

MINORITY STATUS STRESS: FACTORS THAT IMPACT ITS EFFECT
ON THE PSYCHOLOGICAL AND ACADEMIC FUNCTIONING OF
AFRICAN AMERICAN STUDENTS ATTENDING A PREDOMINANTLY
WHITE UNIVERSITY

by

Mary N. Davis

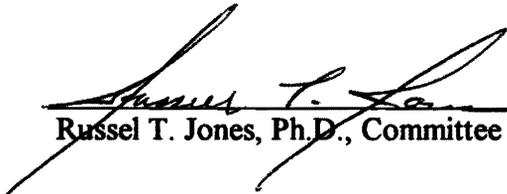
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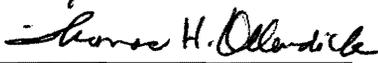
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ABSTRACT

This investigation involved a partial test of a model examining the extent to which sociocultural orientation styles and perceived social support impact the effect of Minority Status Stress (perceived stressors attributed to being an ethnic minority) on the academic and psychological functioning of African American students at a predominantly white university. Eighty African American undergraduate and graduate students were administered self report questionnaires to assess their standing on the relevant variables. Path analytic techniques supported a linear relationship in which sociocultural orientation styles impacted the level of minority status stress experienced which in turn impacted the students perceived social support. All of these factors had a significant impact on the student's psychological adaptation to the predominantly white university environment.

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Introduction

Due to several monumental factors including the 1950 desegregation laws, the civil rights movement of the 60's, and government legislative acts that provided financial assistance to black students, a significant increase in African Americans at major colleges and universities over the past four decades has been witnessed (Smedley, Myers, Harrell, Sidanius, & King, in press). Despite this increase in the presence of African American students within the college setting, African American students have been less likely to graduate within five years, have lower cumulative grade point averages, have lower progression and retention rates, and have lower tendencies to progress to advanced degree programs (Nettles, 1988). The difference in attrition rates are even larger in predominantly white institutions (Sedlacek & Webster, 1978; Suen, 1983).

Studies have suggested that the disparity that exists between the academic performance of African American students relative to their white peers within a university setting cannot be accounted for solely by academic indices. Instead, Lunneborg and Lunneborg (1986) demonstrated that disparities still remain in the academic performances of African American students relative to white students even when differences in academic preparation such as high school cumulative grade point average are controlled. Differences in attrition rates have also not been found to relate to traditional ability measures such as SAT scores (Tracey & Sedlacek, 1985). These findings suggest the need to investigate those specific factors which impact the academic functioning of African American students in the university setting.

Traditionally, academic success has been attributed to academic dimensions (i.e., academic ability, I.Q. scores, study habits) (Tracey & Sedlacek, 1985). However, growing evidence suggests that noncognitive dimensions are as important or even more important

than academic success. Sedlacek and Brooks (1976) attempted to codify these noncognitive variables that appear to specifically impact the academic performance of minority students. Their study demonstrated that the academic performance of African American students was influenced by several factors other than traditional academic indices. The noncognitive influences they determined were having an effect on the academic success of African American students attending predominantly White colleges included: (a) positive self-concept, (b) realistic self-appraisal, (c) understanding and an ability to deal with racism, (d) preferences for long term goals over more immediate, short term needs, (e) availability of a strong support person, (f) successful leadership experience, (g) demonstrated community service, and (h) academic familiarity. These variables were found to be stronger predictors of both academic success and overall academic persistence over four years for African American students than SAT scores.

Suen (1983) also studied the attrition rates of African American and White students at a predominantly White university. Her findings indicated that while the grade point averages of students were important predictors of student attrition, after holding this variable constant, feelings of alienation and meaninglessness emerged as significant predictors of African American attrition rates. The relationships between these particular noncognitive variables and academic performance were not borne out for white students.

Both of these findings suggest that the academic performance of African American students attending predominantly White universities is potentially influenced by different factors than those which affect the performance of white students. These findings also suggest that a different process is involved in the achievement of academic success for these two groups and underscore the fact that achievement within a predominantly White university requires very different skills for African Americans relative to White students.

Research that has examined the experiences of African American students at predominantly White universities has also demonstrated that there are specific factors that also have a psychological effect on these students. According to Prillerman, Myers, and Smedley (1989), the academic achievement and the psychological well being of African American students at these universities appears to suffer due to peculiar psychological and social adjustments students must make within these high demand and generally nonsupportive environments. In general, African American students who attend predominantly White universities evidence more psychosocial problems than their white peers. Thompson, Neville, Weathers, Poston, and Atkinson (1990) demonstrated that African American students were more likely to feel singled out for differential and inferior treatment and consequently evidenced a higher degree of cultural mistrust toward European American teachers and students. Black students also perceived greater levels of hostility and racism directed toward them, were more likely to feel dissatisfied with their college experience, and generally felt alienated from collegiate social networks (Allen, 1985; Nettles, 1988; Sedlacek & Tracey, 1987). In addition to these factors, African American students evidence greater problems in adjustment (Allen, 1985, 1988; Flemming, 1984), report lower quality of college experiences, less favorable interaction with faculty, greater feelings of alienation, negative effects of racism, social isolation, increased financial burdens, and less integration into the main campus life (Robinson, 1990).

Further studies have demonstrated that African American students at predominantly White universities appear to evidence different levels of psychological adaptation to the collegiate environment and have vastly different collegiate experiences than other minority students and African American students who do not attend predominantly White universities. For example, Fleming (1984) demonstrated that

African American students at predominantly White universities show a decrease in achievement motivation compared to African American students at predominantly black colleges. Also relative to other minorities, African American students have a greater likelihood to perceive themselves as victims of racism and discrimination when compared to Asian and Hispanic students (Patterson, Sedlacek, & Perry, 1984).

The academic difficulties experienced by African American students coupled with the additional psychosocial stressors they appear to experience indicate a need for conceptual models that delineate those factors that hinder successful matriculation of African Americans within white universities. This need becomes more obvious when one considers the growing trend of African American students attending predominantly White universities relative to the number who attend historically black colleges. Specifically 4 out of 5 African American freshman now attend white universities as opposed to historically black colleges compared to five decades ago when 9 out of 10 African Americans students attended historically black colleges (Prillerman et al., 1989). This shift illuminates the need for theoretical models that integrate the varied experiences of African American students and that provide direction for future research and intervention strategies.

To date the majority of studies attempting to articulate factors that impact the psychological adjustment and academic achievement of African American students at predominantly white universities have typically approached these issues from a unidimensional perspective. Consequently they have only provided a surface understanding of the factors that contribute to these phenomena. For example, Sedlacek and Tracey (1985, 1987) investigated the impact of noncognitive variables on the academic functioning of African American students attending predominantly white universities. They did not, however, address the impact that these variables have on the psychological

functioning of students nor did they provide an explanation for how these variables function to affect the students. In order to develop and implement intervention programs that adequately address the specific needs of African American students attending predominantly White universities, there exists a need for a multidimensional conceptualization of the nature of stressors that are particular to these students. Also, an understanding of those variables that impact the saliency of these stressors, and explanations of the degree to which these stressors impact the adaptation of these students is warranted.

Stress

In order to understand the relationship that is described by the conceptual model which will guide the present study, it is first imperative that one understand the manner in which stress is perceived within this context. Stress has become somewhat of a buzz word within our society since its early introduction in the 14th century and has subsequently been used extensively in not only the social and biological sciences but also in economics, political science, business, and education. Historically, the concept of stress was used to refer to a physiological pattern in animals in response to a wide variety of stimuli (Lazarus & Folkman, 1984). As such, stress was viewed as a specific entity that could be measured and studied. However, over time, the concept has largely taken on a psychological connotation. From this perspective, it became apparent that the nature of stress was multidimensional and that it was comprised of several distinct facets including both stressors (those phenomena that jeopardized the equilibrium of organisms) and the response of organisms to those stressors. The concept of stress thus came to be viewed as a process rather than an "it" (Dressler, 1991).

Several studies of stress have taken a relational approach (Lazarus & Folkman, 1984) to the concept of stress and viewed it as a particular kind of relationship between a

person and his or her environment. These studies have revealed that stress is more than a response to environmental cues, as evidenced by the myriad of different responses that humans and other organisms emit in reaction to identical stimuli. Instead this relational approach recognizes that characteristics of individuals affect their perceptions of their environment and the characteristics of the environment, in turn, influence the perceptions of the individual. Psychological stress is thus the relationship between the person and the environment that is appraised by the person as taxing, exceeding his/her resources, and endangering the individual's well-being (Lazarus & Folkman, 1984).

According to Folkman and Lazarus (1984), coping is the attempt of individuals to compensate for the discrepancy that exists between their ability to respond to a stressor and the coping resources that a particular stressor evokes. Stress and coping occur in a transactional process whereby the individual's cognitive appraisal of a particular stressor elicits specific coping responses, which in turn affect the nature of the stressor and how it is appraised. Cognitive appraisal occurs in two forms: primary appraisal, a determination of what is at stake in a given situation, and secondary appraisal, an evaluation of the resources an individual possesses in order to meet the demands of the stressor. Individual personal attributes and characteristics impact this appraisal process.

This transactional conceptualization of stress and coping has specific utility for examining the stress-coping process of African American students. Factors impacting the performance of these students may result from a poor fit between the students and their social and academic environment that is perceived by the students as stressful. According to Lazarus and Folkman (1984), and others, the impact of stressful environments is mediated by personal vulnerabilities, strengths, social resources, and obstacles. In addition, contextual factors also affect one's ability to cope with stress. Given that environmental factors can influence personal and social adaptation to stressful situations

(cited by Prillerman et al., 1989) and that one's social status position has an effect on the access of coping resources, the university environment can either facilitate adaptive coping among African American students or it can stifle and interfere with it.

Consequently, multidimensional models of stress, coping, and adaptation may provide mechanisms to investigate the experiences of African American students by allowing for an examination of the potential interaction of personal and contextual variables that may impact their experience of, and reaction to, stress.

Unfortunately, few studies exist that attempt to adequately explain the manner in which African Americans experience, perceive, and respond to stressors. The literature on this subject has typically focused on the examination of the detrimental effects of chronic environmental stressors such as poverty, exposure to crime, and violence (Anderson, 1991; Anderson, McNally, & Myers, 1991) rather than attempting to account for those factors that mediate the impact of deleterious stressors and allow for functional development within this population. Other literature has approached the study of stress among African Americans from a medical perspective and attempted to account for and explain the higher prevalence of stress related illnesses (i.e., hypertension, ulcers) among this group (Anderson et al., 1991). Overall the literature has pointed to the fact that African Americans appear to experience an increased level of stress in their daily lives and potentially may experience a unique type of stress relative to their acculturative experience and resultant social status within society. Studies on stress and coping have also demonstrated that particular contextual and personal variables affect how African Americans respond to stress.

Conceptual Model

A multivariate model of those factors believed to impact the psychological and academic functioning of African American students was developed through several

studies (Prillerman, 1988; Smedley et al., in press). Four major components make up this conceptual framework: namely, background variables, sociocultural orientation, minority status stress, and psychological adaptation as well as academic adaptation (see Figure 1). This model is consistent with the Lazarus and Folkman transactional model of stress and coping in that the stressors experienced (minority status stress), the coping methods used to respond to stressors (sociocultural orientation, social support), and the ultimate outcome of these stressors (academic and psychological adaptation) are proposed to reciprocally interact. Results of recent investigations of this model with reference to each of the components will be discussed below.

Insert figure 1 about here

Background Variables

This model asserts that particular background attributes, level of sociocultural orientation, and experience of minority status stress impact the degree to which psychological and academic adaptation to the university is affected. Background attributes include academic preparation of the student, gender, socio-political attitudes of the student's family, degree to which students were exposed to other ethnic groups prior to attending college, and their socioeconomic status prior to college (Prillerman et al., 1989).

