A Contextual Model of Multiracial Identity and Well-Being

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A CONTEXTUAL MODEL OF MULTIRACIAL IDENTITY AND WELL-BEING

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Abstract

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Multiracial people often experience challenges to developing positive racial

identities and well being. Research and theory suggest that contextual variables are

important for the facilitation of positive adjustment for Multiracial individuals. In

addition, Multiracial identity is typically assessed as a single racial identification

categorization, rather than the racial identity process suggested by Helms's (1995) People

of Color (POC) racial identity theory. The present study proposed a model that

incorporated social context, racial identity, and well-being to better understand how

Multiracial people develop racially and psychologically in a racially contentious society.

Multiracial (Black/White and Asian/White) adults (N = 172) completed a

demographic questionnaire, Multiracial Scales created for this study, the Multiracial

Challenges and Resilience Scale (Salahuddin & O'Brien, 2011), the People of Color

Racial Identity Attitudes Scale (Helms, 2005), the Brief Symptom Inventory 18

(Derogatis, 2001), and the Satisfaction with Life Scale (Diener, Emmons, Larson, &

Griffin, 1985).

Multivariate multiple regression analyses (MMRAs) were conducted to examine

relationships among social context (challenging and supportive) and psychological well-

being, racial identity and well-being, and social context and racial identity. Results of the

MMRAs favored supportive social contexts (i.e., Acceptance by the White and

Multiracial groups) as being related to better psychological well-being and challenging

social contexts (i.e., Exclusion from the White racial group) as detracting from well-being. Challenging social contexts were more predictive of racial identity. Racial identity was also significantly related to psychological well-being. Results revealed differences between racial groups in the relationships among racial identity and well-being, such that Asian/White participants experienced greater life satisfaction and Multiracial pride than Black/White participants.

Overall, the results of the analyses indicated support for the proposed model's inclusion of social context, racial identity, and well-being in a single study. As anticipated, social context and racial identity were predictive of psychological well-being, and social context was predictive of racial identity. Results also provided preliminary evidence for the use of Helms's (1995) POC theory with a Multiracial population. Methodological limitations and implications for future theory, research, and practice are discussed.

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Chapter 1

Introduction

The 2000 Census marked the first time in United States history that Multiracial

people were acknowledged as a racial category and allowed the opportunity to select

multiple racial groups on an official government document to describe themselves.

Results from that Census indicated that nearly seven million people identified with more

than one racial group (United States Census Bureau, 2001). Additionally, results from the

2010 Census indicated that the Multiracial population had grown 32% in the years since

the 2000 Census making it one of the fastest growing socioracial groups in the United

States (United States Census Bureau, 2011). Despite this new seeming recognition of

Multiracials as a legitimate racial group, Multiracial people's existence challenges long-

held societal beliefs about differences between racial groups and the tradition of

categorizing people into one supposedly mutually exclusive racial group rather than

another. Being a violation of racial norms has potentially led to considerable

intrapersonal difficulties for Multiracial people, which includes being forced to choose a

single racial identity often based on physical appearance, invalidation of one's choice as

to how to identify racially, and rejection by the groups that contribute to the person's

Multiracial status (Miville, Constantine, Baysden, & So-Lloyd, 2005; Rockquemore &

Brunsma, 2002; Root, 1999; Shih & Sanchez, 2005). Moreover, due to society's focus on

assigning people to mutually exclusive racial groups, Multiracial people often encounter

challenges to developing positive racial identities that provide them with a sense of well-

being and life satisfaction.

Two theoretical perspectives have addressed their anomalous racial status by identifying the "best" racial-identification choice for Multiracial people's healthy adjustment and life satisfaction (Jacobs, 1992; Kerwin & Ponterotto, 1995; Kich, 1992; Poston, 1990). In these perspectives, choice is conceptualized as whether one chooses to identify with either racial group (e.g., Black or White), neither racial group, or both groups. Stonequist's marginal person perspective contends that well-being is maximized if the person chooses to identify with his/her group of Color or the White group. On the other hand, the developmental perspective contends that Multiracial identification is a developmental process that is best resolved by developing an integrated identity, that is, identifying with both (or all) racial groups contributing to one's Multiracial identity or with a unique Multiracial group. For Stonequist, the choice depends on the person's physical appearance, whereas the developmental theorists do not endorse a choice other than a Multiracial identification.

Underlying the forced-choice theoretical perspectives is the assumption that, regardless of the Multiracial person's context(s), he/she has no options other than to identify in the ways presented by theorists. This assumption represents a significant limitation of these models since the specification of a single, ideal racial identity option, without consideration of individuals' unique personal and environmental contexts, may represent a replication of the hurtful interpersonal and societal forced-choice experiences described by Multiracial individuals (Coleman & Carter, 2007; Kelch-Oliver & Leslie, 2006; Townsend, Markus, & Bergsieker, 2009).

In contrast to the marginal person and developmental theories, Root's (2003) ecological perspective contends that racial identity development for Multiracial people

arises through a transactional process between individuals and their social environments (Miville, 2005; Root, 1999) such that no single choice is best for all Multiracial people. The model discusses three contextual lenses through which Multiracial people's experiences are filtered, including inherited influences (i.e. appearance), traits (i.e. personality), and social environments (i.e. family, friends). These lenses interact with each other to help shape Multiracial people's racial identities. Root's (2003) model provides a framework through which to view the role of various contextual factors in the racial identity development and psychological well-being of Multiracial people.

Very little research has focused on examining the effects of forced-choice racial identification and/or contextual factors on Multiracial individuals' adjustment or well being (Edwards & Pedrotti, 2008; Miville, et al., 2005). Moreover, the extant research has significant limitations, including the use of small non-generalizable samples, typically single racial-group combinations (e.g., Black-White), the lack of quantitative studies, and researchers' tendency to examine well-being or racial identity in isolation (Miville, 2005; Rockquemore & Brunsma, 2002).

Some researchers have investigated the developmental theorists' and Root's (2003) suggestions that Multiracial youths are best supported by parents who acknowledge and discuss race, have positive attitudes about racial differences, and promote the exploration of all racial backgrounds (Hud-Aleem & Countryman, 2008; Kelch-Oliver & Leslie, 2006; Poston, 1990). Research has supported the positive influence of families' discussion of race, positive views of Multiracial individuals' diverse racial backgrounds and exposure and closeness to the family members and cultures of each racial group (Brown, 1995; Khanna, 2004; Rockquemore & Brusnma,

2002). There is also research evidence for the challenges inherent in lack of parental discussion of race, familial rejection, and discriminatory attitudes held by family members (Buckley & Carter, 2004; Collins, 2000; Torkelson, Helms, Wilson, & Ashby, 2013; Torkelson, Helms, Wilson, Ashby, & Hernandez Owusu, 2014).

All of the racial identity theories acknowledge the role of appearance in the racial identity development of Multiracial individuals. Marginal person theory suggests that a single-racial-group choice is necessary because the Multiracial person resembles members of one group rather than the other, but ecological theory suggests that it is the person's transactions with her or his environment that shapes racial identification. Additionally, developmental theories only acknowledge appearance as relevant to the level of crisis experienced by Multiracial people before identifying as Multiracial. Research supports all of these perspectives in that it suggests that ambiguous physical appearances can affect Multiracials' acceptance into one or both racial groups, as well as lead them to feel pressure to choose to identify with the group to which they appear to belong (Rockquemore, Brunsma, & Delgado, 2009; Shih & Sanchez, 2009). In addition, some Multiracial people experience a conflict between their own perceptions of themselves and their desired racial identification and the perceptions that people in their environments ascribe or impose on them, which may present significant challenges for the Multiracial person (Shih & Sanchez, 2005). Challenges include feelings of isolation, social marginality, and difficulties developing an authentic and positive racial identity for Multiracial individuals who are rejected by their racial groups (AhnAllen, Suyemoto, & Carter, 2006; Buckley & Carter, 2004; Collins, 2000; Jackson, 2012). Conversely, multiple theories suggest that having a Multiracial reference group may support

Multiracial people's racial identity development (Jacobs, 1992; Poston, 1990; Root, 1999). Research also supports this supposition and suggests that the support of Multiracial friends and support groups, and identification with the Multiracial community can buffer Multiracial people from the negative effects of racial group rejection (Kelch-Oliver & Leslie, 2006; Nishimura, 1998; Torkelson, et al., 2013). Overall, the theories provide few suggestions for ways to support Multiracial people in developing positive racial identities, but research suggests that family support and a Multiracial reference group might be ways to help.

Thus, theory and research suggest that forced choice of a racial identification can have significant negative effects on a person's racial identity development, which may be reduced or increased depending on the nature of family support, the availability of a Multiracial reference group, and diversity of and acceptance by others in the Multiracial persons' contexts. However, with the exception of the ecological perspective, most theory and research treat the acquisition of a racial identity for Multiracial people as involving a forced categorical choice whose nature depends in varying degrees on the racial beliefs, perceptions, and behaviors of people in the person's environment. Also, although theory and research imply that the nature of the person's choice is related to the person's psychological adjustment and well-being to some extent, very little attention has been given to the question of how Multiracial people develop a positive racial identity. Moreover, the theorized interactions among social context, racial identity, and well-being have virtually never been investigated in a single quantitative study.

Thus, a model is needed that incorporates each of these three factors (i.e., social context, racial identity, and well being) as a means of understanding how Multiracial

people can potentially thrive in a racially contentious society. In the model, Helms's (1995) People of Color racial identity theory was used as an alternative framework for discovering the extent to which Multiracial people's racial identity development involves a fluid process rather than the selection of a single identity defined by others. Helms's theory suggests that people of Color internalize different cognitive-affective schemas for responding to positive and negative race-related social stimuli in their environments (e.g., discrimination, racial stereotyping), which, in turn, affect their well-being. The model should be particularly relevant for Multiracial people who often struggle to develop positive senses of self and racial identities in a society that is often unsupportive of those who do not fit their ideas of race.

Investigating the relationships between various aspects of Multiracial people's social contexts, along with their influence on racial identity and well-being, can provide a framework for understanding the ways in which Multiracial people navigate the challenges presented by their social contexts, develop a racial identity, and, possibly, maintain positive psychological well-being despite contextual challenges. In addition, this framework may begin to suggest the ways in which social context poses risks for negative psychological well-being of Multiracial people, as well as ways to support Multiracial people's development within a challenging or rejecting societal context. Counseling psychologists support clients and communities through strengths-based and preventative interventions aimed at those at the greatest risk for difficulties. Results from this study can allow for interventions directly in line with the values of Counseling Psychology by allowing for the identification of Multiracial individuals at the greatest

risk for decreased well-being, the factors facilitative of positive racial identity and well-being, and the inherent strengths of the Multiracial population.

Chapter 2

Review of Literature

Multiracial people are often faced with the problem of developing a racial identity that brings them a sense of life satisfaction and well-being in a racially stratified society that views them as an anomaly. Because they may or may not resemble members of either of their parents' socially ascribed racial groups, theorists and researchers have argued that they are at risk for developing unhealthy racial identities. The existing literature on Multiracial identity development suggests that how the person chooses to identify is the most critical determinant of whether he or she is well adjusted psychologically, while at the same time focusing on social contexts as being critical determinants of the person's choice (Coleman & Carter, 2007; Poston, 1990; Root, 2003). Thus, there are implicit conflicts between the person's agency to make racial identity decisions and society's imposition of an identity and the effects of either of these on the person's psychological adjustment.

However, no model exists for understanding the ways that Multiracial individuals' social contexts influence their racial identity development and well-being. To support the need for such a model, the current literature review provides an analysis of the theoretical and empirical scholarship on Multiracial individuals focusing on (a) Multiracial identification (b) the influence of social contexts on Multiracial individuals' racial identity development and (c) the psychological well-being of Multiracial people.

Multiracial Identification

There are three main perspectives on how Multiracial people develop their identities and whether or not these ways are adaptive or maladaptive. These models are

Stonequist's Marginal Man Theory (1937), four developmental models (Jacobs, 1992; Kich, 1992; Kerwin & Ponterotto, 1995; Poston, 1990), and Root's (2003) Ecological Framework for Understanding Multiracial Identity.

Stonequist's (1937) Marginal Man Theory

Stonequist's (1937) marginal man theory provides the foundation for much of the theory and research that conceptualizes Multiracial people as being maladjusted and pathological. This theory is an extension of Park's (1928) sociological concept of " the marginal man" *(sic)*, whom he said was "condemned by fate to live in two antagonistic cultures" (Park, as cited in Tizard & Phoenix, 2005, p. 43). In Stonequist's model, after developing awareness of the cultural conflict between his/her White and racial minority groups, the marginal man became psychologically maladjusted due to awareness of belonging to the "inferior" race. Stonequist hypothesized three different possible responses to the crisis including (a) attempting to be accepted into the dominant White group, (b) identifying with the marginal group, or (c) escaping to another country (Stonequist, 1935). He explained that, if the marginal person was unable to adjust appropriately using one of the options, he or she would express disorganization through "delinquency, crime, suicide and mental instability" (Stonequist, 1935, 11-12).

Overall, Stonequist's theory suggests that Multiracial people who attempt to embrace a Multiracial identity (i.e. identifying with the Multiracial group or with more than one racial group) have inherent deficits stemming from the idea that, to adjust to our society, they must accept their marginal status as people of Color or as marginal members of the White racial group. Although Stonequist's (1937) theory acknowledges the importance of context in terms of the White and/or community of Color's acceptance or

rejection of Multiracial people, it focuses on the individual and his/her ability to adjust to these contextual demands, but does not consider the ways that his/her context can help or hinder the person's adjustment and well-being.

Developmental Models

The majority of modern developmental theories have evolved as the antithesis to the premise that Multiracial people have inherent deficits or are maladjusted (Choi-Misailidis, 2004; Helms, 1995; Jacobs, 1992; Kerwin & Ponterotto, 1995; Kich, 1992; Poston, 1990). The choice of a monoracial, White or racial group of Color, identity considered ideal by Stonequist's (1937) theory is considered problematic in these theories, which endorse the development of an integrated, Multiracial identity. These theories suggest that, upon developing recognition of their differences in appearance and racial background from others, Multiracial individuals often adopt a single racial label or feel forced to choose a single racial group categorization (Kerwin & Ponterotto, 1995; Kich, 1992; Poston, 1990). This choice of a single racial label, or recognition of their status as people of Color, tends to lead to ambivalence around their racial background or guilt about choosing the group of one parent over the other (Jacobs, 1992; Kerwin & Ponterotto, 1995; Kich, 1992; Poston, 1990). Over time, Multiracial people explore their constituent cultures and identities in order to develop an integrated Multiracial identity (Jacobs, 1992; Kerwin & Ponterotto, 1995; Kich, 1992; Poston, 1990).

These theories' endorse one of the most common challenges to Multiracial individuals described in the literature; the tendency for most Multiracial people to, at some point in their lives, feel pressured to choose an identity (Hall, 1992). Poston (1990), Kich (1992), Jacobs (1992), and Kerwin & Ponterotto (1995) all describe this issue in

their theories, but suggest that individuals must pass through this stage of crisis, which involves a forced choice of a monoracial identity or confusion about racial identification, to emerge well adjusted. However, implicit in their models is the belief that an integrated Multiracial identity is ideal. However, these theorists do not seem to recognize their "ideal" identity as another instance of forced choice for Multiracial individuals who may have unique contexts or experiences that are facilitative of a different (e.g., monoracial), but healthy, racial identification.

Empirical Studies of the Forced Choice Phenomenon

The marginal person and developmental theories' focus on the necessity of choosing a single racial label for the Multiracial person's healthy functioning has been studied. Two studies examined the relationship between forced choice and well-being for Multiracial people (Coleman & Carter, 2007; Townsend, et al., 2009). Other studies have examined the relationships between context, forced choice, and racial identity for Multiracial people.

Well-Being. Coleman and Carter (2007) conducted a quantitative study of the racial identity and well-being of Biracial Black-White adults ($N = 61$). Their participants were given measures of Biracial identity, societal pressure, state-trait anxiety, fear of negative evaluation, social anxiety, and depression. Participants reported high levels of pressure from family and peers to identify with one race and this pressure was significantly correlated with anxiety and fear of negative evaluation. In Townsend, et al.'s (2009) study of Multiracial undergraduate students ($N = 52$) from a variety of racial backgrounds participants were either allowed to choose their own racial categorization or forced to choose one racial group on the study questionnaire. Results indicated that

participants who were forced to choose one race showed marginally lower levels of positive affect, self-esteem, efficacy of possible selves, and motivation as indicated by self-report measures.

Social Contexts. Participants in Kelch-Oliver and Leslie's (2006) focus groups of Black-White women ($N = 9$) described feeling forced to choose a single racial group by peers and on demographic questionnaires and reported that these pressures led to feelings of frustration and not fitting in. These findings were replicated by Torkelson, et al. (2013) in their mixed-methods study of diverse Multiracial individuals ($N = 95$). Due to their varied appearances, participants described feeling forced to identify with their groups of Color, no matter their amount of knowledge of or comfort with that racial group's culture, which led to feelings of isolation and discomfort.

Also, in their interviews of Black-White and Asian-White women ($N = 10$), Torkelson, et al. (2014) found that participants felt forced to choose a monoracial identity or a Biracial or Multiracial identity to avoid invalidation of their membership in their group of Color. Participants described feeling frustrated and hurt due to others' lack of willingness to acknowledge them as Asian or Black and feeling as if identifying as Multiracial was their only option. Contrary to the developmental perspective, this finding suggests that a forced Multiracial identity may also present significant challenges for the development of a healthy racial identity.

Root's (2003) Ecological Framework for Understanding Multiracial Identity

To address previous theories' limited consideration of contextual factors and the endorsements of a single, ideal Multiracial identity, Root (1999, 2003) presented an ecological framework for understanding the development of Multiracial identity (Root,

2003). Root (1998) references Cooley's (1902) looking glass self and describes identity as being developed through a transactional process that is related to racial-group stratifications in society. In her model the person's contextual lenses of inherited influences (appearance, exposure to extended family), traits (personality), and social environments (family, friends, school, work, and community) act as filters of the Multiracial person's experiences in social environments. These social environments, in turn, provide contexts for social interactions, in which the self is reflected by others (Root, 2003). In contrast to the developmental and marginal person theories, Root's perspective permits personal identities that may differ from those ascribed by others in the Multiracial persons' environments. However, although her model offers person-environment incongruity as a possibility in people's lives, it does not suggest ways to determine whether a Multiracial person is positively adjusted. Thus, although this model provides a framework for understanding the ways that Multiracial individuals' contexts affect their identity development, it does not provide suggestions for determining how contexts might relate to their adjustment and well-being.

Contextual Factors

In all of the models of Multiracial identity, there is varying acknowledgement that the reactions of those within Multiracial individuals' social environments (e.g., family and peers) and society at large can aid Multiracial people in their racial identity development or create additional, unique challenges for them, ultimately, affecting their well-being.

Family Factors

It is integral to consider the ways that Multiracial individuals' families can aid or impede their abilities to develop positive racial identities in our society that is focused on singular racial labels. Since Multiracial people have multiple racial heritages, they may have stronger connections with particular parents or sides of the family, which can, in turn, affect their development and identification with a particular racial group (Miville, et al., 2005). In addition, rejection or poor treatment by family members of one of the person's racial groups can negatively affect Multiracial individuals' well-being and willingness to identify with that group. Moreover, some parents and family members avoid discussing issues of race or difference, while others provide clear messages about appropriate identification or openness to all aspects of a person's racial background (Brown, 1995; Kelch-Oliver & Leslie, 2006). Additionally, developmental and ecological theories all suggest that healthy identity development for Multiracial youths can be facilitated by parental acknowledgement and discussion of racial heritage, positive attitudes about racial differences amongst family members, and cultural and extended family exposure (Hud-Aleem & Countryman, 2008; Jacobs, 1992; Kerwin & Ponterotto, 1995; Kich, 1992; Poston, 1990; Root, 2003).

Empirical Research on Family Factors

Various researchers have used qualitative and mixed methods to study the influence of family on Multiracial identity development. Multiple studies have provided support for the theoretical suppositions (Jacobs, 1992; Kerwin-Ponterotto, 1995; Kich, 1992; Poston, 1990; Root, 2003) that family discussion of racial issues, racial labeling, and socialization around race are integral to the racial identity development of Multiracial individuals. Specifically, Collins (2000) conducted interviews examining how Biracial

Japanese adults (*N* = 15; 14 Japanese-White, 1 Japanese-Black) perceived themselves in

relation to other individuals, groups, and the environment. A majority of participants

reported that being categorized as monoracial White by their parents and/or being told to

deny their Japanese heritage led to confusion and difficulties with fitting in and finding a

reference group. Buckley and Carter (2004) also used interviews to examine the racial

beliefs and attitudes and well-being of Black-White Biracial women (*N* = 5). Participants

described limited racial socialization by their parents as leading to feelings of confusion

and distress about their racial backgrounds.

Studies by Torkelson et al. (2013, 2014) provide additional empirical support for

the importance of parental messages about race, along with the relevance of cultural and

family exposure discussed by Poston (1990) and Root (2003). In their interviews, many

of the Asian-White and Black-White Multiracial women in Torkelson, et al.'s (2014)

study described family rejection and receiving messages regarding the lack of the

importance of race, the idealization of Whiteness, and negative messages about being a

person of Color. These experiences led to confusion or negative emotions regarding their

appearances, racial groups, and racial identity development. Conversely, some

participants described encouragement to embrace both heritages, exposure to the culture

of their parent of Color, and closeness to a parent or side of the family as supportive of

their development of a positive sense of self and racial identity.

Additionally, the diverse Multiracial participants in Torkelson, et. al.'s (2013)

study described the importance of closeness to family members and messages about

appropriate racial identification. They also described difficulties identifying with a racial

group if they were not exposed to the culture and the tendency of some parents to ascribe

a racial group identification to them that did not match their physical appearances. In these instances, participants described confusion, difficulties fitting in, and challenges with developing a racial identity.

Finally, two studies validate the theoretical importance of parental acceptance and support of Multiracial individuals' diverse racial heritages (Kich, 1992; Poston, 1990; Root, 2003). Along with Torkelson et al.'s (2014) study, Kelch-Oliver and Leslie's (2006) Black-White Biracial female participants described the positive effect of maternal promotion of the exploration of both cultural heritages and encouragement of individual choices regarding racial identity. In addition, the majority of participants reported lack of extended family's acceptance or willingness to discuss race as leading to feelings of hurt and distrust of family members and/or their respective racial groups.

Despite the reported significant influence of family members on a Multiracial person's ability to navigate the personal and societal challenges to developing a positive racial identity, there has been limited research on this important topic. Moreover, the majority of research that has been conducted has utilized small samples of, typically single racial group combinations (e.g., Black-White). Thus, there is a need for more research on this topic using quantitative methods and more diverse and larger samples with the goal of better understanding the variety of ways that Multiracial individuals' families affect their racial identity development and well-being.

Reflected Appraisals

Each of the theorists discusses a dynamic interplay between others' reactions to the Multiracial person's appearance (i.e., physical similarity to one or both parental racial groups in terms of skin color, hair texture, etc.) and the manner in which the person

internalizes others' reactions, also called reflected appraisals (Khanna, 2004; Rockquemore & Brunsma, 2002). In marginal person theory, others' perceptions of the person's appearance determine the most appropriate racial choice and whether he or she is excluded from relevant groups, whereas in developmental theories appearance contributes to confusion about one's identity, which must be resolved for healthy adjustment. Root's (2003) perspective is that Multiracial individuals' physical appearances can facilitate racial group acceptance and racial identification options or lead to issues pertaining to racial misidentification or invalidation of personal racial identification by others. Thus, according to the three theories, the often racially ambiguous appearance of Multiracial people supposedly can directly impact their acceptance into one or both racial groups, as well as lead them to feel pressure to choose to identify with the group to which they appear to belong (Rockquemore et al., 2009; Shih & Sanchez, 2009).

Additionally, consistent with Stonequist's perspective, research and theory has suggested that negative adjustment occurs for Multiracial people who attempt to identify differently from the identity ascribed, or imposed, by those in their environments (Shih & Sanchez, 2005). Root (2003) contends that such invalidation is extremely challenging for Multiracial people since external interpretations of their racial backgrounds are likely to be informed by the societal focus on single mutually exclusive racial labels.

Empirical Research on Reflected Appraisals

The concept of reflected appraisal assumes that others react to the person according to their perceptions of the person's racial phenotype, which become

internalized by the Multiracial person. Research has attempted to discover how reflected appraisals occur.

Torkelson et al. (2014) found evidence for the effect of reflected appraisals on the racial identity development of their Black-White and Asian-White female participants. Specifically, some participants tended to identify with and felt accepted by members of a racial group if they perceived that others interpreted them as belonging to that racial group. However, a majority of participants described issues pertaining to acceptance by one or both racial groups and feeling a need to demonstrate their legitimacy as members of their racial groups of Color. For instance, multiple participants described being told that they were not "really" a member of their racial group of Color, due to their appearances. This caused feelings of hurt, isolation, and anger for participants who identified strongly with their racial group of Color and its culture.

Khanna (2004) examined reflected appraisals in her study of Asian-White adults ($N = 110$). Her results indicated that participants were more likely to identify as Asian if they felt that others viewed them as "looking" more Asian. In addition, participants felt that others' interpretations of their racial group appearance facilitated their acceptance or exclusion from their constituent groups. They also described feelings of frustration and confusion when their racial identification was rejected or invalidated by others based upon their appearances.

In addition, Rockquemore and Brunsma (2002) conducted a study of the racial identity choices of Black-White Biracial adults ($N = 177$) using self-report measures of appearance and racial identification. Their results indicated that, although skin color was not associated with identity, socially perceived appearance was. However, it was not

clear how the authors arrived at this conclusion given the methodology as reported did not seem to fit their analyses.

