected for this research. Phase one quantitative data will be analyzed and interpreted using frequency analysis descriptive tables and charts. The qualitative data was coded into categories and sub-categories and written narratives summarizing the interviews that were conducted. I have also included demographic information for the participants used in the qualitative phase of the study.

CHAPTER 4

FINDINGS

Purpose of the Study

The intent of this study is to examine how racial identity variables may impact AACCS ability to assimilate in PWIs and how this paradigm may affect their retention rate. For this research I used a sequential explanatory design. This design fits this research because it allows for the use of (1st) quantitative data collection and (2nd) qualitative data collection. The quantitative data is used to develop more in-depth constructs for use with the qualitative method. This research utilized AACCS from a Mid-Western PWI.

Analysis of the Quantitative Data Collection

The analysis of the data used a similar analysis for direct response method used by Charles Cushinery (2011) who completed a mixed method studied using Quasi frequency analysis and descriptive tables to show the number of responses and the percentage of responses. I will discuss the responses in depth, because the tables will consist of results analyzed for each subscale rather than having a table to represent each question. The questions were taken from the scales and subscales of the CRIS and the MIBI. Both the CRIS and the MIBI has a combine of approximately 92 (36 and 56 with 6 and 5 subscales, respectfully); my decision to use both instrument was because they both measure (MIBI =situational /CRIS= development over time) something different I thought it would add more insight into the research. 25 questions were asked using a Likert scale to provide data answering the researched questions:

- 1) How does racial identity impact African American College Students ability to assimilate on predominately White college campus with high enrollment of African American students' enrollment?

- 2) 2) How do African American college students perceive their college/university's commitment to them with high enrollment of African American students?
- 3) How do African American college students perceive their racial identity impacting their lives?

The survey was designed using a Likert scale to more accurately responses to statements. The choices consisted of five answers; choices were 1 meaning the participants strongly agree thru 5 meaning the participants disagreed: 1=Strongly Agree (SA), 2=Agree (A), 3=Somewhat Agree (SWA), 4=Strongly Disagree (SD), 5= Disagree (D). The surveys was administered to (N=55) African American undergraduate students out of 548 students that were asked to participate via emails. However, 70 out the 125 students were solicited at the campus recreation center. The tables below represent the frequency analysis to the responses given by the participants. The participants were also given the option to choose other, but were asked to explain their decision to make this choose. The survey breakdown also identify if there were no response given for a particular question. The percentage points were rounded up for space within the cells. The survey questions included two sets of subscales from the MIBI those were: Centrality and Public Regard. The CRIS instrument gather data using three sets of subscales for; Mis-education, Assimilation and Self-hatred. A test for reliability was done on the instrument that showed a Cronbach's alpha of .61 to a .66 this is a relatively low reliability, however for the purpose of this research it is acceptable because the purpose of this research was to gage perceptions based on direct responses to the questions. More importantly, Rowell (2011) reported a .60 to a .70 for reliability using the same subscales I used.

Table 1
Centrality Subscale

Question	SA	A	SWA	D	SD
1) In general, being Black is an important part of my self-image.	21.2%	9.1%	30.3%	21.2%	18.2%
2) My destiny is tied to the destiny of other Black people.	0%	24.2%	24.4%	33.3%	18.2%
3) Being Black is unimportant to my sense of what kind of person I am.	15.1%	21.2%	6.01%	27.3%	30.3%
4) Overall, being Black has very little to do with how I feel about myself.	21.2%	9.1%	30.3%	21.2%	18.2%
5) Being Black is an important reflection of who I am.	18.2%	33.3%	18.2%	24.2%	6.0%

Table I has a breakdown of the statements pertaining to Centrality which establishes the importance of race to the students self-image and how in-line being Black is with their long term goals. In this subscale the percentages indicate multiple directions of low and high salience of the impact being Black may or may not play a role in ones' life. Questions 1 and 3 are reflective of how important a role being Black does play in the students' life. In question 1, over 50% (total % from SA, A, SWA columns) of the respondents suggested that the students either strongly agreed or somewhat agreed that being Black was an important part of who they were. For questions 2 and 5, more than 50% of the respondents suggested that being Black was not significant to their ability to reach goals or build social relationships. The response to question number 4 suggests that the students were somewhat split on how they felt being Black impacted their self-image: 30.3% percent of the responses leaned towards agreeing that being Black had little to do with how they felt about themselves and 30.3% percent were somewhat in agreement but 39% felt that self-esteem and how they felt about themselves had little to do with being Black. Question 1 under the Centrality subscale is related to how Blacks view race as having

low salience or high salience (race is important/not important) in-with the context of their racial identity. Many of the responses to questions about centrality could be dependent upon the demographical environment and or family background where the African American student has come from.

Table 2
Public Regard

Question	SA	A	SWA	D	SD
1) Overall, Blacks are considered good by others.	23.1%	4.8%	23.8%	33.3%	14.3%
2) In general, others respect Black people.	4.5%	13.6%	18.2%	27.3%	27.3%
3) Most people consider Blacks, on the average, to be more ineffective than other racial groups.	36.4%	31.9%	13.6%	9.1%	4.6%
4) Blacks are not respected by the broader society.	9.1%	13.6%	9.1%	36.4%	27.3%
5) Society sees Blacks people an as assets.	13.6%	13.6%	27.3%	22.7%	22.7%

Table 2 illustrates how African American students believe they are regarded by the broader society. In question 1, (6.5%) of the respondents agreed with the statement that Blacks are respected, while 41.9% strongly disagreed and in question 5 (3.0%) strongly agreed, while 39.4% strongly disagreed with the statement. In both questions the majority of the participants did not feel that Blacks are looked at as positive by other people. However, in the case of question 3, the participants agreed to some degree that Blacks are not as effective as other racial groups, three participants did not respond to this question. The results of Question 4 showed that participants were somewhat split between strongly agreeing and disagreeing as to rather or not African Americans are assets.

The questions on public regard had responses that were somewhat split because both strongly agree thru somewhat agree had almost equal percentage points to choices of strongly disagree and disagree. However, if you look at the strongly agree category and the strongly disagree category there is a large difference in how African American students feel about how Blacks are viewed in the eyes of the broader society. This question was further explored within the qualitative interviews.

The surveys included three subscales from the CRIS:

Table 3

Pre-encounter Subscales

Mis-education

Question	SA	A	SWA	D	SD
1) Too many Blacks “glamorize” the drug trade and fail to see opportunities that don’t involve crime.	23.1%	4.8%	23.8%	33.3%	14.3%
2) Blacks place more emphasis on having a good time than on hard work.	4.5%	13.6%	18.2%	27.3%	27.3%
3) Many African Americans are too lazy to see opportunities that are right in front of them.	9.1%	4.6%	13.6%	36.4%	31.9%
4) African Americans are too quick to turn to crime to solve their problems.	9.1%	13.6%	9.1%	36.4%	27.3%
5) Blacks place too much importance on racial protest and not enough on hard work and education.	13.6%	13.6%	27.3%	22.7%	22.7%

Table 3 shows a breakdown of how mis-education is perceived by African American students in the context of how Blacks are motivated or not motivated to accomplish goals. On Question (1) the students were split with 51.7% strongly agreeing or somewhat agreeing vs. 47.6% who disagreed or strongly disagreed that too many Blacks glamorize the drug trade. The response to this question could be indicative of how African Americans are stereotypically

viewed in the media. A plethora of research has shown that the way African American college students are stereotypically viewed has a direct impact on their classroom performance.