Socio-cultural Orientation

Sociocultural orientation serves as an overarching construct for the coping style African American students utilize to deal with racially relevant stressors. It is defined as an individual's behavioral preferences, social stances, and attitudes related to racial

identification, intra-racial interactions, and interracial interactions. As such, an individual's sociocultural orientation style is a dynamic attitudinal state that is influenced by her/his experiences and psychological development (Smedley et al., in press). Studies have demonstrated that an individual's sociocultural orientation style emerges in three ways: 1) ethnic affirmation which is a positive sense of racial identity and pride in one's racial/ethnic heritage; 2) white avoidance which reflects hostility toward whites, coupled with behavioral avoidance of whites; and, 3) alienation which reflects feelings of rejection from and of one's own ethnic group (Gibbs, 1974; Smedley, et al., in press).

Within the present model, an individual's sociocultural orientation style is postulated to impact the academic and psychological adaptation to the collegiate environment by determining the extent to which racially relevant stressors are salient to African American students (Smedley et al., in press). Typically, studies have suggested that those students who evidence an affirmative coping style demonstrate higher grades and are relatively well-adjusted when compared to other students. Other research has indicated that a positive racial/ethnic identification is indicative of healthy functioning (Hughes & Demo, 1989; Parham & Helms, 1985; Phinney & Alipura, 1990). Finally, Anderson et al. (1991) suggested that racially affirming values have been found to decrease the effect of stress on physiological indices of stress.

Minority Status Stress

As evidenced by studies that have examined experiences of minority students at predominantly white universities described earlier, these students have been found to experience a unique form of stress that appears to be directly related to their status as ethnic minorities (Smedley, Myers, & Harrell 1993). These racially relevant stressors are organized under the rubric of minority status stress within the present model. These stressors include perceived stressors of African American students such as feelings of

racial discrimination on campus, distrust of white faculty and peers, academic insecurities associated with the social, political, and economic status of being an ethnic minority, and chronic environmental stressors (i.e. having few black faculty or black classmates).

Minority Status Stress was found to negatively impact the academic functioning and psychological well being of black students attending predominantly white universities, independent of the effect of typical college adjustment problems that face all students. This effect was noticed after controlling for typical student stressors associated with college life, prior academic preparation, and occurrence of major life events (Smedley et al., 1993). African American students were also found to experience and to respond to minority status stress differently than other minority groups. Specifically, African American students were found to experience higher levels of minority status stressors and generally felt more alienated than Chicano and Filipino students in a study of minority status stress among college freshman at UCLA (cited by Prillerman et al., 1989). Thus, research has demonstrated that minority-status-related stressors create an additional load to the general level of stress African American students experience and may impact their functioning above and beyond effects of generic stressors.

Psychological and Academic Adaptation

Support for the proposed relationship between these components was obtained by Smedley et al. (in press). Overall, through path analytic techniques, he and his colleague were able to demonstrate support for the implied causal sequence of the relationship among these variables as shown in Figure 1. Specifically, sociocultural orientational styles varied according to the students' background attributes, operated as a precursor to the experience of minority status stress, and had a direct effect on the academic and psychological functioning of the students. Minority status stress, in turn, directly affected the academic and psychological adaptation of the students. These relationships have also

been borne out by previous examinations of the interaction between these variables (Prillerman et al., 1989; Smedley, 1992; Smedley et al., 1993).

Social Support

Several questions emerged regarding a portion of this model which comprise the focus of this study. Specifically, the hypothesized relationship between Minority Status Stress and the outcome variables of academic achievement and psychological distress was not as strong as suspected - suggesting that there may be other factors impacting this relationship. This surprising finding was attributed to the fact that debilitating effects of minority status stress may have been impacted by the social support students received from both the campus itself as well as from the local African American community surrounding the university. The authors thus suggested that social support may serve to mediate the impact of minority status stressors on the academic and psychological functioning of African American students.

The potential mediating impact of support systems that many African American students may have utilized suggests the need to investigate how social support affects the manner in which these students respond to minority status stressors. Studies have demonstrated that the social environment for African American students attending predominantly white universities is often less than ideal as evidenced by student accounts of inadequate dating opportunities, social isolation, alienation, and lack of social integration into the immediate campus environment and, in some cases, the neighboring community (cited in Jay & D'Augelli, 1991). Given the fact that social contexts perceived as supportive facilitate adjustment to a wide variety of stressors, the lack of supportiveness that African Americans perceive within their collegiate settings contributes to a less than optimal adaptation to the collegiate experience.

Jay and D'Augelli (1991) investigated the role that social support played in the adjustment of African American students to a predominantly white university. They compared patterns of social support and the relationship between this support to measures of adjustment to university life of 81 white and 84 African American freshmen attending a 4-year residential institution in rural central Pennsylvania. Their results demonstrated that there was a significant difference in the perception of available support between White and African American students, whereby African American students perceived less support. In addition, social support was associated with psychological well-being of the African American students. This study did not demonstrate, however, that level of social support was related to academic achievement. Hershberger and D'Augelli (1992) also failed to establish social support as a predictor of academic functioning or graduation. However, researchers who have recognized the importance of noncognitive factors as important indices of academic functioning have continued to assert that social support has an impact on both the psychological functioning as well as the academic functioning of African American students attending White Universities. For example, studies examining the impact of social support have demonstrated that perceived social support correctly predicted the persistence and retention rate of African American students (Mallinckrodt, 1988); the retention rate of students who had transferred from community colleges to major universities; and the coping of nontraditional female students (Roehl & Okun, 1984). Conceptually, Anderson (1991) maintains that seeking social support as a coping mechanism becomes vitally important in terms of how African Americans respond to culturally relevant stressors. Lazarus and Folkman (1984) also suggests that social resources play an important role in the stress coping transactional process.

Smedley (1992) investigated the degree to which social support mediated the effect of minority status stress on the adaptive functioning of African American students

within a predominantly white university. His results failed to support the mediational effect of social support. These contradictory findings regarding the extent to which social support operated to mediate the impact of stressors on functional outcomes of African Americans highlight major controversies regarding the conceptualization of the construct of social support and its hypothesized role in helping or hindering individuals to cope with stress.

According to Quittner, Glueckauf, and Jackson (1990) there has been confusion regarding the role that social support has in the processes of adjustment to stress. Some researchers have advocated a buffering hypothesis whereby the level of social support is believed to interact with the levels of stress. According to this hypothesis, individuals with high levels of stress who have well-developed and satisfying relationships will be protected from the adverse effects of the stress. Others have advocated a main effect model in which social support will exert beneficial effects on psychological well-being regardless of an individual's level of stress. In addition to these two models, there is the indirect, mediational model which asserts that social support functions as an intervening variable between the stressor and the outcome. After investigating the role that social support played in regards to the parenting stress experienced by parents of ill children, these authors demonstrated that relative to chronic stressors (ongoing, pervasive stressors), social support mediated the relationship between the stressor and the outcome. This relationship will be hypothesized to exist in the present study. In that minority status stress is defined as a chronic stressor, this study will attempt to provide support for the mediational role of social support between the African American student's level of minority status stress and their academic and psychological adaptation.

Another controversy surrounding studies that have attempted to investigate the mediational role of social support is the conceptualization of social support. Most studies

of social support have focused on the structural aspect of this construct and conceptualized it as the number of individuals who comprised one's support network and the level of satisfaction with the support received. Cohen and McKay (1984) questioned the extent to which such global conceptualizations of social support are able to account for the potential effect of social support (Cohen & McKay, 1984; Cohen, 1985). Accordingly, the important question within these studies should be the function that others serve for individuals in their attempts to cope with stress as opposed to the structure of their support networks. Consequently, they assert that an examination of the specific functions individuals serve within one's support network would offer a more precise analysis of social support.

Various subtypes of perceived social support have been proposed by Cohen and McKay (1984). These subtypes include: (a) tangible support, which is the perceived availability of material aid; (b) appraisal support, which is the perceived availability of someone to talk to about one's problems; (c) self-esteem support, which is the perceived availability of a positive comparison when comparing one's self with others; and (d) belonging support, which is the perceived availability of people one can do things with. Studies that have looked at the effect of these social support functions have demonstrated that the functions of self esteem, appraisal, and belonging support have an impact on the psychological response of individuals to stressors while tangible support impacts their physiological responses.

An important goal of this study is to utilize a more fine-grained conceptualization of social support to determine its role in the experience of minority status stress among African American students. Specifically we will examine the impact of both the structural as well as the functional aspects of social support on the adaptive functioning of students.

Smedley et al. (in press) also suggest that the effects of minority status stress may be mediated by social support from other students as well as the local African-American community. Their investigation was conducted at a university that is situated in a multiethnic setting. Consequently the African American students were able to access a rich resource of African American community support. They suggest that in a smaller, less diverse collegiate setting, the effects of minority status stress may be more discernible. The environment of Virginia Tech as compared to that of the University of California, Los Angeles, certainly offers a less diverse collegiate setting and as such may provide an opportunity for minority status stress to be more salient to students. Therefore, another central purpose of this study was to examine the saliency of minority status stress in a more homogenous collegiate environment and to determine the relative impact of social support resources on the experience of minority status stress.

Research Question

Through a partial test of the stress precursor model an attempt was made to provide further support for the sequential relationship between sociocultural orientation, minority status stress, and adaptational outcomes by incorporating the potential effects of both functional as well as structural social support on this relationship. Social support was postulated to mediate the effect of minority status stress on the adaptive functioning of students (see Figure 2). These variables were expected to produce both direct and indirect effects.

The specific hypothesis are as follows:

Enter figure 2 about here

Hypothesis

- 1. Sociocultural orientation will directly affect minority status stress, indirectly affect social support, and indirectly affect adaptational outcomes (i.e. psychological distress and academic performance). There was also be a direct effect of sociocultural orientation on adaptational outcomes.**
- 2. Minority Status Stress will directly affect social support, and its effect on the academic and psychological adaptation of the students will be mediated by the social support perceived.**
- 3. Subtypes of social support will directly effect the adaptive functioning of students.**

Method

Subjects

Eighty undergraduate and graduate Virginia Tech university students volunteered to participate. Subjects were considered eligible for the study if they were African American and had attended Virginia Tech for a minimum of one semester prior to this study. Consequently first semester freshman were not eligible. Subjects were recruited via several methods which included; phone calls, through campus organizations that have a large African American population, personal solicitation, and through posters posted at strategic locations on campus. As an incentive, subjects were informed that their participation would allow them to be entered into a raffle for one hundred dollars. They were also required to read and sign a consent form detailing the purpose of the study assuring them that all information they provided would remain confidential (see Appendix A).

Procedures

The subjects were allowed to fill out questionnaires at the Black Cultural Center during scheduled hours. The number of subjects present during each scheduled session varied but never exceeded 15. The subjects were given a brief explanation of the purpose of the survey and allowed to read the instruction for themselves. Research assistants were available however to answer any questions that arose. Upon completion of the survey subjects were given a numbered ticket which qualified them for participation in a raffle where two fifty dollar checks were raffled off. Subjects filled out the questionnaires in the same order in which they appear in Appendix B.

Instruments

Each measure is included in Appendix B.

Demographic Information

Student Academic and Demographic Background Profile (Smedley et al., 1989).

Consistent with the proposed model several student academic and sociodemographic background variables conceptualized as relevant precursors of sociocultural orientation, stress, and academic functioning were obtained. These variables included such characteristics as gender, academic level, academic preparation, socioeconomic status, multiethnic exposure, and family socio-political attitudes. They were measured as follows. Academic preparation was defined as reported Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT) scores or Graduate Record Examination (GRE) scores. socioeconomic status (SES) was defined as a weighted product of parental education and occupation (see Table 1).