Collectively, the few existing studies of reflected appraisals suggest that exclusion from racial group(s) and others' rejection of the Multiracial person, based on their beliefs about the person's perceived race, contributes to Multiracial people's feelings of confusion, hurt, and isolation, as well as how they identify. However, studies of reflected appearance have been limited by inadequate methodologies for assessing reflected appraisals .

Acceptance and Exclusion

The theories of Multiracial identity acknowledge the relevance of acceptance or rejection in Multiracial individuals' racial identity development. The racial identity options provided by Stonequist (1937) are dependent upon racial group acceptance of Multiracial people, but there was no Multiracial identity option during his era. On the other hand, developmental theories consider racial group rejection as part of the crisis through which Multiracial people must emerge to develop a positive, Multiracial identity (Kerwin & Ponterotto, 1995; Kich, 1992; Poston, 1990). In addition, Root's (2003) ecological model views rejection or acceptance by members of a Multiracial individual's social environments as interacting with others aspects of a Multiracial person and his/her context to help shape his/her racial identity. Overall, rejection by one or both racial groups can increase the challenges involved in racial identity development for Multiracial individuals, while acceptance into one or both groups can increase opportunities for social support, possible reference groups, and perceived options for racial group categorization.

Empirical Research on Acceptance and Exclusion

There have been numerous qualitative studies of the racial identity development of small groups of Multiracial individuals, which have supported the relevance of acceptance and exclusion for their racial identity development and well-being. In their study of the relationship between appearance, acceptance, exclusion, and racial identification in Biracial Japanese-White Americans ($N = 50$), AhnAllen, Suyemoto, and Carter (2006) found that exclusion was more strongly related to racial identity than either appearance or belonging, suggesting that exclusion placed limitations on participants' perceived identity options.

Similarly, the Japanese Biracial individuals in Collins' (2000) study described being rejected and feeling as if they did not belong to either the Japanese or White groups due to differences in physical appearance and family background. As a result of the absence of a Biracial reference group, many identified with a single racial group despite feeling uncomfortable with it. Furthermore, in interviews chronicling their racial identity development, Jackson's (2012) diverse Multiracial participants described feeling like outsiders in their communities and disconnected from peers, due to having different cultures, beliefs and/or appearances from those in their environments. For her participants, this feeling of disconnection led to rejection and social isolation.

Most of the studies of exclusion or inclusion of Multiracial people have focused on their negative interactions and outcomes with respect to monoracial people. However, some researchers have questioned whether access to a Multiracial reference group may support Multiracial individuals' development of a positive racial identity (Nishimura, 1998; Kelch-Oliver & Leslie, 2006)

In a focus group study of undergraduate Multiracial student in a support group (*N* = 16), Nishimura (1998) found that participants felt that they needed to repress parts of their racial or ethnic backgrounds to be accepted by monoracial groups, but they also reported that the campus Multiracial group provided them with a place where they could feel comfortable and accepted as "whole" people. Kelch-Oliver and Leslie's (2006) sample of Black-White Biracial women also described seeking friends who had a dual racial heritage as did participants' in Torkelson et al.'s (2013) study.

Thus, research suggests that participants are most confused about their identity and sense of belonging if their social interactions are with monoracial people, but Multiracial communities help them to navigate relevant challenges in their social environments and promote positive racial identity development. However, it is not clear whether they can develop positive identities if there is no access to Multiracial contexts or if they choose to identify as monoracial.

Racial Identity

Despite theorists' focus on racial identity as a critical element in Multiracial people's adjustment, only the developmental theories treat identity as a developmental process rather than a fixed choice. To truly understand the ways that Multiracial people cope with and respond to their contexts, an examination of their racial identity, through the lens of a developmental racial identity theory is necessary because such a perspective would permit examination of the multiple ways that Multiracial people might cope with racial pressures in their environments.

Helms's (1995) People of Color Racial Identity Theory

One of the most utilized developmental racial identity models for examining people's strategies for coping with contentious racial environments is Helms's (1995) People of Color (POC) racial identity theory. This theory is based on the premise that some of the types of racial oppression experienced by African, Latino/a, Asian and Native Americans, as minorities, are similar. Helms's (1996) definition of racial identity is, "the internalized consequences of being socialized in a racially oppressive environment and the characteristics of the self that develop in response to or in synchrony with either benefitting from or suffering under such oppression" (p. 147). The main goal of this theory is for People of Color to overcome internalized racism, develop a positive racial concept and become more aware of racial information in the environment, although she conceptualizes this process as ongoing (Helms, 2003b). Given that Multiracial people are ostensibly people of Color, her model might be useful for investigating the manners in which they shape or understand the racism in their contexts that is focused on them.

The POC model has six statuses, which are unconscious states that "define the nature of the person's race-related cognitions, feelings and behaviors" (Helms, 2003b, p. 46). These statuses, rather than representing stages, are all present in any given individual, but differ in dominance based on an individual's personality, racial identity, and environment. The first status, *Conformity*, is represented by the devaluation of the racial group of Color and the idealization of the White group. The *Dissonance* status is characterized by ambivalence and/or confusion regarding racism and identification with one's own racial group. *Immersion* involves idealization of one's own racial group, condemnation of everything perceived as White, and hypersensitivity to racism.

Emersion is, often exclusive, affiliation with one's own racial group and significant feelings of pride and developing knowledge of one's culture. Additionally, the *Internalization* status is characterized by a positive sense of self, based on race, awareness of racism, and the ability to respond objectively to members of the dominant racial group. *Integrative Awareness* represents the highest level of racial identity and is characterized by merging other aspects of one's identity with one's racial identity (Helms, 2003a, Helms, 2003b, Perry, Vance, & Helms, 2009).

Multiracial-Heritage Awareness and Personal Affiliation Theory (Choi-Misailidis, 2004)

The only theory and corresponding measure of the racial identity development of Multiracial people, the M-HAPA (Multiracial-Heritage Awareness & Personal Affiliation) Theory, and scale (M-HAPAs) was created by Choi-Misailidis (2004). Reflecting Helms' (1995) suggestion that racial identity models should be status-based, the M-HAPA model is comprised of three identity statuses: Marginal Identity, Singular Identity, and Integrated Identity. Multiracial individuals in the *Marginal Identity* status do not affiliate with any of the racial groups of their parents and disconnect from others, due to an awareness of differentness based upon race. *Singular Identity* represents exclusive identification with one of the racial groups that comprise a Multiracial person's racial heritage. Individuals utilizing the *Singular Identity* status can shift from one racial group to another racial group in their racial background, but only one at a time. Based upon her research, Choi-Misailidis (2004) separated the *Integrated Identity* status into two different factors: *Combinatory Type* and *Universality Factor*. The *Combinatory Type* involves integrating all aspects of one's racial background and the *Universality Type*

represents appreciating diversity and the commonalities among all racial groups (Choi-Misailidis, 2004).

Although the M-HAPA model has some empirical support (Choi-Misailidis, 2004; Chong, 2013; Damann, 2008), there are concerns regarding the validity of each status and suggestions that the model may better capture the unique experiences of Multiracial individuals in the racially diverse and accepting climate on the island of Hawaii. Thus, the use of this model to better understand the effect of contextual influences on racial identity and well-being for Multiracial people living in a variety of social contexts is not ideal.

Due to the concerns regarding the M-HAPAs model, the use of a well-validated racial identity model to measure Multiracial individuals' racial identities and delineate the relationship between context, racial identity, and well-being, is warranted. Specifically, Helms'(1995) People of Color Racial Identity Theory may address these concerns and allow for an empirical examination of the relationship between Multiracial individuals' contexts, racial identities, and well-being.

Research on Racial Identity and Well-Being

The only extant study on Multiracial individuals utilizing Helms's (1996) Racial Identity theory examined the relationship between racial identity and well being in Black-White Biracial youths ($N = 23$) in Britain. Fatimilehin (1999) used Helms and Parham's (1996) Black Racial Identity Attitudes Scale, which measures the racial identity development of Black individuals. Although slightly different, the sequence of development of racial identity statuses is very similar to the POC model. Fatimilehin also used measures of racial socialization, self-esteem, and sociodemographic variables.

Results indicated that almost half (43%) of the sample described themselves as Multiracial. Additionally, in terms of the RIAS-B, Internalization attitudes were positively associated with self-esteem, while Encounter and Immersion statuses were positively correlated with racial socialization focused on cultural survival, racism struggles, and global socialization. The author suggested that these types of socialization tend to occur when youths are struggling with their racial identities. The author acknowledged that the RIAS-B only allowed for examination of the youths' Black heritages, while not addressing their White backgrounds. However, it demonstrated the relevance of Helms (1996) racial identity theory for a Multiracial sample.

Despite the lack of empirical examinations of Helms's (1995) racial identity model with Multiracial populations, a variety of empirical studies have examined the relationship between racial identity and self-esteem and well-being for members of multiple racial groups.

Self-Esteem. Pierre and Mahalik (2005) examined the relationship between Black racial identity, measured by the BRIAS, and self-esteem for a sample of Black men ($N =$ 130). Results indicated that higher Internalization attitudes were positively related to self-esteem, while Preencounter and Immersion attitudes were positively related to psychological distress and negatively related to self-esteem.

Alvarez and Helms (2001) studied the relationship between racial identity, measured by the People of Color Racial Identity Attitude Scale (PRIAS, 1995), and collective self-esteem for Asian American and Asian international college students ($N =$ 188). Their analyses suggested that collective self-esteem, or positive evaluations of

one's Asian/Pacific Islander racial group, was negatively related to Conformity and Dissonance and positively related to Immersion and Integrative-Awareness.

Well-Being. Pyant and Yanico (1991) utilized measures of both self-esteem and well-being in their study, along with gender role attitudes and racial identity, as measured by the BRIAS, for their sample of Black women ($N = 143$). Results uncovered a negative relationship between Preencounter attitudes and well being and self-esteem.

Parham and Helms (1985) examined the relationship between racial identity, as measured by the BRIAS (1996), self-actualization, anxiety, and inferiority for their sample of African American college students ($N = 166$). They found that Encounter attitudes were negatively related to feelings of anxiety and inferiority and positively related to self-actualization, while Preencounter and Immersion attitudes were correlated in the opposite direction.

Similarly, Neville, Heppner, and Wang (1997) conducted a study of the relationship between racial identity, as measured by the BRIAS, problem solving, and coping, with a sample of African American college students ($N = 90$). Results indicated that Encounter was positively associated with general stress, and Immersion-Emersion was positively associated with general and culture-specific stress and negatively associated with problem-solving appraisal and problem-focused coping. In addition, Internalization was positively associated with problem-solving appraisal and negatively associated with culture-specific stress.

Finally, Iwamoto and Liu (2010) studied the relationship between racial identity, measured by the PRIAS, Asian values, ethnic identity affirmation, belonging, and well-being for a sample of Asian American and Asian international college students ($N = 402$).

Internalization was positively related to well-being, while Immersion-Emersion and Dissonance were negatively correlated with well-being. The author suggested that Internalization attitudes may provide Asian Americans with more cognitive resources and coping skills, while those with high Immersion-Emersion attitudes may struggle with hypersensitivity to racism.

Overall, results from research on racial identity indicate positive relationships between racial identity and indicators of well-being, providing support for Helms's (1990) assertion that racial identity statuses defined as the process of overcoming internalized racism (e.g., Internalization) should be related to better adjustment, whereas statuses reflecting different types of internalizing racism (e.g., Conformity) should be related to poorer adjustment. Although research supports these relationships, there are significant limitations to the literature, including the lack of focus on the racial identity of Multiracial people of any racial combinations, limited research on Asian populations, and use of different racial identity scales and indices of well-being. Given that Multiracial individuals are members of multiple racial groups, an improved understanding of the relationship between racial identity and well-being is relevant to them as members of their racial group(s) of Color, as well as their status as Multiracial individuals in society.

Well-Being or Psychological Adjustment

Each of the Multiracial theoretical perspectives assumes that the quality of a person's functioning results from being a Multiracial person in a racially stratified society. The marginal identity theorists (Park, 1928; Stonequist, 1937) and developmental theorists (Jacobs, 1992; Kerwin & Ponterotto, 1995; Kich, 1992; Poston, 1990) suggest that the wrong identity choice(s) can create identity confusion, which can lead to

psychological problems, such as decreased well-being, social isolation, and lower satisfaction with life, among Multiracial individuals. Additionally, Root's (2003) ecological model suggests that social contexts can affect Multiracial individuals' well-being in a variety of ways. In the research on well being or adjustment, well being has been defined as high self-esteem and satisfaction with life, and low levels of depression and anxiety (Coleman & Carter, 2007; Damann, 2008; Field, 1996; Smith, 2014).

Well-Being and Racial Identification. The majority of studies that have uncovered psychological difficulties for Multiracial people have demonstrated the existence of complicated patterns behind these difficulties. Specifically, multiple studies have suggested that, although the majority of Multiracial people do not suffer from low levels of well-being, risk may vary depending upon their racial identification.

Field (1996) conducted a study comparing Black-White Biracial ($N = 31$), African American ($N = 31$) and White ($N = 31$) youths on measures of self-worth, self-concept, behavioral adjustment, and reference group orientation. A series of MANOVA analyses uncovered no differences in global self-worth or specific self-concept between the majority of Black-White Biracial youths and their Black or White peers. However, her results indicated that Biracial youths who identified with the White racial group had more negative self-concepts, suggesting that this particular identity may cause unique difficulties for Black-White biracial youths.

Phillips (2004) used self-report measures of self-esteem, depression, and substance use to examine the relationship between racial identity, self-esteem, and psychological distress in Multiracial (Black, Asian, or Latino and White) adolescent girls ($N = 463$). Results suggested that, overall, the Multiracial youths had positive self-esteem

and average levels of psychological distress. However, Asian-White and Black-White adolescent girls who identified as White reported the lowest self-esteem and perceived physical attractiveness and the highest levels of depression and substance abuse, relative to Multiracial individuals with different racial identifications. Additionally, Asian-White youths who chose an Asian identification had higher levels of somatic and depressive symptoms.

Damann (2008) conducted a quantitative study of the relationship between racial identity and psychosocial adjustment and life satisfaction for a sample of diverse Multiracial adults ($N = 268$). She assessed racial identity using the M-HAPAs (Choi-Misailidis, 2004), along with measures of depression, self-esteem, satisfaction with life, social functioning, and perceived racism. Her results indicated that a Marginal Identity, or lack of racial group identification, was negatively associated with self-esteem, life satisfaction, and social functioning, and positively associated with depression. Conversely, the Integrated-Combinatory, combining all racial backgrounds into one's identity, was negatively associated with depression, and positively associated with self-esteem, life satisfaction, and social functioning. This result provides evidence for the positive influence of a racial group identification and an integrated, Multiracial identity.

Chong's (2013) quantitative study examined the relationship between racial identity, family factors, and psychological adjustment for Asian-White young adults ($N = 356$). The study also used the M-HAPAs (Choi-Misailidis, 2004), along with assessments of family of origin, ethnic socialization, self-esteem, preparation for bias, positive affect, internalization oppression, and social desirability. Relevant to well-being, the results of Chong's (2013) study uncovered a positive relationship between psychological distress

and Marginal Identity status, suggesting that lacking a racial reference group increased participants' risk for psychological difficulties. Additionally, Asian racial identification was negatively associated with self-esteem, while other racial identifications were not. The author (Chong, 2013) also explained that, overall, individuals with an integrated, Multiracial identity reported less distress and overall well-being than those who identified as Asian or White or with no racial group.

Coleman and Carter (2007) studied the relationship between racial identity choice, anxiety, and depression for their sample of Black-White adults. Participants were given measures of Rockquemore's (1999) racial identity typology, societal pressure, state-trait anxiety, fear of negative evaluation, social anxiety, and depression. Their results indicated that individuals with Biracial identities that were validated by others had significantly lower levels of depression and anxiety than those with other racial identifications. Conversely, participants whose racial group identifications switched (protean identities) or those who lacked a racial reference group (transcendent identities) reported the highest anxiety and depression scores. These results also provide some support for the theoretical assertion that an integrated identity is facilitative of more positive well-being for Multiracial people.

Lusk, Taylor, Nanney, and Austin (2010) also utilized Rockquemore's (1999) typology to examine the relationship between self-identified racial identity, ethnic identity, self-esteem, and depression for a sample of Black/White Biracial adults ($N =$ 74). Participants who self-identified as having Biracial or protean (shifting) identities had higher self-esteem and lower depression scores. Authors suggested that results provide support for theory suggesting that an integrated identity is psychologically beneficial.

Overall, these results suggest that Multiracial people generally have positive psychological well-being. However, this research provides some support for the theoretical assertions by developmental theorists that an integrated, Multiracial identity is ideal. Specifically, results suggests that particular racial identifications (i.e. identification with the White racial group) may create greater risk for Multiracial people's psychological well-being, while other identifications (i.e. Multiracial) are facilitative of more positive well-being for Multiracial people.

Positive Psychological Well-Being. Multiple studies have examined the relationship between racial identification and well-being and found no differences between Multiracial individuals with various racial identifications. Instead, this research suggests that Multiracial people do not suffer from poor well-being.

Binning, Unzueta, Huo, and Molina (2009) examined whether a Multiracial identification was associated with positive or negative psychological consequences for Multiracial adolescents. They hypothesized that Multiracial people who identified with their high-status racial group (i.e. Asian or White) would fare better than individuals who primarily identified with their low-status racial group (i.e. Black and Latino). Their sample was comprised of Multiracial adolescents ($N = 182$) and researchers categorized participants as belonging to either their high-status group ($N = 54$), their low-status group ($N = 49$) or to multiple groups ($N = 79$). Participants were given measures of psychological well-being and social engagement. Results indicated that participants who identified with multiple racial groups were doing as well or better than individuals who identified with a single racial group, no matter the social status. Specifically, those with multiple racial group identification reported lower alienation and stress and more positive

affect. They also found no significant differences between Multiracial individuals that identified with low versus high status groups.

Suzuki-Crumly and Hyers (2004) studied the relationship between racial identification, self-esteem, and depression in a sample of Asian-White and Black-White adults ($N = 66$). Their results indicated that individuals who identified with both racial groups had the highest self-esteem, while minority identified individuals were more satisfied with their lives. They also found no differences between the depression scores of those who identified with both racial groups, a single racial group, or neither racial group.

Finally, Smith (2014) conducted a study of the relationship between racial identification, racial malleability, and authenticity and well-being for diverse Multiracial adults ($N = 149$). Her participants reported positive psychological well-being, indicated by lower levels of perceived stress and negative aspects of well-being and average scores on positive aspects of well-being and life satisfaction, compared with scores reported by studies with diverse community samples (Lavoie & Douglas, 2011; Pavot & Diener, 1993).

Generally, this research contradicts the marginal and developmental theories assertions that Multiracial people can only have positive psychological well-being if they identify in a particular manner. Instead, this may provide some support for Root's (2003) focus on context and belief in no "ideal" racial identification.

Resilience. There has also been research that has suggested, contrary to the findings reflecting lower well-being, that Multiracial people may actually have specific strengths and experience high levels of well-being and resiliency. Specifically, Multiracial individuals may experience higher psychological well-being and social

engagement and their experiences may be more facilitative of the development of psychological strengths (Binning, et al., 2009; Shih & Sanchez, 2009). Research also suggests that Multiracial people have more positive experiences with interracial interactions, more exposure to different cultures, more comfort with intimate interracial relationships, increased appreciation of diversity and cognitive flexibility, less ethnocentrism and reduced intergroup conflict (Bonam & Shih, 2009; Phinney & Alipuria, 1996). These unique strengths of Multiracial people have been suggested to act as resiliency or buffering factors against the various challenges to Multiracial individuals and their identity development (Salahuddin & O'Brien, 2011). However, it is likely that these strengths are dependent upon the particular social contexts in which Multiracial people develop.

In Korgen's (1998) interviews of Black-White adults ($N = 64$), almost all of her participants believed that there were significant benefits to being Biracial. In addition, many participants reported feeling that their dual identities gave them unique perspectives on the meaning of race and that it helped them better interact with others in a nonracist way.

Similarly, Hall (1992) conducted a study of the ethnic identity choices, and attitudes and experiences of being Biracial, for a sample of Black-Japanese adults ($N = 30$). Participants described the benefits of being from two cultures and heritages, the ability to accept and understand people from other races and cultures, and having the best qualities of both racial groups and cultures.

The Asian-White and Black-White women in Torkelson et al.'s (2014) interviews also described their Multiracial heritages as providing them with increased access to

multiple racial groups and communities. In addition, many participants felt that their experiences as Multiracial people helped them be more open to different cultures and people, and more interested in race, racial issues, and social justice.

Finally, Salahuddin and O'Brien (2011) used samples of diverse Multiracial adults to create a scale to assess the challenges and resilience in the lives of Multiracial individuals. Although results of their scale development indicated multiple relevant difficulties for Multiracial individuals discussed earlier in this literature review; their results also provided additional support for the unique strengths of the Multiracial population. Specifically, two resiliency factors were uncovered including appreciation for human differences and Multiracial pride.

Overall, these results suggests that, contrary to theory suggesting that Multiracial people suffer from poor psychological well-being and have inherent difficulties due to their multiple heritages, Multiracial people seem to have positive psychological well-being and significant, psychological resources. In fact, literature suggest that Multiracial people may actually benefit from their multiple racial backgrounds and possess additional strengths that provide them with resiliency against challenges in their social environments.

These contradictory findings on the well-being of Multiracial people indicate a need for additional research examining the relationship between social context, racial identity, and well-being. This should allow for increased understanding of the psychological well-being of Multiracial people, which Multiracial people are at risk for decreased well-being, and possible ways to intervene to support Multiracial people.

Statement of the Problem

Multiracial people's existence challenges long-held societal beliefs about differences between racial groups, which have led to a variety of challenges for Multiracial people's development of positive racial identities and psychological well-being. There are multiple theories of Multiracial identity, which all acknowledge the difficulty inherent in developing as a Multiracial person in a racially stratified society. The marginal and developmental theories suggest that Multiracial people need to identify in a certain "ideal" way to be psychologically well-adjusted (Jacobs, 1992; Kerwin & Ponterotto, 1995; Kich, 1992; Poston, 1990; Stonequist, 1937), whereas ecological theory suggests that social context shapes Multiracial individuals' racial identity development in a dynamic fluid way (Root, 2003).

For the most part, both the developmental and marginality theories deny the Multiracial person agency in determining how she or he will identify with respect to racial dynamics. Moreover, the premise that there is a certain "best" racial identification, suggested by the marginal and developmental models, does not consider the role of context in Multiracial people's racial identity development, thus limiting the racial identity choices available to them. The focus on a certain "ideal" racial identification option is a significant limitation of these theories since forced choice, or limited racial identification options, has been linked with negative well-being (Coleman & Carter, 2007; Townsend et al., 2009). Consequently, although these theories recognize that social context may play a role in the lives of Multiracial people, its importance is not reflected in the identity resolutions presented by the models.

Research provides support for the theoretical assertions that social context is

important for determining the racial identities and well-being of Multiracial people.

Extant research suggests that positive adjustment can be facilitated by family support,

racial group acceptance, and the existence of a Multiracial reference group (Kelch-Oliver

& Leslie, 2006; Torkelson et al., 2013). On the other hand, the challenges inherent in

developing as a Multiracial person in U.S. society can be increased by being socialized in

challenging or negative family contexts, and experiencing racial group exclusion and

invalidation of one's personal racial identification by people in the person's social

contexts (Collins, 2000; Jackson, 2012).

Despite the presumed relevance of social context variables for a Multiracial

person's ability to navigate challenges to developing a positive racial identity and well-

being, there has been limited research on these important topics. In addition, the majority

of research has been limited by the use of small, non-diverse samples of single racial

group combinations, and a lack of consistent ways to measure relevant social context

constructs. Thus, there is a need for more research on Multiracial individuals' social

contexts using quantitative methods and more diverse and larger samples with the goal of

better understanding the variety of ways that Multiracial individuals' perceptions of their

social contexts potentially affect their racial identity development and well-being.

Therefore, a model is needed that incorporates social context, racial identity, and well-

being to help explain how Multiracial people develop racially and psychologically in a

racially stratified society. Since none of the extant theories of Multiracial identity clearly

present a cohesive framework for understanding and examining the role of social context

in the lives of Multiracial people, I aggregated the most consistent themes from previous

research on Multiracial populations into a social context framework, or lens. The

proposed model is intended to provide a framework for examining the racial identity development of Multiracial people through two lenses (a) social context and (b) racial identity theory (Collins, 2000; Helms, 1995; Khanna, 2004; Kelch-Oliver & Leslie, 2006; Root, 2003; Torkelson, et al., 2013, 2014). The focus on racial identity as a developmental construct helps to move beyond the single racial designations used in the majority of studies of Multiracial identity (Khanna, 2004; Rockquemore & Brunsma, 2002).

Multiracial Model

As previously discussed, for Multiracial people, social contexts can be challenging (Collins, 2000; Rockquemore & Brunsma, 2002), or supportive (Kelch-Oliver & Leslie, 2006; Torkelson et al., 2013). The type(s) of contexts to which they are exposed may affect the racial identity, adjustment, and psychological well-being of Multiracial people. In the current study, the model proposes multiple ways that psychological well-being and racial identity are influenced by challenging and supportive contextual factors (Figure 1).

Contextual Factors

Marginal person theory, developmental theory, and ecological theory have argued for the importance of a variety of contextual factors for the racial identity development of Multiracial people (Miville et al., 2005; Rockquemore et al., 2009; Root, 2003). In general, contextual factors have been classified as challenging, or supportive. Challenging social contexts include family challenges (i.e., negative messages, lack of discussion of race), racial group exclusion, and invalidation of racial identification. Challenging contexts seem to have in common the theme that self-identified mono-racial

people in those environments judge the Multiracial person based upon the person's racial heritage and/or physical appearance. Such judgments reportedly contribute to the Multiracial person's self-doubts and discomfort, confusion about race and racial identification, and feelings of anger, hurt, and social isolation (Collins, 2000; Kelch-Oliver & Leslie, 2006; Jackson, 2012). Supportive social contexts are characterized by family support, racial group acceptance and belonging, and the existence and support of a Multiracial reference group. The common theme of supportive environments is acceptance and openness to Multiracial individuals' unique identities, appearances, and experiences that may contradict beliefs about differences between racial groups. Such acceptance can contribute to a positive sense of self, social support, increased opportunities to explore one's race and racial identity, and pride in one's Multiracial background (Kelch-Oliver & Leslie, 2006; Nishimura, 1998; Smith, 2014; Torkelson, et al., 2013, 2014).