Solorano (2000) described micro-aggressions that can be insults delivered visually and verbally or non-verbal insults that can be directed towards AA college students due to the mis-education of the White dominant race. Three of the participants who answered this question (number 1) also wrote comments and the recurring theme that the drug trade is often perpetuated by the over exacerbated attention given when media primarily focuses on the incarceration of Blacks and Blacks involvement with the selling of drugs. Secondly, it was noted by one of the participants that even though Blacks are often portrayed in the media with the drug trade, it is more important to understand that White (dominantly males) are often the ones that are capitalizing on the drugs. However, this is not what is focused on the media.

Table 4

Assimilation

Question	SA	A	SWA	D	SD
1) I think of myself primarily as an American, an seldom as a member of a racial group.	18.2%	22.7%	18.2%	31.8%	9.1%
2) I am not so much a member of a racial group, as I am an American.	14.3%	9.5%	28.6%	33.3%	14.3%
3) If I had to put myself into categories, first I would say I am an American, and second I am a member of a racial group.	19.0%	42.9%	9.5%	19.5%	9.5%
4) If had to put a label on my identity, it would be “American, “and not African American.	5.3%	7.0%	7.0%	26.3%	54.4%
5) I have developed an identity that stresses my experiences as an American more than my experiences as a member of a racial group.	22.7%	18.2%	13.5%	31.8%	13.6%

Table 4 details how African American college students view themselves as Americans as opposed to being categorized in a particular racial group. One person wrote he/she does not like to classify himself/herself in the context of race and another respondent wrote that Blacks have fought the same wars and made contributions to society equal to those of White people and therefore should be classified as Americans first and then classified within a racial group. Although all the participants did not comment on the questions about assimilation, the percentage of participants that strongly agreed thru somewhat agreed on all the questions about assimilation are reflective of students who feel that they are American first and part of a racial group second. However, Question Four revealed that 80.7% of the participants believed that if their identity had to be labeled; it would be African American. This result is different from Question Three because having to choose which category of nationality one would pick is about placement within society. Question Four asks what race would you identify with and this is indicative of race centrality and the importance being Black places in the lives of African American college students. Having strong feelings about being American could assist the African American college students' ability to assimilate on predominantly White college campus because this can impact how they feel about being accepted by the dominant culture. The feelings of isolation may decrease if the African American student has a feeling of being equal to White students in their understanding of being an American first and a member of a racial group. This can also address the disconnect that can be felt by African American students because there can be a shared pride between the students because of their beliefs that both groups can be proud to be Americans.

Table 5
Self-Hatred

Question	SA	A	SWA	D	SD
1) I go through periods when I am down on myself because I am Black.	6.25%	0%	12.50%	25.0%	56.25%
2) I sometimes struggle with negative feelings about being Black.	3.13%	9.38%	2.5%	3.13%	58.38%
3) When I look in the mirror at my Black image, I sometimes have negative feelings about being Black	7.14%	7.14%	21.43%	14.29%	50.0%
4) Privately, I sometimes have negative feelings about being Black.	1.75%	7.01%	8.87%	22.8%	59.6%
5) I sometimes have negative feelings about being Black.	0%	5.3%	3.5	21.0%	70.2%

Table 5 reflects how African American college students feel about their racial identity “Being Black”. These questions address how Black students feel internally about being Black as well as how they internalize being Black (note to reader: items were not cross-scored).

Although, Questions One and Question Five are similar in nature, Question One addresses how Blacks may show outward discontent towards being Black. This could be due to situations where Blacks are portrayed in the media in a negative light doing things that make Blacks look less educated and in some situations causing the dominant race to see African Americans as not being productive members of society. For example, when Blacks are portrayed in movies or in the media doing things like going to prison for selling drugs, this not only perpetuates the stereotypical views people have about blacks, but it can also bring shame to other Blacks who would like to debunk some of the stereotypical views and work towards getting the dominant race to see Blacks as hard working productive members of society. More importantly, in this scale (self-hatred) only 8.9% had negative feelings about being Black and more than 85% of the

participants felt strongly about their Black identity when asked questions such as those displayed in Table 6. This could be indicative to the demographical environment and or family background of the participants (not getting demographics noted as a limitation). More importantly, they could have grown up in an environment that encouraged them to be strong individualistic thinkers who take pride in who they are as individuals, as well as to embrace their “Blackness”.

Qualitative Analysis

The theoretical frame work established for this research was a constructivist grounded theory approach. Mills, Bonner and Francis (2006) asserted that researchers should choose a design that is congruent with the epistemological belief of the researcher. They further cited the “epistemologically, constructivism emphasizes the subjective interrelationship between the researched and participant and the co-construction of meaning”, noting the previous researchers of this framework (Hayes & Oppenheim, 1997; Pidgeon & Henwood, 1997) (as cited in Mills, Bonner and Francis, 2006). Using a constructivist grounded theory approach will allow analyzing of data to be interpreted within relation to how it reflects the researcher’s sensitivity, sampling and coding of the data. Taking this approach does not forbear the researcher from maintaining a degree of bias when conducting interviews and interpreting the data; however, Charmaz (2000) describes this process as recognizing the empirical world and allowing for a middle ground between “postmodernism and positivism” (as sited in Glaser, 2002). Charmaz also asserted that “constructivist assumes the relativism of multiple social realities, recognizes the mutual creation of knowledge by the viewer and the viewed, and aims toward interpretive understanding of subjects’ meaning” (as sited in Glaser, p.3). Glaser 2002, argued that Charmaz’ theory leads the researcher to form mutual interpretations rather than taking the data in the

content for which it was received by the participants. More importantly, Mills et al (2006) noted Charmaz as a leading proponent for constructivist and also acknowledged that her constructivist grounded theory is both plausible and desirable because data does not always lead to realities. They also stated Charmaz theorized that there is a reality that forms in the “interactive process and it is temporal, cultural, and structural contexts” (as cited in Mills et al, 2006, p.6).

Constructivist grounded theory is best appropriate for data analysis for the paradigm investigated in my study because of the relationship and insight I have within the real life experiences of the research topic. Reason (1988) casts the term **critical subjectivity** which has been described as allowing the researcher to reflect on his/her experience and to include that experience within the context of the research (as cited in Maxwell, 2005). This allows the researcher to use their experience as part of the inquiry process. Maxwell (2005) stated the “**researcher identity memo**” is a technique used to bring the researcher’s experience into the study (p.225) (discussed in chapter 2).

Qualitative Interviews

The qualitative data was deducted through the questions asked in the quantitative phase I of the research. The participants for the qualitative phase II was a convenience sample randomly selected to take part in the interviews. Thirteen of the participants who were included in the quantitative surveys agreed to participate in the interviews. The participants were all undergraduate African American students’ representing different geographical areas and different social and economic backgrounds, five of the students were first generation college students, six males and seven females. The interviews were conducted in a central location on campus for convenience to the students, therefore allowing them to schedule interviews before

their classes or after classes depending on their schedule. Initially the interviews were going to be conducted with two participants at a time; however, after the first set of interviewees I realized as the only ethnographer it was difficult to engage with two people at a time. More important, in order to elicit the response needed to clarify the questions, there was a need to ask the participant to expand on his/her answers, which would have time consuming had I continued to interview two people at a time. In addition, the interviews were supposed to take 15 to 20 minutes so keeping with that time frame required me to interview one person at a time. Five questions were developed for a more in-depth understanding of several of the responses to the quantitative survey questions. The qualitative interviews were coded using codifying and categorizing from the text transcriptions. Strauss (1987) describes this process as a system used to classify, re-classify and categorize data into emergent themes.