Multiethnic Exposure (Smedley et al., 1989). This instrument measured the racial composition of the subjects neighborhood, school, and network of friends on a five-point rating scale, with 1 indicating mostly African American (80% or greater), and 5 indicating

mostly white. The **internal consistency** of this measure was demonstrated to be moderate (Cronbach's alpha = .597).

Family Sociopolitical Attitudes (Smedley et al., 1989). This instrument measured the degree to which nine statements regarding tendencies to support African-American businesses and political organizations, feelings about interracial marriage and relationships with Whites, desires to 'blend' into the American mainstream, and degree of emphasis on African American history and culture within the family characterized their family's attitudes. This measure demonstrated moderate internal consistency (Cronbach's alpha = 0.54).

Sources of Stress

Minority Student Stress Scale (MSS) (Prillerman, 1988). This measure assesses the nature of and degree of stressors relevant to minority students. This scale contains 37 items that assess unique, minority-specific stressors and 'generic' student-role-stressors that may be potentially compounded by a student's racial and ethnic background. These items are rated on a six-point scale, from 0 = does not apply to 5 = extremely stressful. In former studies (Smedley et al 1993), the sum MSS score was moderately correlated with chronic role strain ($r=0.38$) and with life event stress ($r= 0.35$), therefore, it demonstrated moderate concurrent validity. The measure has also demonstrated high internal consistency (alpha = 0.92). In the present study the measure demonstrated high reliability (alpha = 0.94).

Sociocultural Orientation Scale (SCO) Prillerman (1988). This measure is comprised of 38 items that assess the racial orientation of the subjects, their social and political values, and their attitudes toward Whites and other ethnic groups. These items are intended to reflect Gibbs (1974) four modes of adaptation. Responses were made on a five-point Likert-type scale ranging from strongly disagree (1) to strongly agree (5).

Initial data indicated good reliability of the subscales of this measure with alpha coefficients ranging from .68 to .78.

The Racial Identity Assessment Survey (RIAS) Parham and Helms (1981). This measure was designed to assess the stages of racial identity and attitudes specified in Cross' (1971) four stage model of the Negro-to Black Conversion experience. Items are rated on a 5-point Likert-type scale from strongly agree (1) to strongly disagree (5). Parham and Helms (1981) found moderate reliability (coefficient alphas ranging from .66 to .71 for four of the subscales of this measure (pre-encounter, encounter, immersion-emersion, and internalization), while Ponterotto and Wise (1986) found similar reliability for three of the subscales (pre-encounter, immersion-emersion, and internalization), but not the fourth. There is little evidence of validity for the RIAS, but its subscales have been shown to be predictive of Black student's preference for counselor race at a university mental health center.

In order to empirically distinguish the sociocultural orientation domain from perceptions of racially-relevant stress, all items from the MSS, RIAS, and SCO measures were combined, and analyzed via principal axis factor analysis. Oblique rotation methods were used to generate four, five, six, and nine factor solutions. Twenty-one items were dropped from the analysis due to low factor loadings (i.e. factor loadings less than .3000).

This analysis yielded a five-factor solution that optimally separated items conceptually defined as stressors from items related to sociocultural attitudes. The factor solution and source of items are presented in Table 1. The first factor that emerged seemed to incorporate all of the items related to minority status stress and was therefore conceptualized as the racially stress domain. It accounted for 15.6.2% of the variance of all three scales. This factor seemed to reflect a constellation of stressors that were

pertinent to one's minority status. This factor, termed **minority status** stress consisted of 40 items and demonstrated high internal validity (Cronbach's alpha = .942).

Insert Table 1 about here

The other factors that emerged seemed to comprise the broad sociocultural domain. The second factor was comprised of 22 items and accounted for 11.1% of the variance. This factor seemed to reflect a degree of self hatred and alienation from one's own cultural group. Termed **alienation**, this factor demonstrated high reliability as well (Cronbach's alpha = .830).

The third factor seemed to reflect a profound preference for participation in activities that were associated solely with African American cultural themes and a desire to avoid interaction with whites. Termed **emersion**, this factor demonstrated high reliability (Cronbach's alpha = .867). This factor accounted for 6.5% of the variance and was comprised of 22 items. The fourth factor which was comprised of 11 items, seemed to depict a desire to assimilate into the dominant culture and a desire for African Americans to not rock the boat'. This factor termed **assimilation** accounted for 4.1% of the variance and demonstrated moderate reliability (Cronbach's alpha = .720). Finally the fifth factor was comprised of seven items and accounted for 3.6% of the variance of this construct. This factor seemed to characterize a profound sense of cultural pride coupled with awareness and appreciation for concerns of other cultural groups. This factor was termed **ethnic affirmation** and demonstrated moderate reliability (Cronbach's alpha = .707).

Previous factor analyses of these scales have revealed similar outcomes. Smedley's (in press) analysis produced five factors, four of which were parallel to these. The parallel

factors were racial climate stress, ethnic affirmation, white avoidance, and alienation. The other factor referred to stress students might experience in relation to their academic performance as minority students. Prillerman (1988) did a separate analysis on the stress scale and the orientation scales. Her analysis of the stress scale revealed stressors related to the environment of UCLA, interpersonal relationships, racism-related stressors, intra-group stressors, and achievement-related stressors. The sociocultural factors that emerged included alienation, affirmation, assimilation, and individualism/race-avoidance.

Social Support

Two measures of social support were utilized within this study to account for the multidimensional nature of this construct.

Interpersonal Support Evaluation List (ISEL; Cohen & Hoberman, 1983). This measure is designed to assess the perceived availability of four separate functions of social support as well as provide an overall functional support measure. The four subscales include tangible support- the perceived availability of material aid; appraisal support- the perceived availability of someone to talk to about one's problems; self-esteem support which is the perceived availability of a positive comparison when comparing one's self with others; and belonging support -the perceived availability of people one can do things with. The items are counterbalanced for desirability, that is half of the items are positive statements about social relationships (e.g., "I know someone who would lend me their notes if I missed class"), while half are negative statements (e.g., "There isn't anyone at school or in town with whom I feel perfectly comfortable talking about my career goals"). The ISEL was found to be moderately correlated with the Inventory of Socially Supportive Behaviors (0.46, $p < .001$) and it was found to be correlated -.52 and -.64 with social anxiety in two samples of college students. The overall rating of perceived social

support was utilized for the present analysis. Throughout the remainder of the text the overall rating of perceived available social support will be referred to as AVAIL.

Social Resources and Social Supports Questionnaire (SRSQ; Myers, 1989). This measure is designed to assess the different types of support individuals have in their daily lives as well as the degree of satisfaction they derive from these sources of support. The SRSQ was developed and tested on African-American adults, and has been used in several studies with multi-ethnic samples of college students. This measure has demonstrated good concurrent validity by showing moderate correlations with level of somatization ($r = 0.35$), obsessive-compulsiveness ($r = 0.61$), and anxiety ($r = 0.24$) in African American adults (Myers, 1989).

A shortened version of this measure was used in which respondents were asked to list the initials of six people who were most important in their life, to describe their relationship with the support individuals, their gender, and their race/ethnicity. Respondents were also asked to rate their degree of satisfaction with the kinds of support received from each of the support person(s) identified on a scale ranging from 1 (I am 100% dissatisfied) to 5 (I am a 100% satisfied), with 0 indicating I don't ask for this kind of help. Support ratings were made in each of five content areas: advice, praise, instrumental help, emotional support, and socializing. Scores for each respondent were generated by summing the ratings in each content area and dividing by the number of support persons listed in Part I. Each of these individual ratings was summed to create a total composite measure of perceived support. This composite of perception of social support received will be referred to as (RECD) throughout the remainder of the text.

Outcome Measures

Two outcome measures were focussed upon, overall student adaptation and academic achievement.

Student Adaptation to College Questionnaire (SACQ) Baker & Siryk, (1989).

This measure consists of 67 statements that are self rated on a nine-point scale. There are four subscales, each measuring a different aspect of adjustment. The academic adjustment subscale has 24 items involving academic stressors such as studying, choice of major, examinations and professors. The social adjustment subscale is comprised of 20 items that tap social relationships and societal demands that students most likely encounter in college, and also deal with social relocation and being away from home while significant persons remain there. The personal-emotional adjustment subscale consists of 15 items that relate to the students' mental and physical health (i.e., nervousness, tension, worry, and somatic complaints). Lastly, the institutional attachment subscale contains 15 items designed to measure how satisfied students are with the institution in general and how well they feel they fit in. These scales have demonstrated acceptable reliability and validity when used with African American students. For the present analysis, the total adjustment score was used. This score is referred to as PSYCH throughout the remainder of the text.

Cumulative Grade Point Average Academic achievement was assessed using students' reported cumulative grade-point average. This information was expected to evidence a high level of reliability.

Results

Demographics and Sample Characteristics

The sample was equally distributed along gender lines (40 females and 40 males) and the majority (82.5%) were undergraduate students while only 17.5 % of the sample was graduate students. The sample was also comprised primarily of social science, physical science, and Humanities majors (26.2%, 28.7% and 20 % respectively). The vast majority of the sample (85.7 %) also were classified as lower socioeconomic status (calculated by collapsing the individual levels of SES into two categories; high and low).

In addition most of the sample originated within the state of Virginia (67.9%) and the second highest place of origin was the east coast (25.6%). Age ranged from 18 to 50 and the average age was 22.06 (SD=4.15). The average standardized test score (SAT scores for undergraduates, GRE scores for graduate students) for the samples was 1012 (SD=221.33) and average grade point average was 2.46 (SD=6.33). Relevant sample demographic information is included in Table 2 and the means and standard deviations of the variables examined in this analysis can be found in Table 3.

Insert Table 2 about here

Insert Table 3 about here

Path Analysis

Several independent sample T- test with Bonferoni corrections were conducted to see if the sample differed significantly on the targeted variables in terms of gender, level in school, and socioeconomic status. There were no significant differences between groups on the targeted variables. Thus this sample represented a relatively homogeneous group.

Correlations

Pearson moment correlations with Bonferoni corrections were conducted with all of the variables. There were several significant relationships . The correlation matrix is presented in Table 4. As can be seen minority status stress was significantly related to the sociocultural orientation styles of alienation ($r=.32, p<.005$) and emersion ($r=.38, p<.001$). This type of stress was also negatively related to psychological adaptation ($r=-.48, p<.001$).

Insert table 4 about here

As for the sociocultural orientation styles, alienation was significantly related to assimilation ($r=.35, p<.005$), and negatively related to ethnic affirmation ($r=-.34, p<.005$). Alienation was also negatively related to perceived available social support ($r=-.51, p<.001$). Finally, perceived available support was demonstrated to be positively correlated with ethnic affirmation ($r=.35, p<.005$). Perceived social support as measured by the SRSQ and the AVAIL were not significantly related supporting the notion that these measures were tapping different aspects of perceived social support.

A causal recursive model was evaluated using path analysis by conducting a series of hierarchical multiple regression equations. In addition the statistical software, Lisrel 8, was used to estimate direct and indirect path coefficients. Table 5 reports the hierarchical regression analyses for prediction of the outcome variables as well as the relationship between the predictor variables. Table 6 presents the direct and indirect effects of the independent variables on scores of psychological adaptation and academic adaptation. Figure 3 diagrams the causal pathways between the variables examined (academic adaptation as an outcome was not included due to its nonsignificance). As can be seen several of the paths were significant. Overall, psychological adaptation was predicted by the proposed causal relationship $F(2, 78) = 6.63, p<.01$. In addition, incorporating the two measures of perceived social support into the model improved the amount of variance accounted for. Academic adaptation $F(7, 72) = 1.02, p<.01$ was not significantly predicted by the proposed causal relationship. Examining the relationships between the independent variables indicated that sociocultural orientation and minority status stress were significant predictors of perceived available support $F(5, 74) = 31.00, p<.01$ and

minority status stress was predicted by the various sociocultural orientation styles $F(4, 75) = 5.66, p < .01$).