The effects of the majority of these social contexts have been examined in isolation from one another and without consideration of the ways that these variables may affect each other, as well as the racial identities and well-being of Multiracial people. Moreover, it is not clear whose communications are most important in shaping the Multiracial person's identity resolutions. Some studies have focused on immediate and extended family as delivering both supportive and challenging messages. Examples of challenging family messages would be lack of discussion of race, idealization of Whiteness, negative opinions about racial groups of Color, and family rejection due to one's Multiracial background (Buckley & Carter, 2004; Collins, 2000; Kelch-Oliver & Leslie, 2006; Torkelson et al, 2013, 2014), while supportive family messages would be

encouragement to embrace both racial heritages and exposure and closeness to family members from multiple racial groups (Kelch-Oliver & Leslie, 2006; Torkelson, et al, 2014).

Others have specified the person's racial groups as the source of mostly challenging interactions. Specifically, research has identified exclusion from a Multiracial person's constituent racial groups as contributing to feelings of confusion and social isolation (AhnAllen, et al., 2006; Jackson, 2012; Khanna, 2004; Torkelson, et al., 2013, 2014), while connection to a Multiracial reference group can contribute to increased comfort with one's self and Multiracial background and social support (Nishimura, 1998; Torkelson, et. al, 2013). Additional studies have classified non-specific "others" as the source(s) of threats to the Multiracial person's racial identity and well-being. Examples of these threats include invalidation of a Multiracial person's racial identification and discrimination due to one's Multiracial background (Coleman & Carter, 2007; Kelch-Oliver & Leslie, 2006; Khanna, 2004; Miville, et al., 2005; Torkelson, et al., 2013, 2014). Conversely, appearing to belong to one's racial group of Color and validation of one's racial identification have been identified as facilitative of positive adjustment (Coleman & Carter, 2007; Khanna, 2004). Thus, it seems important to investigate the differential contributions of these contextual factors as perceived by Multiracial people on their racial adaptations.

An additional issue discussed in the literature and relevant for the current study is the lack of consistent ways to measure social context constructs. Thus, multiple scales were created for this study to address gaps in the literature and allow for the quantitative examination of challenging and supportive social context variables identified as relevant

to Multiracial individuals' racial identity development and well-being. Three different aspects of Multiracial individuals' social contexts were assessed in the study: (a) Family Factors, which was defined as racially affirming and disconfirming family messages regarding race and exposure to family members and cultures; (b) Reflected Appraisals, defined as the interaction between individuals' self-perceptions and others' interpretations of their racial appearances; and (c) Acceptance/Exclusion, defined as the level of acceptance or exclusion by members of individuals' racial groups and society. There were a variety of contextual variables, particularly those reflective of supportive social contexts that have not been measured quantitatively. As a result, scales were created to assess each of these three aspects of Multiracial people's social contexts. Table 1 summarizes the measures that were used to operationalize each construct.

Well-Being

Two perspectives exist concerning the mental health or psychological well-being of Multiracial people. One perspective, originating with Stonequist's (1937) theory, asserts that identification with multiple groups or as Multiracial leads to significant psychological issues, such as depression, anxiety, confusion, and criminal activity. The other perspective suggests that Multiracial people exhibit positive mental health as indicated by high self-esteem, satisfaction with life, and positive affect and that they may actually evidence particular resilience factors due to their Multiracial backgrounds (Binning et al., 2009; Smith, 2014; Suzuki-Crumly & Hyers, 2004). These resilience factors include pride in their Multiracial backgrounds, unique perspectives about race, increased ability to understand and accept people from different races, more comfort with

interracial interactions, and less ethnocentrism (Bonam & Shih, 2009; Hall, 1992; Korgen, 1998; Stephan & Stephan, 1991; Smith, 2014).

The proposed model addressed both well-being perspectives. The construct of maladaptive well-being was operationalized using the Brief Symptom Inventory-18 (BSI-18; Derogatis, 2000), which measures an individual's overall psychological distress, whereas the positive health perspective was operationalized with the Satisfaction with Life Scale (SWLS) (Diener, Emmons, Larson & Griffin, 1985), which measures subjective, global satisfaction with life and well-being. In addition, the resiliency aspect of well-being was operationalized by the two Resilience subscales of the Multiracial Challenges and Resilience Scale (MCRS; Salahuddin & O'Brien, 2011), which are Appreciation for Human Differences and Multiracial Pride (Table 1).

Racial Identity

A major challenge relevant to Multiracial individuals' racial identity development is the pressure, from their social contexts and society as a whole, to identify with a single racial group, often the group to which they appear to belong. Being forced to choose a racial identification has been linked with frustration, confusion, difficulties fitting in, social isolation, and discomfort (Collins, 2000; Hall, 1992; Kelch-Oliver & Leslie, 2006). Additionally, despite a Multiracial person's desire to identify as Multiracial or with a particular racial group, lack of racial group acceptance due to one's Multiracial background or appearance, or the lack of a Multiracial reference group, may create challenges to a Multiracial person's ability to explore and develop their racial identity (AhnAllen, et al., 2006; Khanna, 2004; Jackson, 2012; Torkelson, et al., 2013, 2014).

Nevertheless, in considering the effects of social contexts on Multiracials' racial identity development or the effects of their racial identity on their psychological well-being, most literature has focused on racial labels as the operational definition of identity. Missing from consideration has been the Multiracial person's manner of internalizing or reacting to communications about race from their social contexts. Given the possibility that individuals may interpret the category, "Multiracial," in different ways and, therefore, manifest positive well-being if their racial identity is positive and low levels of well-being if it is not, examination of Multiracial people's racial identities through an established theory may help increase understanding of Multiracial identity development. Racial identity theory proposes that people of Color all experience oppression in our racially stratified society. Thus, the main goal of this theory is for People of Color to develop a positive racial concept, become more aware of racial information in the environment, and overcome internalized racism (Helms, 2003b). Given that Multiracial people typically are people of Color, this model can provide a framework for exploring the ways that they understand race and racism in their social contexts.

Helms's (1995) racial identity model is comprised of racial identity statuses that reflect a person's race-related thoughts, behaviors, and feelings. The racially reactive statuses range from internalized oppression, and conforming to dominant, White group norms (i.e., Conformity) to confusion and ambivalence about racial background (i.e., Dissonance) to racial pride, withdrawal into one's racial group of Color, and hypersensitivity to racism (i.e., Immersion). The self-actualizing status (i.e., Internalization) involves significant flexibility and awareness in regards to race and racial issues, along with increased ability to interact with people from all racial groups.

If the racial identity model pertains to Multiracial people, then it seems plausible that challenging social contexts cause them to continually react to racial dynamics in their environments and consequently to experience more psychological distress, whereas supportive social contexts may encourage resistance to racial oppression and higher levels of well-being and resilience. Nevertheless, racial identity may interact differently with social context and well-being for Asian/White individuals than for Black/White individuals. A little research suggests that Multiracial individuals, who identify as Asian, experience lower self-esteem and increased levels of depression and somatic symptoms, perhaps reflecting the Immersion status (Chong, 2013; Phillips, 2004). Comparable research does not exist for Black/White Multiracials. Therefore, in the present study, both groups were included.

Figure 1 – Conceptual Model – Social Context (Challenging/Supportive) related to Well-Being, Social Context related to Racial Identity, and Racial Identity related to well-being.
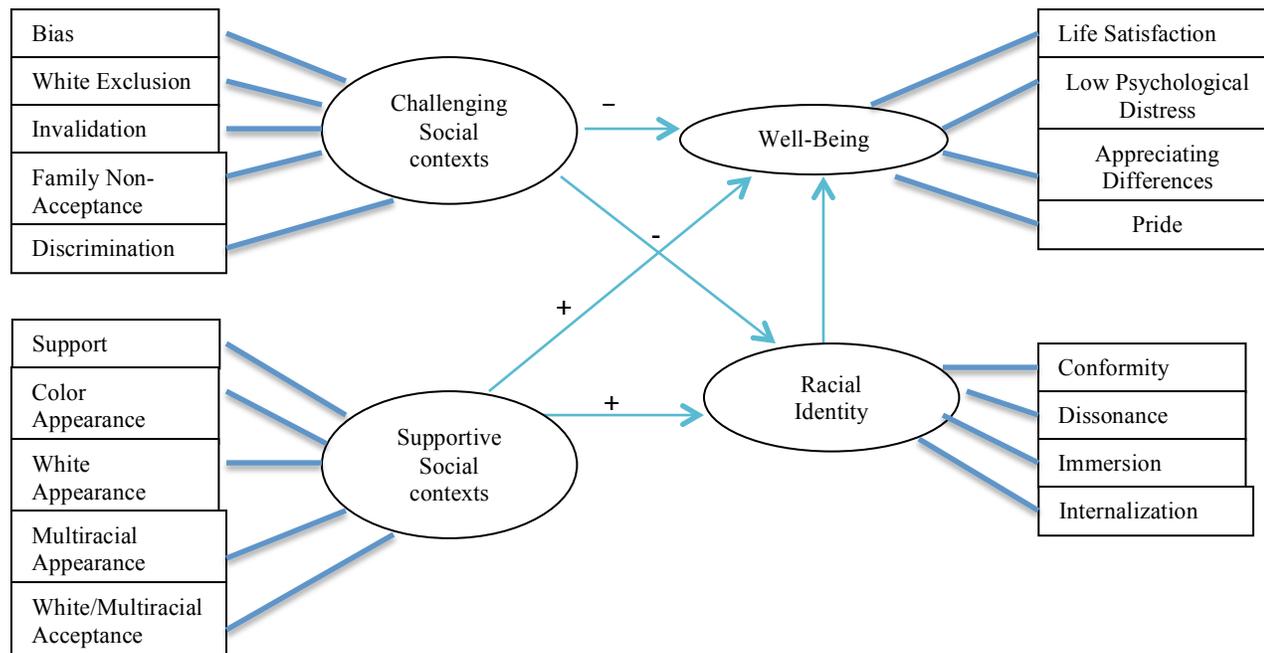
Current Study

The study examined the relationships between Multiracial individuals' social contexts, racial identity, and their well-being. Extant research suggests that Multiracial individuals' are more able to navigate challenges to positive adjustment when they are socialized in social contexts that are supportive of their experiences as Multiracial people (e.g. family messages about the value and acceptability of racial differences, exposure to family members, acceptance by racial groups). Thus, it is expected that supportive social contexts, will be positively related to psychological well-being (i.e., satisfaction with life, low levels of distress, and resilience in the face of challenges). Conversely, challenging social contexts (e.g. biased family messages, racial group exclusion, invalidation of personal racial identification) are expected to be negatively related to psychological well-being.

The relationship between racial identity and well-being will also be examined. Research on Multiracial (Fatemilehin, 1999) and Black and Asian individuals (Iwamoto & Liu, 2010; Neville et al., 1997) have found positive relationships between psychological well-being and racial identity. Reflecting research on racial identity and well-being, it is anticipated that racial identity statuses reflecting denial of the significance of race (i.e. Conformity), confusion or ambivalence regarding racial background (i.e. Dissonance), and withdrawal into one's racial group of Color (i.e. Immersion), will be negatively related to psychological well-being. On the other hand, the racial identity status that represents high levels of awareness of, and flexibility in addressing, racial issues, and the ability to interact positively with members of all racial group (i.e. Internalization), will be positively related to psychological well-being. To

operationalize racial identity attitudes, I used the People of Color Racial Identity

Attitudes Scale (PRIAS; Helms, 2005), which measures the salience of race for

participants and their race-related consciousness (Table 1).

Finally, the relationship between social context and racial identity was also

examined. Theory suggests that supportive social contexts are facilitative of racial

identity development, such that Multiracial people are able to develop positive racial

schemas (i.e. Internalization) and be willing to identify with and immerse in their racial

groups (i.e. Immersion). In addition, challenging social contexts have been linked to

difficulties in developing one's racial identity, in that these experiences can create

feelings of confusion and ambivalence (i.e. Dissonance), and limit Multiracial people's

ability to immerse in their racial groups (i.e. Immersion) and develop their racial

identities.

Table 1 – Measures and Constructs

Construct	Specific Construct	Variable	Scale	Subscale	Name
Social Context	Challenging Social Contexts	Challenging Family Influences	Family Influence Scale	Parental Bias	Bias
			Multiracial Challenges and Resilience Scale	Lack of Family Acceptance	Family Non-Acceptance
		Invalidation of Racial Identity	Multiracial Challenges and Resilience Scale	Others' Surprise and Disbelief Regarding Racial Heritage	Invalidation
		Racial Group Exclusion	Acceptance/Exclusion Scale	White Exclusion	
			Multiracial Challenges and Resilience Scale	Multiracial Discrimination	Discrimination
Social Context	Supportive Social Contexts	Supportive Family Influence	Family Influence Scale	Parental Support	Support
		Racial Group Acceptance	Acceptance/Exclusion Scale	White/Multiracial Group Acceptance	White/Multiracial Acceptance
		Perceived Racial Appearance	Reflected Appraisals Scale	Group of Color Appearance	Color Appearance
				White Racial Group Appearance	White Appearance
				Multiracial Group Appearance	Multiracial Appearance
Psychological Well-Being		Psychological Distress	Brief Symptom Inventory 18		Psychological Distress
		Satisfaction with Life	Satisfaction with Life Scale		Life Satisfaction

		Resilience	Multiracial Challenges and Resilience Scale	Appreciation of Human Differences	Appreciating Differences
				Multiracial Pride	Pride
Racial Identity		Racial Identity	People of Color Racial Identity Attitudes Scale	Conformity	
				Dissonance	
				Immersion	
				Internalization	

Hypotheses

Considering the theory and empirical research on the influence of their racialized social contexts on Multiracial individuals' racial identities and well-being, the following hypotheses were tested:

Hypothesis 1: Social context (family influence, reflected appraisals, and racial group acceptance) will be related to psychological well-being. Hypothesis 1a, challenging social contexts (i.e., negative family influence, exclusion from racial groups, and invalidation of racial identity) will be negatively related to psychological well-being (Figure 2) and Hypothesis 1b, supportive social contexts (i.e. family support and racial group acceptance) will be positively related to psychological well-being (Figure 3)

Figure 2 – Hypothesis 1a - Challenging Social Context Predicting Well-Being
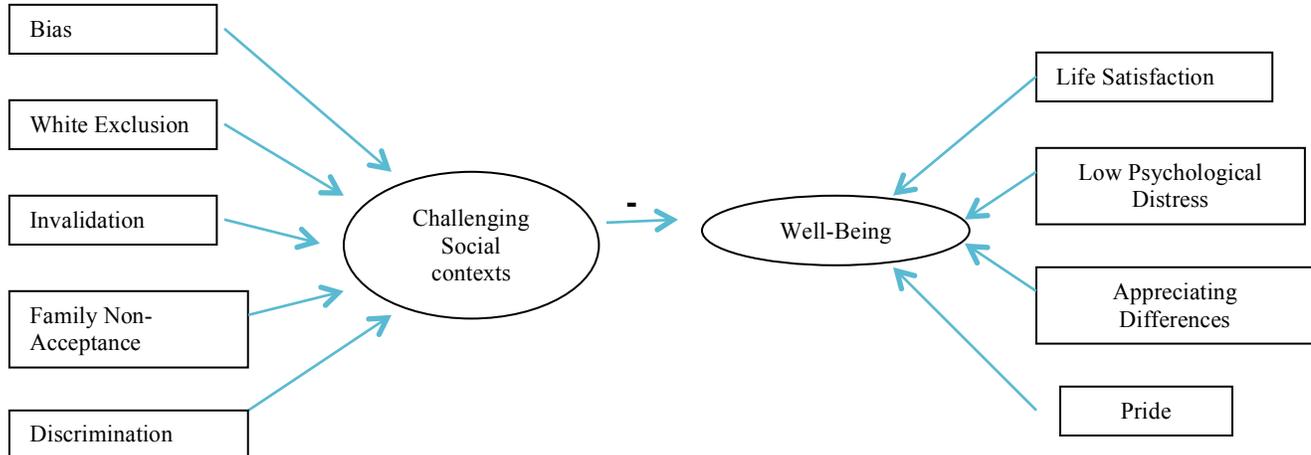
Figure 3 – Hypothesis 1b - Supportive Social Context Predicting Well-Being
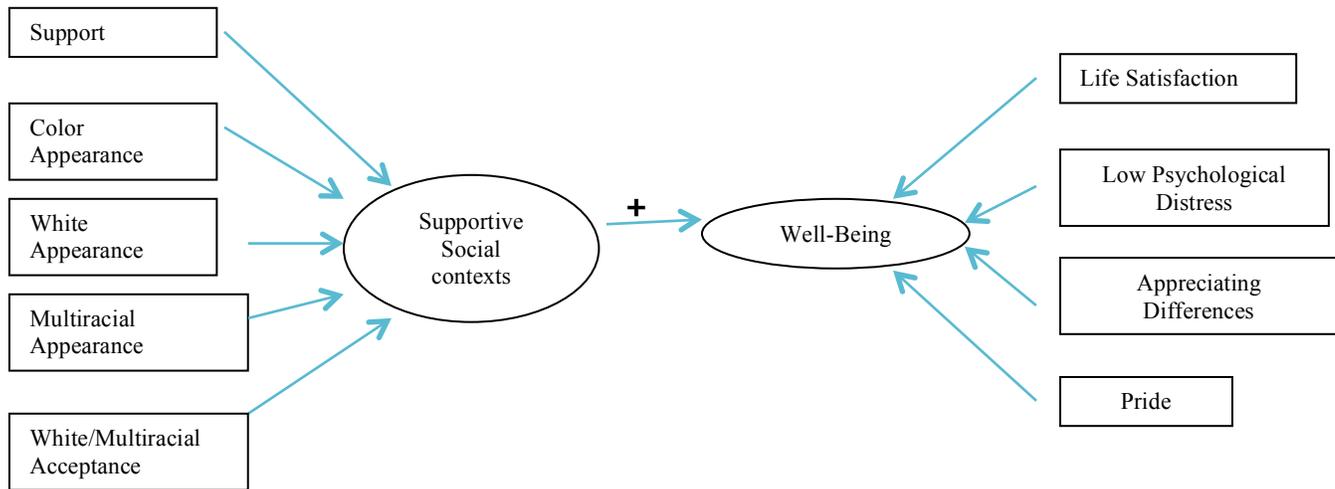
Previous research has linked lack of family support, others' invalidation of a

Multiracial person's personal racial identification, and exclusion from a Multiracial

person's respective racial groups to lower levels of various indices of psychological well-

being, including confusion, distress, social isolation, anger, and lack of social support

(Buckley & Carter, 2004; Collins, 2000; Jackson et al., 2012; Kelch-Oliver & Leslie,

2006; Torkelson et al., 2013). Conversely, family support, a Multiracial reference group,

and racial group acceptance has been linked with positive well-being for Multiracial

people (Khanna, 2004; Nishimura, 1998; Rockquemore & Brunsma, 2002; Torkelson, et

al., 2014).

The challenging and supportive social context variables were measured by the

Family Influence-Parental Bias and Support, Reflected Appraisals-Group of Color,

Multiracial, and White Racial Group Appearance, and Acceptance/Exclusion – White

Exclusion and White/Multiracial Group Acceptance scores from the Multiracial Scales

developed for this study. The Others' Surprise and Disbelief about Racial Heritage, Lack of Family Acceptance, and Multiracial Discrimination subscales of the Multiracial Challenges and Resilience Scale (MCRS; Salahuddin & O'Brien, 2011) were also used to assess challenging social contexts. Well-being was measured by the Brief Symptom Inventory-18 (BSI-18), the Satisfaction with Life Scale (SWLS), and the Multiracial Pride and Appreciation for Human Differences subscales of the MCRS.

Hypothesis 2: Racial identity will be related to psychological well-being.
Conformity, Dissonance, and Immersion racial identity statuses will be related to more negative psychological well-being (i.e., more psychological distress symptoms, lower satisfaction with life, lower resiliency), whereas Internalization will be related to more positive psychological well-being (i.e., lower levels of psychological distress symptoms and greater satisfaction with life and resiliency) (Figure 4)

Figure 4 – Hypothesis 2 - Racial Identity Predicting Well-Being
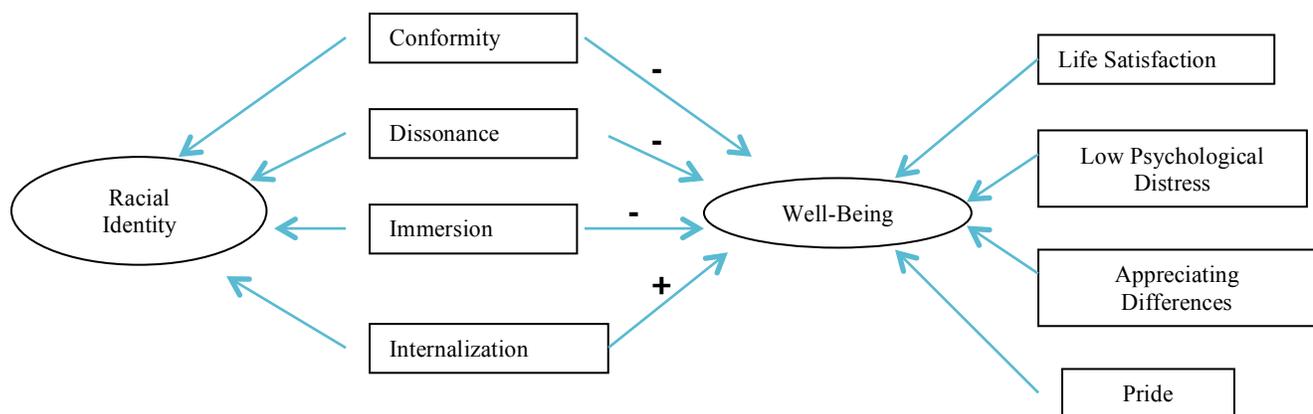
This hypothesis is based on research demonstrating a negative relationship between Conformity, Dissonance, and Immersion statuses and various indices of

psychological well-being, and a positive relationship between Internalization and positive psychological well-being for people of Color and Multiracial people (Fatemilehin, 1999; Iwamoto & Liu, 2010; Pyant & Yanico, 1991; Watson, 2009).

Racial identity was assessed by the People of Color Racial Identity Attitudes Scale (PRIAS; Helms, 2003), which is comprised of four subscales: Conformity, Dissonance, Immersion, and Internalization. Well-being was assessed by the BSI-18, SWLS, and the Multiracial Pride and Appreciation for Human Differences subscales of the MCRS.

Hypothesis 3: Social context will be related to racial identity. Challenging social contexts (i.e., negative family influence, exclusion from racial groups, invalidation of racial identity) will be negatively related to Immersion and Internalization racial identity statuses and positively related to Conformity and Dissonance (Hypothesis 3a) (Figure 5), whereas supportive social contexts (i.e., family support and racial group acceptance) will be positively related to Immersion and Internalization and negatively related to Conformity and Dissonance (Hypothesis 3b) (Figure 6).