Table 6 is a background description of the participants. I felt it was important to establish where the students were from demographically because this would lend some knowledge of information about their interaction with other cultures. I also felt it was important to include information about their family's educational background because if the student is a first generation college student, this can make assimilating into the overall campus environment somewhat complex, because the support from their family could be limited due to the fact that no one has ever attended college. It was also important to ascertain why they had chosen this Mid-Western University as opposed to an institution close to home.

Table 6

Interview Subject Profile

Subject Names	Sex	Grade	Age	Geographic Location	Family Education	Choice for this school
Charles	M	Junior	22	Chicago	Father /Bachelor Degree	Engineering School
Terrell	M	Freshman	19	Chicago Inner City	Mom/ Master	Second choice
Ronnie	FE	Junior	23	Rural Town (up north)	Mom/ Masters	Close to Home
Michaela	M	Sophomore	22	Chicago Suburb	First Generation	Engineering School
Sharon	FE	Senior	23	Chicago	Sibling in College	Architect Program
Martinis	FE	Freshman	20	Chicago Inner City	First Generation	Criminal Justice
John	M	Sophomore	20	Chicago Suburb	Sibling Graduated	Mortuary Science
James	M	Freshman	20	O'Fallon	First Gen	Auntie
Steve	M	Freshman	19	Chicago	Dad/PhD	Father Alumni
Sally	FE	Junior	28	Chicago	First Generation	Best Friend Attending

Table 6 continued

Glory Dean	FE	Freshman	19	Chicago Inner City	First Generation	Close to Home
Arnold	M	Senior	22	Chicago Suburb	Sibling Graduated	Engineering Program
Barbara	FE	Freshman	19	Chicago Inner City	First Generation	Second Choice

At the beginning of each interview the participants were asked demographic questions as well as questions about their family background. I also disclosed why I was doing the study and the reasons for my interest in racial identity, which was explained in the identity memo (figures 1.0 thorough 1.3 pages 14-16). Most of the students had varying reasons for choosing this university. However, the majority of the students were from Chicago or the surrounding suburbs of Chicago. The students were asked to answer the six questions below to the best of their ability and to be honest with their responses. The participants were asked to explain and/or give examples of some of their experiences when warranted or if I need further explanation. I assured the participants that their responses were completely confidential. The questions have been codified and put into categories.

Question1. Tell me how you feel the overall school environment has made you feel welcome and is there any one thing that you can say stands out made you feel accepted on this campus.

Category: University Support

Subcategory 1: Organizational Climate

Code Themes:

Diverse Groups

Caring

Inclusiveness

Peer Mentoring Groups

Support Groups/move in

Category: University Climate

Subcategory 2: Social Justice

Code Themes:

Separatism

Blacks vs. White

Police Discrimination

Separate Housing

The reoccurring theme for question 1 was that overall the university did a really good job with the opening days of move-in. The different organizations helping the students made everyone feel welcome. James and Arnold specifically stated the School of Business did an excellent job during recruitment and assisting with their transition into the university. However, Ronnie who is a junior stated the university has a segregated campus atmosphere that bothers her because the Black students are primarily housed on one side of campus and the White students are housed on the other side of campus. She also stated, and gave some examples, how the police are often present at the Black student events but not as much at the White student events. It seems as though Ronnie's feelings about the overall campus atmosphere has distorted any positive interactions she may have had. She did admit that one of the reasons she continues her education here is because of the mortuary science program.

This question further expands on the student's ability to assimilate in a predominantly White campus because all of the participants seemed to have engaged with the move-in helpers who were predominantly White. And all of the participants except for Ronnie expressed how they felt extremely welcomed during the move-in process.

Question II: When you're in class do you feel when you answer a question that your answer(s) are as valued and received with the same respect as the White students when they answer a question?

Category: Professors Participation

Subcategory 1: Classroom Activity

Code Themes:

Knowledgeable Answers

Physical Appearance

Specific Course

Instructor Feedback

Stereotyping

Acceptance

Subcategory 2: White Peer Perceptions

Code Themes:

Competitive

High Participation (Elaborate)

Stereotyping

Confidence

Subcategory 3: Black Peer Perceptions

Code Themes:

Low Participation (Open-ended)

Appearance

Acceptance

In Class Student Perceptions

Question 2 led the participants in many different directions; however, six of the thirteen participants felt that their participation in class was as valued as their White peers. More importantly, this question was answered from three different perspectives, honing in on the teachers, White peers and how the Black students felt about one another in terms of how Black students present themselves and participation in the classroom. For example, Arnold explained that he thought students who did not come off confident in themselves resulted in the instructor or the White students to possibly look at the person strange or the instructor may question the Black student's answers. Several of the participants perceived that in some courses the instructors seemed surprised if the Black student sat in front of the class and participated; Arnold stated he felt as though the instructors were surprised when he would sit in front of the class, although he also expressed that he was usually pretty confident in his response when he participated in class. James also stated that the instructors seemed surprise when he sat in front and regularly participated in the class discussion. He also felt the some of the professors and administration sometimes stereotyped the Black male students when they had general conversations, because the professors/administration usually assume the Black students are knowledgeable about sports; however, he felt that they would not talk to the Black students about things like the stock market or world news. Arnold also felt that the Black students are always being judged by their appearance by professors and White peers. However, Arnold also admits that sometimes Black students could carry themselves better; he referenced the pants hanging off their butts. Both Barbara and Martinis stated when they are in certain classes they feel that some teachers care more about their success than others; when I asked them to explain they both

thought the teachers who cared were the ones who they could feel free to talk to after class if they did not understand something that was discussed during class.

White Peers Perceptions

The majority of the participants perceived that White students usually are more assertive than the Black students and participated more in class than the Black students. Martinis explained that she often felt the White students would sometimes try to outdo the Black students (compete). For example, she explained, when a Black student answers a question they might be correct but the White students will give the same answers and add to it making it seem as though the Black student gave the incorrect answers. However, Martinis explained that she felt sometimes the White students expound on questions more so than the Black students who would sometimes give open-ended or short answers as opposed to the White students who would give lengthy answers to questions. She does feel that White students try to compete to show up the Black students especially if the Black student seemed to be arrogant or smart.

Black Students Self Perceptions

This question not only addressed how African American students felt about public regard but it also touches on how African American students felt about the private regard they have for Blacks. More importantly, Arnold and Steve felt that Black students could do a better job of not only representing themselves but they could also participate more in the classroom. The response to this question seemed to be more individualistic depending on the student academic ability and if the student was an introvert or extrovert because given the students personality it could influence whether or not they would participate in the classroom discussions. This question also was dependent on the year the student was in school because Arnold is a senior and

he was the most vocal about how African Americans should do a better job at representing themselves and he also seemed to be very confident in his ability to engage within the dynamics of the classroom. On the other hand Sharon, who is also a senior, said that she does not participate a lot but she did discuss how she felt African American students should do better job of representing themselves (see comments in question 5).

The overall recurring theme in the responses for this question was that the majority of the participants (N=8) felt that their answers to questions in class were as valued as those of their White peers. A number of participants either perceived there was a competition between the Black students and White students when it came to classroom participation, or they were not comfortable with participating in the classroom at all.

Question III. Do you feel that Black people are respected and valued as assets by people of other races and what indications can you explain that has brought you to this conclusion?

