

ETHNIC IDENTITY, SELF-CONCEPT, AND ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT
OF FIRST-YEAR BLACK COLLEGE STUDENTS

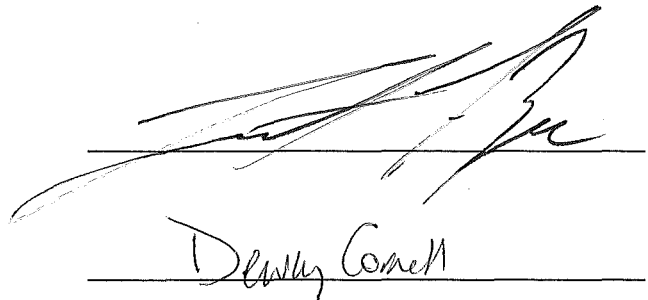
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Department of the Curry School of Education
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A handwritten signature, "Dewey Cornell", is written over a horizontal line. The signature is in cursive and appears to be a signature of approval or endorsement.

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Abstract

Research has shown that self-concept is related to ethnic identity in minority youth. Ethnic identity has been newly hypothesized as a factor that is related to academic achievement. This study empirically investigated the relationship between ethnic identity, self-concept, and academic achievement in Black students who attend a predominantly White university. The subjects were seventy-five Black first-year college students in a predominantly White university. Using simple path analysis, socioeconomic status and academic aptitude were examined as control factors. Ethnic identity was investigated as potentially influencing four domains of self-concept (i.e., global, academic, social, physical appearance) and academic achievement. Additionally, the domains of self-concept were examined as potentially influencing ethnic identity and academic achievement.

Results indicated that there was a negative direct effect of socioeconomic status on the students' academic aptitudes. Thus, the higher Black college students' socioeconomic status, the lower their academic aptitude scores. However, socioeconomic status significantly positively influenced students' academic achievement, such that students with higher socioeconomic status backgrounds produced higher grade-point averages. Ethnic identity positively influenced self-concept. Furthermore, the different domains of self-concept

significantly influenced ethnic identity. Generally, then, a bidirectional relationship was suggested; stronger ethnic identities contributed to higher self-concepts, and higher self-concepts contributed to stronger ethnic identities. Finally, ethnic identity was found to have a significant positive influence on academic achievement, once the influences of socioeconomic status and academic aptitude had been removed. Thus, the stronger, more developed the ethnic identities of the Black students were, the higher their academic achievement. Surprisingly, none of the domains of self-concept was found to significantly influence the academic achievement of the Black college students. Also unexpectedly, academic aptitude did not have a significant effect on the academic achievement of the Black students.

Implications for the enhancement of academic achievement of Black college students in predominantly White colleges are given. The recommendations are related to college admissions criteria, culturally-relevant support services and curricula, and suggestions for further research.

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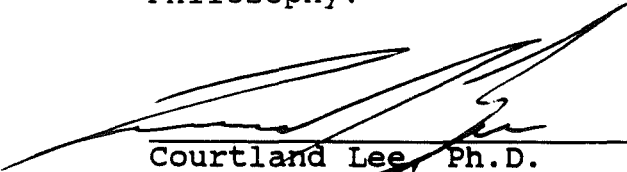
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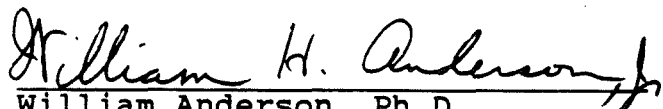
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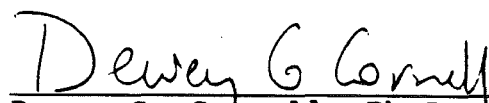
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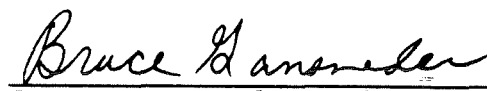
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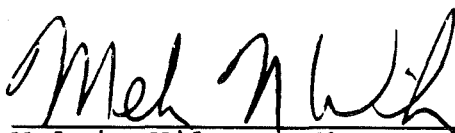
This project, **Ethnic Identity, Self-Concept, and Academic Achievement of Black First-Year College Students**, has been approved by the faculty of the Curry School of Education and/or Graduate School of Arts and Sciences in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy.



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To all God's people
who seek to tell the truth
about the "Black race."

Acknowledgements

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As a result of the "dissertation process," I honestly believe I am a better, more knowledgeable, self-actualized person. Completing this dissertation -- in addition to successfully passing my doctoral comprehensive examinations last year -- has contributed to my being able to put life's experiences in perspective. Those two accomplishments are personal achievements that no one can ever take away from me. My mother always told me an education is something no one can ever take away from you. I know she was right.

I am very thankful that I am Doctor Michele R. Cooley [as of June 13, 1991]. Nonetheless, I cannot help but be saddened by my African-American ancestors who had at least as much intelligence, perseverance, and motivation as I did, but were prohibited from the opportunity to pursue advanced degrees. I believe that their toils and struggles contributed to my motivation and perseverance to earn my doctorate of philosophy. Education is truly a terrible thing to waste; notwithstanding, the lack of opportunity to earn an education is an even greater travesty. I suppose that is one reason I

chose to research Black college students. They, we, now have [limited] opportunities to educate ourselves and earn degrees in the United States of America. Nonetheless, there is a need for Black people to be understood as a group of people, both with similarities to all humans who pursue education, yet with differences from White people due to our discrepant experiences.