Insert table 5 about here

Insert table 6 about here

To gain a more detailed understanding of the relationships between sociocultural orientation styles, minority status stress, perceived social support, and psychological adaptation, the specific pathways between these variables were examined (see Table 5 for relevant statistics). The pathway from emersion and alienation to minority status stress (Beta = .30, $p < .05$; Beta = .36, $p < .01$ respectively) was significant. Perceived available social support (AVAIL) was directly predicted by assimilation (Beta = .26, $p < .01$) and ethnic affirmation (Beta = .73, $p < .00$). It also evidenced a negative relationship with alienation (Beta = -.86, $p < .01$) and emersion (Beta = -.23, $p < .01$). Only minority status stress (Beta = .26, $p < .05$), alienation (Beta = -.34, $p < .05$), and ethnic affirmation (Beta = .30, $p < .05$) were significant predictors of perception of social support received (RECD). Alienation again was a negative predictor. Alienation (Beta = .45, $p < .05$) and emersion (Beta = .26, $p < .05$) independently predicted psychological adaptation. Ethnic affirmation (Beta = -.60, $p < .01$) was a negative predictor of psychological adaptation. Minority status stress was significantly related to perception of received social support (RECD) (Beta = .26, $p < .05$), and negatively related to psychological adaptation (Beta = -.52,

p<.01). Finally, available social support (AVAIL) directly predicted psychological adaptation (Beta=.56, p<.01).

Contrary to expectations, the hypothesized indirect relationships were not significant. Thus sociocultural orientation did not have an indirect effect on social support and adaptation outcomes. In addition, minority status stress did not have an indirect effect on adaptational outcomes. The indirect effects can be seen in Table 6.

Discussion

The purpose of this research was to explore the extent to which adding a fine grained analysis of perceived social support increased the predictive utility of the causal relationship between sociocultural orientation, minority status stress, and both psychological and academic student adaptation. Thus a path model was derived that would allow for an empirical test of this relationship. The relationship between the predictor variables will be discussed first followed by a discussion of the entire model as it relates to the prediction of the outcome variables.

Sociocultural Orientation

As one could intuitively expect, the sociocultural orientation styles of assimilation and alienation were significantly related to each other. In addition, alienation had a negative relationship with ethnic affirmation. It has often been indicated that those African Americans who opt to divorce themselves from their own culture and to take on all the social characteristics of the dominant culture (i.e. assimilation) often either chose to alienate themselves from their own culture or they are ostracized by their cultural community (Tracey & Sedlacek, 1985). In addition, alienation seems to represent a maladaptive method of coping with the dominant culture while ethnic affirmation seems to be more positive. Thus one would expect those individuals who evidence a desire to distance themselves from their culture (Alienation) to be less likely to have a sense of

cultural pride balanced by an appreciation of other cultures (ethnic affirmation).

Therefore, these findings seem consistent with the present understanding of sociocultural orientation styles.

Minority Status Stress

Consistent with the stress precursor model (Smedley et, al., in press), these results demonstrated that an individual's sociocultural orientation serves as a precursor to his/her experience of minority status stress (i.e. "..seeing members of my racial group in low status jobs while whites have high status jobs"). The sociocultural orientation styles of emersion and alienation emerged as specific predictors of minority status stress. This relationship was demonstrated in prior studies of African American students at other predominantly white universities (Smedley et, al., in press; Prillerman, 1988). Based on these results, it would appear that the more students evidence coping and attitude styles that are characterized by complete enmeshment in those activities that they perceive to be indicative of the African American cultural experience (i.e. emersion) or that are characterized by distancing oneself from these activities (i.e. alienation), the greater their vulnerability to minority status stressors.

This finding is ironic, however, because it suggests that seemingly opposite orientation styles lead to increased minority status stress. It becomes more understandable, however, when one realizes that for both these groups racially relevant stimuli may be more salient to these individuals due to their orientation styles. Consequently, these individuals may experience an increased vulnerability to these type of stressors. Perhaps for the other two groups (i.e., assimilation, ethnic affirmation), individuals may have developed effective strategies for responding to racially relevant stimuli and thus they are less negatively affected. Other research has suggested that the development of effective coping styles has led to a healthy sense of racial identity where

progression through stages characterized by both emersion and alienation results in a more balanced perspective regarding ethnicity and the dominant culture (Cross, 1978; Gibbs, 1974; Gurin & Epps, 1975; Parham & Helms, 1985).

Social Support

A further purpose of this study was to employ a more fine grained analysis of perceived social support to ascertain its role in the relationship between the experience of minority status stressors and adaptational outcomes. To accomplish this, two measures of perceived social support were utilized. The ISEL assessed the students' perceptions of available social support resources (AVAIL) and the SRSSQ assessed the student's perception of social support they had received in specific areas from significant individuals within their life (RECD). Composite scores from these measures were not found to be correlated thus suggesting that they did indeed tap distinctive aspects of the construct of social support.

Minority status stress and ethnic affirmation were predictive of the student's perception of the social support they received, while alienation was a negative predictor. Thus a high level of stress and a balanced sociocultural perspective were more predictive of a positive evaluation of received support. This suggests that those students who are experiencing difficulties related to their minority status are very content with the support they receive from others to help deal with these stressors. In addition, ethnically affirming students are also more satisfied with the social support they receive.

Those who were distanced from their own community (alienated) did not demonstrate this same pattern. Rather alienated individuals were more dissatisfied with their received social support. The negative predictive ability of alienation seems to reflect a general discontent of these individuals with their own cultural group and negative evaluation of any support that may be available from this group. Examining the items that

comprise the alienation factor indicate that in addition to feeling distanced from their own community, these individuals also exhibit isolation from the dominant community as well (i.e. "I feel like avoiding most people at Virginia Tech" and "I don't feel that I fit in with either African Americans or Whites"). Consequently, it would appear that they are not heavily integrated with either group and therefore not integrated into the collegiate environment as a whole.

It is not uncommon for those students who are not integrated into the collegiate environment to give negative evaluations of the social support they receive. Smedley (1992) demonstrated that decreased social integration into the college community was related to a decreased perception of received social support. It would therefore seem that alienated students would be discontent with support they received from their own community and the majority community as well.

Ethnic affirmation and assimilation were direct predictors of perceived available support while alienation and emersion were negative predictors. The relationship between assimilation and perceived available support is somewhat surprising. Given the fact that assimilated individuals may not have access to support resources within their own community (Tracey & Sedlacek, 1985), one would expect them to have a decreased perception of support available to them. One explanation for these counterintuitive findings is that these individuals seek after resources within the dominant community and devalue support from individuals within their own community. Therefore, their perception of available support is not lessened by a lack of support from the African American community. For example, one of the items within the assimilation subscale posits a belief that an African American's most effective weapon for solving problems is to become a part of the dominant culture ('white man's world'). Thus, these individuals may

in fact believe that they have more social support resources than those who have limited their source of social support to the minority community.

Academic Adaptation

Academic Adaptation was not significantly predicted by the hypothesized causal model. In addition none of the causal pathways leading to this variable were significant. This finding was consistent, however, with prior research that failed to establish a connection between unique sociocultural factors and academic performance (Smedley et al. ,1993). Thus, there still remains a need for future research to investigate those factors which contribute to the disparity between the academic functioning of African American students at predominantly white universities and other students.

Psychological Adaptation

The model as designed and tested demonstrated that overall there is a predictive relationship between sociocultural orientation styles, minority status stress, social support, and psychological adaptation in the direction predicted. Consequently, for African American students at Virginia Tech their psychological adaptation to the university appears to be a function of three causal relationships: their perception of racially relevant stimuli, how this perception impacts their experience of racially relevant stressors, and how their evaluation of their received social support impacts their experiences of minority status stressors. This relationship seems to offer a possible causal explanation for the disparity that exists in the psychological functioning of African American students at predominantly white universities relative to other students. This finding further suggests that both evaluation of support received and perception of available social support impact the influence of minority status stress on African American students' psychological adaptation to the collegiate environment.

Examining the individual pathways between the predictor variables reveals that students' estimation of the actual support received in specific areas was less important to their psychological functioning than their perception of available support. This is demonstrated by comparing the predictive ability of the two types of perceived social support. The amount of support that students perceived available to them was a significant independent predictor of psychological functioning. This suggests that students' awareness of available social support resources, should they require these resources, is more central to their psychological adaptation than how they have actually used these resources.

Minority status stress negatively predicted psychological adaptation. Therefore individuals who had high levels of minority status stress were less adapted to the collegiate environment and those students who evidenced lower levels of stress were more adapted. Prior studies, however, have not shown these type of stressors to be specifically related to general psychological distress (Smedley, 1992). It seems as if these stressors are more likely to impact individuals within specific contexts (i.e., psychological adaptation to a collegiate environment) as opposed to general areas of psychological functioning. Specifically, African American students attending predominantly white universities have been found to evidence psychological problems that are specifically relevant to their collegiate environment (Allen, 1988). As such, examining the impact of these sociocultural factors on the functioning of African American students within particular contexts may be a more useful heuristic for studying the impact of these factors.

In addition, studies that demonstrated less of an impact of minority status stressors on psychological functioning were situated in multi-cultural settings where students may have been able to access social support resources within the larger community. Virginia Tech as stated earlier is located in a more homogeneous environment (i.e. the majority of

the students are from neighboring communities within the state of Virginia) with fewer culturally relevant community resources as compared to those that would be available within a large, more ethnically diverse, metropolitan city. Consequently, minority status stressors may be more salient within the Virginia Tech environment.

Several interesting relationships were demonstrated between specific sociocultural orientation styles and psychological adaptation. Specifically, ethnic affirmation was negatively related to psychological adaptation, and both assimilation and emersion were positively related to this type of adaptation. These relationships suggest that seemingly polarized approaches to racial issues (i.e., emersion and alienation) are more conducive to healthy functioning within this environment than a more balanced approach (i.e. ethnic affirmation). These results are inconsistent with the literature that suggests that emersion and alienation are maladaptive ways of dealing with one's minority status stress. However, based on these results, these individuals seem to fair much better than those who evidence more adaptive orientations.

One potential explanation is that an ethnically affirming sociocultural orientation style is not conducive for optimal psychological functioning within a predominantly white collegiate environment. Consequently, ethnic affirmation individuals evidence more psychological discomfort. This is in direct contrast to the literature suggesting that more racially affirming orientation styles are more psychologically conducive for functioning within a predominantly white cultural context.

Also, the failure of increased ethnic affirmation to lead to more psychological adaptation seems to contrast with its ability to directly predict perceived available support and perception of social support received. This finding is consistent with research that suggests that optimal functioning for African Americans within the American society requires a level of **healthy cultural paranoia** (Thompson et al, 1990). Healthy cultural

paranoia refers to the anxiety and suspiciousness that African Americans develop as a result of ongoing exposure to a ecosystem they cannot trust. This paranoia manifests itself in several potential ways; lack of trust in people, suspicion of the motives of others, etc. Thus one could postulate that alienation and emersion may be adaptive manifestation of this paranoia and thus they contribute to greater psychological adaptation, while ethnic affirmation represents a maladaptive sense of comfort thus contributing to decreased psychological adaptation.