Category: White Society

Subcategory 1: Social Injustice

Code Themes:

Racism

Devalued

Segregation

Inclusivity

Glass Ceiling

Subcategory 2: Stereotypical Views

Code Themes:

Less Intellect

Boxed In

Negative Representation (Media)

Category: Black Society

Subcategory 1: Social Reform

Code Themes:

Professional Standing

More Inclusive Programs

Debunking Stereotyping

Staff Representation

Race Card

Perpetuating Stereotypical Views

Positive Exposure

Implication for White Society

This question was asked to better understand how the African American students perceive the Black culture as seen by other cultures. I also wanted to investigate if today's young Black generation thinks Blacks are being respected and considered productive members of society. Out of the thirteen participants, nine stated they do not think Blacks are respected by the broader society. Some of the participants described how Blacks are respected because of the stereotypical views of Blacks. Many of them described how Blacks are still being portrayed in a negative light in the media and how it makes Blacks seem less productive than other races. Ronnie, who is a junior, felt that other cultures only see Blacks from one side and that's the stereotypical views depicted in the media. However, she did think Blacks are respected more in the business world as opposed to not being respected in the academic world. She went on to say that blacks are not expected to do well academically and when Blacks do well with academics White people seem to be surprised. John stated he thinks Black people are respected when it

comes to sports but White people do not believe Blacks can be high achievers academically but we can be “good ball players”.

Arnold spoke esthetically about racism and how he believed if it were not for legislative laws we (Blacks) would not be anywhere. He also explained how Blacks have to work twice as hard to get half of the recognition White people receive and it does not matter what academic accolades you have. Steve felt Blacks are respected if your important like President Obama or a successful entertainer (movie, music) but people outside of those genres are not as respected nor do they receive the positive notoriety. He spoke about Angela Davis a famous feminist, controversial communist and author who came to speak on campus. He asked several African American students if they were going to see her speak and a lot of the Black students replied “who is she or what does she do”? More importantly, he felt that the media does a poor job at equal representation of Blacks. Steve and Sharon express their dismay with how there is a clear division on the campus. Steve went on to say how the students on the East side of campus (predominantly Blacks) have security within the residence halls, the rules are different and the overall atmosphere is different from the West side of campus which houses predominantly White students.

Implication for African American Society

Although the word stereotyping/stereotypical was the overall theme in the responses for this question some of the participants did feel that blacks needed to do more to debunk some of the stereotypical views that precede us as Black people. Sharon felt that Blacks do things to perpetuate the stereotypical views. She explained that Blacks sometimes carry themselves in ways that make people look down on us. James referred to Black students walking around with

their pants down and acting up (swearing out loud.) The participants described this as making Black people look bad.

James also stated that he thinks BET does a bad job at representing Black people and many of their TV shows tend to perpetuate the stereotypical views White people believe to be true. He also suggested that BET take a page from CNN and portray more African Americans running big business and discussing things that matter the most in the world.

There were two reoccurring themes that came out of this question; (1) Blacks are continuously being stereotyped and; (2) Blacks sometimes perpetuate the stereotypical views that are seen by other cultures. More importantly, James stated “how can Blacks change without changing society”? When I asked him to explain, he stated that the racism and discrimination that still exists is problematic and it continues to hold Black people back.

Question IV. Do you feel there are things the administration and or faculty could do to make Black students feel more welcomed and inclusive in the overall campus environment
What types of things; Example, programming, class offerings ,RSOs etc.?

Category: University Environment

Subcategory 1: All Inclusive

Code Themes:

RSOs

Minority Representation (Staffing)

Programming

Student Mediator

Subcategory 2: Social Justice Training

Code Themes:

Debunking Stereotyping

Connecting cultures

Racism

Subcategory 3: Black Student Involvement

Code Themes:

Individual Choices

Accountability

Program Involvement

Debunking Stereotyping

Six of the respondents thought there was a need for a larger minority representation within the faculty, staff and TAs employed at the university. Another concern was the need for more inclusive organizations/RSOs that focused on bringing both cultures together. Some of the participants felt that if there were a bigger push for or more opportunities for the entire student population to work together then people would see Blacks in a different light, which could possibly debunk some of the stereotypical views that the dominate race has about African Americans. Arnold spoke about his concern for having someone as a mediator for the students; he stated there is no one to turn to when the students have disagreements with the professors “if the faculty and staff are friends and associates working together, who is there to fairly negotiate situations between the students and faculty.” He said he wasn’t just speaking for Black students but there should be someone there for all the students.

Social Justice

Some of the participants (N=4) discussed specific examples of racial discrimination, so we discussed the importance of offering social justice programs. Martinis describe an incident when she and a friend were walking from class and a White male student was approaching them

and he was giving them eye contact as though he were going to speak, so they decided to speak first by stating “hello” and guy replied “What’s up nigga”. She expressed how hurtful and shocking it was because they were thinking it was going to be a pleasant interaction and that it wasn’t. More importantly, she did say that they did not further respond to his rudeness and they just let it go. Both Charles and Terrell recalled separate occasions when they were walking and White students driving by threw a cup of some kind of liquid at them and yelled racial slurs. However, Steve who continually talked about how he feels there is a hostile environment on campus between the Black students and White students, expressed that if the university addresses the problem with the majority of Blacks living on one side of campus and White students living on the other side of campus it would address the hostility between the groups.

Black Student Involvement/ Autonomy

Six participants explained that the Black students needed to get more involved with the activities offered on campus. Some of them felt it did not matter if the administration offered more programs because they felt the African American students would not get involved anyway. Michaela stated, “the administration could do more but he doesn’t think the Black students would take advantage of it”. Terrell also stated “administration could do more but Black students will choose to do other things anyway.” He brought up a program that included a friendly atmosphere where all students could engage in fun filled activities that did not include drinking liquor and getting wild. However, most of the Blacks students he knows skipped that activity to attend a party that got out of control. Sharon expressed, it’s the Black students who needed to get more involved with programs that would allow Black students to be around different people.

The recurring theme was the need for the administration to bring students together on a consistent basis in such areas as housing, programming and open dialog on racism (social justice). Referring back to Steve's comment, there is a need for the students to connect with one another in order to form a better understanding of the cultures which he felt would lead to a more harmonious environment. Another recurring theme seemed to be the need for African American students to have a better sense of autonomy and to decide if they want to be a part of the university holistically and to be more accountable for the decisions they make. James stated, "Blacks must be more accountable" for their own success, but too often Black people want to make excuses for things that happen to them but he feels that we (blacks) need to own up to our own destiny.

Question V. Tell me if there has ever been a time when you have felt uncomfortable feeling embarrassed about being Black, or being yourself when in the presence of your White fellow students. For example, the way you speak, your style or clothes you wore.

Category: Racial Identity

Subcategory 1: Comfort Zone

Code Theme:

Proud

People who look like me

Self-Representation

Observation of others

Appearance

Adapting

Subcategory 2: Stereotyping

Code Theme:

Not intellectual

Poor success rate

Appearance

Comfort Zone (Assimilation)

Many of the participants (N=9) expressed their overall pride and were proud of their Blackness and did not allow stereotypical notions to make them feel bad about who they are. However, there were a couple of those same participants that commented on the fact that although they have never been made to feel bad about themselves, they do have friends that have been uncomfortable in different situations.