Figure 5 – Challenging Social Context Predicting Racial Identity
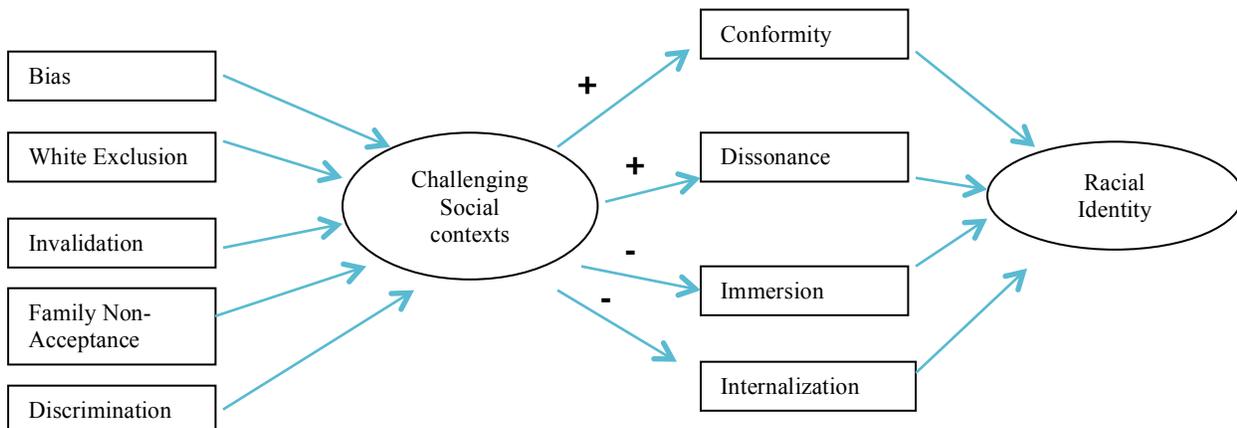
Figure 6 – Supportive Social Context Predicting Racial Identity
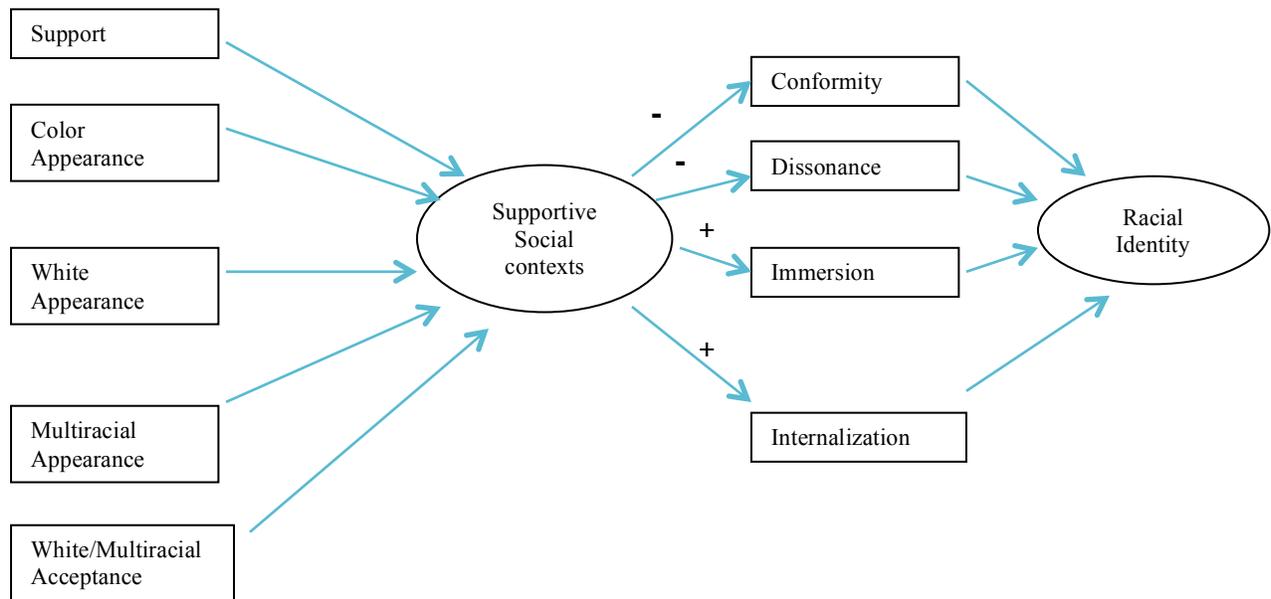
This hypothesis is based upon theory and research suggesting that negative reactions from or lack of acceptance by individuals in Multiracial people's social environments can lead to ambivalence about racial background, confusion, inability to identify with a racial group(s), and difficulty developing a racial identity (Collins, 2000; Miville et al., 2005; Poston, 1990; Torkelson, et al., 2014). Additionally, research and theory suggest that social support can facilitate the development of positive racial identity and Multiracial resiliency, including various traits characteristic of the Internalization status (Hall, 1992; Kelch-Oliver & Leslie, 2006; Rockquemore & Brunsma, 2002).

The challenging and supportive social context variables were measured by the created Multiracial scales (i.e. Family Influence-Parental Bias and Support, Reflected Appraisals-Group of Color, Multiracial, and White Racial Group Appearance, and Acceptance/Exclusion – White Exclusion and White/Multiracial Group Acceptance), as well as the Others' Surprise and Disbelief about Racial Heritage, Lack of Family

Acceptance, and Multiracial Discrimination subscales of the MCRS. Racial identity was

assessed by the Conformity, Dissonance, Immersion, and Internalization subscales

Chapter 3

Method

Participants

Participants ($N = 172$) were Multiracial adult men ($N = 27$) and women (N = 144), and one person who identified as "Other" with one White parent and one parent belonging to either the African American/Black or Asian/Pacific Islander racial groups. The sample consisted of Black/White ($n = 70$) and Asian/White ($n = 102$) participants recruited online through web-based sampling. Table 2 provides a summary of the respondents' self-reported demographic characteristics. The sample was predominately women (83.7%), middle class (44.8%), and highly educated with the entire sample having at least completed high school. In addition, the sample was mostly comprised of individuals from the West (45.9%) and East coasts (23.8%). Participants were provided with an opportunity to enter a raffle for one of four $25 Amazon gift cards as an incentive for participation.

Measures

Measures used in this study were (a) Demographic Questionnaire (b) Multiracial Scales (Family Influence, Reflected Appraisals, Acceptance/Exclusion), (e) Multiracial Challenges and Resilience Scale (MCRS; Salahuddin & O'Brien, 2011), (f) People of Color Racial Identity Attitudes Scale (PRIAS; Helms, 2005), (g) Brief Symptom Inventory 18 (BSI 18; Derogatis, 2001), and (h) Satisfaction with Life Scale (SWLS; Diener, Emmons, Larson & Griffin, 1985).

Demographic Questionnaire. This multiple-choice questionnaire was created in the current study to gather demographic information about participants and was used to describe the sample and identify Multiracial participants who fit the inclusion criteria.

Participants were asked to report their racial and ethnic backgrounds, the racial and ethnic backgrounds of their parents, their socioeconomic status, age, gender, highest degree completed, relationship status, racial background of their partner, workplace or current occupation, hometown, and current city and state of residence (Appendix D).

Multiracial Scales. These scales were created for the present study using a combination of theory and principal components analyses (PCA), which are described in Appendix A. The three scales were Family Influence, Reflected Appraisals, and Acceptance/Exclusion. Participants used Likert-type scales ranging from 1 (Strongly disagree) to 5 (Strongly agree) to respond to all of the items of the Multiracial Scales. These scales were used in this study to assess challenging and supportive social contexts.

Family Influence Scale

The 14-item Family Influence scale was created to measure parental socialization messages regarding racial identification with parents and extended family and consisted of two subscales: (a) Parental Bias (8 items) (e.g. "My dad believed in a hierarchy among races") and (b) Parental Support (6 items) (e.g. "My mom was open to me exploring all of my racial groups"); Cronbach alpha coefficients for participants responses to the subscale items were .81 for Parental Bias and .68 for Parental Support. These reliability estimates provide some initial support for the inter-item relations of participants' responses to the Parental Bias and Parental Support subscales of the Family Influence Scale with an aggregated Multiracial Black/White and Asian/White sample (Appendix E).

Table 2

Participants' Self-Reported Demographic Characteristics (N = 172)

Category	Frequency	%
Racial Classification		
Black/African American and White	70	40.7
Asian/Pacific Islander and White	102	59.3
Biological Mother's Race		
Black/African American	17	9.9
White/Caucasian	66	38.4
Asian/Pacific Islander	75	43.6
Biracial/Multiracial	14	8.1
Biological Father's Race		
Black/African American	46	26.7
White/Caucasian	96	55.8
Asian/Pacific Islander	22	12.8
Biracial/Multiracial	8	4.7
Gender		
Female	144	83.7
Male	27	15.7
Other	1	.6
Socioeconomic Status		
Lower Class	9	5.2
Lower Middle Class	34	19.8
Middle Class	77	44.8
Upper Middle Class	45	26.2
Upper Class	7	4.1
Level of Education		
High School Graduate	10	5.8
Some College	77	44.8
Associates Degree (AA)	5	2.9
Bachelor's Degree	37	21.5
Some Graduate School	15	8.7
Advanced Degree (MA, JD, PhD, PsyD, MD)	28	16.3
Hometown Region		
West Coast	79	45.9
East Coast	41	23.8
Midwest	26	15.1
South	15	8.7
International	9	5.2
No Hometown	2	1.2

Reflected Appraisals

The 17-item Reflected Appraisals scale was created to measure participants' personal beliefs about racial appearance, others' interpretations of participants' racial appearance, and the ways that these beliefs interacted to affect participants' racial categorization (i.e., Reflected Appraisals). The following four subscales were derived from the PCAs, (a) Group of Color Appearance (4 items) (e.g. "I appear to belong to my racial group of Color"); (b) White Racial Group Appearance (4 items) (e.g. "I appear similar to members of my White racial group"); (c) Multiracial Group Appearance (4 items) (e.g. "Other people believe that I belong to my Multiracial/Biracial/Mixed-Race group) and (d) Others' Opinions (5 items) (e.g. "Others' interpretations of my race have affected my current racial categorization"). The final subscale, Others' Opinions, was not used in this study since it did not reflect the constructs of interest.

Cronbach's alpha coefficients for item responses of the four subscales were as follows: Group of Color, .86; White Racial Group, .89; Multiracial Group, .86.; and Others' Opinions, .84. These results provide some initial evidence for reliability of the Reflected Appraisals subscales for use with a Multiracial Black/White and Asian/White sample (Appendix F)

Acceptance/Exclusion Scale

The 12-item Acceptance/Exclusion scale was created to measure the level of acceptance and exclusion of Multiracial individuals by their constituent racial groups (i.e., White and/or Black or Asian), as well as the relationship between acceptance or exclusion and participants' racial categorizations. Each item was measured on a Likert-type scale ranging from 1 (Strongly disagree) to 5 (Strongly agree). The following three

subscales were derived from the PCAs, (a) White/Multiracial Group Acceptance (4 items) (e.g., "I am accepted by my Multiracial/Biracial/Mixed-Race Group"); (b) White Racial Group Exclusion (3 items) (e.g., "Growing up, I was excluded by my White racial group"); and (c) Perceived Racial Group Rejection (5 items) (e.g., "I would identify differently if I were more accepted by my Racial group of Color"). The third subscale, Lack of Racial Group Acceptance, comprising the scale was not used in the analysis since it did not reflect the constructs of interest. Cronbach's alpha coefficients for item responses of the three subscales were as follows: White/Multiracial Group Acceptance (α = .71), White Racial Group Exclusion (α = .70), and Perceived Racial Group Rejection (α = .83). These internal consistency results provide some initial support for the reliability of the Acceptance/Exclusion Scale for use with a Multiracial Asian/White and Black/White sample (Appendix G).

Multiracial Challenges and Resilience Scale (MCRS) (Salahuddin & O'Brien, 2011). The Multiracial Challenges and Resilience Scale is comprised of 6 subscales (four assessing Challenges and two assessing Resilience) and was developed to measure the specific challenges experienced and strengths exhibited by Multiracial individuals. In the current study, three of the Challenges subscales were used to examine reflected appraisals, lack of family acceptance, societal exclusion, and acceptance and belonging to one's socially ascribed racial groups.

The Challenge subscales used in this study were: (a) Others' Surprise and Disbelief regarding Racial Heritage (5 items), which assesses others' surprised and disbelieving reactions when Multiracial people disclose their racial backgrounds (e.g., "I told someone about my racial background(s) but they did NOT believe me"); (b) Lack of

Family Acceptance (5 items) measures behaviors and statements that indicate familial lack of acceptance of a Multiracial person's racial background (e.g., "A member of my family treated me like an "outsider" because I'm multiracial"); and (c) Multiracial Discrimination (5 items) assesses discriminatory treatment by family or non-family members (e.g., "I was the victim of discrimination because I'm multiracial").

The Resilience subscales were used in this study as measures of resilience and well-being. The two Resilience subscales are: (a) the Appreciation of Human Differences (5 items), which assesses whether individuals believe their racial background and experiences have allowed them to develop an appreciation for individual and cultural differences (e.g., "As a multiracial person, I have developed an appreciation for different cultures"); and (b) Multiracial Pride (5 items), which represents respondents' pride in having a Multiracial background (e.g., "I am proud that I am multiracial").

Three of the Challenge subscales (Others' Surprise and Disbelief regarding Racial Heritage, Lack of Family Acceptance, and Multiracial Discrimination) are answered using a frequency scale. It asks participants to rate the frequency of each experience from 0 (Never happened to me) to 5 (Happened to me more than 10 times in my life). The Resilience subscales (Appreciation of Human Differences, and Multiracial Pride) are answered on Likert-type scales, ranging from 0 (Strongly Disagree) to 5 (Strongly Agree).

In addition, in their instrument development study of diverse Multiracial adults, Salahuddin and O'Brien (2011) found moderate to high Cronbach alpha coefficients that ranged from .66 (Challenges with Racial Identity) to .88 (Appreciation for Human Differences). Moreover, using a sample of Multiracial adults, Smith (2014) reported

Cronbach alpha coefficients for the MCRS that ranged from .65 (Others' Surprise and Disbelief) to .90 (Appreciation for Human Differences).

In the present study, Cronbach alpha coefficients were as follows: Others' Surprise (.74), Lack of Family Acceptance (.81), Multiracial Discrimination (.76), Appreciation for Human Differences (.89), and Multiracial Pride (.85). These results indicate support for the internal consistency of the present sample's responses to the MCRS.

In their instrument development study of the MCRS, Salahuddin and O'Brien (2011) examined the relationship between the MCRS subscales and self-esteem, assessed by the Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale (Rosenberg, 1965), depression, measured by the Center for Epidemiological Studies-Depression Scale (Radloff, 1977), social connection, measured by the Social Connectedness Scale (Lee & Robbins, 1995), and ethnic identity, assessed by the Multigroup Ethnic Identity Measure (Phinney, 1992), for a sample of diverse Multiracial individuals from a variety of racial backgrounds. All of the Challenge subscale scores were positively related to depression, Others' Surprise and Disbelief Regarding Racial Heritage ($r = .23$), Lack of Family Acceptance ($r = .26$), and Multiracial Discrimination ($r = .24$), although the effect sizes were small. Additionally, the Resilience subscales were positively related to social connection (Appreciation for Human Differences ($r = .26$) and Multiracial Pride ($r = .36$) and ethnic identity (Appreciation for Human Differences ($r = 22$) and Multiracial Pride ($r = .40$). The relationships between the MCRS subscales and established measures of depression, social connection and ethnic identity provide some initial evidence for the construct validity of the MCRS (Appendix H).

People of Color Racial Identity Attitudes Scale (PRIAS) (Helms, 2005). The

PRIAS is a 50-item self-report measure with four subscales designed to assess four racial

identity schemas of the People of Color racial identity theory (Helms, 1995). It was used

in the present study to measure participants' race-related consciousness and level of racial

identity development. The measure uses Likert-type scales ranging from 1 (Strongly

Disagree) to 5 (Strongly Agree) to elicit responses to four subscales (a) Conformity (12

items) (e.g. ,"In general, I believe that Whites are superior to other racial groups"); (b)

Dissonance (14 items) (e.g. ,"I feel anxious about some of the things that I feel about

people of my race"); (c) Immersion (14 items) (e.g. "I limit myself to activities involving

people of my own race"); and Internalization (10 items) (e.g. " People, regardless of their

race, have strengths and limitations") (Helms, 2005). The item responses for each scale

are summed to form total subscale scores. Higher scores on each subscale correspond

with higher levels of that status.

A multitude of studies have demonstrated moderate to high internal consistency

coefficients using Cronbach alpha, which seem to vary for different racial/ethnic groups.

In these studies, alpha coefficients ranged from .66 for Internalization to .83 for

Immersion (Bianchi, Zea, Belgrave & Echeverry, 2002; Helms & Alvarez, 2001; Inman,

2006; & Perry, et al., 2009). In addition, Torkelson, et al. (2013) used the PRIAS in their

mixed-methods study of the components involved in Multiracial identity development for

a sample of diverse Multiracial adults ($N = 70$). They reported Cronbach alpha

coefficients of .70 (Conformity), .84 (Dissonance), .82 (Immersion), and .66

(Internalization). For the present study, alpha coefficients for the PRIAS were:

Conformity (.74), Dissonance (.83), Immersion/Emersion (.86), and Internalization (.72).

These results provide some initial evidence for the use of the PRIAS with a Multiracial population.

Furthermore, in their study of the relationships between racial identity, measured by the PRIAS, and collective self-esteem and racism for Asian Americans, Helms and Alvarez (2001), found relationships between racial identity and well-being. Specifically, they reported a negative relationship between Conformity and collective self-esteem ($\beta = -.29$) and a positive relationship between Immersion-Emersion ($\beta = .23$) and Integrative Awareness ($\beta = .35$) and collective self-esteem. This provides some evidence of the validity of the PRIAS for studies on well-being (Appendix I). Descriptive statistics pertaining to sample responses to predictor variables by racial group combination are summarized in Table 3.

Brief Symptom Inventory 18 (BSI 18) (Derogatis, 2001). The BSI 18 is an 18-item self-report measure of psychological distress and is a shortened version of the Brief Symptom Inventory (BSI; Derogatis & Spencer, 1993). Each question asks participants to rate the extent to which they experienced a variety of symptoms over the past week using 5-point scales ranging from (0 = not at all) to (4 = extremely). The BSI 18 provides a Global Severity Index (GSI) score, which provides a measure of the person's overall psychological distress level, and is calculated by summing participants' responses to all 18 items. GSI scores can range from 0 to 72.

Derogatis and Savitz (2000) reported acceptable internal consistency using Cronbach's alpha for the GSI (alpha = .89), although they did not report the demographic characteristics of their sample. In their study of the component structure and psychometric properties of participants' responses to the BSI-18, Wiesner et al. (2010)

reported alpha coefficients ranging from .90 to .96 for their aggregated sample of Black, White, and Hispanic women. In addition, Chong (2013), in her study of the racial identity and psychological adjustment of Asian/White Multiracial adults, reported an overall alpha coefficient of .91 on the GSI, providing some initial support for the reliability of the BSI-18 for a Multiracial sample.

For the present study, the Cronbach's alpha coefficient for the GSI was .94. Furthermore, although she did not use the Brief Symptom Inventory-18, Sparrold (2003) used the original Brief Symptom Inventory, from which the BSI-18 is derived, for her dissertation study of the relationship between ethnic identity and psychological adjustment for a sample of diverse Multiracial college students ($N = 60$) and comparison groups of White ($N = 60$) and racial minority ($N = 41$) college students. She reported high overall alpha coefficients for Monoracial participants (.96) and Multiracial participants (.96).

Derogatis (2001) also reported initial evidence for convergent validity between the BSI 18 and the Symptom Checklist-90-Revised (SL-90-R; Derogatis & Lazarus, 1994) and Minnesota Multiphasic Personality Inventory (Butcher, Dahlstrom, Graham, Tellegen, & Kaemmer, 1989; MMPI) scores with correlations between .40 and .72. Chong (2013) also reported inter-item correlations ranging from .33-.69 for her sample of Asian/White Multiracial adults. These results provide some evidence for the validity and reliability of scores on the BSI 18 as a measure of psychological well-being of Multiracial populations. (Appendix J).

Satisfaction with Life Scale (SWLS) (Diener, Emmons, Larson, & Griffin, 1985). The SWLS is a 5-item self-report inventory measuring subjective, global

satisfaction with life and well-being. Each item is answered using a Likert-type scale ranging from (1 = strongly disagree) to (7 = strongly agree). Total scores can range from 5 (lowest satisfaction) to 35 (highest satisfaction). Sample items from the SWLS include, "In most ways my life is close to my ideal" and "So far I have gotten the important things I want in life." In the current study, the SWLS was used as a measure of participants' psychological well-being.

Various studies have reported Cronbach alpha coefficients ranging from .79 to .89, with most studies either using international samples or not reporting the racial demographics of their samples (Alfonso, Allison, & Dunn, 1992; Alfonso & Mateo, 2015; Blais, Vallerand, Pelletier, & Brière, 1989; Diener et al., 1985). However, one study by Whisman and Judd (2016) reported alpha coefficients ranging from .84 to .86 for a combined sample of Black, White, and Hispanic women. In addition, some studies have used the SWLS with Multiracial populations. In their study of the relationship between racial identification, self-esteem, and depression for Asian-White and Black-White adults, Suzuki-Crumly and Hyers (2004) reported alpha coefficients of .82 for their Black/White sample and .84 for their Asian/White sample. Similarly, Damann (2008) reported an overall alpha coefficient of .91 for her study of the relationship between racial identity and psychosocial adjustment in diverse Multiracial adults. Finally, in her study of the relationship between racial identification and well-being for diverse Multiracial adults, Smith (2014) reported an overall alpha coefficient of .87. Similar to previous studies, the alpha coefficient in the present study was .87 (Appendix K). Descriptive statistics and reliability data pertaining to the sample's responses are summarized in Table 4.

Procedures

Prior to sample recruitment, the Boston College Institutional Review Board approved the study. Black/White and Asian/White participants were recruited via an online survey. The research survey link and study description were distributed via email to leaders of graduate and undergraduate multicultural, racial, ethnic, and cultural groups at colleges and universities in all U.S. states and to professional organizations for individuals of Color (e.g., National Association for Multi-Ethnicity in Communications; Association of Black Psychologists). It was also shared via the social media website "Facebook" and the classifieds website "Craigslist". Recruitment advertisements for the study were also sent to community agencies serving diverse individuals in various cities in the United States.

After clicking the survey link to the website hosting the survey (i.e. Qualtrics), participants were first connected to the informed consent document explaining the purpose of the study, along with the risks, benefits, and their rights. In addition, it informed them that they could be entered into a raffle for one of four $25 Amazon gift cards for participating in the survey. After consenting to participate in the study, participants were asked to complete the demographic questionnaire and the measures: Family Influence, Reflected Appraisals, Acceptance/Exclusion, Multiracial Challenges and Resilience Scale, People of Color Racial Identity Attitudes Scale, Brief Symptom Inventory, and Satisfaction with Life Scale.

Participants who chose to be entered into the raffle for the $25 Amazon gift cards indicated their interest by clicking "Yes" at the survey's end. This directed them to another survey where they were instructed to provide their email address. Email addresses collected through the second survey were stored in a secure database separate

from the database containing participants' responses to the survey. This procedure allowed for the maintenance of anonymity of survey responses. The database with participants' email addresses was deleted after the raffle was conducted and the winners were sent their $25 gift cards via the Amazon.com website.

The original sample ($N = 295$) included respondents who completed the informed consent and replied to some of the measures. After eliminating 91 (31%) of the respondents who did not complete all of the measures, the racial backgrounds of respondents were examined. Of the remaining respondents, 33 (16%) reported that their parents belonged to the same racial group (i.e., they were monoracial) or belonged to other racial groups that were not included in this study (i.e., Hispanic/Latino or Native American). As a result, these respondents were eliminated as well. The final sample ($N = 172$) consisted of 58% of those responding to the survey (Table 2)

Table 3

Means and Standard Deviations by Racial Group for Predictor Variables (N= 172)

Scale	Subscale	Racial Group	Mean	SD
Family Influence Scale				
	Bias*	Asian/White	22.08	6.82
		Black/White	18.40	5.98
	Support	Asian/White	18.21	3.59
		Black/White	18.68	3.95
Reflected Appraisals				
	Color Appearance*	Asian/White	11.91	3.52
		Black/White	13.74	3.57
	White Appearance*	Asian/White	11.79	3.65
		Black/White	9.20	4.01
	Multiracial	Asian/White	16.06	2.22
	Appearance	Black/White	16.60	2.39
Acceptance				
	White/Multiracial*	Asian/White	15.63	2.22
	Acceptance	Black/White	13.97	3.17
	White Exclusion*	Asian/White	6.44	2.22
		Black/White	8.27	2.93
Multiracial Challenges and Resilience Scale				
	Invalidation	Asian/White	20.41	6.04
		Black/White	21.56	6.20
	Family Non-Acceptance*	Asian/White	9.22	4.07
		Black/White	10.79	4.49
	Discrimination*	Asian/White	13.62	5.65
		Black/White	16.97	6.29
People of Color Racial Identity Attitudes Scale				
	Conformity	Asian/White	25.35	6.42
		Black/White	23.84	5.84
	Dissonance	Asian/White	36.67	9.49
		Black/White	37.47	8.78
	Immersion/Emersion	Asian/White	33.69	8.39
		Black/White	36.10	8.36
	Internalization	Asian/White	43.79	3.91
		Black/White	43.64	3.95

Note: Family Influence: Bias = Parental Bias, Support = Parental Support. Reflected Appraisals: Color Appearance = Group of Color, White Appearance = White Racial Group, Multiracial Appearance = Multiracial Group. Acceptance/Exclusion: White/Multiracial Acceptance = White/Multiracial Group Acceptance, White Exclusion = White Racial Group Exclusion. MCRS (Salahuddin & O'Brien, 2011): Invalidation = Others' Surprise and Disbelief regarding Racial Heritage, Family Non-acceptance = Lack of

Family Acceptance, Discrimination = Multiracial Discrimination, Appreciating Differences = Appreciation for Human Differences, Pride = Multiracial Pride. Satisfaction with Life = Satisfaction with Life Scale (Diener, Emmons, Larson, & Griffin, 1985). * Indicates significant differences with a p-value below .05

Table 4

Means, Standard Deviations, Ranges, and Cronbach Alpha Coefficients for Predictor and Outcome variables (N= 172)

Variable	Mean	SD	Obtained Range	Possible Range	α
Family Influence Scale					
Bias	20.68	6.73	9.00-37.00	9.00-45.00	.81
Support	18.39	3.73	9.00-25.00	6.00-30.00	.68
Reflected Appraisals					
Color Appearance	12.66	3.64	5.00-19.00	4.00-20.00	.86
White Appearance	10.74	4.00	9.00-19.00	4.00-20.00	.89
Multiracial Appearance	16.28	2.30	12.00-20.00	4.00-20.00	.86
Acceptance/Exclusion					
White/Multiracial Acceptance	14.95	2.76	4.00-20.00	4.00-20.00	.71
White Exclusion	7.19	2.68	3.00-15.00	3.00-15.00	.70
Multiracial Challenges and Resilience Scale (MCRS)					
Invalidation	20.88	6.12	5.00-25.00	0.00-25.00	.74
Family Non-Acceptance	9.85	4.30	5.00-18.00	0.00-25.00	.81
Discrimination	15.00	6.12	5.00-24.00	0.00-25.00	.76
Appreciating Differences	26.25	3.74	17.00-25.00	0.00-25.00	.89
Pride	25.59	4.80	5.00-25.00	0.00-25.00	.81
People of Color Racial Identity Attitudes Scale					
Conformity	24.74	6.22	12.00-41.00	12.00-60.00	.74
Dissonance	37.00	9.19	18.00-58.00	14.00-70.00	.83
Immersion	34.67	8.44	17.00-53.00	14.00-70.00	.86
Internalization	43.73	3.91	35.00-50.00	10.00-50.00	.72
Brief Symptom Inventory	30.90	12.82	18.00-81.00	18.00-90.00	.94
Life Satisfaction	24.62	6.54	6.00-35.00	5.00-35.00	.87

Note: Family Influence: Bias = Parental Bias, Support = Parental Support. Reflected Appraisals: Color Appearance = Group of Color, White Appearance = White Racial Group, Multiracial Appearance = Multiracial Group. Acceptance/Exclusion: White/Multiracial Acceptance = White/Multiracial Group Acceptance, White Exclusion = White Racial Group Exclusion. MCRS (Salahuddin & O'Brien, 2011): Invalidation = Others' Surprise and Disbelief regarding Racial Heritage, Family Non-acceptance = Lack of Family Acceptance, Discrimination = Multiracial Discrimination, Appreciating Differences = Appreciation for Human Differences, Pride = Multiracial Pride. Life Satisfaction = Satisfaction with Life Scale (Diener, Emmons, Larson, & Griffin, 1985).