The introduction to this project focussed on the apparent disparity that exists between the academic and psychological functioning of African American students at predominantly white universities relative to white students and other minority students. It was postulated that this disparity was due in part to the impact of unique sociocultural factors on the functioning of African American students at these institutions. These specific sociocultural factors were believed to be the students' sociocultural orientation style and their experience of minority status stress. Previous tests of a stress precursor model of the relationship between these factors did not account for a significant amount of variance of the students academic and psychological functioning. Based on research suggesting that perceived social support affects the relationship between stress and adaptational outcomes, this study was intended to ascertain the extent to which social support impacted this relationship. Thus a revised stress precursor model which accounted for the effect of sociocultural orientation style, minority status stress, and perception of both social support available and received on adaptational outcomes was proposed. The results demonstrated that the revised stress precursor model was a more superior model to the previous stress precursor model.

In summary, these results support the fact that the psychological adaptation of African American students to the environment at Virginia Tech is impacted by the

sociocultural factors of sociocultural orientation and minority status stress. In addition, these results indicate that both perception of social support received and perception of available support resources also affect their psychological adaptation. These factors have been demonstrated to also have a significant impact on each other. Thus there are several complex phenomena that affect how comfortable African American students are in the predominantly white collegiate setting of Virginia Tech. These results also suggest that sociocultural factors are very salient issues that these students confront on a day to day basis and that these factors play a pivotal role in the quality of the experience African Americans have while here at Virginia Tech.

Limitations

There are several limitations within this study. Due to a relatively small sample size the results of this investigation should be interpreted cautiously and may not be generalizable to other groups of minority students. Also, given the fact that the present study was conducted in the Black Cultural Center at Virginia Tech, the study sample may be biased toward those students who are more active within the African-American community. Hopefully, however, the solicitation of students through posters and telephone calls may have allowed for a more representative sample of the African American students at Virginia Tech.

The relatively small sample size also may have compromised the validity of the factor analysis conducted in the current study. Typically there should be a higher ratio of subjects in comparison to the number of items included within a factor analysis. Consequently, the factors which emerged from the analysis (i.e. minority status stress, and the various sociocultural orientation styles) may not be generalizable to other populations.

This current study was intended to evaluate the applicability of an established model. Thus alternative orderings of the variables which comprised this model were not considered. However, the nature of the relationships that were supported by the present data do suggest that alternative theoretical explanations of the relationship between these variables might exist. Thus, future research should investigate alternative explanations as a means of adding to our understanding of the experiences of African American students at predominantly White universities.

Psychological adaptation was not found to be significantly correlated with academic adaptation within the present study. This suggests that students' academic performance has no effect on their psychological functioning and vice versa. Given the fact that prior studies of student performance has shown that these two constructs are related, this finding is rather surprising and should be interpreted with caution.

The present path analysis also did not allow for an examination of the reciprocal relationships that may exist between the relevant variables. Also the relevant variables were all assessed at one point in time. Thus we are afforded only a limited understanding of the true relationship between one's orientation style, level of minority status stress, social support, and adaptation. Further research should pursue the extent to which these factors reciprocally interact and the extent to which these relationships may change over the course of time.

Implications

African American students are demonstrating significant problems in the arena of higher education specifically in regards to their functioning at predominantly white universities. This research hopefully can offer some insight into the nature of these difficulties and lead to more research that examines those unique factors which differentially impact the functioning of these students within the collegiate environment.

Although the popular trend now is more toward focussing on those factors that unite us as a human race we need to make sure that those factors which contribute to our diversity, such as those investigated within this study, are not forgotten.

These results suggest that intervention programs that are designed to improve the retention of African American students should offer services that address the minority status stressors these students experience in addition to offering them academic support services. These interventions should be geared toward dealing with difficulties these students might experience acclimating themselves to the university environment and toward normalizing their feelings of isolation within this environment (Smedley et, al. 1985).

There is also a need to address these issues at the level of the collegiate environment. The fact that the ability of students to adapt to the collegiate environment is negatively impacted by minority status stressors also represents a failure of the university administration to foster an environment where all students can achieve their optimal functioning. Thus a definite need exists for policy makers at universities to work at making the predominantly white college environment less threatening to those from minority cultures. Some suggested intervention strategies which were posited by Thompson et, al, (1990) include: creating racial awareness programs for students, administrators, faculty, and staff; offering discussion groups to focus on groups differences and similarities; and advocating for required ethnic course requirements.

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Table 1
Principal Axis Factor Solution: MSS, RIAS, SCO
Principal Axis Factor Analysis: MSS, RIAS, SCO
(Factor solution accounts for 40.8% of variance)

Factor 1: Minority Status Stress (15.6% pf variance; alpha=.94)	
Item	Factor Loading
My family does not understand pressures from college (i.e., amountof time or quiet time needed to study). MSS	.47
Being the first in my family to attend a major university. MSS	.34
Doubting my ability to succeed in college. MSS	.49
My academic background preparation for college being inadequate. MSS	.32
White people expecting me to be a certain way because of my race(i.e., stereotyping). MSS	.73
Language-related problems (i.e., having an " accent" or speaking non-standard English). MSS	.52
Maintaining my ethnic identity while attending Virginia Tech. MSS	.59
The lack of unity/supportiveness among members of my race at Virginia Tech. MSS	.60
Being discriminated against. MSS	.71
Being treated rudely or unfairly because of my race. MSS	.72
Others lacking respect for people of my race. MSS	.70
Attitudes/treatment of faculty toward students of my race. MSS	.68
Having to "prove" my abilities to others (i.e., work twice as hard). MSS	.78
Pessures to show loyalty to my race (i.e., giving back to my ethnic group community). MSS	.73
White students and faculty expecting poor academic performance from students of my race. MSS	.64
Pressures from people of my same race (i.e., how to act, what to believe). MSS	.68
People close to me thinking that I am acting "White". MSS	.44
Feeling others do no respect my intelligence. MSS	.64
Having white friends. MSS	.38
Relationships between different ethnic groups at Virginia Tech. MSS	.68
Having to always be aware of what white people might do. MSS	.70
White-oriented campus culture at Virginia Tech. MSS	.54
Wealthy campus culture at Virginia Tech. MSS	.60
Virginia Tech being an unfriendly place. MSS	.73
Having to live around mostly White people. MSS	.34
Tense relationships between Whites and minorities at Virginia Tech. MSS	.76

Few courses involving issues relevant to my ethnic group. MSS	.61
Racist policies and practices of the university. MSS	.66
Virginia Tech lacking concern and support for the need of students of my race. MSS	.56
Virginia Tech not having enough professors of my race. MSS	.58
Few students of my race being in my classes. MSS	.48
Seeing members of my race doing low status jobs and Whites in high status jobs at Virginia Tech. MSS	.68
Pressures that what "I" do is representative of my ethnic group's abilities, behavior, etc. MSS	.60
Feeling less intelligent or less capable than others. MSS	.52
Relationships between males and females of my race (i.e., lack of available dating partners). MSS	.50
I feel like avoiding most people at Virginia Tech. SCO	.34
I feel that I don't fit in with either African Americans or Whites. SCO	.32
It is useless to put effort into the African Americans student union because they really can't change the problems facing African Americans. SCO	.38
I frequently confront the system and the man. RIAS	.31

Factor 2: Alienation (11.1% of the variance; alpha=.83)

Item	Factor Loading
Doubting my ability to succeed in college. MSS	.34
Pressures from people of my same race (i.e., how to act, what to believe). MSS	.39
Feeling less intelligent or less capable than others. MSS	.30
I feel that I can't live up to my high expectations of myself. SCO	.36
I feel like avoiding most people at Virginia Tech. SCO	.44
I am more attracted to dating Whites than I am to African Americans. SCO	.43
I am embarrassed by other African Americans. SCO	.46
I feel that I don't fit in with either African Americans or Whites. SCO	.57
I would rather avoid conflict than confront it. SCO	.49
I don't feel comfortable discussing racial issues. SCO	.47
I am hesitant to speak my mind when I hear something negative about African Americans. SCO	.38
I don't like to take part in programs or organizations that are just for African Americans. SCO	.42
I would rather not be involved in ANY group activities-- I prefer to keep to myself. SCO	.57
I don't feel accepted by other African Americans. SCO	.59

It is useless to put effort into the African Americans student union because they really can't change the

problems facing African Americans. SCO	.49
I am more comfortable around Whites than African Americans. SCO	.64
I believe that large numbers of African Americans are untrustworthy. RIAS	.31
I believe that White people look and express themselves better than African Americans. RIAS	.56
I feel very uncomfortable around African American people. RIAS	.34
I believe that to be African American is not necessarily good. RIAS	.33
I believe that certain aspects of the African American experience apply to me, and others do not. RIAS	.38
I believe that African American people came from a strange, dark, and uncivilized continent. RIAS	.41

Factor 3: Emersion (6.5% of the variance; alpha=.87)

Item	Factor Loading
Having to live around mostly White people. MSS	.44
Few students of my race being in my classes. MSS	.36
I feel angry toward White people about their treatment of African Americans. EOS	.54
It is important for me to participate in activities and organizations related to African Americans. EOS	.35
I feel like avoiding most people at Virginia Tech. EOS	.32
I don't trust White people. EOS	.48
In general, Virginia Tech represents values that are different from my own. EOS	.39
I try to have as little contact with Whites as possible. EOS	.64
It is important for me to participate in political protests and rallies relevant to Third World issues (i.e., South Africa). EOS	.31
I don't feel comfortable discussing racial issues. EOS	.31
African American student groups are too militant and radical. EOS	.40
It bothers me to see interracial couples. EOS	.64
I feel that White students really don't want African Americans to participate in "their" activities. EOS	.60
I feel unable to involve myself in white experiences, and am increasing my involvement in African American experiences. RIAS	.69
I feel an overwhelming attachment to African American people. RIAS	.40
I often find myself referring to White people as honkies, devils, pigs, etc. RIAS	.46
I believe that the world should be interpreted from an African American perspective. RIAS	.68
I have changed my style of life to fit my beliefs about African American people. RIAS	.55

I find myself reading a lot of African American literature and thinking about being African American. RIAS	.37
I believe that everything African American is good, consequently, I limit myself to African American activities. RIAS	.48
I am determined to find my African American Identity. RIAS	.57

Factor 4: Assimilation (4.1%; alpha=.72)

Item	Factor Loading
My family discourages me from spending my time going to college. MSS	.39
My academic background preparation for college being inadequate. MSS	.40
I consider myself "American" more than I consider myself African-American. SCO	.50
African Americans should not "rock the boat" but rather focus on individual achievement. SCO	.48
It is important to work within "the system" to make things better for African Americans. SCO	.44
African American student groups are too militant and radical. SCO	.41
I don't feel comfortable in African American neighborhoods. SCO	.70
I am hesitant to speak my mind when I hear something negative about African Americans. SCO	.47
I believe that African American people should learn to think and experience life in ways which are similar to White people. SCO	.41
I feel guilty and/or anxious about some of the things I believe about African American people. SCO	.43
I believe that an African American's most effective weapon for solving problems is to become a part of the White person's world. SCO	.63

Factor 5: Ethnic Affirmation (3.6% of variance; alpha=.70)

Item	Factor Loading
It is important for me to participate in political protests and rallies relevant to Third World issues (i.e., South Africa). SCO	.49
I involve myself in causes that will help all oppressed people. RIAS	.38
I feel comfortable wherever I am. RIAS	.45
I constantly involve myself in African American political and social activities. RIAS	.58
I involve myself in social action and political groups even though there are no other African Americans. RIAS	.60
I believe that everything African American is good, consequently, I limit myself to African American activities. RIAS	.43