However, there were students that expressed the difficulties of assimilating into the campus environment and difficulties with forming friendships with the White students. Glory Dean stated, she wanted to make friends with the White students but she never felt comfortable enough to pursue those relationships, because it seemed like most of the students hung out with people who looked like them. For that reason she continued to gravitate to the Black students. Sharon, who is a senior, reflected on how when she initially came to the university she had difficulty fitting in because of not only her nationality but her demographical background. Sharon is bi-racial, her mom is Black and her dad is African and she comes from a suburb where the environment was predominately White and a lot of her friends were White. Sharon describes having a problem fitting in because she wanted to get close with the Black students but they started accusing her of “acting white” because of the way she dressed and spoke. She then thought maybe she could get to learn more about the African culture so she tried attending African talk sessions and programs, however, she says that was not a comfortable situation either. She says she remembers calling her mom and crying because she could not figure where she fit in. By her second semester she decided to work on “getting in where she fit in” and now

she has many different friends, which attributes to her willingness to join clubs and getting involved in different organizations.

Ronnie explained that she felt more anger than embarrassment because White students would often ask really “stupid questions about her hair style or want to touch her hair”.

Although, she stated it did not make her feel bad about herself because she was going into a profession that where she would not have to deal with how White people perceived her. She explained that in the funeral business Black people often use Black funeral homes and White people often use White funeral homes. I asked her if she thought her profession was going to keep her from engaging with White people. She replied, it won’t be like being at this college.

On the other hand, Barbara, a freshman from the inner city expressed that this has been a good opportunity to meet a diverse group of people, although she admits it has also been somewhat of a challenge as well because the Black students tend to hang out with the Black students and the Whites students tend to hang out with the White students.

Stereotyping

Arnold, who is a senior, reflected on when he first came to this university he attempted to meet with his advisor to set his schedule for the next academic school year. However, his advisor kept blowing him off, telling him they would get it done but he should not worry about it immediately. After a little probing he found out that most of the White students in his major had already made their schedules for the new school year, but he and another Black student had not been given a chance to meet with the advisor to set-up their schedule. He says after speaking with the advisor on a number of occasions, he figured out that she did not think he was going to be returning or that he possibly would be dropping out. He says that was the first time that he

had been made to feel bad about being Black, because he knew she only did that to he and the other student because they were Black male students. Since statistics show that Blacks do not have a good success rate in college, the advisor didn't give them the same attention. He also said that that experience was a motivating factor for him to continue and he decided then that he would keep that same advisor for the entire time he was at the university. Now that he is graduating, it feels good to show that advisor that he made it.

James explained that he always feels good about himself but people often stereotype him when he dresses nice. He has had White students refer to him as acting "White" when he has worn nice clothes. He spoke about societies stereotyping people by putting them in a box. He explained, just because one person does something it does not mean it is indicative of the entire group. He gave an example of how White people can hear a Black person with loud music playing from their car and give them a strange look as if Blacks were the only race that played loud music from their cars. Sharon talked about how some of the Black females wore surfs to class and how she felt as though White students were thinking that this was common practice for Black girls to wear head surfs to class. Sharon also stated that Black girls should not wear surfs to class because it makes Blacks look like we're too lazy to comb our hair which she explained only perpetuates stereotypical views. Sharon also explained that she thought the Black students could do a better job at representing themselves and then we could get the respect we (Blacks) deserve.

Question VI. Is there anything you would like to share about your overall experience at this school that you feel has been directly or indirectly related to the fact that you're Black/good or bad? Table 10 displays the detail response for this question.

Table 7

Overall Experiences

Name	Response	Would you recommend
Glory Dean (Freshman)	Feeling shy when around majority White people	Yes
John (Freshman)	N/A	Yes
Sharon (Senior)	Disappointment with African American students behavior	Yes
James (Sophomore)	Meeting people with different backgrounds	Yes
Arnold (Senior)	People who care you know them. People who do not care you know them as well.	No. First generation student. Came here because of parents.
Steve (Freshman)	Would like to see campus living more diverse (West and East Campus).	Yes.
Michaela	N/A	No-Racism
Terrell (Freshman)	Recalls having water thrown at him and his friends.	Not Sure
Barbara (Freshman)	Having to adapt to the diverse atmosphere.	Yes

Table 7 continued

Martinis (Sophomore)	N/A	Yes
Sally (Junior)	Had roommate issues that needed to be taken care of.	Yes. Love professional support.
James (Sophomore)	Overcrowded in the dorm room.	Yes
Charles (Sophomore)	Good meeting new people	Yes

Data Summary

Phase One's quantitative survey was taken by 125 participants and was comprised of 30 questions that was analyzed using frequency analysis for direct responses to the questions (Cushinery, 2011). Phase Two qualitative interviews consisted of 13 participants randomly chosen from the participants solicited to take the quantitative surveys. This study was to examine how racial identity might impact African American students' ability to assimilate within a predominantly White college and how the paradigm of racial identity impacts their retention. Three questions were developed to assess how racial identity impact African American students:

- 1) How does racial identity impact African American College Students' ability to assimilate on predominately white college campus with high enrollment of African American students?
- 2) How do African American college students perceive their college/university's commitment to them with high enrollment of African American students?

3) How do African American college students perceive their racial identity impacting their lives?

The results of the data for both phase one's quantitative survey and phase two's qualitative interviews showed some similarities in how African American students perceived the dominate culture's view of Blacks as a respected and valued culture. The two phases consistently showed that the African American students did not feel that Blacks were respected nor valued to the degree that that they should be. Furthermore, to connect the data to the CRIS, the scales that were examined was the mis-education wish both the surveys and interviews implied that 60% of African American college students do not agree with a lot of those statements; self-hatred about 85% percent of the students disagreed and in the qualitative phase the students continually expressed high salience for their Blackness and Black people as a whole. The assimilation scale was somewhat split. More importantly, most of the students felt that Black students (perpetuating stereotypical views) and the administration (more inclusive programs, Black employees, social justice classes) was responsible for making the assimilation process better for Black students. The response from the subscales of the MIBI were both (centrality, public regard) answered surprisingly indifferent. The centrality question showed that most of the students 60% thought being Black was an important part of who they were. Although 30% did not think being Black was in-line with rather they were successful. For the statement about public regard a majority of the students 85% expressed that Blacks were not respected nor assets, to the broader society.

However, it was noted that several of the participants in the qualitative phase felt that Blacks could do more to insure that they are getting the respect that is deserved. Furthermore, some of the participants felt that Blacks could be more conscience of how they present

themselves to help debunk the stereotypical views the dominate race has about African Americans. The feelings are consistent with the researched framework that concluded that the stereotypical views the dominant culture has about Blacks can be problematic as Black college students' assimilate on predominately White college campuses. Both phases of the research consistently showed that the participants had high salience for being Black, and the students overall were proud of being Black and felt that being Black played some significant role in racial identity life. However, some of the participants did not feel that being Black would define their destiny in life. Several of the participants stated that Black college students needed to be individually accountable for their own success, rather than depending on faculty and or administration to ensure they are successful.

Chapter 5 will conclude this research with evidence of how the process of assimilating at a predominately White university can be complex for African American students. I will also discuss how past research correlates with the finding of this study. In conclusion, I will offer suggestions for future research.

CHAPTER 5

SUMMARIES, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Assimilation Internal and External Binaries

The focus of this research was to examine how racial identity can impact how African American students assimilate on a predominately White college campus and how racial identity can impact their retention. Applying frameworks from theorists as Sellers et al., (1997) and Fuller-Rowell et al., (2011) who theorized that racial identity although at times salient and stable, is often developed over time and African American students are charged with the complexities of identity shifts depending on the situation.