Chapter 4

Results

Preliminary Analyses

In the present study, the predictor variables were characteristics of the participants' social contexts (i.e., family influence, reflected appraisals, racial group acceptance, and Multiracial challenges) and four racial identity statuses, Conformity, Dissonance, Immersion, and Internalization. Outcome variables were psychological well-being scores (i.e., Distress, Life Satisfaction, and Resilience), and racial identity statuses (i.e. Conformity, Dissonance, Immersion, and Internalization). Prior to testing the hypotheses, the data were analyzed for outliers and missing responses. Additionally, preliminary analyses were conducted to test for violations of the multivariate assumptions of linearity, normality, and homoscedasticity .

Linearity. The assumption of linearity is that predictor and criterion variables are related to each other and that paired comparisons reveal shared regression lines and significant correlations. Scatterplots and correlation coefficients between predictor-outcome variable pairs indicated that all predictors were linearly related (Table 5).

Multicollinearity. Multicollinearity occurs when independent variables are so strongly correlated with each other that they lead to unstable regression coefficients. Variance inflation (VIF) and tolerance levels were examine whether variables were too strongly correlated with each other. A VIF value between 5 and 10 indicates high correlation and could be problematic for future analyses. VIF for the social context variables ranged between 1.10 and 2.71, and tolerance ranged from .37 to .91. VIF for the four PRIAS subscales ranged from 1.35 to 2.80, whereas tolerance ranged from .36 to

.74. Moreover, Pearson correlations between independent variables indicated small to medium relationships (Table 5). Therefore, VIF and Tolerance levels and Pearson correlations indicated the absence of significant multicollinearity.

Table 5

Pearson Correlations among the Predictor and Criterion Variables (N = 172)

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19
1. Bias	--	-.04	.02	.06	-.04	-.06	.12	-.01	.11	.05	.35**	.18*	.24**	-.12	-.12	.07	.06	-.03	-.31**
2. Support		--	.11	.04	.03	-.04	.17*	.09	.09	.08	-.12	.16*	.16*	.02	.03	.12	.05	.04	-.11
3. Color Appearance			--	-.29*	.43*	-.01	.18*	-.25**	.05	.01	.01	.10	.10	-.01	.00	-.00	.06	.09	-.25**
4. White Appearance				--	-.20**	-.27**	-.23*	.07	-.01	-.14	.02	-.12	-.03	-.04	.27**	-.05	.00	.16*	.32**
5. Multiracial Appearance					--	-.27**	-.02	-.19*	-.04	-.06	.15	.07	-.03	.13	.11	-.02	.16*	.33**	-.12
6. White/Multiracial						--	-.62**	-.17*	-.21*	-.42**	.07	-.10	-.15*	-.17*	.31**	-.22**	.23**	.44**	.30**
7. White Exclusion							--	.14	.24**	.44**	.04	.33**	.31**	-.14	-.28**	.24**	-.07	-.27**	-.34**
8. Invalidation								--	.44**	.47**	-.13	.10	.22**	.17*	-.02	.11	.23**	.03	-.09
9. Family Non-acceptance									--	.53**	.14	.22**	.21**	-.03	-.12	.17*	.06	-.07	.18*
10. Discrimination										--	-.08	.17*	.31**	.00	-.26**	.20**	.14	-.13	-.27**
11. Conformity											--	.33**	-.03	-.28**	-.25**	.21**	-.17*	-.01	.12
12. Dissonance												--	.48**	-.15	-.22**	.43**	.01	-.05	-.04
13. Immersion													--	-.08	-.10	.31**	.20*	.02	-.14
14. Internalization														--	.07	-.10	.57**	.40**	.02
15. Life Satisfaction															--	-.30**	.11	.24**	.15
16. Psychological distress																--	-.02	.03	.02
17. Appreciating Differences																	--	.51**	-.06
18. Pride																		--	.22**
19. Race																			--

Note: Bias = Family Influence-Parental Bias. Support = Family Influence-Parental Support. Color Appearance = Reflected Appraisals-Racial Group of Color. White Appearance = Reflected Appraisals-White Racial Group. Multiracial Appearance = Reflected Appraisals-Multiracial Group. White/Multiracial = Acceptance/Exclusion – White/Multiracial Acceptance. White Exclusion = Acceptance/Exclusion –White Racial Group Exclusion. Invalidation = Multiracial Challenges and Resilience Scale (MCRS)- Others' Surprise and Disbelief regarding Racial Heritage, Family Non-acceptance = MCRS-Lack of Family Acceptance, Discrimination = MCRS-Multiracial Discrimination. Conformity = People of Color Racial Identity Attitudes Scale (PRIAS)- Conformity,

Dissonance = PRIAS-Dissonance, Immersion/Emersion = PRIAS-Immersion/Emersion, Internalization = PRIAS-Internalization (Helms, 2005). Life Satisfaction = Satisfaction with Life Scale (Diener, Emmons, Larson, & Griffin, 1985). Psychological Distress = Brief Symptom Inventory (Derogatis, 2001). Appreciating Differences = MCRS-Appreciation for Human Differences. Pride = MCRS-Multiracial Pride. Race = Multiracial Background (Black/White or Asian/White). * = Significant at the .05 level. ** = Significant at the .01 level.

Normality. The assumption of normal distributions was assessed by evaluating the shapes of the histograms of the independent variables, as well as by examining their levels of skewness. The scores for 12 of the 15 independent variables were roughly normally distributed. However, Internalization and Multiracial appearance scores were negatively skewed, while Family Non-acceptance scores were positively skewed. Although all of the skewness values were below the value of 3.0 commonly used to consider the shape of score distributions as problematic, outliers for the skewed predictor variables were analyzed to determine whether they were contributing to the skewness. They were moved toward the scores in the distribution that they were closest to (i.e., outliers were winsored), and their skewness statistics improved.

Homoscedasticity. To test for homoscedasticity, regression analyses of pairs of predictor and criterion variables were run. In addition, scatterplots of predictor variables and residuals (i.e. errors) were examined to determine whether the errors were randomly distributed. Results indicated that residuals had no systemic pattern or relationship to predictor variables and were randomly distributed, indicating a homoscedatic relationship between predictor and outcome variables.

Missing Values. The continuous demographic variable, age, was missing significant data (N = 51). As a result, a dummy variable was created (1 = missing, 0 = not missing) to determine whether there were significant differences between participants who reported their age and those who didn't. A one-way between-groups analyses of variables (ANOVA) was conducted to assess for between group differences among those with and without missing age data, when the four psychological well-being and the four racial identity scores were the criterion variables. No differences were found between the

two groups. Similarly, a series of ANOVAs were conducted to assess for between-group differences among categorical demographic variables (socioeconomic status, level of education, gender, and geographic region) when psychological well-being and racial identity scores were the criterion variables. No significant mean differences were found in regards to geographic region where participants resided, socioeconomic status, gender, or level of education.

Tests of Hypotheses and Research Questions

To test Hypotheses 1a-3b, multivariate multiple regression analyses (MMRAs) were conducted. MMRA is a stepdown analysis such that if the overall model(s) is significant, subsequent steps in the analysis may be interpreted. In all analyses race ($0 =$ Black/White, $1 =$ Asian/White) was used as a predictor.

Hypothesis 1a: Challenging social contexts (i.e., family non-acceptance, parental bias, white exclusion, invalidation, and Multiracial discrimination) will be negatively related to psychological well-being (i.e. satisfaction with life, psychological distress, and resilience).

For Hypothesis 1a, predictor variables were (a) the challenging family social context variables, Parental Bias and Family Non-acceptance scores; and (b) the challenging environmental social context variables, White Exclusion, Invalidation, and Multiracial Discrimination scores. High Parental Bias and Non-acceptance scores indicated high levels of racially discriminatory parental views and messages and lack of acceptance by family members; while high Exclusion, Invalidation, and Discrimination scores respectively indicated more reported exclusion from the White group, questioning of participants' racial identities, and racial discrimination .

The psychological well-being criterion variables were (a) Life Satisfaction, (b)Psychological Distress, (c) Appreciating differences, and (d) Multiracial Pride scores. High scores indicate high satisfaction with life, more symptoms of distress, flexibility and openness to differences, and higher levels of pride in being Multiracial.

Four models using six predictors were tested and Wilks's lambdas were used to determine the significance of the overall tests of models (Table 6). Only the overall model in which White Exclusion was used to predict the outcome variables accounted for a significant (8.5%) amount of the variance using the Wilks's lambda ($\lambda = .915$) criterion, $F (4, 145) = 3.36$, $p = .012$. Neither Race ($\lambda = .966$), Bias ($\lambda = .961$), Invalidation ($\lambda = .960$), Non-acceptance ($\lambda = .990$), nor Discrimination ($\lambda = .959$) accounted for significant variance among the four criteria and, consequently, were not interpreted further.

Exclusion from the White racial group was significantly positively related to psychological distress, $F (1, 897.61) = 5.57$, $p = .020$, and negatively related to Multiracial pride, $F (1, 130.54) = 7.03$, $p = .009$. Thus, when participants reported being excluded from the White racial group, they had more psychological distress symptoms and lower Multiracial pride. This result provided some support for Hypothesis 1a that challenging social contexts would be negatively related to psychological well-being, but only one predictor, exclusion from the White racial group, was significant.

Table 6

Multivariate Multiple Regression Analysis with Challenging Social Contexts predicting
Psychological Well-Being (N = 172)

Outcome	Predictor	R^2	F	B	T	Sig
Life Satisfaction		11.7	3.265			.005**
	Race		.343	.673	.586	.559
	Bias		1.531	-.128	-1.237	.218
	White Exclusion		3.771	-.430	-1.942	.054
	Invalidation		2.613	.156	1.617	.108
	Family Non-acceptance		.290	-.077	-.538	.591
	Discrimination		3.338	-.194	-1.827	.070
Psychological Distress		9.4	2.562			.022*
	Race		2.314	3.652	1.521	.130
	Bias		.006	-.017	-.080	.936
	White Exclusion		5.570	1.092	2.360	.020*
	Invalidation		.052	.046	.229	.819
	Family Non-acceptance		.933	.289	.966	.336
	Discrimination		.765	.194	.874	.383
Appreciating Differences		6.0	1.578			.157
	Race		.038	.133	.195	.846
	Bias		.655	.050	.809	.420
	White Exclusion		1.991	-.186	-1.411	.160
	Invalidation		3.144	.102	1.773	.078
	Family Non-acceptance		.542	-.063	-.736	.463
	Discrimination		2.114	.092	1.454	.148
Pride		10.10	2.776			.014*
	Race		2.180	1.203	1.477	.142
	Bias		1.928	-.102	-1.389	.167
	White Exclusion		7.033	-.416	-2.652	.009*
	Invalidation		.233	.033	.483	.770
	Family Non-acceptance		.086	-.030	-.293	.834
	Discrimination		.044	.016	.210	.855

Note: Life Satisfaction = Satisfaction with Life Scale (Diener, Emmons, Larson, & Griffin, 1985). Race = Multiracial Background (Black/White or Asian/White). Bias = Family Influence-Parental Bias. White Exclusion = Acceptance/Exclusion –White Racial Group Exclusion. Invalidation = Multiracial Challenges and Resilience Scale (MCRS)- Others' Surprise and Disbelief regarding Racial Heritage, Family Non-acceptance = MCRS-Lack of Family Acceptance, Discrimination = MCRS-Multiracial Discrimination. Psychological Distress = Brief Symptom Inventory (Derogatis, 2001). Appreciating Differences = MCRS-Appreciation for Human Differences. Pride = MCRS-Multiracial Pride. * = Significant at the .05 level.

Hypothesis 1b: Supportive social contexts (i.e., family support and racial group acceptance and belonging) will be positively related to psychological well-being.

To test this hypothesis, race and scores for the supportive social context variables, (a) Parental Support, (b) Color Appearance, (c) White Appearance, (d) Multiracial Appearance, and (e)White/Multiracial Group Acceptance, were the predictor variables. High scores indicated higher levels of perceived (a) parental support, (b) White appearance, (c) Multiracial group appearance, (d) racial group of Color appearance, and (e) acceptance by the White/Multiracial groups, respectively. The psychological well-being variables were the same as for Hypothesis 1a.

The MMRA indicated that the overall models for each of three of the predictor variables and the four outcome variables accounted for significant variance (Table 7). Specifically, using the Wilks's lambda criterion, the regression models accounted for significant variance when White/Multiracial Group Acceptance ($\lambda = .874$), $F(4, 154) = 5.55$, $p < .001$, Multiracial appearance ($\lambda = .923$), $F(4, 154) = 3.22$, $p = .014$, and White appearance ($\lambda = .940$), $F(4, 154) = 2.44$, $p = .049$, were used to predict the outcome variables. The models using the three predictor variables to predict outcomes accounted for 12.6%, 7.7%, and 6.0% of variance respectively. Neither Race ($\lambda = .962$), Support ($\lambda = .975$), nor Group of Color Appearance ($\lambda = .999$), accounted for significant variance among the four criteria and, consequently, were not interpreted further.

When White/Multiracial group Acceptance was the predictor, across models, it was positively related to life satisfaction, $F(1, 219.45) = 6.10$, $p = .015$, appreciation for differences, $F(1, 71.26) = 5.29$, $p = .023$, and Multiracial pride, $F(1, 200.24) = 11.74$, p

=.001, and negatively related to psychological distress, $F(1, 1323.22) = 8.33$, $p = .004$. In addition, as the predictor White appearance was positively related to life satisfaction, $F(1, 322.49) = 8.97$, $p = .003$, and, as a predictor, Multiracial appearance was positively related to Multiracial pride, $F(1, 201.34) = 11.80$, $p = .001$.

These findings indicate that when participants reported being accepted by both White and Multiracial groups, they reported higher levels of life satisfaction and resilience and lower levels of psychological distress. In addition, perceived White appearance were related to greater life satisfaction, whereas perceived Multiracial pride was related to greater pride in their Multiracial backgrounds.

In sum, four of the tested models using supportive social context variables as predictors yielded at least one significant relationship between the predictors and outcomes in hypothesized directions. Consequently, the overall results do suggest a positive relationship between supportive social contexts and psychological well-being. Therefore, Hypothesis 1b was partially supported.

Table 7

Multivariate Multiple Regression Analysis with Supportive Social Contexts predicting Psychological Well-Being (N = 172)

Outcome	Predictor	R^2	F	B	t	Sig
Life Satisfaction		14.8	4.544			.000**
	Race		.004	.070	.066	.948
	Support		.198	.087	.445	.657
	Color Appearance		.034	.028	.185	.853
	White Appearance		8.964	.396	2.994	.003**
	Multiracial Appearance		1.791	.323	1.338	.183
	White/Multiracial Acceptance		6.100	.480	2.470	.015*
Psychological Distress		7.5	2.115			.054
	Race		2.711	3.670	1.646	.102
	Support		2.633	.667	1.623	.107
	Color Appearance		.077	-.087	-.278	.781
	White Appearance		.058	-.067	-.242	.809
	Multiracial Appearance		.265	.261	.515	.607
	White/Multiracial Acceptance		8.331	-1.179	-2.886	.004**
Appreciating Differences		6.8	1.913			.082
	Race		.186	.280	.432	.666
	Support		.602	.093	.776	.439
	Color Appearance		.016	-.012	-.126	.900
	White Appearance		.345	-.047	-.587	.558
	Multiracial Appearance		1.352	.172	1.163	.247
	White/Multiracial Acceptance		5.293	.274	2.301	.023*
Pride		23.2	7.925			.000**
	Race		3.347	1.336	1.830	.069
	Support		.065	.034	.255	.799
	Color Appearance		.112	-.034	-.335	.738
	White Appearance		.311	.051	.558	.578
	Multiracial Appearance		11.803	.572	3.436	.001**
	White/Multiracial Acceptance		11.739	.459	3.426	.001**

Note: Life Satisfaction = Satisfaction with Life Scale (Diener, Emmons, Larson, & Griffin, 1985). Race = Multiracial Background (Black/White or Asian/White). Support = Family Influence-Parental Support. Color Appearance= Reflected Appraisals-Racial Group of Color. White Appearance = Reflected Appraisals-White Racial Group. Multiracial Appearance = Reflected Appraisals-Multiracial Group. White/Multiracial Acceptance = Acceptance/Exclusion – White/Multiracial Acceptance. Psychological Distress = Brief Symptom Inventory (Derogatis, 2001). Appreciating Differences = MCRS-Appreciation for Human Differences. Pride = MCRS-Multiracial Pride. * = Significant at the .05 level. ** = Significant at the .01 level.

Hypothesis 2: The racially reactive racial identity statuses (i.e., Conformity, Dissonance, and Immersion,) will be negatively related to psychological well-being (i.e. more psychological distress symptoms, less satisfaction with life, and lower resiliency), while Internalization, the self-actualizing status, will be related to more positive psychological well-being (i.e. fewer psychological distress symptoms and greater satisfaction with life and resiliency).

To test this hypothesis, a MMRA was used in which in which race and the racial identity subscales (Conformity, Dissonance, Immersion, and Internalization) were the predictor set and scores on the psychological well-being variables (i.e. life satisfaction, psychological distress, and resilience) were the outcome variables. High scores indicate conformance to White standards, confusion, anger and withdrawal, and self-actualizing, respectively.

The MMRAs indicated significant models for all of the predictor variables and outcome variables (Table 8). Using the Wilks's lambda criterion, the models for Racial Group ($\lambda = .917$, $F(4, 162) = 3.68$, $p = .017$), Dissonance ($\lambda = .915$, $F(4, 162) = 3.76$, $p = .006$), Immersion ($\lambda = .886$, $F(4, 162) = 5.20$, $p = .001$), and Internalization ($\lambda = .573$, $F(4, 162) = 30.17$, $p < .001$), predicted the outcome variables. The models accounted for 8.3%, 8.5%, 11.4%, and 42.7% of the variance in the outcome variables respectively. Conformity ($\lambda = .946$) did not significantly account for significant variance in the criterion variables and, resultantly, will not be interpreted further.

Examination of which of the individual outcomes were significantly predicted indicated that racial group was positively related to life satisfaction, $F(1, 179.72) = 4.60$, $p = .033$, and Multiracial pride, $F(1, 194.01) = 12.26$, $p = .001$. Since Asian/White

participants were dummy coded "1", these relationships signify that Asian/White individuals were more likely to be satisfied with their lives and have more Multiracial pride than Black/White individuals. As predictors, Immersion, $F(1, 135.02) = 15.70$, $p < .001$, and Internalization, $F(1, 772.55) = 89.85$, $p < .001$, were both positively related to appreciating differences. Also, Internalization, $F(1, 917.81) = 58.00$, $p < .001$, was significantly positively related to Multiracial pride. In addition, Dissonance, $F(1, 1850.93) = 13.93$, $p < .001$, and Immersion, $F(1, 527.99) = 3.97$, $p = .048$, were positively related to psychological distress.

Based upon the results of the MMRA analyses, Hypothesis 2 was partially supported. As hypothesized, the racially reactive racial identity statuses of Dissonance and Immersion were positively related to psychological distress. In addition, the self-actualizing racial identity status of Internalization was positively related to the resilience indices of appreciating differences and Multiracial pride. However, not all of the racial identity statuses were related to all of the psychological well-being variables. Also, contrary to the hypothesis, the racially reactive racial identity status of Immersion was positively related to appreciating differences.

Table 8

Multivariate Multiple Regression Analysis with Racial Identity predicting Psychological Well-Being (N = 172)

Outcome	Predictor	R^2	F	B	t	Sig
Life Satisfaction		10.8	4.003			.002**
	Race		4.598	2.127	2.144	.033*
	Conformity		8.484	-.254	-2.913	.004**
	Dissonance		1.498	-.079	-1.224	.223
	Immersion/Emersion		.146	-.026	-.382	.703
	Internalization		.154	-.050	-.392	.696
Psychological Distress		21.0	8.790			.000**
	Race		.564	1.374	.751	.454
	Conformity		1.711	.211	1.308	.193
	Dissonance		13.925	.445	3.732	.000**
	Immersion/Emersion		3.972	.246	1.993	.048*
	Internalization		.000	.003	.014	.989
Appreciating Differences		40.5	22.430			.000**
	Race		2.275	.702	1.508	.133
	Conformity		.017	.005	.131	.896
	Dissonance		.405	-.019	-.636	.526
	Immersion/Emersion		15.702	.124	3.963	.000**
	Internalization		89.845	.572	9.479	.000**
Pride		33.2	16.410			.000**
	Race		12.261	2.210	3.502	.001**
	Conformity		.140	-.021	-.374	.709
	Dissonance		1.614	-.052	-1.270	.206
	Immersion/Emersion		2.418	.066	1.555	.122
	Internalization		58.001	.623	7.616	.000**

Note: Life Satisfaction = Satisfaction with Life Scale (Diener, Emmons, Larson, & Griffin, 1985). Race = Multiracial Background (Black/White or Asian/White). Conformity = People of Color Racial Identity Attitudes Scale (PRIAS)- Conformity, Dissonance = PRIAS-Dissonance, Immersion/Emersion = PRIAS-Immersion/Emersion, Internalization = PRIAS-Internalization (Helms, 2005). Psychological Distress = Brief Symptom Inventory (Derogatis, 2001). Appreciating Differences = MCRS-Appreciation for Human Differences. Pride = MCRS-Multiracial Pride. * = Significant at the .05 level. ** = Significant at the .01 level.

Hypothesis 3a: Challenging social contexts (i.e. negative family influence, exclusion from racial groups, invalidation of racial identity) will be significantly related to racial identity. Specifically, challenging social contexts will be negatively related to Immersion and Internalization and positively related to Conformity and Dissonance.

To test this hypothesis, a MMRA was conducted in which race and the challenging social context variables were the predictor variables and the racial identity subscales were the outcome variables (Table 9). Results of the MMRA indicated significant models for outcomes when predictors were Parental bias (λ = .826, F(4, 146) = 7.71, p < .001), White Exclusion, (λ = .877, F(4, 146) = 5.13, p = .001), Invalidation (λ = .884), F(4, 146) = 4.79, p = .001, and Family Non-acceptance, (λ = .892), F(1, 146) = 4.44, p = .002. Thus, the models involving these predictor variables accounted for 17.4%, 12.3%, 11.6%, and 10.8% of the variance in the outcome variables, respectively. The other two predictor variables, Race (λ = .973) and Discrimination (λ = .960) were not significantly related to racial identity, and, consequently, were not interpreted further.

Parental bias was significantly positively related to Conformity, F (1, 484.66) = 17.18, p < .001, and Immersion, F(1, 559.89) = 10.22, p = .002. Exclusion from the White racial group was positively related to Dissonance, F(1, 1199.69) = 15.84, p < .001, and Immersion, F(1, 672.52) = 12.27, p = .001. Invalidation of racial identity was negatively related to Conformity, F(1, 360.59) = 12.78, p < .001, and positively related to Internalization, F(1. 89.007) = 6.19, p =.014. Finally, Family Non-acceptance was positively related to Conformity, F(1, 493.65) = 17.50, p < .001.

There was mixed support for Hypothesis 3a. Specifically, in support of the hypothesis, parental Bias and Family Non-acceptance were positively related to Conformity, and Exclusion by the White racial group was positively related to Dissonance. However contrary to the hypothesis, racial identity Invalidation was negatively related to Conformity and positively related to Internalization. In addition, Parental Bias and Exclusion by the White racial group were positively related to Immersion.

Table 9

Multivariate Multiple Regression Analysis with Challenging Social Contexts predicting
Racial Identity (N = 172)

Outcome	Predictor	R^2	F	B	t	Sig
Conformity		26.1	8.768			.000[**]
	Race		.025	.159	.159	.874
	Bias		17.179	.374	4.145	.000[**]
	White Exclusion		.062	.048	.248	.804
	Invalidation		12.778	-.300	-3.575	.000[**]
	Family Non-acceptance		17.498	.524	4.183	.000[**]
	Discrimination		4.606	-.200	-2.146	.033[*]
Dissonance		17.8	5.388			.000[**]
	Race		.007	.133	.081	.935
	Bias		2.322	.225	1.524	.130
	White Exclusion		15.838	1.261	3.980	.000[**]
	Invalidation		.034	.025	.185	.854
	Family Non-acceptance		3.516	.384	1.875	.063
	Discrimination		.532	-.111	-.730	.467
Immersion/Emersion		26.1	8.782			.000[**]
	Race		3.041	-2.430	-1.744	.083
	Bias		10.217	.402	3.196	.002[**]
	White Exclusion		12.273	.944	3.503	.001[**]
	Invalidation		3.149	.207	1.774	.078
	Family Non-acceptance		.197	-.078	-.444	.658
	Discrimination		1.362	.151	1.167	.245
Internalization		6.4	1.686			.128
	Race		.093	-.218	-.305	.761
	Bias		1.057	-.066	-1.028	.306
	White Exclusion		.751	-.120	-.866	.388
	Invalidation		6.189	.149	2.488	.014[*]
	Family Non-acceptance		2.069	-.129	-1.438	.152
	Discrimination		.014	.008	.120	.905

Note: Conformity = People of Color Racial Identity Attitudes Scale (PRIAS)-
Conformity, Dissonance = PRIAS-Dissonance, Immersion/Emersion = PRIAS-
Immersion/Emersion, Internalization = PRIAS-Internalization (Helms, 2005). Race = Multiracial
Background (Black/White or Asian/White). Bias = Family Influence-Parental Bias. White
Exclusion = Acceptance/Exclusion – White Racial Group Exclusion. Invalidation = Multiracial
Challenges and Resilience Scale (MCRS)- Others' Surprise and Disbelief regarding Racial
Heritage, Family Non-acceptance = MCRS-Lack of Family Acceptance, Discrimination =
MCRS-Multiracial Discrimination.. * = Significant at the .05 level. ** = Significant at the .01
level.