Now, back to the more traditional acknowledgements. First, I must thank the well-spring of my strength, perseverance, intelligence, and motivation: God, my immediate family (Daddy, Mommy, Lisa, and Robert), Todd, and my extended family (especially G-mom and G-pops for financing all my graduate school application fees four years ago, and Mommy Alice and Poppa Irvin for helping me to learn at an early age that women can do anything men can do). Throughout my life you have given -- and will continue to give -- endless, unconditional love and support.

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How sweet it is.

CHAPTER 1

Overview of Study

Black people historically have believed that education is the primary means to achieve vertical mobility in the existing social system. Thus, education has always been important for Black students. Nonetheless, education's importance has not been consistently reflected in Black students' levels of academic achievement. For example, Black students are described as well-endowed, well-behaved, and receptive to intellectual stimulation, although their school performance has generally been below their capabilities (McCabe et al., 1967). Additionally, the literature comparing the academic achievement of Black and White students suggests that Black students fail to achieve as well (Ahmann 1984; Baughman & Dahlstrom, 1968; Boykin, 1955; Bullock, 1950; Gutek & Tatum, 1984), drop out of school more frequently (Conant, 1961), and demonstrate a lower need for academic achievement than their White peers (Lott & Lott, 1963).

Reasons for the discrepancies between the two groups are not clear. The difference in achievement cannot be attributed to differences in intellectual ability, as it has been argued (Jensen, 1969). This is demonstrated by studies in which performance on intelligence tests was controlled and the discrepancy between Black and White students' achievement remained (Moore, 1987). This leads researchers to look for other factors that influence the academic achievement of Black

students.

Besides intelligence, researchers have examined other factors that affect Black students' academic achievement. Self-concept is one of the factors positively related to academic achievement in Black youth (Epps, 1969; Miller & Woock, 1970). In minority adolescents, a factor related to self-concept is ethnic identity (Phinney, in press). Ethnic identity has been newly hypothesized (Fordham, 1988; Fordham & Ogbu, 1986), but not empirically examined, as a factor that is related to academic achievement in minority adolescents. The lack of empirical research on this issue leaves the relationship between ethnic identity, self-concept, and educational achievement an open question (Hall & Allen, 1989).

The purpose of this study was to investigate the impact of several factors on the academic achievement of Black first-year college students. Ethnic identity and domains of self-concept were examined as potentially influencing academic achievement. Socioeconomic status and academic aptitude were examined as control factors. Based on the literature, it was hypothesized that there were significant positive relationships among the main factors proposed to influence academic achievement.

Chapter Two reviews and summarizes the existing literature on Black adolescents' ethnic identity, self-concept, and academic achievement. Chapter Three presents the methodology for this study. Chapter Four presents the results

of the analyses. Chapter Five discusses the results of the analyses, the limitations of the study, suggestions for future research, and the implications for the enhancement of academic achievement for Black college students.

CHAPTER 2

Literature Review

Ethnic Identity in Black Adolescents

Relatively recently, identity research included ethnicity as a domain of identity formation (Phinney, in press). In adolescence, the central task is identity formation (Erikson, 1968; Marcia, 1980; Waterman, 1985) such that a stable sense of self, or an achieved personal identity, develops (Erikson, 1968). During adolescence, the issue of ethnicity may be more salient than other kinds of identity issues (i.e., occupation, politics, religion) (Phinney & Tarver, 1988). At this stage, students are exposed to more heterogenous settings, such as larger schools, extracurricular programs, and jobs. They become involved with dating and other social activities outside of their home. These activities introduce adolescents to issues about their own and others' ethnicities, and may stimulate exploration of ethnic identity (Gay, 1978). For minority adolescents, researchers have identified the importance of a positive ethnic identity for healthy functioning (Atkinson, Morten, & Sue, 1983; Parham & Helms, 1985; Phinney, 1989; Phinney, Lochner, & Murphy, in press). Ethnic identity may also directly or indirectly influence the academic performance of minority youth.

Research on ethnic identity significantly contributes to understanding ethnic minorities' differing attitudes towards

themselves, towards other minorities, and towards the majority (Ponterotto, 1989). This literature provides a model for the measurement of the diversity within ethnic groups (Ponterotto, Anderson, & Grieger, 1986).

The study of ethnic identity only dates back to the 1920s and 1930s, and originated with Blacks. Scholars identified what they perceived as a new, more "militant," Black mood. They called this mood "race consciousness," and defined it as a collective sentiment of: identification and solidarity with Blacks, feelings of oppression, and a desire to change the oppressive state (Brown, 1931a, 1931b; Ferguson, 1938; Standing, 1938). Race consciousness, then, incorporates beliefs and feelings that guide a person's behavior toward their race. Race consciousness is a set of political attitudes that address a person's relationship to or feelings about their race, an understanding of their race's status in the social structure, and their resultant orientation or behavioral repertoire (Hall & Allen, 1989).

Generally, ethnic identity examines one's acceptance and commitment to his or her ethnic group as one relates to the dominant culture. Ethnic identity enables a Black person and other persons who belong to ethnic minority groups to know and understand themselves as minority individuals while they recognize their place in society (Rosenthal, 1987). The development of a positive Black identity is a liberating experience for Black people (Cross, 1971; Hall & Cross, 1970;

Thomas, 1971). Stage theories of ethnic identity suggest that ethnic identity develops in stages which overlap (Stikes, 1984). Ethnic identity is not a static phenomenon, but changes with the social and historical context in which the person is involved. It varies with an individual's development and experience (Atkinson, Morten, & Sue, 1983; Cross, 1978; Parham & Helms, 1985; Phinney, in press; Weinreich, 1988).