Reason (1988) casts the term **critical subjectivity** which has been described as allowing the researcher to reflect on his/her experience and to include that experience within the context of the research (as cited in Maxwell, 2005). This allows the researcher to use their experience as part of the inquiry process. Maxwell (2005) stated the “**researcher identity memo**” is a technique used to bring the researcher’s experience into the study (p.225). In chapter I described identity memos that were identity memos, reflective of the racial identity challenges experienced by myself and my daughter. These identity memos are reflective of my daughter’s college experience as well as my own personal struggle with racial identity disconnect. More importantly, these are examples of how being the only Black and having to assimilate in an all-White atmosphere can impact a person’s life. More importantly, throughout this chapter I will share more racial identity paradigms I witness or experienced during my career at this university.

For example, one of the interviewed participants stated that normally she has an extroverted personality (when around Blacks) but when she is around majority Whites, she tends to feel uncomfortable and becomes introverted, therefore shifting her identity to due to situational circumstances. Sharon, one of my participants, explained, she was bi-racial having a Black mother and a African father. She also stated she talked “White.” As a result of these identity binaries, she believed that she did not fit in with any of the groups with which she identified. She recalled calling her mom in tears because when she socialized with the Black students, they would accuse her of acting “White.” When she socialized with the African students who were of traditional African descent, she could not really relate to their cultural experiences. She internally referred to the experience as having a “mini identity crisis.”

Glory Dean, another participant, stated she liked being at this school but wanted to make friends with White students. However she felt apprehensive because she did not feel she could connect with them. In addition to that, some of the White girls in her dorm seemed to “snob their nose up” at the Black girls.

Many of the participants felt that when they were in the classroom the White students would make answering questions a competition to see who was the smartest. For example, Martinis described being in the classroom and answering a question and noticed that the White students would try to “out do” the Black students. She also mentioned something that was a common thread from the interviews: White students tend to elaborate or expound a little more to questions asked by the instructor and Black students tend to give more direct responses. I think this statement is indicative of the perceptions of African Americans, especially when we are in the presence of the dominate cultural. The fear of coming off unintelligent, whether it’s the way we speak (Ebonics) or the context in which the answer was given, can make African Americans

apprehensive at answering questions. Also several of the participants felt the ratio of Black and White faculty and staff was beyond unequal and they would like to see more Black faculty and staff. Most of them felt they would feel better if there were more “people who look like them.” They also felt Black staff members could relate more effectively with the Black students.

Baber (2012) addressed the paradigm discussed in my research and stated that the struggles of African Americans assimilating holistically on PWI campus can present complexities. He also described these complexities as causing African American students to have a perception that the campus at times has a hostile environment, which causes African American students to mentally withdraw from the campus environment. Furthermore, Torres (2009) cited a plethora of research that has shown African Americans struggle to assimilate within the culture of PWIs (Allen, Epps and Haniff 1991; Feagin, Vera and Imani 1996; Willie 2003) (as cited in Torres, 2009). From the limited sample in my study, it can be seen that this complexity of assimilating on a PWI campus can be found at the studied institution.

Implications for Administration

The word stereotyping was used or implied in some context 27 times during the thirteen qualitative interviews. All of the participants that participated in the interviews believed that at some point, as they engaged with the dominant culture, they were being judged based on stereotypical views of how Black people are perceived to act and behave. In the quantitative phase, I used the Public Regard subscale from the MIBI. The Public Regard subscale is an indication of how African Americans feel they are perceived by other cultures. For example, one of the questions asks, “if you feel Blacks are respected by other cultures” and 41% percent of the participants strongly disagreed with that statement. Meaning that a majority of the participants

believed that Blacks are not respected by the dominant culture. I believe some of that perception can be attributed to how African Americans are negatively stereotyped by the media. Although I do feel that some of it is our own ability to perpetuate the stereotypical views. More importantly, some of the interviewed participants provided several examples of how Blacks tend to perpetuate those stereotypical views that other cultures tend to have about them. For example, Glory Dean stated she felt that Blacks are respected to a certain degree but she feels there are stereotyping forces that cause people to see Blacks in a negative way. John expressed his concern that Black men are expected to do well in sports but they're not expected to be high academic achievers. More importantly, the participants that were interviewed also felt that Blacks were not respected by the broader society.

Racism was of some concern to a few of the interviewed students. Three of them described separate incidents where they were had water or other objects thrown at them from car windows. One young lady described an incident when she and a friend were walking on campus and a young White guy gave them eye contact. They decided to say hello to him and he replied with "what's up niggas." She said they were more hurt and embarrassed than angry so they let it go and did not respond to his rudeness. None of the students that shared these racist experiences stated that it impacted their view overall opinion of the school.

There were some participants that stated they do perceive a separation of races within the school itself. Steve stated there is a separation in the living spaces because mainly Blacks live on one side of campus and Whites live on the other side of campus. He expressed that he thinks if the Black and White students lived closer to each other, then both races may have a better understanding of each other.

In research question number 3, I felt it was important to assess how the students perceived the school's commitment to their success. During the interviews, I asked the students if they thought more could be done to enhance their overall experience while attending this university. A surprising number of the students felt that the school was doing a pretty good job. In fact several of the students expressed that Black students needed to take responsibility for their own success and to be accountable for making good grades. Some of the participants also stated that they did not feel African American students took advantage of the school's program offerings and did not feel it would be beneficial for the school to offer anything more than they already did.

Michaela stated the school could sponsor more Black related activities but he did not think Blacks would take advantage of them. Terrell stated Black students would go to the bars before they would attend the school-sponsored activities. Although many of the participants expressed concerns about their peers and their lack of participation, some of the students believed there were things the school administration could do better. For example, several of them felt the school could promote programs that were all inclusive for both White and Black students. Some of the participants suggested the university could do better at hiring Black faculty and staff so they could have people teaching them that they felt could better relate to African American students.

Conclusion

Overall the students felt that both the African American students as well as the administration could do more to make their college experience successful. In the case of the school administration, the students felt the administration should do more to bring the students' together

as a whole. The students believed this could debunk some of the stereotypical perceptions held by their White peers. The students also expressed that the university needed to do more to break the silos so that the university does not give the impression that Black students live on one side of the campus while White students live on the other side of the campus. More importantly, there were students that believed the university should offer more Registered Student Organizations and different opportunities for Black students to represent themselves in a positive way. Although this may not help Black students in the process of assimilating into the college campus but this could help with retaining more African American students. The students also identified the need for more Blacks to be employed by the university.

Recommendations for the University

I believe it is important to continue to conduct research that focuses on assisting African American college students with being successful. The trajectory of the world is indicating that more and more African Americans will be entering into institutions of higher education. It will be important to identify and understand their needs and their overall expectations. At the same time, it is important to hold them accountable for their own success. More important, the majority of the students interviewed for this research expressed that they have had, thus far, a positive experience at this university. However, nine of the 13 students interviewed were freshmen and it's impossible to foresee if they will continue through to degree completion.

I also believe institutions of higher education need to take a different approach. I believe colleges and universities are going to have look past offering more Black options and start opening dialogue on how to bring the races together. I had a student say he's tired of White people thinking he always wants to talk about sports because he also knows about the stock

market. However, he believes that is what Whites think about Blacks. I had a student say, “I really wanted a White friend” but I never felt comfortable. Another student said he wanted the division in the dorms to be changed so the White students could get to know the Black students. A major theme gathered from the interviews and the surveys is that unity is needed in order to curb Whites from viewing Blacks as underachievers. Having worked on this campus it was not conveying to this young man that the division or as I call it, the segregation that he sees as a division between White students living on one side of campus and Black students living on the other side of campus has been a continuing problem for many, many years. This is something the administration could explore changing so the campus is not only inclusive but this will allow all the students to experience different cultures.