Hypothesis 3b: Supportive social contexts (i.e., family support and racial group acceptance and belonging) will be positively related to Immersion and Internalization, and negatively related to Conformity and Dissonance.

To test this hypothesis, a MMRA was used in which race and the supportive social context variables were the predictor set and scores on the racial identity subscales were the outcome set of variables.

The results of the MMRA indicated that only the model in which Parental Support scores were used to predict the racial identity outcomes was significant as indicated by the Wilks's lambda criterion, ($\lambda = .940$), $F(4, 155) = 2.48$, $p = .046$ (Table 10). Thus, this model accounted for 6% of the variance in the outcome variables. None of the other predictor variables, Race ($\lambda = .974$), Group of Color Appearance ($\lambda = .991$), White Appearance ($\lambda = .979$), Multiracial Appearance ($\lambda = .943$), and White/Multiracial Acceptance ($\lambda = .971$), accounted for significant variance among the four criteria and were not interpreted further. Examination of whether the outcomes were uniquely predicted indicated that parental support was significantly positively related to Dissonance, $F(1, 350.10) = 4.10$, $p = .044$. There were no other significant relationships between Parental Support and outcome variables.

In sum, the finding that the only significant relationship was between Parental Support and Dissonance was contrary to the hypothesis. Therefore, Hypothesis 3b that supportive social contexts would be positively related to Immersion and Internalization, and negatively related to Conformity and Dissonance was not supported.

Table 10

Multivariate Multiple Regression Analysis with Supportive Social Contexts predicting Racial Identity (N = 172)

Outcome	Predictor	R^2	F	B	t	Sig
Conformity		6.2	1.740			.115
	Race		2.445	1.697	1.564	.120
	Support		1.962	-.281	-1.401	.163
	Color Belonging		.024	.024	.154	.878
	White Belonging		.146	.051	.382	.703
	Multiracial Belonging		4.433	.520	2.105	.037*
	White/Multiracial Acceptance		.020	-.028	-.142	.887
Dissonance		4.9	1.358			.235
	Race		.582	1.244	.763	.447
	Support		4.103	.610	2.026	.044*
	Color Belonging		.282	.122	.531	.596
	White Belonging		.886	-.191	-.941	.348
	Multiracial Belonging		.287	.199	.536	.593
	White/Multiracial Acceptance		1.201	.325	-1.096	.275
Immersion/Emersion		6.4	1.787			.105
	Race		.919	-1.393	-.958	.339
	Support		3.427	.497	1.851	.066
	Color Belonging		.519	.147	.720	.473
	White Belonging		.089	.054	.299	.765
	Multiracial Belonging		.338	-.192	-.582	.562
	White/Multiracial Acceptance		2.274	-.399	-1.508	.134
Internalization		4.4	1.219			.299
	Race		.059	-.161	-.243	.808
	Support		.195	.054	.441	.660
	Color Belonging		.882	-.088	-.939	.349
	White Belonging		.999	-.082	-1.000	.319
	Multiracial Belonging		1.903	.208	1.380	.170
	White/Multiracial Acceptance		2.318	.184	1.522	.130

Note: Conformity = People of Color Racial Identity Attitudes Scale (PRIAS)-Conformity, Dissonance = PRIAS-Dissonance, Immersion/Emersion = PRIAS-Immersion/Emersion, Internalization = PRIAS-Internalization (Helms, 2005). Race = Multiracial Background (Black/White or Asian/White). Support = Family Influence-Parental Support. Color Belonging = Reflected Appraisals-Racial Group of Color. White Belonging = Reflected Appraisals-White Racial Group. Multiracial Belonging = Reflected Appraisals-Multiracial Group. White/Multiracial Acceptance = Acceptance/Exclusion – White/Multiracial Group Acceptance. Psychological Distress = Brief Symptom Inventory (Derogatis, 2001). Appreciating Differences = MCRS-Appreciation for Human Differences. Pride = MCRS-Multiracial Pride. * = Significant at the .05 level. ** = Significant at the .01 level.

Chapter 5

Discussion

Various theories, models, and research have been proffered to explain how Multiracial people develop psychologically and racially in a racially stratified society, especially when the racial groups that define them are at different levels of society's racial hierarchy (e.g., Asian/White or Black/White). Most of the dominant perspectives in the Multiracial development literature contend that challenging and supportive contexts play a critical role in determining whether Multiracials develop healthy or unhealthy identities. These types of contexts are alleged to shape the person's racial identity and psychological well-being to different extents. However, no study could be located that combined measurement of more than one kind of context with racial identity and well-being in a quantitative study involving more than one type of Multiracial people.

In the current study, a model was created that explored the possible differential effects of various types of challenging and supportive social context variables on racial identity and well-being. Responses from a sample of Black/White and Asian/White Multiracial individuals were analyzed to explore the following hypotheses: (a) Challenging social contexts are negatively related to psychological well-being; (b) Supportive social contexts are positively related to psychological well-being; (c) Racial identity is related to psychological well-being; (d) Challenging social contexts are related to racial identity; and (e) Supportive social contexts are related to racial identity. In the following sections, findings related to each hypothesis, methodological limitations of this study, and research and practice implications are discussed.

Challenging Social Contexts are Negatively Related to Psychological Well-Being

Ecological theory suggests that social context shapes Multiracial identity development and well-being in a dynamic way (Root, 2003). In the current study, challenging social contexts were operationalized as (a) negative family influences, including racially biased parental messages and family rejection of Multiracial individuals; (b) exclusion from the racial groups to which a Multiracial person belongs (i.e. Black/Asian, White, and Multiracial), (c) invalidation of one's choice as to how to identify racially, and (d) Multiracial discrimination (i.e. discrimination specifically related to one's Multiracial background).

Hypothesis 1a proposed that challenging social contexts, defined as biased parental messages, family non-acceptance, invalidation, White exclusion, and discrimination, would be negatively related to psychological well-being, defined in terms of psychological distress, life satisfaction, and resilience. The results summarized in Table 6 revealed only two statistically significant relationships providing partial support for hypothesis 1a. Exclusion by the White racial group was the only challenging social context variable that was significantly related to psychological well-being. Participants' reports of being excluded from the White racial group were related to more symptoms of psychological distress and lower levels of Multiracial pride, but not to life satisfaction or appreciating differences.

Hypothesis 1a was developed based upon qualitative research, using interviews and focus groups of small samples (N = 5-15) of diverse Multiracial individuals, suggesting that challenging social contexts are associated with lower levels of well-being, including distress, social isolation, and anger (Buckley & Carter, 2004; Collins, 2000;

Kelch-Oliver & Leslie, 2006; Jackson et al., 2012). Thus, the relationships between exclusion by the White racial group, greater psychological distress, and lower Multiracial pride are consistent with previous research. Perhaps the relationships reflect the importance in U.S. society of being accepted by the White racial group, which has the most sociopolitical power and is at the top of the racial hierarchy (Helms, 2005; Kendall, 2001). This exclusion may also have more significant effects on Multiracial individuals with one biological parent who would be classified as White, due to connection and identification with the White racial group. This result does provide some support for the theoretical assertion of the negative influence of racial group rejection on psychological well-being for Multiracial people.

The lack of significant relationships between the other challenging social context variables, including parental bias, family non-acceptance, Multiracial discrimination, and invalidation, and any aspect of psychological well-being as operationally defined is inconsistent with previous research. It is possible that parental bias, invalidation, Multiracial discrimination, and family non-acceptance are not as important to the adjustment of Multiracials' well-being as previous literature suggests. It is also may suggest that, once the variables are operationalized using quantitative measures, the relationship between challenging social context and well-being is not as direct or strong as suggested by interviews with Multiracial people.

Supportive Social Contexts are Positively Related to Psychological Well-Being

Previous research on Multiracial populations suggests that supportive social contexts are facilitative of positive well-being (Khanna, 2004; Nishimura, 1998; Rockquemore & Brunsma, 2002). For the present study, supportive social contexts were

operationalized as parental support and racial group acceptance by the Multiracial group and White group, as well as racial group of Color, White, and Multiracial group appearance. Racial group appearance was conceptualized as the perception, by oneself and others, as physically resembling or appearing to be a member of each particular (i.e., Color (Black or Asian), White, and Multiracial) racial group. Hypothesis 1b proposed that such supportive social contexts would be positively related to psychological well-being.

The results summarized in Table 7 revealed six statistically significant relationships, providing partial support for hypothesis 1b. White racial group appearance was positively related to life satisfaction, whereas Multiracial group appearance was positively related to Multiracial pride. In addition, being accepted by the White and Multiracial groups, which was a combined variable, was positively related to life satisfaction, appreciating differences, and Multiracial pride, and negatively related to psychological distress. Once again, family dynamics, parental support in this case, did not relate to well-being.

Hypothesis 1b was based upon research suggesting that Multiracial individuals are more able to navigate challenges to positive adjustment when they are socialized in social contexts that are supportive of their experiences as Multiracial people and are connected with a Multiracial reference group (Kelch-Oliver & Leslie, 2006; Nishimura, 1998; Torkelson et al., 2013, 2014). The relationships between appearance and acceptance by the White and Multiracial groups and psychological well-being seem to be consistent with previous research on this topic. Specifically, acceptance by the White and

Multiracial groups was significantly related to all of the psychological well-being variables.

These findings may reflect both the importance of acceptance by the White and Multiracial groups, and the social support provided by having a Multiracial reference group. If Multiracial individuals are accepted by the White racial group, they may experience less discrimination and social isolation than Multiracial individuals who are not accepted by the White racial group. White racial group acceptance may also allow access to White privilege, which can provide them with greater personal, occupational, and educational opportunities (Kendall, 2001). In addition, acceptance by the Multiracial group may decrease the confusion and isolation often faced by Multiracial individuals attempting to navigate racially stratified U.S. society. Previous qualitative research with Multiracial people has highlighted the importance of the support and acceptance by Multiracial peers and the challenge inherent for those Multiracial people who do not have access to a Multiracial support network (Kelch-Oliver & Leslie, 2006; Jackson, 2012; Nishimura, 1998). Not only could acceptance by the White and Multiracial groups have facilitated positive psychological well-being, but it also may have allowed Multiracial people to increase their resilience (i.e. appreciating differences and pride) despite potentially biased or challenging societal racial perspectives.

Appearing to belong to the White racial group was related to greater satisfaction with life. This may reflect the opportunity for these Multiracial individuals to be interpreted by others as White, which may have led to decreased discrimination and greater access to power and White privilege.

Neither appearing to belong to the racial group of Color nor parental support for racial identity development was positively related to psychological well-being. Perhaps the lack of power in society experienced by people of Color generally makes resembling it less important in developing a healthy identity (Helms, 2005; Song, 2004). It may also be that acceptance by one's respective racial groups is more important to psychological well-being.

Overall, more results favored supportive social contexts as being related to better psychological well-being than challenging results detracting from well-being. In particular, it appears that acceptance by the White and Multiracial groups was most important for Multiracial individuals' psychological well-being and resilience. The relationships between appearing to belong to the racial group of Color, family dynamics, invalidation, and discrimination and well-being were not demonstrated in this study and warrants further research.

Racial Identity and Psychological Well-being

Most theorists and researchers contend that how Multiracial people identify with respect to their racial-group membership(s) determines their psychological status (Jacobs, 1992; Kich, 1992; Poston, 1990; Stonequist, 1971). Virtually all perspectives have treated identity as a categorical variable (e.g. Biracial, Black, White, Asian) rather than as a dynamic process whereby the person's identity depends on how he or she internalizes racial life experiences. For Hypothesis 2, identity was operationalized as the statuses of Helms's (1995) POC racial identity model. It proposed that the racially reactive racial identity statuses most influenced by others' reactions to race (i.e., Conformity, Dissonance, and Immersion) would be negatively related to psychological well-being,

whereas the self-actualizing status Internalization would be related to more positive psychological well-being.

With respect to the racism reactive statuses, higher levels of Dissonance (i.e., confusion about race) and Immersion (i.e., White withdrawal and in-group affiliation) were related to more symptoms of psychological distress, and higher levels of Immersion were also related to more appreciation of differences. Internalization, the self-actualizing status, was positively related to higher levels of appreciating differences and Multiracial pride. With the exception of Immersion, these findings each supported hypothesis 2 (Table 8). An unexpected finding was that the racial groups' levels of life satisfaction and Multiracial pride differed significantly with Asian/White people reporting higher levels of both aspects of well-being than Black/White participants. This finding provides support for examining differences in life experiences of Multiracial individuals from different backgrounds.

The positive relationship between psychological distress and Dissonance and Immersion, may be due to the common challenges experienced by Multiracial individuals, such as forced choice of a single racial group identification and/or lack of acceptance by one or more constituent racial groups. As a result of forced choice or racial group exclusion, Multiracial individuals may experience ambivalence about their Multiracial backgrounds leading to psychological distress. Multiracial people may feel forced to exclusively identify with a single racial group and/or feel as if they are not able to embrace the totality of their racial heritage, thus increasing psychological distress.

Interestingly, the positive relationship between Immersion and appreciating differences is contradictory to the literature. This unexpected result may provide some

support for research that suggests that Multiracial individuals' experiences may actually be facilitative to the development of psychological strengths, such as positive interracial interactions, cognitive flexibility, less ethnocentrism, and increased appreciation of differences (Bonam & Shih, 2009; Hall, 1992; Korgen, 1998). These strengths can help buffer Multiracial individuals against the challenges inherent to being Multiracial in our society, including the increased psychological distress associated with operating from within the Immersion status.

Furthermore, the positive relationship between racial group and life satisfaction and Multiracial pride suggests that these well-being factors are more typical of Asian/White than Black/White individuals. Due to the historical legacy of slavery in this country, Blacks are at the bottom of the racial hierarchy and are subject to the most significant oppression and societal disadvantages (Song, 2004), this may contribute to greater satisfaction with life for Asian/White individuals. Furthermore, due to the legacy of the one-drop rule, a Jim Crow era law stating that any person with at least one drop of "Black blood" must be considered Black (Spickard, 1992) as well as light skin color privilege in this country, Black/White individuals may be less likely to identify as Multiracial and, if they do, they may express less pride in this racial background, than their Asian/White counterparts. Conversely, research suggests that parents of Asian/White people are more likely to encourage their children to embrace their White heritage, likely to increase their access to the power and status a White identity affords, but actually very little research has explored parents' roles in advocating for White skin-color privilege as in pertains to Black/White parents (Collins, 2000; Torkelson, et al., 2014).

Another important consideration for understanding the differences in Multiracial pride between Black/White and Asian/White participants is the political and social climate of the United States when these data were collected from November 2014 through March 2015. During this time, the Black Lives Matter movement, an activist movement originating in the Black community that campaigns against violence towards Black people, gained national attention and was helping raise awareness about the large number of unarmed Black people being killed by police all over the United States. The media attention given to the large number of Black people killed during this time led to an increase in anger, resentment, and emotional pain felt by many members of the Black community. As a result, the Black/White participants may have been less likely to identify with their White and Multiracial backgrounds, leading to a lower level of Multiracial pride.

The positive relationship between Dissonance and Immersion and psychological distress, and Internalization and resilience (i.e. Multiracial pride and appreciating differences) reflects previous literature examining the relationship between racial identity and well-being. A unique aspect of this study was the use of Helms's (1995) People of Color model with a Multiracial sample. The fact that the results of this study are in line with previous research on monoracial Black and Asian individuals provides some initial support for the use of the POC theory with a Multiracial population.

Overall, results suggest that racial identity is important to the psychological well-being of Multiracial people in expected ways, and that using racial identity, rather than a single racial identification option, may allow for greater understanding of the racial identity and well-being of Multiracial people. These results suggest that Multiracial

people may also have unique strengths, such as appreciating differences.

Challenging Social Contexts and Racial Identity

Although theorists assert that the messages communicated to or perceived by Multiracials in various social contexts shape their racial identities, there is currently no known research that actually investigates the influence of more than one type of perceived social context communication on more than one aspect of Multiracial identity. Thus, one of the major components of the model proposed in the current study was the examination of the relationship between challenging communications from the person's social contexts and racial identity statuses for Multiracial people as described in Helms's (1995) POC model. Thus, hypothesis 3a proposed that challenging social contexts would be associated with more adherence to White racial norms (i.e., Conformity) and confusion (i.e., Dissonance), and less rejection of White racial norms (i.e., Immersion) and racially self-determining identities (Internalization).

Consistent with the hypothesis, when their parents were perceived as racially biased and their extended families as not accepting of them, their Conformity was high, and when they felt excluded from the White racial group, their Dissonance or confusion about race was high. However, contrary to the hypothesis, experiencing invalidation of one's racial identification by others was negatively related to Conformity, and positively related to Internalization. In addition, having racially biased parents and being excluded from the White racial group were positively related to Immersion.

Some of these findings were supported by previous research that has linked lack of family support and acceptance and negative family messages with difficulties in developing one's racial identity (Buckley & Carter, 2004; Kelch-Oliver & Leslie, 2006;

Torkelson et al., 2014). Maybe challenging family messages that are biased against all racial minorities and/or one's racial group of Color lead participants to internalize their families' perspectives on race and idealize the White racial group and operate from their Conformity status.

Contrary to the literature, invalidation of one's racial identity, rather than being challenging to the development of Multiracial individuals' racial identities, appeared to actually facilitate greater racial self-determination. Invalidation by people in their social contexts may provide Multiracial individuals with an increased sense of flexibility regarding race and their own racial identification. This result again underscores previous literature that suggests that, due to Multiracial people's experiences, they may have unique strengths, such as openness and flexibility, which may buffer them against challenges to developing positive racial identities and well-being.

These results suggest mixed support for Hypothesis 3a. It appears that Multiracial individuals' racial identities develop differently even when they are exposed to presumably similar challenging messages in their social contexts. These contradictory results may be the result of different social context characteristics (e.g., unique family makeup), personal attributes (e.g., phenotype), or mediating variables (e.g. racial composition of one's social contexts), none of which was assessed in the current study. Also, maybe growing up with racially biased parents leads Multiracial individuals to try to gain the approval or be more like their White parents (i.e. Conformity), and to withdraw into their racial group of Color (i.e. Immersion). Similarly, exclusion from the White racial group can lead to confusion about race, Dissonance, as well as withdrawal from the White group, Immersion, when one parent is White. It is somewhat puzzling

that invalidation of one's personal racial categorization by others in his/her environment was not positively related to any of the racially reactive statuses and, instead was positively related to Internalization. A possible explanation for the positive relationship between invalidation and Internalization is that this result may reflect the unique strengths of the Multiracial population, such as cognitive flexibility, increased appreciation of differences, and positive interracial interactions, although these possible attributes were not actually investigated in the current study (Bonam & Shih, 2009; Hall, 1992; Korgen, 1998). Thus, the relationship between challenging social contexts and racial identity appears to be more complicated than expected. However, these results do provide support for Root's (2003) ecological theory reflecting a transactional process between individuals and their social environments to help shape Multiracial people's racial identities.

Supportive Social Contexts and Racial Identity

There is no extant research specifically examining the relationship between supportive social contexts and racial identity. As a result, this hypothesis was mostly based upon theory suggesting that supportive social contexts, particularly racial group acceptance and open and supportive family messages, are facilitative of positive racial identity development (Jacobs, 1992; Kich, 1992; Kerwin & Ponterotto, 1995; Poston, 1990; Root, 2003). In addition, literature does suggest that acceptance by and resembling one's constituent racial groups can facilitate identification with those racial groups. To better understand the relationship between supportive racial messages in social contexts, including supportive and open family messages, resembling racial groups, and acceptance by the White and Multiracial groups, and racial identity, Hypothesis 3b proposed that

supportive social contexts would be related to more identification with one's Multiracial or group of Color as reflected in the Immersion and Internalization racial identity statuses and less identification with White racial norms as reflected in the Conformity and Dissonance statuses.

The only significant result was between parental support and Dissonance, such that the more supportive parents were perceived as being, the more confused and ambivalent the Multiracial person felt about her or his racial identification (Table 10), which was contrary to the hypothesis. This result may be a result of the content of the parental support scale. Along with parental openness to exploring all of a Multiracial person's racial heritage and discussion of race, the scale also includes messages about identification with the racial group of Color and exposure to only one side of the family. Thus, although this was conceptualized as support, it may actually reflect somewhat confusing or contradictory parental messages in regards to racial identity.

In addition, parental support was theoretically provided by both parents. However, since this was a Multiracial sample, with one White parent and one racial minority parent, these messages may not have had the same effect on participants. Racial and gender differences can lead to power differentials between parents where one, often the White parent's perspective, is considered more important or has a more significant impact on his/her children. In addition, different perspectives of parents about race and racial identity, in general, could lead to increased confusion for Multiracial individuals. Furthermore, there may be limited access to one side of the family or familial issues or biases in a Multiracial person's extended family, that could lead to ambivalence about race, despite supportive parental messages.

There were no other significant relationships between supportive social contexts and racial identity. Thus, results do not support previous theory suggesting that supportive social contexts are important to the racial identity development of Multiracial individuals. The results of this study suggest a need for additional research on the relationship between supportive social contexts and racial identity, especially as the contexts involve parental communications with their Multiracial children.

Overall, results suggested a much stronger relationship between challenging social contexts and racial identity, rather than supportive social contexts. Since racial identity develops as a result of racially oppressive experiences, it follows that racially challenging contexts would be more predictive of racial identity. In particular, parental bias, exclusion from the White racial group, and invalidation of one's personal racial identification contributed to racial identity development in dynamic ways. The relationships between supportive social contexts (i.e. racial appearance, and White and Multiracial group belonging) and racial identity were not demonstrated in this study and warrant further research.

Methodological Challenges

Several methodological challenges should be considered when interpreting the findings from the study, as well as generalizing the results to other samples of Multiracial individuals. These challenges include (a) sample characteristics, (b) measurement concerns, and (c) research design.

Sample Characteristics

The sample was relatively small (N = 172) and was comprised of two different racial group combinations: Black/White and Asian/White. There were an unequal number of

participants from each group, such that the Black/White sample (N = 70) was significantly smaller than the Asian/White sample (N = 102). The size and composition of the sample creates multiple limitations for the study. First the limited sample size may have affected the generalizability of the obtained results to a larger Black/White and Asian/White population or to either separate group. In addition, the unequal group sizes may have led the results to be slightly more representative of Asian/White participants than Black/White participants. Given that some of the measures developed for the current study used the combined Multiracial groups, it is possible that they reflected the experiences of Asian/Whites more than Black/Whites.

In addition to the size of the sample, the heterogeneity of the sample was not considered. Specifically, there were a variety of ethnicities represented between Asian/White (e.g. Japanese, Chinese) and Black/White (Caribbean/African American) participants, as well as a variety of White ethnicities (e.g. Irish, Italian, English). Since the groups were so small, differences in racial experiences between individuals from different ethnic backgrounds were not examined, although they rarely have been in the Multiracial literature. In addition, ethnicity often intersects with social class, with certain ethnicities represented more in the lower social class of our society. Thus, future research should consider the intersections of social class, race, and ethnicity in recruitment of Multiracial samples. Despite the diversity of ethnic groups included in the current study, the study's focus was on differences between racial groups. In the US, it is a common socialization experience that ethnicities are disregarded in favor of race. Nevertheless, whether Multiracials perceive themselves in terms of ethnicities rather than race is a question that requires further study.

Also, since the sample was only comprised of Asian/White and Black/White participants, perhaps the results cannot be generalized to the other varieties of Multiracial racial group combinations. Furthermore, all participants had one White parent. As a result, all participants were in some ways members of the dominant, White racial group, as well as a group of Color and could have, in many instances, appeared White. Thus, their responses to the measures and life issues may have been different from the ways Multiracial individuals with two parents of Color would respond.

Homogeneity of the sample related to education level, gender, geographic locations, and age should also be considered. The sample was highly educated, with all of the participants having received at least a high school diploma; they were mostly female identified (84.3%); and they resided on the West (45.9%) and East (23.8%) coasts of the United States. Furthermore, a large percentage of the sample (30%) did not report their age on the survey. As a result, it was difficult to determine whether the age or developmental level of participants affected the results. Although many studies of Multiracial individuals have had similar demographic limitations, the homogeneity of the sample may decrease the generalizability of the findings to the wider Multiracial population. Overall, the limited sample size, and homogeneity of the sample, may have restricted the generalizability of the results of the study.

Measurement Concerns

The majority of the social context variables were assessed using scales created specifically for the current study (e.g. Family Influence, Reflected Appraisals, Acceptance/Exclusion). Although the scale items were developed based upon previous research on Multiracial identity, after factor analyzing the item responses of the

aggregated Multiracial group, some items were omitted or combined in unexpected ways. Given that the scales were created with a sample comprised of participants from two different racial groups (Black/White and Asian/White), who may have had different life experiences, the scales may not have completely reflected the experiences of individuals in either racial group combination. As a result, it is unclear whether the scales were measuring the constructs they were designed to assess. It would be useful to factor analyze the responses of the Asian/Whites, the larger group of participants, to determine whether the factor structures are supported.