Typically, stage theories of Black ethnic identity development espouse that a Black person first encounters the world as being White and accepts it. This is consistent with Black children and adolescents being socialized in Europeanized or Eurocentric contexts (Spencer, Dobbs, & Swanson, 1988). Unless some form of intervention takes place (e.g., involvement in predominantly Black programs, Black history lessons, cultural enrichment), the person's group identity reflects a White bias in which Blacks more highly value the White culture (Spencer, 1983, 1985). Once some type of intervention occurs, a struggle begins against the view that White is "right" and Black is "bad". The person attempts to validate himself or herself as a Black person who has strengths. Truly immersed in the process of transformation, the person begins to view everything that is Black as good. The person feels a heightened sense of excitement and joy about being Black, and is necessarily narcissistic. Lastly, the person develops personal security and satisfaction, and

attempts to change the oppressive system for the betterment of Black people. The person manifests a love for all oppressed people and adopts a world view that humanistically embraces the persons in an ethnically diverse world (Stikes, 1984).

A concept related to ethnic identity is the "fictive kinship." It denotes a cultural symbol of collective identity among Blacks. The fictive kinship implies a particular mind-set of those persons who are considered to be "Black." Essentially, the mere possession of African American features or being of African descent does not automatically make one a Black person in good standing with the group. Thus, the concept is based on more than just skin color. One can be black in color, but choose not to seek membership in the fictive kinship system. One can also be denied membership by the group because of behaviors, attitudes, and activities perceived as inconsistent with those thought to be appropriate and group-specific (Fordham, 1988). Clearly, Blacks vary in their identification with and value of important aspects of Black culture. In other words, Black people vary in their ethnic identity. This is true for minority children and adolescents, too (Phinney, in press).

Self-Concept in Black Adolescents

Generally, self-concept is one's evaluation of himself or herself as a function of his or her perceived competence in different domains. Self-concept is a result of how

individuals perceive their adequacy and competence in various situations (Exum & Colangelo, 1979). It is also a result of how individuals believe they are perceived by others in their environment (Cooley, 1902; Harter, 1983; Marsh, Smith, & Barnes, 1983; McCandless & Trotter, 1977). Seemingly, there are no value judgments more significant to a person and more decisive in one's psychological development and motivation than those that are self-imposed estimates (Branden, 1969). An individual's self-evaluation profoundly affects his or her thinking processes, emotions, desires, values, and goals. Part of this evaluation depends on interactions with and opinions of other people. This concept of self-evaluation is very important in understanding the development of self-concept among minority youth (Powell, 1989). For example, one study found that minorities with positive self-concepts have a greater chance to succeed in American society than those minorities with negative self-concepts (Smith, Burlow, Mosley, & Whitney, 1978).

Self-concept has been conceptualized as a universal component of behavior similar in definition across races and ethnicities (Cross, 1987). Self-concept has been identified as a multidimensional construct (Byrne, 1984) through factor analysis (Marsh, Smith, & Barnes, 1983; Wylie, 1979). There is empirical support for the distinction of different areas or domains of self-concept in Black people, generally along the same lines used for White people (Cauce, 1987). Physical

appearance is generally considered a predictor of general self-concept, which indicates that racial physiognomy may be a crucial variable in self-concept development for Black children (Powell, 1989). Thus, the analysis of physical appearance self-concept and other domains of self-concept is important in the study of Black youth.

Self-Concept and Achievement in Black Adolescents

Self-concept is positively related to academic achievement (Brookover & Thomas, 1963; Purkey, 1970; Yamamoto, 1972). This relationship is particularly strong among ethnic minorities (Epps, 1969; Miller & Woock, 1970). Among minority students, it has been suggested that self-concept may be a better predictor of educational attainment than standardized achievement scores and academic rank (Green & Farquhar, 1965; Payne & Farquhar, 1962; Powell, 1989). Indeed, academically successful Black students have been found to have positive self-concepts (Giddings, 1965; Hirsch & Borowitz, 1967; Mackler, 1970; Myers, 1966; Solomon et al., 1967), and self-confidence was one of the factors which contributed to high or low achievement in academically able Black students (Gowan, 1960). Nonetheless, the direction of influence between academic achievement and self-concept is not clear.

Several older studies have implicated inadequate global self-concept as a factor in minority children's poor academic achievement (Ausubel & Ausubel, 1963; Erikson, 1966;

Kvaraceus, 1965; Witty, 1967). This relationship has not been consistently supported by empirical studies (Jordan, 1981), particularly considering findings by Soares and Soares (1969) and Circirelli (1977). Those two studies revealed that low achieving minority students can exhibit more positive global self-concepts than high achieving students. In addition, more recent studies of Black adolescents have not indicated a relationship between global self-concept and academic achievement (Jordan, 1981; Powell, 1989). Other studies have also found that academic self-concept was not a predictor of global self-concept among Black youth (Bledsoe, 1967; Campbell, 1967; Epps, 1969; Hare, 1977).