Table 2
Sample Demographics

Sample Demographics

Variables	n	%		
Gender				
male	40	50		
female	40	50		
Age				
18	4	5		
19	9	11.2		
20	15	18.8		
21	16	20		
22	11	13.7		
23	10	12.5		
24	5	6.3		
25	2	2.5		
26	1	1.2		
27	1	1.2		
28	3	3.7	Mean	<u>SD</u>
29	1	1.2	22.06	4.15
31	1	1.2		
50	1	1.2		
Level in School				
Fresh	5	6.3		
Soph	15	18.8	82.6 % Under-	
Junior	18	22.5	graduate	
Senior	28	35.0	17.5 % Graduate	
Grad	14	17.5		
Major				
Soc Science	21	26.2		
Life Sciences	11	13.7		
Humanities	7	8.7		
Phy Sciences	23	28.7		
Buisiness	16	20.0		
Other	1	1.2		
SES				
Low	51	65.4		
High	24	30.8		
Place of Birth				
East Coast	20	25.6		
South	53	67.9		
North	2	2.6		
Other Country	3	3.8		

Table 3
Means and Standard Deviations

Means And Standard Deviations

	<u>Mean</u>	<u>SD</u>
GPA	2.46	.63
	max=3.7	min=1.0
Test Score	1012.95	221.33
	max=1490	min=640

Table 4
Pearson Moment Correlation

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
1. MSS	-								
2. Alie	.32*	-							
3. Emer	.38**	.06	-						
4. Assi	.10	.35*	.05	-					
5. EAff	.12	-.34	*.16	-.22	-				
6. AVAIL	-.19	-.51	**-.17	-.19	.35*	-			
7. RECd	.15	-.10	-.04	.01	.16	.20	-		
8. PSYCH	-.48	**-.23	-.08	-.03	-.24	.19	-.19	-	
9. GPA	.04	.05	-.12	.08	-.06	-.11	-.18	-.08	-

*p<.005 **p<.001

Table 5 Summary of Hierarchical Multiple Regressions

Dependent Variable - Psychological Adaptation (PSYCH)

	Variable	B	SEB	Beta	p	
Equation 1	Alienation	-14.43	12.08	-.16	.24	F(7,72) = 6.63 p<.01**
	Emersion	-4.08	11.01	-.04	.71	
	Assimilation	-1.55	11.19	-.02	.89	
	Eth Affirm	-14.00	9.72	.19	.15	
Equation 2	Alienation	-.46	11.21	.01	.97	
	Emersion	14.07	10.61	.14	.19	
	Assimilation	-13.26	10.13	-.15	.19	
	Eth Affirm	-15.59	8.67	-.21	.07	
	MSS	-30.97	6.87	.51	.00	
Equation 3	Alienation	41.11	16.73	.45	.02	
	Emersion	25.66	10.67	.26	.02	
	Assimilation	-13.26	10.13	-.15	.19	
	Eth Affirm	-45.08	12.35	-.60	.00	
	MSS	-31.69	-6.63	-.52	.00	
	RECD	-.71	.95	-.07	.47	
	AVAIL	1.91	.55	.56	.00	

Note. R²=.09 for Equation 1; change in R²=.09 for Equation 2 (p<.01). R²=.28 for Equation 2; change in R²=.11 for Equation 3(p<.01).

Dependent Variable- Perception of Support Received (RECD)

	Variable	B	SEB	Beta	p	
Equation 1	Alienation	-2.43	1.26	-.26	.06	F (5,74)=2.19, p=.06
	Emersion	-.56	1.15	-.06	.63	
	Assimilation	1.48	1.16	.16	.21	
	Eth Affirm	2.30	1.01	.29	.03	
Equation2	Alienation	-3.17	1.28	-.34	.02	
	Emersion	-1.53	1.21	-.15	.21	
	Assimilation	1.47	1.14	.16	.20	
	Eth Affirm	2.38	.99	.30	.02	
	MSS	1.65	.78	.26	.04	

Note. R²=.08 for Equation 1; change in R²=.05 for Equation 2 (P<.05).

Dependent Variable- Perception of Available Support (AVAIL)

	Variable	B	SEB	Beta	p	
Equation 1	Alienation	-22.41	2.12	-.84	.00	F(5,74)=31.00 p<.01
	Emersion	-6.03	1.93	1.93	.00	
	Assimilation	6.7	1.97	.26	.00	
	Eth Affirm	16.21	1.71	.73	.00	
Equation 2	Alienation	-22.86	2.21	-.86	.00	
	Emersion	-6.61	2.09	-.23	.00	
	Assimilation	6.69	1.97	.26	.00	
	Eth Affirm	16.27	1.71	.73	.00	
	MSS	.99	1.35	.06	.47	

Note. R²=.67 for Equation 1; change in R²=.002 for Equation 2 (p=.47).

Dependent Variable- Minority Status Stress

	Variable	B	SEB	Beta	p	
Equation 1	Alienation	.45	.18	.30	.01	F 4,75)=5.66 p<.01
	Emersion	.59	.17	.36	.00	
	Assimilation	.00	.17	.00	.98	
	Eth Affirm	-.05	.15	-.04	.72	

Table 6
Direct, Indirect, and Total Effect (Beta Weights)

Psychological Adaptation

Variable	Direct Effect	Indirect Effect	Total Effect
AVAIL	1.92	--	1.92
RECD	-.71	--	-.71
MSSStress	-31.67	70	-30.97
Alienation	41.11	-55.54	-14.43
Emersion	25.66	-29.74	-4.08
Assimilation	-13.26	11.71	-1.55
Ethnic Affirmation	-45.08	31.10	-13.98

Academic Adaptation

Variable	Direct Effect	Indirect Effect	Total Effect
SSAVAIL	-.12	--	-.12
RECD	-.29	--	-.29
MSSStress	1.37	-.61	.76
Alienation	-3.33	4.09	.76
Emersion	-3.33	1.71	-1.62
Assimilation	1.79	-1.25	.54
Ethnic Affirmation	2.22	-2.74	-.52

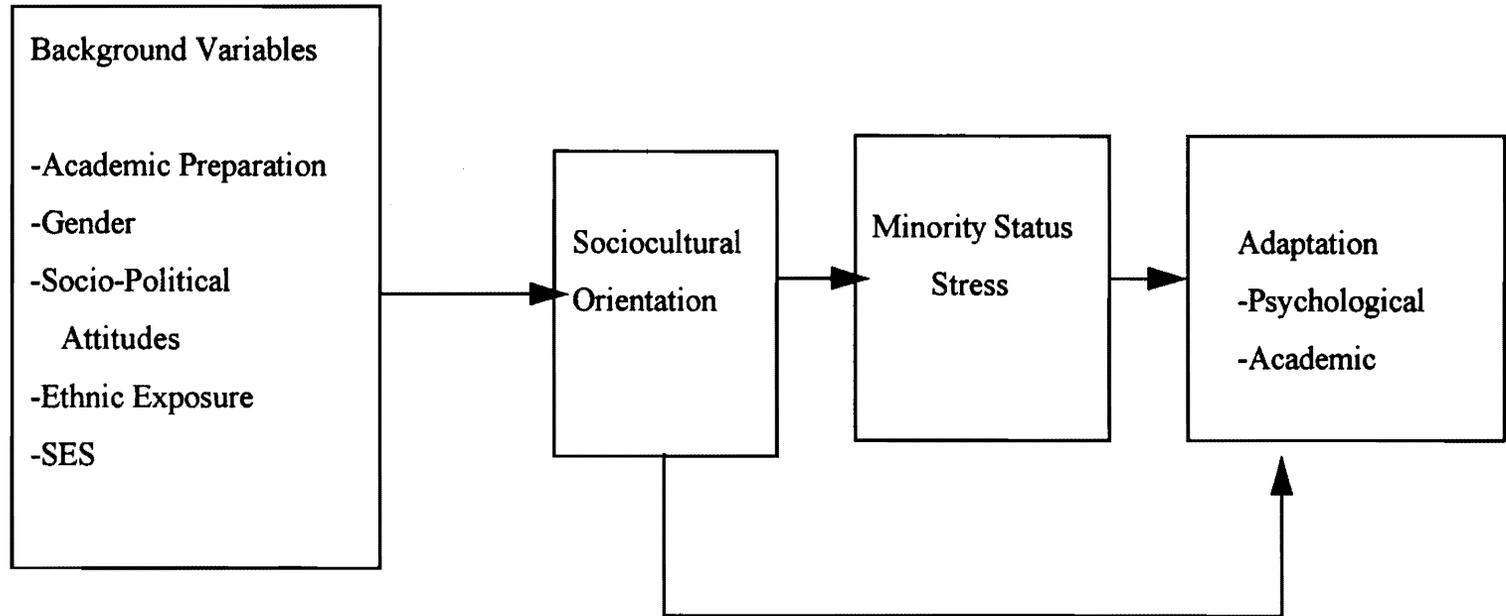


Figure 1-Stress Precursor Model

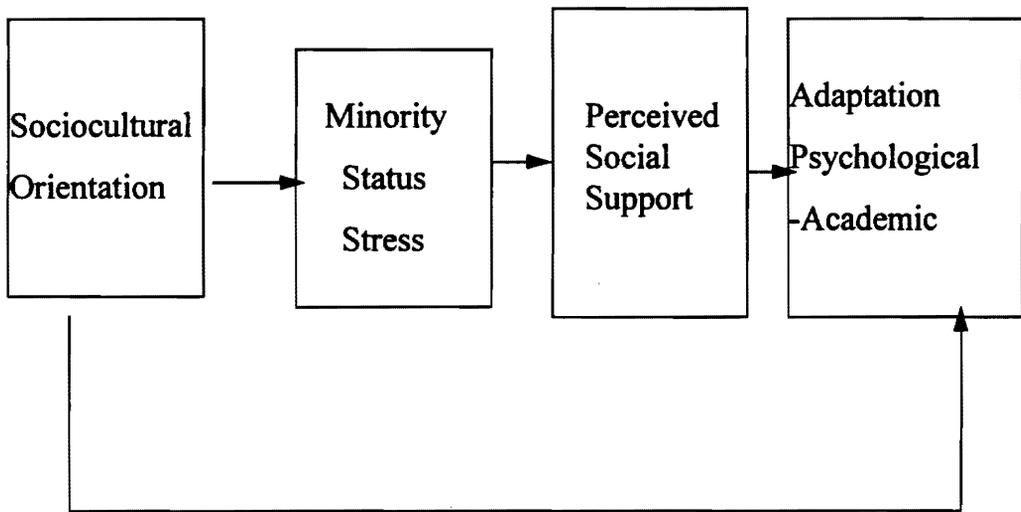
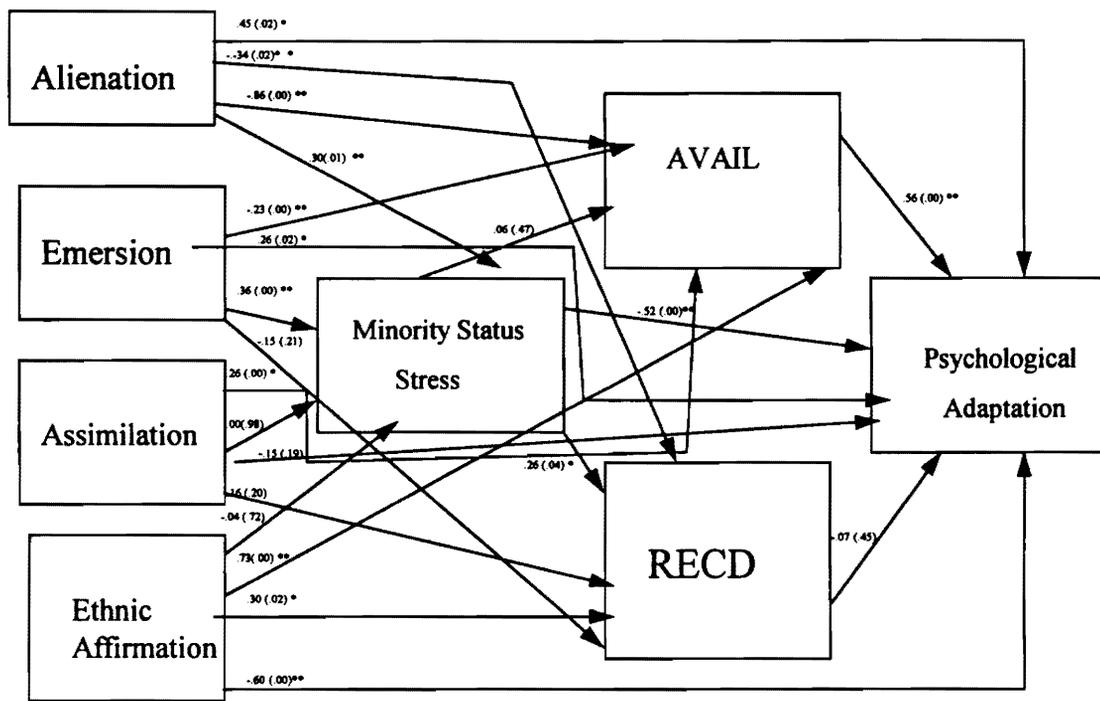