In addition, since the developed measures were piloted in this study, reliability and validity across samples has not yet been determined. However, correlations between the created scales and the challenge subscales of the Multiracial Challenges and Resilience Scale (MCRS; Salahuddin & O'Brien, 2011) provide some initial evidence for the construct validity of the created scales. As anticipated, the Invalidation subscale of the MCRS was inversely related to the supportive contextual variables of Color appearance ($r = -.25$), Multiracial appearance ($r = -.19$) and White/Multiracial group Acceptance ($r = -.17$). White/Multiracial group Acceptance was also inversely related to Family Non-Acceptance ($r = -.21$), and Multiracial discrimination ($r = -.42$). Conversely, White Exclusion was positively related to Family Non-Acceptance ($r = .24$) and Multiracial Discrimination ($r = .44$).

The remaining social context and resiliency variables were assessed using the Multiracial Challenges and Resilience Scale (MCRS, Salahuddin & O'Brien, 2011). There has been limited research on the MCRS and, although extant research suggests adequate reliability and validity with a diverse Multiracial sample, more information is

needed regarding the validity and factor structure of item responses to the scale using different types of samples. The need for further statistical examination of the scale was also indicated by a factor analysis of the MCRS conducted by Smith (2014) with her diverse Multiracial sample, which suggested a slightly altered factor structure for the scale. The need for additional refinement may account for the lack of significant relationships between many of the MCRS subscales and outcome variables.

Helms's (2005) People of Color Racial Identity Attitudes Scale (PRIAS) was used to assess the racial identities of Multiracial participants. Although the PRIAS has been used effectively with self-defined monoracial people of Color, it has not been used with a self-described Multiracial population. The questions that comprise the PRIAS ask participants to answer questions from the perspective of their own racial group (i.e., group of Color or Multiracial) versus the White racial group. These questions may be difficult or confusing for participants with one White parent and one parent of Color. In addition, it is unclear what racial reference group (i.e., Black/Asian or Multiracial) participants used to answer the questions, which may have impacted the results. These variables may have affected the way that participants understood and answered the questions and, thus, affected the results. However, despite these limitations, results suggest that the PRIAS was able to capture the racial identity of the Multiracial participants in this sample.

Research Design

A primary concern about the research design in the present study is that all of the participants identified as Multiracial or at least enough so that they were willing to volunteer to participate in the current study. Yet there are many other ways that people of Color with a White parent might identify. They might identify as monoracial White,

or as person of Color based on their parents' race or according to their physical appearance or their parents' preferences. Unfortunately, there is no way to obtain Multiracial samples capable of participating in survey research before they have made a decision about their racial classification. Consequently, at best, the results of the present study can be assumed to pertain to self-identified Multiracials.

Another research design issue was the length of the survey. Overall, respondents were asked to respond to 180 items excluding the demographic questions, many of which were focused on race. Both the length of the survey and the number of items may have been too overwhelming or time consuming for a large percentage (30.8%) of potential participants who started the survey but did not finish it (N = 91).

One might also make an argument that the ordering of the measures in the survey may have influenced participants' responses. The order was social context, racial identity, and well-being measures. This ordering was consistent with how the concepts that were measured were hypothesized to affect each other. Even so, an alternative perspective is that the social context items may have primed participants to answer the next set of items in a certain way. The social context and racial identity variables may have elicited difficult thoughts or feelings for participants around their families, acceptance or exclusion from racial groups, discrimination, and various other challenges related to being Multiracial in U.S. society. Participants' responses to the last measures of life satisfaction and psychological distress may have been affected by the racial stress generated by the other measures..

Finally, participants in the study were recruited online through social media (i.e. Facebook), online postings (i.e. Craigslist), and college-based and professional groups for

Multiracial, Black, and Asian individuals. As a result, the use of only online recruitment limited the sample to people who can easily access a computer and the internet, likely decreasing the number of participants from lower socioeconomic statuses. In addition, the use of racially-based organizations likely contributed to a somewhat biased sample with a higher identification as a person of Color, or Multiracial, and knowledge and awareness of racial issues. The use of web-based sampling through social media also may have led to a biased sample.

Implications for Future Theory and Research

There has been limited research in psychology on Multiracial people. The current study presented and piloted a model for understanding the relationships among important aspects of Multiracial individuals' experiences (i.e., social context, racial identity, and well-being). Theory and research suggest that family acceptance and attitudes, reflected appraisals, and racial group acceptance are integral to the development of positive racial identities and well-being for Multiracial people. Results from this study suggest that acceptance by both the White and Multiracial groups may provide the most support for Multiracial individuals' abilities to thrive in the racially stratified U.S. society. In addition, although resembling the White and Multiracial groups may contribute to positive well-being and possibly facilitate acceptance by the White and Multiracial groups, reflected appraisals were not as important as initially expected. In addition, contrary to theory, parental support also did not facilitate positive well-being or racial identity.

To address the lack of measures for variables believed to be important for Multiracial development, scales were created to assess family influences, reflected

appraisals, and acceptance and exclusion by Multiracial individuals' respective racial groups. The scales allowed the researcher to examine relevant variables quantitatively and to test the model created for the current study. Results indicated relationships between many of these variables and suggests limitations to all of the extant theories of Multiracial identity development.

Although exclusion from the White racial group was negatively associated with psychological well-being, which is consistent with the Marginal Man theory (Stonequist, 1971), White exclusion also evidenced a dynamic relationship with racial identity leading Multiracial people to idealize Whiteness and to immerse in their Multiracial or racial group of Color. Thus, the overarching focus on acceptance or exclusion and identification with a single racial group does not completely capture the relationship between social context and well-being or the relevance of racial identity to Multiracial people's adjustment. Similarly, the developmental theories all suggest that Multiracial people must overcome the pressure to choose a single racial identification option and develop an integrated, Multiracial identity to emerge well-adjusted. However, despite the Multiracial identification of most of the sample, the sample ranged in its answers to the psychological well-being measures. Thus, results suggest that simply identifying as Multiracial is not sufficient to facilitate positive well-being for Multiracial people. Instead, acceptance and exclusion by a Multiracial person's constituent racial groups, particularly White and Multiracial, may affect their overall well-being.

Finally, Root's (2003) ecological model poses a dynamic interaction between a person's appearance, family, personality, and social environments to affect his/her racial identity and well-being. The fact that White Exclusion and Parental Bias can lead to

idealization of the White group (i.e. Conformity) or confusion (i.e. Dissonance), respectively, and immersion into one's Multiracial or racial group of Color (i.e. Immersion), seems to provide support for the ecological model's supposition that a Multiracial person's identity development is developed through a transactional process with his/her environment. Similarly, the positive relationship between invalidation of one's racial identification and later stages of racial identity development, Immersion and Internalization, suggest that simply examining social context variables in isolation will not provide a clear enough picture of the effect of social context on a Multiracial person's adjustment. Overall, results allude to the complex, interactional process of identity development presented by Root (2003), as well as the importance of understanding Multiracial individuals' racial identity as a process that can create additional difficulties or buffer against challenges related to being Multiracial in U.S. society.

Further underscoring the importance of utilizing racial identity theory, rather than a racial identification option, this study also differed from previous studies by using the People of Color Racial Identity model (Helms, 1995) to assess racial identity. The majority of research on Multiracial individuals provides them with a single racial identification option and then examines differences between them, often through measures of self-concept or well-being. However, these findings have been inconsistent, which may be partially due to the conflation of racial identification with racial identity (i.e., the way one processes racial information about oneself). Instead, the utilization of a racial identity measure allowed for the possibility that Multiracial individuals may identify in a variety of ways, but still report positive well-being due to positive, or more

developed, racial identities. Results generally supported this supposition and reflect the importance of understanding how Multiracial individuals understand race and navigate racially stratified U.S. society to better determine the effect of various social contexts, as well as which Multiracial individuals are at-risk for poor psychological health.

Based upon these results, theory on Multiracial identity development needs to acknowledge and assess the interactive nature between social context variables and well-being. The inclusion of additional factors suggested by Root's (2003) model, such personality traits (e.g. self-esteem) and diversity of environments, may better capture the complexity of this relationship. In addition, the inclusion of racial identity as a process, instead of a single identification, is necessary to understand the mechanisms involved in the positive adjustment for Multiracial people. Furthermore, all participants in this study had one White parent and results indicated that acceptance or exclusion by the White racial group had the most significant effect on Multiracial individuals' well-being. Future researchers should also consider that the most salient contextual factors may differ depending upon whether a Multiracial person has a White parent, or two parents of Color.

Given that the scales created for this study were piloted with a group comprised of people from two different racial groups, Asian/White and Black/White, future researchers should attempt to use the scales with only Black/White or Asian/White individuals to determine whether the scales yield similar results regardless of respondents' racial heritage. In addition, possibly due to the different life experiences of Black/White and Asian/White people, the items intended to assess acceptance and exclusion from the group of Color were omitted during the factor analysis of the scales.

Future researchers should attempt to create scales to measure acceptance and exclusion from the group of Color for both Black/White and Asian/White individuals.

Furthermore, the scales created to examine racialized appearance, and reflected appraisals, evidenced high reliability with a Black/White and Asian/White sample. However, these scales did not account for much variance in the overall model. Future research examining the specific role of appearance and reflected appraisals in the lives of Multiracial individuals should use the created scales to allow for the quantitative examination of this important variable.

Future research should attempt to further test aspects of the proposed model for Multiracial identity development by using the scales created for this study, along with additional measures to address the limitations of this pilot study. Additional research can help determine whether results reported here can be replicated with other samples, and, in particular, whether acceptance or exclusion by the White racial group is equally important to the racial identity and well-being of Multiracial individuals from a variety of backgrounds.

Existing research typically has used small samples, which are either widely diverse or a single racial group combination. As a result, it is challenging to generalize results to improve psychology researchers' understanding of the Multiracial population. The lack of generalizable results is problematic since, despite the increase in research on this population, little can be extrapolated beyond the study samples to further inform research and practice with Multiracial individuals. The current study attempted to address these limitations by using a fairly large sample, and examining the two most common groups of Multiracial individuals (Black/White and Asian/White). Although

participants from each racial group generally responded to items similarly, between group differences were found on certain indices of well-being (i.e. life satisfaction and Multiracial pride) with Asian/White individuals evidencing higher rates of these well-being and resilience variables. These differences may relate to the different positions held by the Asian and Black racial groups in the racial hierarchy of the United States.

Finally, future researchers should attempt to examine larger samples of multiple racial group combinations, which would allow them to compare and contrast their experiences to a greater extent than was possible in this study, and to use the proposed model to understand the experiences of a variety of Multiracial groups.

Implications for Practice

Multiracial people violate societal beliefs about differences between racial groups, which can lead to challenges in developing positive racial identities, life satisfaction, and psychological well-being. In this study, a model was proposed to improve counseling psychologists' understanding of the relationships among Multiracial individuals' social contexts, racial identities, and psychological well-being, with the goal of identifying which social contexts increase risks for poor psychological well-being and which buffer against the challenges experienced by this population. These results can inform the creation of targeted interventions for those Multiracial individuals who are most at risk for poor adjustment. In addition, knowledge about the characteristics of supportive environments can inform preventative interventions to foster resilience in Multiracial individuals.

In the current study, exclusion from the White racial group was correlated with higher levels of distress, confusion regarding race, and decreased Multiracial pride.

Conversely, participants who were accepted by and resembled both the White and Multiracial groups endorsed greater life satisfaction, appreciation for differences, and Multiracial pride, and lower psychological distress. As a result, practitioners working with Multiracial individuals should be aware that clients who experience exclusion by the White group may be at increased risk for poor mental health outcomes. This has implications for clinical work with Multiracial clients with one White parent. Given that therapy is designed to be an opportunity for clients to heal from painful experiences, a White therapist could provide a reparative relational experience for clients who have experienced the pain of rejection by the White group, which they also may identify as their racial group. If a White therapist is able to demonstrate acceptance and appreciation for a Multiracial person and his/her racial identification and empathize with the pain caused by his/her previous rejection from the White racial group, this could lead to a reduction in the client's psychological distress and, thereby, reduce the therapist's tendency to pathologize the Multiracial person, who may not "look White" to the therapist. Furthermore, although the obtained results suggested that racial identity invalidation is common for Multiracial individuals, the experience of invalidation actually aided Multiracial people's racial identity development, as evidenced by a positive relationship with Internalization or self-actualizing identity development. Clinicians should normalize the invalidation experience for Multiracial clients and, in response, rather than viewing it as a risk factor, support them in exploring their racial identity and understanding of the role race plays in their lives.

Clinicians may also support their clients by aiding them in finding a Multiracial reference group, to provide Multiracial clients with support from others who have had

similar experiences and a sense of racial group belonging. Clinicians who work in schools or university environments may want to raise awareness about the importance of creating organizations to help establish a Multiracial community on campus. Similarly, college counseling centers and mental health clinics can start Multiracial support groups to encourage Multiracial individuals to connect and share their experiences. In addition, clinicians should assess the nature and quality of Multiracial clients' social support with a particular focus on the racial messages and beliefs of their support systems. Although social support is important for well-being and adjustment, conflicting or biased social support systems may increase psychological distress for clients.

Practitioners should also be aware that rejecting or biased family environments may negatively affect Multiracial individuals' racial identity development. Results suggested a positive relationship between these types of family contexts and Conformity, which, in turn, was related to poorer life satisfaction. Operating from a racial identity status that is characterized by the idealization of the White racial group and devaluation of one's racial group of Color may exacerbate the challenges faced by Multiracial individuals attempting to navigate their racially stratified environment.

In addition to asking clients about their personal racial categorization, clinicians should assess what a Multiracial person's racial background means to him/her, since results suggest that Multiracial individuals' identities and racial identity development can be complicated. Clinicians should assess the role of race and messages regarding race in Multiracial clients' families and social contexts over time. Clients should also be aided in understanding relevant racial dynamics of their families and environments in therapy and the ways in which these dynamics have affected their identity and well-being. Clinicians

working with Multiracial clients should also be trained to understand the unique issues affecting Multiracial people, such as the role of appearance in acceptance and belonging to racial groups, the negative effect of exclusion on psychological well-being and the availability of social support, and the experience of racial identity invalidation. Furthermore, clinicians should be trained to increase Multiracial clients' critical consciousness around racial issues to help normalize and increase their understanding of the challenges inherent to being Multiracial in our racially stratified society. In particular, Multiracial clients may need support understanding that, despite their personal racial identification, depending upon their appearance and other personal attributes, they may be perceived differently by others, which could lead to confusion and distress.

Also, the results of the current study may have implications for the training of clinicians who work with Multiracial clients and/or are Multiracial themselves. Clinicians also must function in a racially stratified society. Consequently, they may manifest some of the same kinds of biases and styles of communicating or not communicating about race as their Multiracial clients experience in other settings. Therefore, it is important that clinicians explore their own racial identities and feelings about race so that they can deliberately focus on such topics when working with Multiracial clients. Overall, clinicians should be trained to assess relevant issues for Multiracial clients, to infuse racial issues into their intakes, to listen for racially related content in sessions, and to utilize their role to increase Multiracial clients' feelings of being accepted and understood despite their multiple racial backgrounds.

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Appendix A – Creation of the Multiracial Scales

As previously discussed one goal of the present study was to create a measure for assessing components potentially related to Multiracial people's well-being including (a) Family Influence; (b) Reflected Appraisals; and (c) Degree of Acceptance. The constructed measures were meant to assess the social context constructs of family influence (messages, closeness, exposure), racialized appearance (personal beliefs and others' interpretations), and acceptance and exclusion by participants' constituent racial groups (White and Black or Asian). The Family Influence scale was created to measure parental messages regarding racial identification, discussion of race, exposure to culture, and exposure, closeness to, and identification with parents and extended family. The Reflected Appraisals scale was designed to measure personal beliefs about racial appearance, others' interpretations of participants' racial appearance, and the ways that these beliefs interacted to affect participants' racial categorization (i.e., reflected appraisals). The Acceptance/Exclusion scale was created to measure the level of acceptance and exclusion of Multiracial individuals by their constituent racial groups (i.e., White and/or Black or Asian), as well as the relationship between acceptance or exclusion and participants' racial categorizations.

Originally, based on theoretical literature and empirical studies of Multiracial people, 63 items were generated. The original items for the Family Influence Scale and the Acceptance/Exclusion Scale are listed in Appendices B and C, respectively. The Reflected Appraisals Scale retained all of its items and the scale, in its entirety, comprises Appendix F. Participants' responded to the items using a Likert-type scale ranging from 1 (Strongly disagree) to 5 (Strongly agree). Three Principal Components Analyses (PCA)

were used to investigate the construct validity of the subscales.   PCA is an exploratory analysis intended to identify subsets of items that are not correlated with each other and, therefore, ideally are relatively independent of other subsets of items. I initially intended to measures two constructs for each scale, six constructs in all. These constructs included: Challenging and Supportive Family Influences, Challenging and Supportive aspects of Appearance, or Reflected Appraisals, and one subscale each measuring Acceptance and Exclusion.

Development of Multiracial Scales

Preliminary Analyses

Prior to conducting the PCAs for each of the three scales (i.e., Family Influence Scale, Reflected Appraisals, Acceptance/Exclusion), data were examined to confirm that they were suitable for the PCAs. Participants' item responses were examined to determine whether (a) any were missing, (b) responses were approximately normally distributed (i.e., were not significantly skewed), (c) the matrix of correlations among item responses was significant as indicated by Bartlett's test of sphericity, and (d) showed no redundancies as indicated by determinants greater than zero and less than one. The assumption of normal distributions item responses for the three scales was assessed by evaluating the shapes of the histograms of each item, as well as by examining their levels of skewness. For these preliminary analyses, as well as the PCAs, the combined sample of Asian-White and Black-White ($N = 172$) participants were used.

Family Influence Scale

For the 30 Family Influence items, nine participants were missing significant data because they were unable to answer questions that presumed they grew up with both

parents. As a result, these participants were excluded from the analyses. In addition, there were 14 items that were missing between 1 and 3 participant responses. These missing data appeared to be random and did not fall into any clear pattern. As a result, these missing item responses were substituted using unconditional mean substitution. For these missing data points, the mean value for all participants on that item was substituted for all missing cases.

The scores for 14 of 18 items comprising the Family Influence scale were normally distributed, but four were slightly negatively skewed, which indicates a tendency for participants to endorse the items. After moving outliers toward the scores in the distribution that they were closest to (i.e., winsoring outliers), the skewness statistics improved significantly.

Reflected Appraisals Scale

For the Reflected Appraisals items, there were very few missing data points, specifically, there was 1 response missing for each of 4 items. The participant responses that were missing data were substituted with the average score on each item across participants. After evaluating the shapes of the histograms of each item and their levels of skewness, the scores for 15 of 17 items comprising the Reflected Appraisals scale were normally distributed and two were slightly negatively skewed. After moving outliers toward the scores in the distribution that they were closest to (i.e., winsoring outliers), the skewness statistics improved significantly and, consequently, all 17 items were used in the subsequent PCA.

Acceptance/Exclusion Scale

For the Acceptance/Exclusion items, there were very few missing data points, specifically, there was 1 response missing for each of 5 items. The average score on each item was substituted for missing item responses. The examination for skewness of responses indicated that 15 of 16 items were normally distributed, but one item was slightly positively skewed. Skewness for this item was significantly reduced by moving outliers toward their nearest scores in the distribution. In the subsequent PCA, 16 items were used.

Results

Principal Components Analysis (PCA)

Components identified by the PCAs became subscales within the three primary dimensions that were included in the hypothesized model. The dimensions were Family Influence, Reflected Appraisals, and Acceptance/Exclusion.

Family Influence Scale

For the PCA of the 30 items for the Family Influence scale, 10 components or potential subscales were identified with eigenvalues ranging from 1.03 to 5.24. The scree plot, used to determine how many components should be retained, indicated that four should be kept. The PCA was conducted a second time specifying four components for extraction and Varimax rotation. Table 3 summarizes the results of this analysis. As a result of the second analysis, 18 items were retained whose loadings or coefficients on one component were above .30 and below .30 on all other components. The remaining 12 items with component loadings above .30 on multiple components were omitted (see initial items in Appendix B). The results of the PCA are summarized in Table 11.

Component 1 consisted of 8 items, accounted for 17.5% of the total variance. All items were positively related. The component was interpreted as representing participants' parents' biased or discriminatory views regarding racial groups. This component was labeled "Parental Bias".

Component 2 consisted of 6 items and accounted for 11% of the total variance. Almost all items were positively related to each other and inversely related to item 24. Thus, item 24 was reversed scored when the items were combined into a total scale score to test the study hypotheses. Component 2 was interpreted representing supportive family messages and experiences and was labeled "Parental Support".

Component 3 consisted of 2 items, and accounted for 11% of the total variance. Component 3 was interpreted as representing parental lack of acknowledgement of race. However, since it was only comprised of 2 items, it was not included as a subscale in the current study.

Component 4 consisted of 2 items, and accounted for 8% of the total variance. Component 4 seemed to represent participants' degree of closeness with their parents. However, since it was only comprised of 2 items, it was not used as a subscale in the current study.

Reflected Appraisals Scale

The PCA for the 17 items comprising the Reflected Appraisals scale yielded four components with eigenvalues greater than 1.0. The scree plot also indicated that four components should be kept. A Varimax rotation and an Oblimin rotation of the four components were conducted. The Varimax rotation provided the best defined component structure, which is summarized in Table 4. All 17 items were retained because their

component loadings on the first four components were above .30 on one component and there were no cross loadings on other components larger than .30. The results of the PCA are summarized in Table 12.

Component 1 consisted of 5 items and all items were positively related. Component 1 was interpreted as representing the interaction between others' interpretations of participants' racial appearance and participants' racial self-categorization. This component was labeled Others' Opinions.

Component 2 consisted of 4 items and all items were positively related. Component 2 was interpreted as representing the extent to which participants appeared to themselves or others to resemble the White racial group physically and was labeled White Racial Group Appearance.

Component 3 consisted of 4 items and all items were positively related. Component 3 was interpreted as representing participants' appearing to themselves and/or others to resemble heir Multiracial group. This component was labeled Multiracial Group Appearance.

Component 4 consisted of 4 items and all items were positively related. Component 4 was interpreted as representing participants' appearing to themselves and/or others to resemble their racial group of Color (Black or Asian). This component was labeled Group of Color Appearance.

Acceptance/Exclusion Scale

The initial eigenvalues (5.95, 2.25, 1.72, and 1.34) indicated that the first four components explained 37%, 14%, 11%, and 8% of the variance, respectively, but the scree plot suggested retaining two components. The PCA was conducted a second time

specifying two components for extraction and Varimax rotation. Twelve items were retained because their component loadings were above .30 on only one component and there were no cross loadings above .30 on other components; 4 items were dropped due to cross loadings about .30 on both components (see initial items in Appendix C). The results of the PCA are summarized in Table 13.

Component 1 consisted of 7 items. The items reflecting acceptance by the White and Multiracial groups were inversely related to the items representing exclusion from the White racial group. Component 1 was interpreted as representing participants' acceptance by the White or Multiracial groups and exclusion from the White racial group. This component was separated into two subscales, since they seemed to represent opposite constructs (i.e. Acceptance and Exclusion), and labeled White/Multiracial Group Acceptance and White Racial Group Exclusion.

Component 2 consisted of 5 items. The item reflecting acceptance by the racial group of Color was inversely related to the item reflecting exclusion from the racial group of Color and the items reflecting the influence of racial group exclusion (White/racial group of Color/Multiracial) on one's racial categorization. As a result, the item reflecting acceptance by participants' racial group of Color, was reverse scored to be combined with the other items in the subscale for the hypothesis tests. This component was labeled "Perceived Racial Group Exclusion".

Summary

In sum, two subscales (i.e. Parental Conflict and Support) were identified to measure the construct of Family Influences in the proposed model, four subscales (i.e., Group of Color Appearance, White Racial Group Appearance, Multiracial Group

Appearance, and Others' Opinions), were identified to reflect the construct of Reflected

Appraisals, and three subscales were identified to measure the construct of

Acceptance/Exclusion (i.e. White/Multiracial Group Acceptance, White Racial Group

Exclusion, and Perceived Racial Group Exclusion). However, upon reviewing the items,

both the Others' Opinions and Perceived Racial Group Exclusion subscales, were omitted

from the hypothesis tests because they seem to represent the Multiracial person's

perceptions and reactions to their social contexts, rather than the social contexts

themselves.