Researchers have identified the importance of using multidimensional models of self-concept in the assessment of the relationship between self-concept and academic achievement (i.e., Shavelson, Hubner, & Stanton, 1976). Academic self-concept, unlike global self-concept, has been consistently found to serve as a significant predictor of academic achievement for Black students (Jordan, 1981). The findings from this study support the need to study self-concept as a multidimensional factor in Black adolescents.

In a longitudinal study of stability and change in self-perception and achievement among Black adolescents, the academic self-concepts of Black youth declined from preadolescence to adolescence (Hare, 1985). An explanation proposed for this phenomenon was that Black youth became

increasingly aware of their relative academic deficiency compared to White youth. Alternatively, on the general self-esteem measure, the Black adolescents in that study appeared to feel good about themselves. The Black adolescents seemed to feel relatively better about themselves in general, but felt and achieved worse academically (Powell, 1989).

Ethnic Identity and Self-Concept in Black Adolescents

Cross (1987) recently developed what he entitled the "Two-Factor Theory." It may be interpreted as an explanation of the relationship between self-concept and ethnic identity development. Cross originally developed this theory based on an exhaustive literature review of Black identity, and used it to explain the domains which contribute to self-concept. He suggested self-concept is comprised of: a) personal identity and, b) group identity or reference group orientation. The personal identity includes subordinate factors such as self-esteem, self-worth, and general personality traits. The subordinate factors included in the reference group orientation are racial identity, racial attitudes, and group identity. Cross' Two-Factor Theory appears to represent ethnic identity development as a subgroup or subordinate factor of self-concept. As such, a conceptual relationship between the two is implied. Several studies have been conducted on ethnic identity and self-concept and related factors in Black youth.

There are empirical studies of the relationship between ego identity development (i.e., development of control of the self, the result of an integration and organization of all aspects of one's personality) and racial identity development (Looney, 1988; Phinney, 1989). One study (Looney, 1988) involved Black college students. Two of the three universities the students attended were predominantly Black, the third was predominantly White. To Looney's (1988) surprise, results from the study suggested ethnic identity is independent from the development of the self, or ego. Looney's findings suggested that if an individual has a strong ego, or sense of self, he or she does not have a positive sense of his or her "Blackness;" if their ego is weak, they have a strong or positive sense of their "Blackness". From Cross' theoretical perspective, one would expect the opposite results. Nonetheless, Looney (1988) acknowledged some methodological problems with her study, particularly regarding the definition and measurement of "ego development." Assessment of self-concept should be operationally defined and measured to clarify the relationship to ethnic identity.

A second study (Phinney, 1989) examined the relationship between ethnic identity development and ego identity, in addition to other psychological adjustment variables. Subjects were from a variety of ethnic groups. They were interviewed to assess their ethnic identity and administered questionnaires to assess ego identity. The study demonstrated

that ethnic identity development is a key factor related to the self-esteem and psychological adjustment of minority youth.

Another study (Ward & Braun, 1972) investigated the relationship between self-concept and Black children's racial preference. Half of the subjects attended a middle-class integrated school; the other half attended a lower-class urban school. The researchers (Ward & Braun, 1972) found a significant relationship between self-esteem and racial preference. Those Black children who made more own-race preferences had higher self-concept scores than those making fewer own-race preferences. Those findings support a positive relationship between ethnic identity and self-concept.

Researchers studied the relationship between self-concept and ethnic identity in Puerto Rican adolescents who were involved in a cultural awareness program (Comas-Diaz, Arroyo, & Lovelace, 1982). Multidimensional self-concept and cultural awareness were assessed both before and after the program. Results indicated a significant increase in cultural awareness and in academic self-concept. Near significant findings were reported for two other domains of self-concept: awareness program apparently had no significant effect on the students' social self-concepts. It seems that as the minority students' pride in their heritage increased, so did some domains of their self-concepts (e.g., academic self-concept).

A review of the literature generally indicates that there

is a positive relationship between ethnic identity and self-concept among ethnic minority youth. Although several studies examined factors that were related to multidimensional self-concept or ethnic identity in Black youth, there is an apparent need for investigations that directly assess the relationship between multidimensional self-concept and ethnic identity in Black students.

Ethnic Identity and Academic Achievement

The Black students who achieve successfully often do so as a way to gain the knowledge to overcome racism (Powell, 1989). This is a theme that many Black people have been able to identify with in the past and still resonate to in the present (Powell, 1989). For example, youth whose parents transmitted knowledge to them about the racial barriers which exist in our society attained better grades than those students who were taught nothing about their oppressed racial status (Comer & Poussaint, 1975; Jackson, McCullough, & Gurin, 1981).

However, it has also been hypothesized that typical high achieving Black students denigrate and reject the Black culture in favor of identifying with the White culture (e.g., Fordham, 1988; Fordham & Ogbu, 1986). For example, a number of Black youth with otherwise healthy psychological development have identified academic interests and skills as "White" and identified nonacademic interests as "Black"

(Comer, 1975). Thus, it is hypothesized that, in the minds of Black adolescents, to achieve academically is to reject Black culture and embrace White culture. This dual identity often surfaces in early adolescence (Comer, 1975).

The few studies of the relationship between academic achievement and ethnic identity in Black students have been predominantly qualitative in nature. Fordham (1988) and Fordham and Ogbu (1986) are the significant contributors to this area, based on interviews with high- and low- achieving Black adolescents. The researchers conclude that a major reason Black students underachieve in school is because they experience inordinate ambivalence and affective dissonance in regard to academic success. The source of this dissonance arose partly because White people traditionally refused to acknowledge that Black people were capable of intellectual achievement. Subsequently, Black people began to doubt their own intellectual ability. Black people began to define academic success as White people's prerogative, and began to discourage their peers -- perhaps unconsciously -- from emulating White people in academic achievement (i.e., from "acting White") (Fordham & Ogbu, 1986).