Figure 2-Revised Stress Precursor Model



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

Figure 3- Supported Model

Appendix A

Consent Form

You are invited to participate in a study concerning stress and coping processes among African American undergraduate and graduate students at Virginia Tech. Through this study we would like to gain a greater understanding of the types of experiences, attitudes, and behaviors that play a role in the success of African American students. To accomplish the goals of this study, you will be asked to fill out a number of questionnaires that will not take longer than one hour to complete. The content of these questionnaires will include a variety of feelings, concerns, and situations experienced while attending school here at Virginia Tech.

The results of this study will be kept confidential. The information you provide will have your name removed and only a subject number will identify you during analyses and any writeup of the research. Consequently no one will be able to determine which questionnaires you filled out.

Some people may experience some degree of emotional discomfort when responding to some of the items in the questionnaires. If at any time you feel that you do not wish to proceed with the study, you may stop participation at any time without losing any incentives.

The information you provide will only be used for scientific purposes. This may include a presentation of the results at a scientific meeting and/or being published and reproduced in professional journals or books, or used for any other purpose that Virginia Tech's Department of Psychology deems proper in the interest of education, knowledge, or research. However, you will not be identifiable in any way other than as part of the African American student body here at Virginia Tech. The information you provide will also be kept in a locked filing cabinet which will on be accessed by this researcher or the research assistants.

This research project has been approved by the Human Subjects Committee of the Department of Psychology and by the Institutional Review Board of Virginia Tech.

I have read and understand the above description of the study. I have had an opportunity to ask questions and have had them all answered. I hereby acknowledge the above and give my voluntary consent for participation in this study. I further understand that if I participate, I may withdraw at any time without penalty. I understand that if I should have any questions regarding this research and its conduct, I should contact any of the persons named below.

Primary Researcher: Mary N. Davis (Parker) Phone: (703) 951-5085

Faculty Advisor: Dr. Russell Jones Phone: 231-5934

Chair HSC: Richard M. Eisler Phone: 231-6914

Chair IRB: Ernest Stout Phone: 231-9359

Subject's Signature: _____ Date: _____

Subject's ID: _____

Appendix B

Subject # _____

Background Information

1. Gender: ___ Male ___ Female
2. Age: _____
3. Place of birth: _____
4. Are your parents from different racial groups? ___ yes ___ no
If yes: Mother's race: _____
Father's race: _____
5. Current level in school: ___ Freshman
___ Sophomore
___ Junior
___ Senior
___ Graduate Student
6. Major: _____
7. Career goal: _____

8. Family Educational Background

Please check the highest educational level attained by your parents and either set (maternal or paternal) of grandparents (One check in each column).

	Mother	Father	Grandmother	Grandfather
Less than 7th grade	_____	_____	_____	_____
Junior High *8th-9th)	_____	_____	_____	_____
Partial High School (10th of 11th)	_____	_____	_____	_____
High School Diploma or G.E.D.	_____	_____	_____	_____
Partial College (or other specialized training after high school	_____	_____	_____	_____
College graduate (with B.A. degree)	_____	_____	_____	_____
Professional or Graduate degree (Ph.D., M.D.)	_____	_____	_____	_____

9. Occupation of family members

Please specify position and type of institution or company. Examples: (a) high school teacher in public school; (b) manager for a restaurant; (c) self employed--owns construction company.

(a) Mother: _____

(b) Father: _____

(c) Grandmother: _____

(d) Grandfather: _____

10. We are interested in the amount of contact you have had with other racial groups as well as with other African Americans. Please estimate the racial composition of your environment at the times or settings listed below. Use the following scale.

1 = Mostly African American (approximately 80% or greater)

2 = Integrated with another racial minority group

3 = Mostly another racial group

4 = Integrated with Whites and other minority groups

5 = Mostly White

(a) _____ Neighborhood growing up

(b) _____ Current neighborhood of your family

(c) _____ Your current neighborhood

(d) _____ Elementary school

(e) _____ High School

(f) _____ Previous college (if any)

(g) _____ Childhood friendships

(h) _____ Current friendships

11. Most families have some orientation towards race relations and expressions of being African American. In general, how well do each of these statements characterize your family's beliefs.

0 = Not at all

1 = Very little

2 = Somewhat

3 = Very well

4 = Extremely well

(a) _____ They support and patronize African American businesses and African American professionals.

(b) _____ They strive towards blending easily into mainstream American culture and encourage assimilation.

(c) _____ There is strong emphasis on African American history and culture (i.e., music, art).

(d) _____ They hold hostile feelings towards Whites.

(e) _____ They support political activism.

(f) _____ They look down on or feel embarrassed by other African Americans.

(h) _____ They would have negative feelings if I married someone White.

(i) _____ They participate in African American organizations (i.e., NAACP).

(j) _____ They believe that African Americans only have themselves to blame for their current problems.

12. Please list your current overall cumulative G.P.A. and SAT scores(estimate if necessary). For graduate students, please list your G.R.E. scores. Remember this information is **completely anonymous**. No one will be able to find out about the information you provide.

(a) Current Virginia Tech G.P.A. _____

(b) For undergraduates: SAT scores

For graduate students: G.R.E. scores

Quantitative _____ Verbal _____

Interpersonal Support Evaluation List (AVAIL)

Instructions

This scale is made up of a list of statements each of which may or may not be true for you to varying degrees. For each statement we would like for you to circle the number that describes the degree to which the statements are true about you.

You may find it difficult to determine the degree to which the statements are true or not true for you. In these cases, try to decide quickly which response correctly conveys your feelings. Although some of the statements will be difficult, it is important that you answer each question and that you pick one alternative or the other. Remember to circle only one of the alternatives for each statement.

How true are these statements for you?

1 - Not at all true

2 - Probably true

3 - Definitely true

Please reach each item quickly but carefully before responding. Remember this is not a test and there are no right or wrong answers.

- _____ 1. I know someone who would loan me \$50 so I could go away for the weekend.
- _____ 2. There are people at school or in town who I regularly run with, exercise with, or play sports with.
- _____ 3. There isn't anyone at school or in town with whom I would feel perfectly comfortable talking about any problems I might have making friends.
- _____ 4. I don't feel friendly with any teaching assistants, professors, campus or student officials.
- _____ 5. Most people who know me well think highly of me.
- _____ 6. I know someone who I see or talk to often with whom I would feel perfectly comfortable talking about problems I might have budgeting my time between school and my social life.
- _____ 7. I am not a member of any social groups (such as church groups, clubs, teams, etc.).
- _____ 8. I don't know anyone who would loan me several hundred dollars to pay a doctor bill or dental bill.
- _____ 9. I know someone who would give me some old dishes if I moved into my own apartment.
- _____ 10. I hang out in a friend's room or apartment quite a lot.
- _____ 11. There isn't anyone at school or in town with whom I would feel perfectly comfortable

talking about any problems I might have getting along with my parents.

- _____ 12. Most of my friends think that I'm smart.
- _____ 13. Most of my friends are more satisfied or happier with themselves than I am.
- _____ 14. I know someone who I see or talk to often with whom I would feel perfectly comfortable talking about any problems I might have adjusting to college life.
- _____ 15. Lately, I often feel lonely, like I don't have anyone to reach out to.
- _____ 16. I don't know anyone who would give me some old furniture if I moved into my own apartment.
- _____ 17. I know someone who would loan me \$100 to help pay my tuition.
- _____ 18. I can get a date who I enjoy spending time with whenever I want.
- _____ 19. There isn't anyone at school or in town with whom I would feel perfectly comfortable talking about difficulties with my social life.
- _____ 20. Most of my friends are more popular than I am.
- _____ 21. Most of my friends don't do as well as I do in school.
- _____ 22. I know someone who I see or talk to often with whom I would feel perfectly comfortable talking about sexually transmitted diseases.
- _____ 23. I don't have friends at school or in town who would comfort me by showing some physical affection.
- _____ 24. Even if I needed it my family would (or could) not give me money for tuition and books.
- _____ 25. If I wanted a date for a party next weekend, I know someone at school or in town who would fix me up.
- _____ 26. If I decided at dinner time to take a study break this evening and go to a movie, I could easily find someone to go with me.
- _____ 27. There isn't anyone at school or in town with whom I would feel perfectly comfortable talking about my feelings of loneliness and depression.
- _____ 28. Most of my friends are more interesting than I am.
- _____ 29. I will have a better future than most other people will.
- _____ 30. I know someone who I see or talk to often with whom I would feel perfectly comfortable talking about any problems I might have meeting people.
- _____ 31. I don't often get invited to do things with other people.
- _____ 32. I don't know anyone at school or in town who would help me study for an exam by spending several hours reading me questions.
- _____ 33. If I needed it, my family would provide me with an allowance and spending money.
- _____ 34. People hang out in my room or apartment during the day or in the evening.
- _____ 35. I don't know anyone at school or in town who makes my problems clearer and easier to understand.

- _____ 36. Most of my friends have more control over what happens to them than I.
- _____ 37. Most of my friends have not adjusted to college as easily as I have.
- _____ 38. I know someone who I see or talk to often with whom I would feel perfectly comfortable discussing any sexual problems I might have.
- _____ 39. I don't talk to a member of my family at least once a week.
- _____ 40. I don't know anyone at school or in town who would loan me their car for a couple of hours.
- _____ 41. I know someone at school or in town who would bring my meals to my room or apartment if I were sick.
- _____ 42. I belong to a group at school or in town that meets regularly or does things together regularly.
- _____ 43. Lately, when I've been troubled, I keep things to myself.
- _____ 44. Most people are more attractive than I am.
- _____ 45. Most people think I have a good sense of humor.
- _____ 46. I know someone who I see or talk to often with whom I would feel perfectly comfortable talking about any problems I might have with drugs.
- _____ 47. I don't usually spend two evenings on the weekend doing something with others.
- _____ 48. I don't know anyone at school or in town who would get assignments for me from my teachers if I was sick.

Student Stress Inventory

Below is a list of statements that describe situations that may be stressful for some students at Virginia Tech. We would like to know how stressful these situations have been for you since you have been in college. By "stressful" we mean that it bothers you or causes you problems in any way.

In the space next to each item write the NUMBER of the response that best indicates how stressful each situation has been for you since you have been at Virginia Tech.

Write "N/A" if YOU DO NO EXPERIENCE THE SITUATION AT ALL.