Table 11

Items and Subscale loadings for Components 1-4, Means, Standard Deviations, Eigenvalues, and % variance for the Family Influence scale

Item #	Item	eigenvalue	%	Component				M	SD
				C1	C2	C3	C4		
Parental Bias									
		5.24	17.5						
2.	My mom wanted me to identify with my White racial group.			**.70**	.06	.10	.20	2.93	1.23
4.	My dad wanted me to identify with my White racial group.			**.62**	.25	.09	.22	2.92	1.12
13.	My mom believed in a hierarchy among races.			**.68**	-.12	-.05	.05	2.01	1.16
14.	My dad believed in a hierarchy among races.			**.68**	-.22	-.12	-.04	2.13	1.22
15.	My mom expressed a preference for my racial group of Color.			**.49**	.18	-.10	-.23	2.55	1.24
16.	My dad expressed a preference for my racial group of Color.			**.65**	.00	-.28	-.16	2.47	1.12
17.	My mom expressed a preference for my White racial group.			**.74**	-.21	.07	-.04	2.26	1.14
18.	My dad expressed a preference for my White racial group.			**.75**	-.14	-.07	-.13	2.25	1.04
Parental Support									
		3.28	11						
1.	My mom wanted me to identify with my racial group of Color.			.15	**.73**	-.03	-.11	3.33	1.29
5.	My mom talked about race in my home.			.04	**.58**	-.26	-.12	3.71	1.24
7.	My mom was open to me exploring all of my racial groups.			-.18	**.59**	.28	-.10	4.05	.98
8.	My dad was open to me exploring all of my racial groups.			-.12	**.60**	.25	.19	4.08	.88
24.	I was only exposed to my dad's side of the family.			.16	**-.37**	.04	.27	1.90	1.05
30.	My family's attitudes and messages influenced my current racial categorization.			-.12	**.48**	-.04	.09	3.64	1.12

Table 12

Items and Subscale loadings, Means and Standard Deviations, Eigenvalues and % of variance for the Reflected Appraisals scale

Item #	Item	eigenvalue	%	C1	C2	C3	C4	M	SD
Group of Color Appearance									
		4.74	28						
1.	I appear to belong to my racial group of Color.			-.02	-.21	.01	**.84**	3.09	1.11
4.	I appear similar to members of my racial group of Color.			-.01	-.04	.27	**.75**	3.09	1.04
7.	Other people believe that I belong to my racial group of Color.			-.04	-.06	.21	**.86**	3.24	1.14
10.	Other people believe that I appear similar to members of my racial group of Color.			-.02	-.07	.22	**.80**	3.22	1.09
White Racial Group Appearance									
		3.10	18						
2.	I appear to belong to my White racial group.			-.09	**.82**	-.20	-.12	2.58	1.15
5.	I appear similar to members of my White racial group.			.02	**.81**	-.12	-.07	2.55	1.09
8.	Other people believe that I belong to my White racial group.			-.03	**.87**	-.08	-.11	2.82	1.20
11.	Other people believe that I appear similar to members of my White racial group.			.02	**.89**	-.06	-.07	2.79	1.18
Multiracial Group Appearance									
		2.34	14						
3.	I appear to belong to my Multiracial/Biracial/ Mixed-Race group.			.03	-.18	**.79**	.21	4.11	.71
6.	I appear similar to members of my Multiracial/Biracial/ Mixed-Race group.			.08	-.24	**.78**	.19	4.19	.68
9.	Other people believe that I belong to my Multiracial Biracial/Mixed-Race group.			.02	.04	**.82**	.19	3.97	.85
12.	Other people believe that I appear similar to members of my Multiracial/Biracial/ Mixed-Race group.			-.06	-.05	**.87**	.11	3.92	.83

Others' Opinions

		1.70	10						
13.	Others' interpretations of my race have affected my ability to identify with my racial group of Color.			**.82**	.07	.02	-.18	3.48	1.34
14.	Others' interpretations of my race have affected my ability to identify with my White racial group.			**.85**	-.02	.01	.13	3.16	1.39
15.	Others' interpretations of my race have affected my ability to identify with my Multiracial/ Biracial/Mixed-Race group.			**.78**	.12	.02	-.03	2.80	1.32
16.	Others' interpretations of my race have affected my current racial categorization.			**.80**	-.11	-.04	.01	3.15	1.31
17.	I would identify differently if others thought that I appeared to belong to a different race.			**.65**	-.11	.02	-.03	2.46	1.23

Table 13

Items and Subscale loadings, Means and Standard Deviations, eigenvalues, and % variance for the Acceptance/Exclusion scale

Item #	Item	eigenvalue	%	Component Loadings		M	SD
				C1	C2		
White/Multiracial Group Acceptance		5.87	36.7				
2.	I am accepted by my White racial group.			**-.76**	-.00	3.49	1.04
3.	I am accepted by my Multiracial/Biracial/ Mixed-Race group.			**-.54**	-.24	4.22	.69
5.	Growing up, I was accepted by my White racial group.			**-.79**	.18	3.36	1.11
6.	Growing up, I was accepted by my Multiracial/Biracial /Mixed-Race group.			**-.60**	-.25	3.88	.88
White Racial Group Exclusion		5.87	36.7				
8.	I am excluded from my White racial group.			**.67**	.18	2.33	1.08
11.	Growing up, I was excluded from my White racial group.			**.76**	.16	2.45	1.10
16.	I would feel more accepted if I lived in a different country.			**.44**	.29	2.41	1.21
Perceived Racial Group Exclusion		2.78	14.2				
1.	I am accepted to my racial group of Color.			-.26	**-.69**	3.51	1.02
7.	I am excluded from my racial group of Color.			.27	**.72**	2.34	1.09
13.	I would racially identify differently if I were more accepted by my racial group of Color.			-.12	**.84**	2.58	1.18
14.	I would racially identify differently if I were more accepted by my White racial group.			.10	**.61**	2.20	.98
15.	I would racially identify differently if I were more accepted by my Multiracial/ Biracial/Mixed-Race group.			.08	**.78**	2.27	1.08

Appendix B – Initial Items of the Family Influence Scale

Initial Items of the Family Influence Scale	
#	Item
1.	My mom wanted me to identity with my racial group of Color.
2.	My mom wanted me to identify with my White racial group.
3.	My dad wanted me to identify with my racial group of Color.
4.	My dad wanted me to identify with my White racial group.
5.	My mom talked about race in my home.
6.	My dad talked about race in my home.
7.	My mom was open to me exploring all of my racial groups.
8.	My dad was open to me exploring all of my racial groups.
9.	My mom expressed negative attitudes about one of my racial group(s).
10.	My dad expressed negative attitudes about one of my racial group(s).
11.	My mom supported colorblind attitudes (i.e. race doesn't matter).
12.	My dad supported colorblind attitudes (i.e. race doesn't matter).
13.	My mom believed in a hierarchy among races.
14.	My dad believed in a hierarchy among races.
15.	My mom expressed a preference for my racial group of Color.
16.	My dad expressed a preference for my racial group of Color.
17.	My mom expressed a preference for my White racial group.
18.	My dad expressed a preference for my White racial group.
19.	I was exposed to aspects of my parents' cultures equally.
20.	I was exposed to aspects of my mom's culture.
21.	I was exposed to aspects of my dad's culture.
22.	I was exposed to both sides of my family equally.
23.	I was only exposed to my mom's side of the family.
24.	I was only exposed to my dad's side of the family.
25.	Growing up, I was closer to my mom.
26.	Growing up, I was closer to my dad.
27.	Growing up, I was equally close to both parents.
28.	Growing up, I racially identified more with my mom.
29.	Growing up, I racially identified more with my dad.
30.	My family's attitudes and messages influenced my current racial categorization.

Appendix C – Initial Items of the Acceptance/Exclusion Scale

Initial Items of the Acceptance/Exclusion Scale	
#	Item
1.	I am accepted by my racial group of Color.
2.	I am accepted by my White racial group.
3.	I am accepted by my Multiracial/Biracial/Mixed-Race group.
4.	Growing up, I was accepted by my racial group of Color.
5.	Growing up, I was accepted by my White racial group.
6.	Growing up, I was accepted by my Multiracial/Biracial/Mixed-Race group.
7.	I am excluded from my racial group of Color.
8.	I am excluded from my White racial group.
9.	I am excluded from my Multiracial/Biracial/Mixed-Race group.
10.	Growing up, I was excluded from my racial group of Color.
11.	Growing up, I was excluded from my White racial group.
12.	Growing up, I was excluded from my Multiracial/Biracial/Mixed-Race group.
13.	I would racially identify differently if I were more accepted by my racial group of Color.
14.	I would racially identify differently if I were more accepted by my White racial group.
15.	I would racially identify differently if I were more accepted by my Multiracial/Biracial/Mixed-Race group.
16.	I would feel more accepted if I lived in a different country.

Appendix D: Demographic Questionnaire

1) What is your age?

2) Gender
   a) Female   b) Male   c) Transgender   d) Other _____

3) Socioeconomic Status
   a) Lower class   b) Lower Middle Class   c) Middle Class
   d) Upper Middle   e) Upper Class

4) Hometown

   _____

5) Education
   a) Some high school   b) High School graduate   c) Some College
   d) Associates Degree   e) Bachelors Degree   f) Some Graduate School
   g) Advanced Degree (MA, PhD, PsyD, JD, MD)

6) Current Location

   _____

7) Workplace

   _____

8) Race (Choose as many as apply)
   a) African American/Black   b) White/Caucasian   c) Asian/Pacific Islander
   d) White Latino/Hispanic   e) Latino/Hispanic of Color
   f) Native American

9) Racial Identification (Please choose the **one** that most accurately reflects your racial group identification/categorization)
   a) African American/Black   b) White/Caucasian   c) Asian/Pacific Islander
   d) Latino/Hispanic   e) Native American   f) Biracial/Multiracial/Mixed-Race
   g) Black and White   h) Asian and White   i) Latino/Hispanic and White
   j) Native American and White   k) Other_____

10) Race of Biological Mother (Please choose **one**)
    a) African American/Black   b) White/Caucasian   c) Asian/Pacific Islander
    d) Latino/Hispanic   e) Native American
    f) Biracial/Multiracial (Please list which races)_____

11) Race of Biological Father (Please choose **one**)
    a) African American/Black   b) White/Caucasian   c) Asian/Pacific Islander
    d) Latino/Hispanic   e) Native American

f) Biracial/Multiracial (Please list which races)_____

12) If you were not raised by your biological parents, the race(s) of the people who raised you.

   a) African American/Black   b) White/Caucasian   c) Asian/Pacific Islander

   d) Latino/Hispanic   e) Native American

   f) Biracial/Multiracial (Please list which races)_____

   12a) If you were not raised by your biological parents, who raised you?

       a) Aunt   b) Uncle   c) Grandmother   d) Grandfather

       e) Cousin   f) Adoptive mother   g) Adoptive father   h) Other_____

13) Relationship Status

   a) Single   b) In a Relationship   c) Married   d) Separated   e) Divorced   f) Widowed

14) Race of partner

   a) African American/Black   b) White/Caucasian   c) Asian/Pacific Islander

   d) Latino/Hispanic   e) Native American

   f) Biracial/Multiracial (Please list which races)_____

   g) Not Applicable

Appendix E: Family Influence Scale

This questionnaire includes questions about your parents' messages and attitudes while you were growing up, along with your feelings about and exposure to your family and cultures.

If you were not raised by your biological parents, please answer the following questions based upon your experiences with the people who raised you.

If you did not have a mother or father figure, please mark not applicable for the questions pertaining to each of these people.

Use the scale to respond to each statement based upon how true it is for you.

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

1. My mom wanted me to identify with my racial group of Color.	1 2 3 4 5 N/A
2. My mom wanted me to identify with my White racial group.	1 2 3 4 5 N/A
3. My dad wanted me to identify with my White racial group.	1 2 3 4 5 N/A
4. My mom talked about race in my home.	1 2 3 4 5 N/A
5. My mom was open to me exploring all of my racial groups.	1 2 3 4 5 N/A
6. My dad was open to me exploring all of my racial groups.	1 2 3 4 5 N/A
7. My mom believed in a hierarchy among races.	1 2 3 4 5 N/A
8. My dad believed in a hierarchy among races.	1 2 3 4 5 N/A
9. My mom expressed a preference for my racial group of Color.	1 2 3 4 5 N/A
10. My dad expressed a preference for my racial group of Color.	1 2 3 4 5 N/A
11. My mom expressed a preference for my White racial group.	1 2 3 4 5 N/A
12. My dad expressed a preference for my White racial group.	1 2 3 4 5 N/A
13. I was only exposed to my dad's side of my family.	1 2 3 4 5
14. My family's attitudes and messages influenced my current racial categorization.	1 2 3 4 5
a) How?_____	

Appendix F: Reflected Appraisals Scale

This questionnaire includes questions about your appearance and others' interpretations of your appearance. Use the scale to respond to each statement based upon how true it is for you.

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

1. I appear to belong to my racial group of Color.   1 2 3 4 5

2. I appear to belong to my White racial group.   1 2 3 4 5

3. I appear Multiracial/Biracial/Mixed-Race.   1 2 3 4 5

4. I appear similar to members of my racial group of Color.   1 2 3 4 5

5. I appear similar to members of my White racial group.   1 2 3 4 5

6. I appear similar to members of my Multiracial/Biracial/Mixed-Race group.   1 2 3 4 5

7. Other people believe that I belong to my racial group of Color.   1 2 3 4 5

8. Other people believe that I belong to my White racial group.   1 2 3 4 5

9. Other people believe that I belong to my Multiracial/Biracial/Mixed-Race group.   1 2 3 4 5

10. Other people believe that I appear similar to members of my racial group of Color.   1 2 3 4 5

11. Other people believe that I appear similar to members of my White racial group.   1 2 3 4 5

12. Other people believe that I appear similar to members of my Multiracial/Biracial/Mixed-Race group.   1 2 3 4 5

13. Others' interpretations of my race have affected my ability to identify with my racial group of Color.   1 2 3 4 5

14. Others' interpretations of my race have affected my ability to identify with my White racial group.   1 2 3 4 5

15. Others' interpretations of my race have affected my ability to identify with my Multiracial/Biracial/Mixed-Race group.   1 2 3 4 5

16. Others' interpretations of my race have affected my current racial categorization.   1 2 3 4 5

17. I would identify differently if others thought that I appeared to belong to a different race.   1 2 3 4 5

Appendix G: Acceptance/Exclusion Scale

This questionnaire includes questions about your acceptance by members of your racial groups. Use the scale to respond to each statement based upon how true it is for you.

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

1. I am accepted by my racial group of Color.   1   2   3   4   5

2. I am accepted by my White racial group.   1   2   3   4   5

3. I am accepted by my Multiracial/Biracial/Mixed-Race group.   1   2   3   4   5

4. Growing up, I was accepted by my racial group of Color.   1   2   3   4   5

5. Growing up, I was accepted by my White racial group.   1   2   3   4   5

6. Growing up, I was accepted by my Multiracial/Biracial/Mixed-Race group.   1   2   3   4   5

7. I am excluded from my racial group of Color.   1   2   3   4   5

8. I am excluded from my White racial group.   1   2   3   4   5

9. I am excluded from the Multiracial/Biracial/Mixed-Race group.   1   2   3   4   5

10. Growing up, I was excluded from my racial group of Color.   1   2   3   4   5

11. Growing up, I was excluded from my White racial group.   1   2   3   4   5

12. Growing up, I was excluded from my Multiracial/Biracial/Mixed-Race group.   1   2   3   4   5

13. I would racially identify differently if I were more accepted by my racial group of Color.   1   2   3   4   5

14. I would racially identify differently if I were more accepted by my White racial group.   1   2   3   4   5

15. I would racially identify differently if I were more accepted by my Multiracial/Biracial/Mixed-Race group.   1   2   3   4   5

16. I would feel more accepted if I lived in a different country.   1   2   3   4   5

Appendix H: Multiracial Challenges and Resilience Scale (MCRS, Salahuddin & O'Brien, 2011)

Multiracial Challenges and Resilience Scale (MCRS) Part 1

The term "multiracial" refers to an individual whose biological parents represent two or more different racial groups (e.g., your mother is Black, White, Asian, Native American, Middle Eastern, Latino, or biracial, and your father is a different race than your mother).

For the following 15 items, please indicate how often each event has happened to you (frequency) and how distressed you felt as a result of the event (distress). Please use the following 6-point scales.

Item	Frequency	Distress
	0 _ Never happened to me	0 _ Not at all distressed
	1 _ Happened to me once	1 _ Slightly distressed
	2 _ Happened to me 2–4 times	2 _ Somewhat distressed
	3 _ Happened to me 5–7 times	3 _ Moderately distressed
	4 _ Happened to me 8–10 times	4 _ Very distressed
	5 _ Happened to me more than 10 times	5 _ Extremely distressed

Item	Frequency	Distress
1. Someone chose NOT to date me because I am multiracial.	0 1 2 3 4 5	0 1 2 3 4 5
2. An individual acted surprised when they saw me with a family member because we look like we belong to different racial group(s).	0 1 2 3 4 5	0 1 2 3 4 5
3. A family member said something negative about multiracial/biracial people.	0 1 2 3 4 5	0 1 2 3 4 5
4. Someone outside my family said something derogatory about multiracial/biracial people.	0 1 2 3 4 5	0 1 2 3 4 5
5. I was discriminated against because of one or more of my racial backgrounds.	0 1 2 3 4 5	0 1 2 3 4 5
6. Someone in my family made a hurtful statement about one of the racial group(s) with whom I identify.	0 1 2 3 4 5	0 1 2 3 4 5
7. When I disclosed my racial background, someone acted surprised.	0 1 2 3 4 5	0 1 2 3 4 5
8. A family member said that I am NOT a "real" member of a racial group(s) with whom I identify.	0 1 2 3 4 5	0 1 2 3 4 5
9. I told someone about my racial background(s), but they did NOT believe	0 1 2 3 4 5	0 1 2 3 4 5

me.

10. A member of my family expected me to "choose" one racial group with whom to identify.	0 1 2 3 4 5	0 1 2 3 4 5
11. Someone placed me in a racial category based on their assumptions about my race.	0 1 2 3 4 5	0 1 2 3 4 5
12. A member of my family treated me like an "outsider" because I am multiracial.	0 1 2 3 4 5	0 1 2 3 4 5
13. I was the victim of discrimination because I am multiracial.	0 1 2 3 4 5	0 1 2 3 4 5
14. A person outside of my family made a hurtful statement about one of the racial group(s) with whom I identify.	0 1 2 3 4 5	0 1 2 3 4 5
15. Someone did NOT believe I was related to a family member because we look like we belong to different racial groups.	0 1 2 3 4 5	0 1 2 3 4 5

(Appendix continues)

Multiracial Challenges and Resilience Scale (MCRS) Part 2

Based on your experiences as a multiracial person, please indicate how strongly you agree or disagree with each of the following statements.

Please respond to Items 16–30 using the following 6-point scale, indicating how strongly you agree or disagree with each of the statements below.

Item	Rating
	0 _ Strongly disagree
	1 _ Disagree
	2 _ Slightly disagree
	3 _ Slightly agree
	4 _ Agree
	5 _ Strongly Agree

Item						
16. I love being multiracial.	0	1	2	3	4	5
17. I hide parts of myself when interacting with some friends	0	1	2	3	4	5
18. Being multiracial makes me feel MORE attractive to romantic partners.	0	1	2	3	4	5
19. As a multiracial person, I have developed an appreciation of different cultures.	0	1	2	3	4	5
20. I feel the need to prove my racial identity to others.	0	1	2	3	4	5
21. Because of my experiences as a multiracial person, I value human differences.	0	1	2	3	4	5
22. I am proud that I am multiracial.	0	1	2	3	4	5
23. Being multiracial has taught me to understand multiple perspectives.	0	1	2	3	4	5
24. I feel as if I do NOT belong to any racial group.	0	1	2	3	4	5
25. Because of my experiences as a multiracial person, I have compassion for people who are different than myself.	0	1	2	3	4	5
26. I wish I was NOT multiracial.	0	1	2	3	4	5
27. Being multiracial has taught me to adapt to a variety of cultural situations.	0	1	2	3	4	5
28. Being multiracial makes me feel special.	0	1	2	3	4	5
29. I feel pressure to distance myself from a racial group to which I feel connected.	0	1	2	3	4	5
30. Because I am multiracial, I do NOT have a strong sense of who I am.	0	1	2	3	4	5

Note. Items load onto the following subscales: Others' Surprise and Disbelief Regarding Racial Heritage: 2, 7, 9, 11, 15; Lack of Family Acceptance: 3, 6, 8, 10, 12; Multiracial Discrimination: 1, 4, 5, 13, 14;

Challenges With Racial Identity: 17, 20, 24, 29, 30; Appreciation of Human Differences: 19, 21, 23, 25, 27; Multiracial Pride: 16, 18, 22, 26, 28. Item 28 is reverse scored.

Appendix I: PRIAS Social Attitudes Inventory (Helms, 2005)

Instructions: This questionnaire is designed to measure people's social and political attitudes concerning race and ethnicity. Since different people have different opinions, there are no right or wrong answers. Use the scale below to respond to each statement according to the way you see things. Be as honest as you can.

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

1   2   3   4   5   1. In general, I believe that Whites are superior to other racial groups.

1   2   3   4   5   2. I feel more comfortable being around Whites than I do being around people of my own race.

1   2   3   4   5   3. In general, people of my race have not contributed very much to White society.

1   2   3   4   5   4. I am embarrassed to be the race I am.

1   2   3   4   5   5. I would have accomplished more in life if I had been born White.

1   2   3   4   5   6. Whites are more attractive than people of my race.

1   2   3   4   5   7. People of my race should learn to think and act like Whites.

1   2   3   4   5   8. I limit myself to White activities.

1   2   3   4   5   9. I think racial minorities blame Whites too much for their problems.

1   2   3   4   5   10. I feel unable to involve myself in Whites' experiences, and am increasing my involvement in experiences involving people of my race.

1   2   3   4   5   11. When I think about how Whites have treated people of my race, I feel an overwhelming anger.

1   2   3   4   5   12. I want to know more about my culture.

1   2   3   4   5   13. I limit myself to activities involving people of my own race.

1   2   3   4   5   14. Most Whites are untrustworthy.

1   2   3   4   5   15. White society would be better off if it were based on the cultural values of my people.

1   2   3   4   5   16. I am determined to find my cultural identity.

1   2   3   4   5   17. Most Whites are insensitive.

1   2   3   4   5   18. I reject all White values.

1   2   3   4   5   19. My most important goal in life is to fight the oppression of my people.

1   2   3   4   5   20. I believe that being from my cultural background has caused me to have many strengths.

1   2   3   4   5   21. I am comfortable with people regardless of their race.

1   2   3   4   5   22. People, regardless of their race, have strengths and limitations.

1   2   3   4   5   23. I think people of my culture and the White culture differ from

each other in some ways, but neither group is superior.

1 2 3 4 5   24. My cultural background is a source of pride to me.

1 2 3 4 5   25. People of my culture and White culture have much to learn from each other.

1 2 3 4 5   26. Whites have some customs that I enjoy.

1 2 3 4 5   27. I enjoy being around people regardless of their race.

1 2 3 4 5   28. Every racial group has some good people and some bad people.

1 2 3 4 5   29. Minorities should not blame Whites for all of their social problems.

1 2 3 4 5   30. I do not understand why Whites treat minorities as they do.

1 2 3 4 5   31. I am embarrassed about some of the things I feel about my people.

1 2 3 4 5   32. I am not sure where I really belong.

1 2 3 4 5   33. I have begun to question my beliefs.

1 2 3 4 5   34. Maybe I can learn something from people of my race.

1 2 3 4 5   35. White people can teach me more about surviving in this world than people of my own race can, but people of my race can teach me more about being human.

1 2 3 4 5   36. I don't know whether being the race I am is an asset or a deficit.

1 2 3 4 5   37. Sometimes I think Whites are superior and sometimes I think they're inferior to people of my race.

1 2 3 4 5   38. Sometimes I am proud of the racial group to which I belong and sometimes I am ashamed of it.

1 2 3 4 5   39. Thinking about my values and beliefs takes up a lot of my time.

1 2 3 4 5   40. I'm not sure how I feel about myself.

1 2 3 4 5   41. White people are difficult to understand.

1 2 3 4 5   42. I find myself replacing old friends with new ones who are from my culture.

1 2 3 4 5   43. I feel anxious about some of the things I feel about people of my race.

1 2 3 4 5   44. When someone of my race does something embarrassing in public, I feel embarrassed.

1 2 3 4 5   45. When both White people and people of my race are present in a social situation, I prefer to be with my own racial group.

1 2 3 4 5   46. My values and beliefs match those of Whites more than they do people of my race.

1 2 3 4 5   47. The way Whites treat people of my race makes me angry.

1 2 3 4 5   48. I only follow the traditions and customs of people of my racial group.

1 2 3 4 5   49. When people of my race act like Whites I feel angry.

1 2 3 4 5   50. I am comfortable being the race I am.

Appendix J: Brief Symptom Inventory 18 (BSI 18, Derogatis, 2001)

The BSI 18 consists of a list of problems people sometimes have. Read each one carefully and mark the number of the response that describes HOW MUCH THAT PROBLEM HAS DISTRESSED OR BOTHERED YOU DURING THE PAST 7 DAYS INCLUDING TODAY. Mark only one number for each problem. Do not skip any items.

1 = Not at all   2 = A little bit   3 = Moderately   4 = Quite a bit
5 = Extremely

How much were you distressed by:

1. Faintness or dizziness	1	2	3	4	5
2. Feeling no interest in things	1	2	3	4	5
3. Nervousness or shakiness inside	1	2	3	4	5
4. Pains in the heart or chest	1	2	3	4	5
5. Feeling lonely	1	2	3	4	5
6. Feeling tense or keyed up	1	2	3	4	5
7. Nausea or upset stomach	1	2	3	4	5
8. Feeling blue	1	2	3	4	5
9. Suddenly scared for no reason	1	2	3	4	5
10. Trouble getting your breath	1	2	3	4	5
11. Feelings of worthlessness	1	2	3	4	5
12. Spells of terror or panic	1	2	3	4	5
13. Numbness or tingling in parts of your body	1	2	3	4	5
14. Feelings hopeless about the future	1	2	3	4	5
15. Feeling so restless you couldn't sit still	1	2	3	4	5
16. Feeling weak in parts of your body	1	2	3	4	5
17. Thoughts of ending your life	1	2	3	4	5
18. Feeling tearful	1	2	3	4	5

<u>Appendix K: Satisfaction With Life Scale (SWLS)</u>
<u>(Diener, Emmons, Larson & Griffin, 1985)</u>

Below are five statements that you may agree or disagree with.

Using the 1 - 7 scale below, indicate your agreement with each item by placing the appropriate number on the line preceding that item. Please be open and honest in your responding.

- 7 - Strongly agree
- 6 - Agree
- 5 - Slightly agree
- 4 - Neither agree nor disagree
- 3 - Slightly disagree
- 2 - Disagree
- 1 - Strongly disagree

_____ In most ways my life is close to my ideal.

_____ The conditions of my life are excellent.

_____ I am satisfied with my life.

_____ So far I have gotten the important things I want in life.

_____ If I could live my life over, I would change almost nothing.

- 31 - 35 Extremely satisfied
- 26 - 30 Satisfied
- 21 - 25 Slightly satisfied
- 20   Neutral
- 15 - 19 Slightly dissatisfied
- 10 - 14 Dissatisfied
- 5 - 9 Extremely dissatisfied