Fordham and Ogbu (1986) theorize that ambivalence, affective dissonance, and social pressures interfere with Black students producing the requisite effort in their schoolwork. Consequently, they do poorly in school. Fordham and Ogbu (1986) further theorize that even those Black

students who do not actually fail generally perform substantially below their potential for the same reasons. Generations of Black children have internalized this lesson so well that it appears that segments of the Black community have developed a cultural orientation which identifies academic achievement as acting White, and academic success as the prerogative of White Americans (Fordham & Ogbu, 1986).

Underachieving Black students in one qualitative study of urban high school students (Fordham & Ogbu, 1986) appeared to have the ability to do well in school, but did not do so. They apparently decided -- consciously or unconsciously -- to avoid acting White. That is, they chose to avoid putting in enough time and effort in their schoolwork because their peers (and they themselves) would interpret their behaviors as "White." Apparently, their main strategy for coping with the burden of acting White was avoidance (Fordham & Ogbu, 1986). The "anti-achievement ethic" (Granat, Hathaway, Saleton, & Sansing, 1986) is consistent with this strategy of avoidance. Case studies have revealed that underachieving Black students' growing racial awareness was inversely related to school effort and achievement (Fordham & Ogbu, 1986).

In addition to the underachieving students, the high achieving Black urban high school students in Fordham and Ogbu's (1986) study also wrestled with the challenge of attaining academic achievement while retaining Black group/peer support and approval. Peer acceptance was a major

factor among the variables which contributed to high or low achievement in academically able Black students (Gowan, 1960). There was a need to balance good grades and meet the expectations of school authorities, without being rejected by their peers for acting White. This issue is further complicated when Black students face doubts from Whites about their ability. The high achievers in Fordham & Ogbu's (1986) study responded in one of two ways to these pressures. They may have rejected their Black identity and attempted to view themselves as "Americans" not affiliated with any particular cultural group. They tried to develop a raceless persona in order to succeed in school, which created tremendous stress and anxiety (Fordham, 1988). Apparently, these may be the types of students that have been described as being ignorant of their own history, display a lack of political activism, and have an overriding preoccupation with material comfort (Gaines-Carter, 1985; Jones & Cleveland, 1986).

Alternatively, other high achievers maintained their Black identity and participated in activities which hid their preoccupation with academic achievement. High achieving Black students camouflaged their academic effort by involvement in athletics, other team-oriented activities, and clowning. Others did well in school and maintained "in-group" status and acceptance by acquiring the protection of "bullies" in return for assisting the latter in their schoolwork and homework. In general, academically successful Black students are careful

not to brag about their achievements or otherwise bring too much attention to themselves. These students would be even more successful if they did not have to divert time and energy into strategies designed to camouflage their academic pursuit (Fordham & Ogbu, 1986). It seems that ambivalence and conflict characterize the core of Black -- particularly, high achieving -- students' responses to school and achievement (Fordham, 1988).

The burden of acting White, how Black students cope with it, and its effects on their academic careers have not been widely recognized, let alone systematically studied. Nevertheless, various references suggest that problems similar to those discussed by Fordham (1988) and Fordham and Ogbu (1986) in urban high school students are faced by Black students in all parts of the United States (Fordham & Ogbu, 1986). The conflict between ethnic identity and academic achievement is a social phenomenon that must be examined to fully understand the Black adolescent school experience in the United States (Fordham, 1988).

Purpose

The empirical literature on Black youth generally supports the conclusion that there is a positive relationship between ethnic identity and self-concept, and between self-concept and academic achievement in this population. However, qualitative studies suggest that there is an inverse

relationship between ethnic identity and academic achievement. Nonetheless, there is a lack of empirical research on the relationship between ethnic identity and academic achievement in Black students in predominantly White schools, or on the interrelationship among ethnic identity, multidimensional self-concept, and academic achievement.

Therefore, the goal of this research was to investigate the relationship among ethnic identity, four domains of self-concept, and academic achievement, having controlled for socioeconomic status and academic aptitude among Black first-year college students in a predominantly White university. The questions of interest were: "Once socioeconomic status and academic aptitude are controlled, are there significant relationships among ethnic identity, global self-concept, and academic achievement?" and "Are these relationships different for any other domain of self-concept: academic self-concept, social self-concept, or physical appearance self-concept?"