Write "1" if you do experience or recognize the situation but YOU DO NOT EXPERIENCE IT AS STRESSFUL AT ALL.

Use the following scale in your ratings:

N/A = Does not apply to me

1 = Not at all stressful for me

2 = A little stressful for me

3 = Somewhat stressful for me

4 = Very stressful for me

5 = Extremely stressful for me

1. My family does not understand pressures from college (i.e., amount of time or quiet time needed to study).
2. My family discourages me from spending my time going to college.
3. Being the first in my family to attend a major university.
4. Doubting my ability to succeed in college.
5. My academic background preparation for college being inadequate.
6. White people expecting me to be a certain way because of my race (i.e., stereotyping).
7. Language-related problems (i.e., having an "accent" or speaking non-standard English).
8. Maintaining my ethnic identity while attending Virginia Tech.
9. The lack of unity/supportiveness among members of my race at Virginia Tech.
10. Being discriminated against.
11. Being treated rudely or unfairly because of my race.
12. Others lacking respect for people of my race.
13. Attitudes/treatment of faculty toward students of my race.
14. Having to "prove" my abilities to others (i.e., work twice as hard).
15. Pressures to show loyalty to my race (i.e., giving back to my ethnic group community).
16. White students and faculty expecting poor academic performance from students of my race.
17. Pressures from people of my same race (i.e., how to act, what to believe).
18. People close to me thinking that I am acting "White".
19. Feeling others do not respect my intelligence.
20. Having white friends.
21. Relationships between different ethnic groups at Virginia Tech.
22. Having to always be aware of what white people might do.
23. White-oriented campus culture at Virginia Tech.
24. Wealthy campus culture at Virginia Tech.
25. Virginia Tech being an unfriendly place.
26. Having to live around mostly White people.
27. Tense relationships between Whites and minorities at Virginia Tech.
28. Few courses involving issues relevant to my ethnic group.
29. Racist policies and practices of the university.
30. Virginia Tech lacking concern and support for the need of students of my race.
31. Virginia Tech not having enough professors of my race.
32. Few students of my race being in my classes.
33. Seeing members of my race doing low status jobs and Whites in high status jobs at Virginia Tech.
34. My family having very high expectations for my college success.
35. Pressures that what "I" do is representative of my ethnic group's abilities, behavior, etc.
36. Feeling less intelligent or less capable than others.
37. Relationships between males and females of my race (i.e., lack of available dating partners).

Community Resources

Please list the number of social support resources you feel are available to you within the Montgomery County area and indicate your level of satisfaction you have with these resources.

- 1 = Very dissatisfied**
- 2 = Dissatisfied**
- 3 = Satisfied**
- 4 = Very satisfied**

Resources	Satisfaction			
	1	2	3	4
_____	1	2	3	4
_____	1	2	3	4
_____	1	2	3	4
_____	1	2	3	4
_____	1	2	3	4
_____	1	2	3	4
_____	1	2	3	4
_____	1	2	3	4
_____	1	2	3	4
_____	1	2	3	4
_____	1	2	3	4
_____	1	2	3	4
_____	1	2	3	4
_____	1	2	3	4
_____	1	2	3	4

Sociocultural Orientation Scale

Below is a list of different statements about how some ethnic minority students feel at a university like Virginia Tech. Please rate how much You agree or disagree with each of the following statements at this point in your life. Circle the appropriate number.

Strongly Disagree **Disagree** **Neutral** **Agree** **Strongly Agree**

I don't think I belong at

Virginia Tech.	1	2	3	4	5
I feel angry toward White people about their treatment of African Americans.	1	2	3	4	5
I consider myself "American" more than I consider myself African-American.	1	2	3	4	5
It is important for me to participate in activities and organizations related to African Americans.	1	2	3	4	5
I feel that I can't live up to my high expectations of myself.	1	2	3	4	5
People put too much emphasis on race.	1	2	3	4	5
I am glad that I am African American.	1	2	3	4	5
I feel like avoiding most people at Virginia Tech.	1	2	3	4	5
I am more attracted to dating Whites than I am to African Americans.	1	2	3	4	5
It is important for me to participate in predominantly White activities if they contribute to my growing as a person or attaining my goals.	1	2	3	4	5
I am embarrassed by other African Americans.	1	2	3	4	5
I don't trust White people.	1	2	3	4	5
In general, Virginia Tech represents values that are different from my own.	1	2	3	4	5
I feel that I don't fit in with either African Americans or Whites.	1	2	3	4	5
I would rather avoid conflict					

than confront it.	1	2	3	4	5
African Americans should not "rock the boat" but rather focus on individual achievement.	1	2	3	4	5
I act differently around Whites than around African Americans.	1	2	3	4	5
I try to have as little contact with Whites as possible.	1	2	3	4	5
It is important for me to participate in political protests and rallies relevant to Third World issues (i.e., South Africa).	1	2	3	4	5
I prefer activities with African Americans but I can also be comfortable in activities with Whites.	1	2	3	4	5
It is important to work within "the system" to make things better for African Americans.	1	2	3	4	5
I don't feel comfortable discussing racial issues.	1	2	3	4	5
It is important for me to fit in at Virginia Tech.	1	2	3	4	5
African American student groups are too militant and radical.	1	2	3	4	5
I don't feel comfortable in African American neighborhoods.	1	2	3	4	5
I am hesitant to speak					

my mind when I hear something negative about African Americans.	1	2	3	4	5
"Giving back" to the African American community is important to me.	1	2	3	4	5
I don't like to take part in programs or organizations that are just for African Americans.	1	2	3	4	5
Doing well in my classes is more important to me than involvement in African American activities and organizations.	1	2	3	4	5
I would rather not be involved in ANY group activities-- I prefer to keep to myself.	1	2	3	4	5
It is important for African Americans to know the history of their people in order to really know themselves.	1	2	3	4	5
It bothers me to see interracial couples.	1	2	3	4	5
I don't feel accepted by other African Americans.	1	2	3	4	5
I feel that White students really don't want African Americans to participate in "their" activities.	1	2	3	4	5
It is useless to put effort into the African Americans student union because they really can't change the problems facing African Americans.	1	2	3	4	5
I am more comfortable around Whites than African Americans.	1	2	3	4	5
I am proud to be African American.	1	2	3	4	5

_____ I speak my mind regardless of the consequences (e.g., being kicked out of school, being imprisoned, being exposed to danger).

_____ I believe that everything African American is good, consequently, I limit myself to African American activities.

_____ I am determined to find my African American Identity.

_____ I believe that White people are intellectually superior to African Americans.

_____ I believe that Because I am African American, I have many strengths.

Social Resources and Supports--Short Form

Think carefully about the various people who are important in your life. These can include members of your immediate family, other relatives, close friends, neighbors, co-workers, church members, etc. With the next few questions we would like to get an idea of the kind of relationships you have with these people, how you depend on them for assistance, and how satisfied you are with the support you receive from them.

Section I. List the INITIALS of up to six(6) people who you consider to be most important in your life at this time. For each person fill in the blank indicating the type of relationship you have with them (i.e., aunt, friend), their gender (male or female), and their race or ethnic group membership.

Initials only	Relationship to you	Gender	Race/ Ethnicity
1.	_____	_____	_____
2.	_____	_____	_____
3.	_____	_____	_____
4.	_____	_____	_____
5.	_____	_____	_____
6.	_____	_____	_____
7.	_____	_____	_____
8.	_____	_____	_____
9.	_____	_____	_____
10.	_____	_____	_____

Section II.

Use the list of important people that you made in Section I. Copy the same initials in the same order. Please indicate how relatively satisfied you are with the support each of the people on your list had given you or currently gives you in each of the five areas in Section II: advice, praise or criticism, socializing, specific assistance, and emotional support. Use the following scale in making your ratings.

0 = I don't ask for this type of support.

1 = I am 100% dissatisfied.

2 = I am 75% dissatisfied.

3 = I am about 50% satisfied

4 = I am 75% satisfied

5 = I am 100% satisfied

Place the number that best indicates your satisfaction with EACH type of support to EACH person on your list. There should be a number in each blank.

Initials	Advice	Praise or Criticism	Socialize	Specific Help	Emotional Support
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1.	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
2.	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
3.	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
4.	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
5.	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
6.	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
7.	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
8.	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
9.	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
10.	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____

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Education

Master's in Clinical Psychology, expected May 1995

Virginia Polytechnic Institute & State University (Virginia Tech), Blacksburg, VA

Thesis: Minority Status Stress: Factors that Impact Its' Effect on the Psychological and Academic Functioning of African American Students Attending a Predominantly White University

Advisor: Russell Jones

Bachelor of Arts in Psychology, June 1992

University of California, Irvine

Professional Affiliations

American Psychological Association (APA)

APA Division 12, Section 1, Clinical Child Psychology

Associations for The Advancement of Behavioral Therapy (AABT)

Association of Black Psychologist

Academic Honors and Awards

Deans Fellowship Recipient

Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University

Campuswide Honors Program Participant

University of California, Irvine

Minority Fellowship Research Grant

University of California, Irvine

Natural Hazards Quick Response Research Grant

Professional Experience

Teaching Assistant, Department of Comparative Culture, University of California, Irvine

September 1990 - June 1991

- Facilitated discussion sections, administered assignments, for three classes during the academic year (African- American Religion, Black Students in A White University, and African American Music)

Childcare Worker, Young Life Enrichment Group Homes, Garden Grove, CA
(August 1992 to August 1993)

- Supervised female adolescents who had been sexually and physically abused
- Helped to develop and implemented behavioral modification plans intended to address individual client symptomatology
- Coordinated daily activities and planned extracurricular activities for female residents

Clinical Practicum, Psychological Services Center and Child Services Center, Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University

August 1993 - May 1994

Supervisors: Tom Ollendick, Ph.D.: Ellie Sturgis, Ph.D.

August 1994- May 1995

Supervisors: Russell Jones, Ph.D.: George Clum, Ph.D.

- Formulated conceptualizations of client cases
- Developed and implemented treatment plans
- Administered psychological assessment measures to clients as needed
- Provided in depth client case presentations to supervisors and practicum teams

Clinical Practicum, Southwest Virginia Mental Health Institute (SWVMHI)

August 1995 - Present

Supervisor: Dr. Mears, Dr. Steele

- Conduct psychological evaluations and assessments of in-patient adult and adolescent residents
- Develop and implement behavioral treatment plans to target problem behaviors
- Conduct therapy groups with both adolescent and adult patients
- Work with multidisciplinary team to establish treatment plans, treatment goals, and discharge plans for patients
- Conduct individual psychotherapy with patients

Research Experience

August 1993-January 1994 Dept of Psychology, Virginia Tech. Research Assistant.

Supervisor: Dr. Russell Jones. Responsibilities: Gave diagnostic interviews to individuals who had experienced the death of a pet to assess for PTSD symptomatology.

January 1993- May 1994

Research Assistant, Dept of Psychology, Virginia Tech. Supervisor: Dr. Danny Axsom. Responsibilities- establish reliability of diagnostic interviews with African-American mothers of homicide victims.

April 1994 - Present

Leadership Coordinator/ Graduate Research Assistant, Center for Research and Health Behavior, Virginia Tech. Supervisor: Dr. Eileen Anderson. Responsibilities- assist in the assessment of low income women for presence of HIV-risk behavior, coordinate the establishment and maintenance of a leadership group within low income housing developments, facilitate interventions among these women geared at providing necessary skills to reduce their level of HIV-risk behavior.

Professional Presentations

Davis, M.N., Jones, R.T. (1995, November). Minority Status Stress: Factors That Impact Its' Effect on African American Students Attending a Predominantly White University. Poster presented at the Annual conference for the Association for Advancement of Behavioral Therapy. Washington, D.C.

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