There is also the need to understand how to balance discipline and building relationships. Sometimes I’ve notice that we underestimate our students, by thinking that you can’t have a real relationship with students as appose to a superficial one, will cause the student to disrespect authority to me is a huge misnomer. I had a colleague name Dick (in my new department) ask me why I allow the students to know where I live? I stated because I have often taken them to church, and I have them at my house for a Sunday home cook meal. In this department it’s as though no one understand the richness that can develop by building close relationships with the students. I express to dick last year I had 13 undergraduates and 4 graduate students that was employed by me graduate; and they had become like my own children. More importantly, I had impacted their life so much when they looked into the stands of the Arena and saw I had made their graduation they almost lost it, you could see from the looks and whispers to one another, they were happy I was there. Seventeen students may not be a lot but if we as administrators did more to build those lasting relationships I really think it would help with the retention.

Suggestion for Future Research

I would also suggest that future research involve the use of one of the instruments as opposed to trying to incorporate both instruments. However, whatever instrument is chosen, it should be indicative of the thought process and or direction of a new culture of African American college students. The CRIS and the MIBI are instruments that were based on a post racial error when Blacks were trying to negotiate placement within a White society as well as developing a sense of pride and worth. I realize that we continue to have racial dilemmas, educational and economical class separations, but I think this generation of African American college students wants to be more accountable and they want the university be more inclusive and offer more programs that include students of all nationalities. This would make the assimilation process a much easier transition.

I also suggest future research exploring how racial identity impacts the lives of African Americans within the work environment. Because my racial identity memo could be indicative of what is experienced by a number Blacks in the work force.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX_A

Interview Protocol

Introduction

My name is Janette Howard and I am a PhD student in Curriculum and Instruction here at SIU. My research has been approved by the Department of Human Subjects and I will need you to sign this letter of consent before we proceed with the interviews and their participation is strictly voluntary. I will also let the participants know the interviews will be taped recorded for accuracy when it's time for analyzing their response. I will let the participants know the interviews should not take more than thirty minutes of their time. My research project is titled "The Effect of Racial Identity on the Retention of African American College Students at a Predominantly White College." At that point I will explain how and why I became passionate about the topic, to try and get the participants to relax and get to know me so they will be more willing to open up. I will explain to the participants that these interviews are totally confidential and this is intended to be a completely casual conversation.

Questions: A background question will be asked of all participants.

- a. Name
 - b. Where they grew up
 - c. Why they choose this school
 - d. Family education background
- 1) Tell me how you feel the overall school environment has made you feel welcome, and is there anyone one thing that you can say stands out they have made you feel accepted on this campus.

- 2) When you're in class do you feel when you answer a question that your answer is valued and it is received with the same respect that the white students get when they answer a question? Explain and give example
- 3) Do you feel there are things the administration and or faculty could do to make Black students feel more welcomed and inclusive in the overall campus environment? What types of things; Example, Programming, class offering, RSOs, etc.
- 4) Tell me if there has ever been a time when you have felt uncomfortable (feeling embarrassed about being Black) about being yourself when in the presents of your White fellow students. For example, the way you speak your hair, cloths or where you come from (demographics). How did it make you feel and did you engage with the people that were around?
- 5) Is there anything you would like to share about your overall experience at this school that you feel has been directly or indirectly related to the fact that you're Black/good or bad experience.

Conclusion

I would like to thank you for your participation in my research and for allowing me to take you away from your busy schedule. The participants will be told there is a possibility I may have to contact them again needing clarification to their response once I began interpreting the data.

APPENDIX B

Racial- Identity and Centrality Questionnaire

Please answer the questions as honest as possible.

Age_____

Year in School_____

First Generation Yes_____/No_____

MIBICentrality

1.) In general, being Black is an important part of my self-image.

- ☐ Strongly Agree
- ☐ Agree
- ☐ Somewhat Agree
- ☐ Disagree
- ☐ Strongly Disagree

2.) My destiny is tied to the destiny of other Black people.

- ☐ Strongly Agree
- ☐ Agree
- ☐ Somewhat Agree
- ☐ Disagree
- ☐ Strongly Disagree

3.) I have a strong sense of belonging to Black people.

- ☐ Strongly Agree
- ☐ Agree
- ☐ Somewhat Agree
- ☐ Disagree
- ☐ Strongly Disagree

4.) I have a strong attachment to other Black people.

- ☐ Strongly Agree
- ☐ Agree
- ☐ Somewhat Agree
- ☐ Disagree

- ☐ Strongly Disagree

5.) Being Black is an important reflection of who I am

- ☐ Strongly Agree
- ☐ Agree
- ☐ Somewhat Agree
- ☐ Disagree
- ☐ Strongly Disagree

Regard Scale

Public Regard

6.) Overall, Blacks are considered good by others.

- ☐ Strongly Agree
- ☐ Agree
- ☐ Somewhat Agree
- ☐ Disagree
- ☐ Strongly Disagree

7.) In general, others respect Black people.

- ☐ Strongly Agree
- ☐ Agree
- ☐ Somewhat Agree
- ☐ Disagree
- ☐ Strongly Disagree

8.) Most people consider Blacks, on the average, to be more ineffective than other racial groups.

- ☐ Strongly Agree
- ☐ Agree
- ☐ Somewhat Agree
- ☐ Disagree
- ☐ Strongly Disagree

9.) Society views Black people as an asset.

- ☐ Strongly Agree
- ☐ Agree
- ☐ Somewhat Agree
- ☐ Disagree
- ☐ Strongly Disagree

10.) In general, other groups view Blacks in a positive manner.

- ☐ Strongly Agree
- ☐ Agree
- ☐ Somewhat Agree
- ☐ Disagree
- ☐ Strongly Disagree

CRIS

Mis-Education

11.) Too many Blacks “glamorize” the drug trade and fail to see opportunities that don’t involve crime.

- ☐ Strongly Agree
- ☐ Agree
- ☐ Somewhat Agree
- ☐ Disagree
- ☐ Strongly Disagree

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

- ☐ Strongly Agree
- ☐ Agree
- ☐ Somewhat Agree
- ☐ Disagree
- ☐ Strongly Disagree

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

- ☐ Strongly Agree
- ☐ Agree
- ☐ Somewhat Agree
- ☐ Disagree
- ☐ Strongly Disagree

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

- ☐ Strongly Agree
- ☐ Agree
- ☐ Somewhat Agree
- ☐ Disagree
- ☐ Strongly Disagree

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

- ☐ Strongly Agree
- ☐ Agree
- ☐ Somewhat Agree
- ☐ Disagree
- ☐ Strongly Disagree

Preencounter-Assimilation

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

- ☐ Strongly Agree
- ☐ Agree
- ☐ Somewhat Agree
- ☐ Disagree
- ☐ Strongly Disagree

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

- ☐ Strongly Agree
- ☐ Agree
- ☐ Somewhat Agree
- ☐ Disagree
- ☐ Strongly Disagree

18.) If I had to put a label on my identity, it would be “American,” and not African American.

- ☐ Strongly Agree
- ☐ Agree
- ☐ Somewhat Agree
- ☐ Disagree
- ☐ Strongly Disagree

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

- ☐ Strongly Agree

- ☐ Agree
- ☐ Somewhat Agree
- ☐ Disagree
- ☐ Strongly Disagree

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

- ☐ Strongly Agree
- ☐ Agree
- ☐ Somewhat Agree
- ☐ Disagree
- ☐ Strongly Disagree

Preencounter—Self hatred

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

- ☐ Strongly Agree
- ☐ Agree
- ☐ Somewhat Agree
- ☐ Disagree
- ☐ Strongly Disagree

22.) I sometimes struggle with negative feelings about being Black.