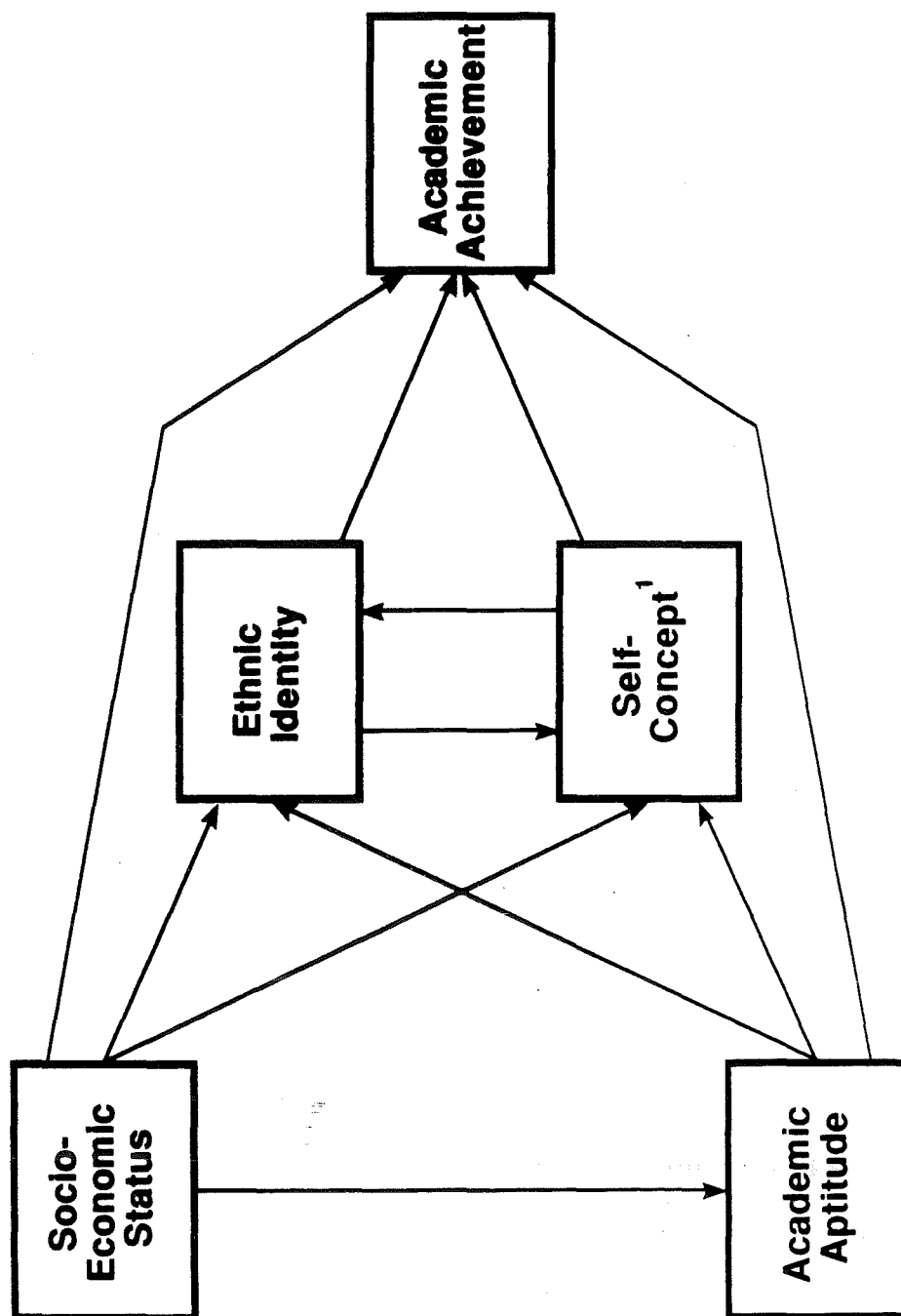
Hypotheses

On the whole, the literature provides support for the conclusion that there is a positive relationship between ethnic identity and self-concept. Different domains of self-concept have been found to have a positive relationship with academic achievement in Black youth (i.e., academic self-concept), although other domains have not been consistently positive (i.e., global self-esteem). However, the relationships among all of these variables (academic achievement, multidimensional self-concept, and ethnic identity) are not known, particularly having controlled for socioeconomic status and academic aptitude. Therefore, based on the hypothesized path model (see Figure 1), it was predicted that for each domain of self-concept (i.e., global, academic, social, physical appearance), there was a significant relationship among all the main factors that influenced academic achievement such that:

- 1) Socioeconomic status serves as a control factor for academic aptitude, ethnic identity, domains of self-concept, and academic achievement;
- 2) Academic aptitude serves as a control factor for ethnic identity, domains of self-concept, and academic achievement;
- 3) Ethnic identity significantly positively influences domains of self-concept and academic achievement;
- 4) Domains of self-concept (i.e., global, academic,

social, physical appearance) significantly positively influence ethnic identity and academic achievement.

**Figure 1: Path Diagram of Hypothesized Relationships
Factors Influencing Academic Achievement**



Note. ¹ There will be four separate path models, each with different domains of self-concept: global, academic, social, and physical appearance. In the path analyses, the order of entry for the factors is: 1) SES 2) academic aptitude 3) ethnic identity 4) self-concept, and 5) academic achievement

CHAPTER 3

Method

Subjects

Subjects were seventy-five Black freshman college students in their first-semester at the University of Virginia (UVA) (see Table 1 for demographic information). The subjects were recruited for this study from several university-sponsored programs: Peer Advising Program, Transition Program, and First-Year Focus Program.

Peer Advising Program. The Peer Advising Program is sponsored by the Office of Afro-American Affairs. The program assigns trained, upperclass Black students to small groups of first-year Black students. The peer advisors serve as mentors and advisors, facilitating the freshmen's adjustment to college. There are individual, small group, and large group activities designed to increase the support systems of the first-year students. Every freshman Black student is assigned a peer advisor, although participation in the program is optional.

Transition Program. The Transition Program is sponsored by the Associate Provost of Student Academic Support and the Office of the Dean of Students. There are two categories of Transition students: a) those who entered the University for a summer program preceding their Fall enrollment, and b) those who entered UVA and the program in the Fall without

participation in the summer program. The residential summer program was six-weeks long. It was designed to facilitate the students' adjustment to college and better prepare them for the academic rigors that they encounter in college. The students from the summer component of the Transition Program continue to participate in the program in the Fall. The Fall Transition program involves academic advising, speakers and support services, and mentoring. Participation in the Transition Program is required for those students identified for it by the Office of Admissions (based on admissions criteria).

First-Year Focus Program. The First-Year Focus Program is instituted by the Office of Minority Programs of the School of Engineering and Applied Sciences. It is designed to be a didactic support program for Black first-year engineering students. Graduate engineering students implement the program, and in bi-monthly meetings, the students in this program are exposed to many instructional and support services. For example, they are taught study skills specific to engineering, are introduced to various resources, and are assisted in gaining internship programs. Although all Black first-year engineering students are encouraged to attend, participation is voluntary.

Table 1
Demographic Information for Subjects

Gender

Male	42 (56%)	Female	33 (44%)
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Age*

16 year olds	1 (1%)	18 year olds	49 (71%)
17 year olds	11 (16%)	19 year olds	8 (12%)

Program

Summer Transition	31 (41%)
First-Year Focus	18 (24%)
Fall Transition	17 (23%)
Peer Advising	9 (12%)

School

College of Arts and Sciences	52 (69%)
School of Engineering and Applied Sciences	21 (28%)
School of Nursing	2 (3%)

State

Virginia	40 (53%)
Non-Virginia United States resident	33 (44%)
Non-United States resident	2 (3%)

Note. Total sample size = 75. *Sample size (n) varies because some subjects did not provide information on their ages (n = 69).

Measures

Background. An informed consent form and a debriefing statement were administered to the subjects, in addition to a short background questionnaire. On this questionnaire, the subjects reported their parents' education and occupation, and other general information. Socioeconomic status was assessed by a combination of mother's occupation and education using the standard 9- and 7-point rating scales (respectively) by Hollingshead (1975). Although Hollingshead's (1975) socioeconomic index provides a formula to calculate a family socioeconomic index (i.e., mother and father combination), there were substantially more subjects who reported information on their mothers' education and occupation compared to their parents' combined. Thus, mother's socioeconomic status was used as an index for this study.

Academic aptitude was assessed by college application records of Scholastic Achievement Test (SAT) scores. The combined math and verbal national percentiles were obtained from admissions records.

Academic Achievement. Academic achievement was assessed by the subjects' first (Fall, 1990) semester grades earned at the University of Virginia. The students' grade point averages were based on a 4.0 grading scale.

Ethnic Identity. The Multigroup Ethnic Identity Measure (MEIM; Phinney, 1989) was administered to the subjects to assess ethnic identity. The MEIM is a 23-item questionnaire

comprised of one major factor. It assesses theoretically-derived aspects of ethnic identity: positive ethnic attitudes and sense of belonging, ethnic identity achievement (exploration and resolution of identity issues), and ethnic behaviors or practices. Items are rated on a four-point Likert scale which ranges from strongly agree to strongly disagree. Additional items are included in the questionnaire to assess self-identification of ethnicity and parental ethnicity, but are not part of the MEIM score, and subsequently were not included in this study.

Factor analysis of the MEIM is based on a sample of 417 male and female students attending a predominantly ethnic minority high school. A single factor structure for ethnic identity was revealed (Phinney, in press). The single factor structure was also found in a sample of 136 male and female students attending a predominantly ethnic minority college. The single factor accounted for 23.4% of the variance for high school students and 33.4% for college students. The reliability of the MEIM was assessed by Cronbach's coefficient alpha and was .81 for the high school sample and was .90 for the college sample. Other psychometric properties of the MEIM are included in Phinney's (1989) unpublished manuscript.

Self-Concept. Harter's (1985) Self-Perception Profile for Adolescents (SPPA) was used to assess the self-concepts of the subjects. The SPPA is a 45-item self-report instrument which assesses adolescents self-concept across nine different

domains. Four of the domains most relevant to the factors of interest in this study were selected. They are: 1) academic self-concept (scholastic competence; perceived academic performance), 2) social self-concept (social acceptance; comparison of self to peers in social environment), 3) physical appearance self-concept, and 4) global self-concept (general self-esteem).

Harter's original instrument was the Perceived Self-Competence Scale for Children (Harter, 1982), which was revised in 1985 and entitled The Self-Perception Profile for Children. The SPPA is an extension of the revised children's scale. The SPPA is worded more appropriately for adolescents. The scales are based on the assumption that a multidimensional instrument provides a more differentiated and comprehensive profile of self-concept than those instruments that provide only a single self-concept score.

Test-retest reliabilities for each domain were reported by Harter in 1982 for the Children's Perceived Self-Competence Scale. They ranged from .70 to .87 for a group of 208 male and female Colorado students over a three month period and ranged from .69 to .80 for a group of 810 New York students after a nine month period. The subscale reliabilities of the Self-Perception Profile for Adolescents were reported in 1986 on a sample of male and female parochial school subjects from seventh to twelfth grade. The reliabilities on the four selected scales for this study ranged from .72 to .94. Other

psychometric properties of the SPPA are included in Harter's (1987) test manual.