- ☐ Strongly Agree
- ☐ Agree
- ☐ Somewhat Agree
- ☐ Disagree
- ☐ Strongly Disagree

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

- ☐ Strongly Agree
- ☐ Agree
- ☐ Somewhat Agree
- ☐ Disagree
- ☐ Strongly Disagree

24.) Privately, I sometimes have negative feelings about being Black.

- ☐ Strongly Agree
- ☐ Agree
- ☐ Somewhat Agree
- ☐ Disagree

☐ Strongly Disagree

25.) I sometimes have negative feelings about being Black.

- ☐ Strongly Agree
- ☐ Agree
- ☐ Somewhat Agree
- ☐ Disagree
- ☐ Strongly Disagree

APPENDIX C

Cross Racial Identity Scales (CRIS)

1. As an African American, life in America is good for me.
2. I think of myself primarily as an American, and seldom as a member of a racial group.
3. Too many Blacks “glamorize” the drug trade and fail to see opportunities that don’t involve crime.
4. I go through periods when I am down on myself because I am Black.
5. As a multiculturalist, I am connected to many groups (Hispanics, Asian-Americans, Whites, Jews, gays & lesbians, etc.).
6. I have a strong feeling of hatred and disdain for all White people.
7. I see and think about things from an Afrocentric perspective.
8. When I walk into a room, I always take note of the racial make-up of the people around me.
9. I am not so much a member of a racial group, as I am an American.
10. I sometimes struggle with negative feelings about being Black.
11. My relationship with God plays an important role in my life.
12. Blacks place more emphasis on having a good time than on hard work.
13. I believe that only those Black people who accept an Afrocentric perspective can truly solve the race problem in America.
14. I hate the White community and all that it represents.
15. When I have a chance to make a new friend, issues of race and ethnicity seldom play a role in who that person might be.
16. I believe it is important to have both a Black identity and a multicultural perspective, which is inclusive of everyone (e.g., Asians, Latinos, gays & lesbians, Jews, Whites, etc.).
17. When I look in the mirror at my Black image, sometimes I do not feel good about what I see.
18. If I had to put a label on my identity, it would be “American,” and not African American.

19. When I read the newspaper or a magazine, I always look for articles and stories that deal with race and ethnic issues.
20. Many African Americans are too lazy to see opportunities that are right in front of them.
21. As far as I am concerned, affirmative action will be needed for a long time.
22. Black people cannot truly be free until our daily lives are guided by Afrocentric values and principles.
23. White people should be destroyed.
24. I embrace my own Black identity, but I also respect and celebrate the cultural identities of other groups (e.g., Native Americans, Whites, Latinos, Jews, Asian Americans, gays & lesbians, etc.).
25. Privately, I sometimes have negative feelings about being Black.
26. If I had to put myself into categories, first I would say I am an American, and second I am a member of a racial group.
27. My feelings and thoughts about God are very important to me.
28. African Americans are too quick to turn to crime to solve their problems.
29. When I have a chance to decorate a room, I tend to select pictures, posters, or works of art that express strong racial-cultural themes.
30. I hate White people.
31. I respect the ideas that other Black people hold, but I believe that the best way to solve our problems is to think Afrocentrically.
32. When I vote in an election, the first thing I think about is the candidate's record on racial and cultural issues.
33. I believe it is important to have both a Black identity and a multicultural perspective, because this connects me to other groups (Hispanics, Asian-Americans, Whites, Jews, gays & lesbians, etc.).
34. I have developed an identity that stresses my experiences as an American more than my experiences as a member of a racial group.
35. During a typical week in my life, I think about racial and cultural issues many, many times.
36. Blacks place too much importance on racial protest and not enough on hard work and education.

- 37. Black people will never be free until we embrace an Afrocentric perspective.
- 38. My negative feelings toward White people are very intense.
- 39. I sometimes have negative feelings about being Black.
- 40. As a multiculturalist, it is important for me to be connected with individuals from all cultural backgrounds (Latinos, gays & lesbians, Jews, Native Americans, Asian-Americans, etc.).

Subscales:

Preencounter —Miseducation

- 3. Too many Blacks “glamorize” the drug trade and fail to see opportunities that don’t involve crime.
- 12. Blacks place more emphasis on having a good time than on hard work.
- 20. Many African Americans are too lazy to see opportunities that are right in front of them.
- 28. African Americans are too quick to turn to crime to solve their problems.
- 36. Blacks place too much importance on racial protest and not enough on hard work and education.

Preencounter—Assimilation

- 2. I think of myself primarily as an American, and seldom as a member of a racial group.
- 9. I am not so much a member of a racial group, as I am an American.
- 18. If I had to put a label on my identity, it would be “American,” and not African American.
- 26. If I had to put myself into categories, first I would say I am an American, and second I am a member of a racial group.
- 34. I have developed an identity that stresses my experiences as an American more than my experiences as a member of a racial group.

Preencounter—Self hatred

- 4. I go through periods when I am down on myself because I am Black.
 - 10. I sometimes struggle with negative feelings about being Black.
 - 17. When I look in the mirror at my Black image, sometimes I do not feel good about what I see.
 - 25. Privately, I sometimes have negative feelings about being Black.
 - 39. I sometimes have negative feelings about being Black.
-

Immersion-Emersion Anti-White

- 6. I have a strong feeling of hatred and disdain for all White people.
- 14. I hate the White community and all that it represents.
- 23. White people should be destroyed.
- 30. I hate White people.
- 38. My negative feelings toward White people are very intense.

Internalization Multiculturalist Inclusive

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

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

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

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

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

Internalization Afrocentric

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

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

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

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

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

10 filler items

8. When I walk into a room, I always take note of the racial make-up of the people around me.
19. When I read the newspaper or a magazine, I always look for articles and stories that deal with race and ethnic issues.
29. When I have a chance to decorate a room, I tend to select pictures, posters, or works of art that express strong racial-cultural themes.
32. When I vote in an election, the first thing I think about is the candidate's record on racial and cultural issues.
35. During a typical week in my life, I think about racial and cultural issues many, many times.
15. When I have a chance to make a new friend, issues of race and ethnicity seldom play a role in who that person might be.
11. My relationship with God plays an important role in my life.
27. My feelings and thoughts about God are very important to me.
21. As far as I am concerned, affirmative action will be needed for a long time.
1. As an African American, life in America is good for me.

Multidimensional Inventory of Black Identity (MIBI)

Subscales:

Preencounter —Miseducation

Too many Blacks “glamorize” the drug trade and fail to see opportunities that don’t involve crime.

- 12. Blacks place more emphasis on having a good time than on hard work.
- 20. Many African Americans are too lazy to see opportunities that are right in front of them.
- 28. African Americans are too quick to turn to crime to solve their problems.
- 36. Blacks place too much importance on racial protest and not enough on hard work and education.

Preencounter—Assimilation

- 2. I think of myself primarily as an American, and seldom as a member of a racial group.
- 9. I am not so much a member of a racial group, as I am an American.
- 18. If I had to put a label on my identity, it would be “American,” and not African American.
- 26. If I had to put myself into categories, first I would say I am an American, and second I am a member of a racial group.
- 34. I have developed an identity that stresses my experiences as an American more than my experiences as a member of a racial group.

Preencounter—Self hatred

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

10. I sometimes struggle with negative feelings about being Black.
17. When I look in the mirror at my Black image, sometimes I do not feel good about what I see.
25. Privately, I sometimes have negative feelings about being Black.
39. I sometimes have negative feelings about being Black.

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