Data Collection Procedures

The parents of potential subjects under age 18 were notified by mail and asked for consent for their sons and/or daughters to participate in this study. Parents provided a release of information for the researcher to have access to their son's and/or daughter's college records (see Appendix A for letters and consent forms). Those students under 18 years of age who had parental permission to participate in the study and the Black first-year students 18 years or over comprised the subject group. Subjects were addressed by the researcher after one of their regular program meetings (Transition Program, Peer Advising Program, First-Year Focus Program). Of the students present at the various program meetings, approximately 85% consented to participate in this study. Data collection occurred during the Fall semester (October or November, 1990) of the Black students' freshman year at the University of Virginia. The researcher requested their participation in this research project. She explained that their voluntary participation would entail about a half-hour of their time completing three self-report questionnaires. Subjects were informed that the project was supported by the Associate Provost of Academic Affairs and by the Dean of Afro-American Affairs.

Participants signed forms which indicated consent to participate in this study and to release information from college records to the investigator (see Appendix A for student consent form). Provisions for confidentiality and anonymity were explained and subjects were discouraged from discussing their responses with their peers. The Background Information questionnaire, Multigroup Measure of Ethnic Identity (Phinney, 1989), and the Self-Perception Profile for Adolescents (Harter, 1985) were passed out to each student who had given permission to participate (see Appendix B for sample instruments). The instructions for each questionnaire were read and questions were answered regarding the instruments (see Appendix C for statement to subjects), then the subjects completed the forms. Debriefing Forms were given to each of the subjects (see Appendix D for debriefing form), they were thanked for their participation, and additional questions were answered.

Program directors were provided a brief summary of the research findings and conclusions. Subjects who expressed an interest in the research findings were encouraged to contact their program directors for the summaries. No names were used and only general results were presented.

Data Analyses

Preliminary analyses and path analyses were performed on the data obtained from the administration of the self-report

instruments.

Preliminary Analyses. There were three types of preliminary analyses: descriptive statistics, Pearson correlation coefficients, and analyses of variance. Descriptive statistics were calculated for the demographic information on the subjects and for scores on all factors of interest. Pearson correlation coefficients were calculated among the five variables (i.e., socioeconomic status, academic aptitude, ethnic identity, four domains of self-concept, academic achievement) to describe the relationships among the variables that were later included in the path analyses. Analyses of variance were calculated to discern any group differences in gender or program on the outcome variable, academic achievement.

Path Analyses. A path analytic model was constructed which contained the control variables (socioeconomic status and academic aptitude) and the primary variables of interest (ethnic identity, self-concept, and academic achievement). There was a total of four different models, each of which contained a different domain of self-concept. Thus, domains of self-concept were separately studied. In each of the models, path analysis was used to investigate the hypothesis that in Black first-year college students, ethnic identity would influence domains of self-concept and academic achievement; and domains of self-concept would influence ethnic identity and academic achievement (see Figure 1,

Chapter 2 for path model).

Description of Path Analysis. Path coefficients were constructed using the Linear Structural Relations method (LISREL; Joreskog & Sorbom, 1984). Path analysis was selected as the method of data analysis primarily because it simplifies and systematizes the interpretation of multiple correlations. Path analysis requires an explicit model of the hypothesized relationships and tests the presumed cause-effect relationships. Path coefficients were calculated to examine the strength and direction of presumed causal relationships.

Path analysis (also called causal analysis, structural modeling, or path modeling) uses multiple regression analysis in a structured, explicit manner; it was designed to be used for nonexperimental research (Keith, 1988). The independent variables in the present study are not able to be directly manipulated, thus it constitutes nonexperimental or correlational research (Keith, 1988). Path analysis is an observational technique which separates correlations among the variables into presumed cause (independent variable) and presumed effect (dependent variable) "by combining the correlational data with an explicit theory of cause and effect. . . . In fact, cause and effect are inferred from the theory, and the correlations simply provide fuel for the calculations" (Keith, 1988, p. 347). Thus, prior to performing the analyses, path analysis requires that the proposed theory and hypothesized relationships are stated.

The implication is not that one variable directly causes another, but if there is a causal relationship, the influence is in the direction specified by the path model (Keith, 1988). The results do not prove cause or effect, but support or disconfirm the proposed theory (Dickens, 1990).

There are several assumptions that need to be met in the application and interpretation of path analysis to infer causality. The first involves the specification of the direction of the paths of influence. In meeting this assumption, researchers must consider: prior time precedence (given that causality only occurs forward in time) and the use of formal or informal theory, logic, and observation to guide the drawing of the paths (Kenny, 1979). The present study has considered both these criteria, and based on a review of the literature (see Chapter 1), the path model was designed.

The second assumption of path analysis requires that there is a relationship between the hypothesized cause and effect variables; the relationships may be represented by correlation coefficients (Keith, 1988). The results of the correlational analyses between the major variables were reported (see Table 2). Significant correlations were consistently found between academic aptitude and academic achievement, domains of self-concept and ethnic identity, and socioeconomic status and academic achievement. Additionally, academic self-concept was significantly related to academic achievement. None of the remaining relationships was

significant, although they were all nonzero correlations.

The third, and most important, assumption is that the relationships among the variables are true (not spurious). The model should include all of the important, or common, cause and effect variables (Keith, 1988). In other words, the relationships between the variables should only be caused by variables included in the model. Undoubtedly, there are many factors that influence academic achievement in Black college students, only a few of which have been investigated in the present study. It is impossible to identify all potential causal variables in one study (Dickens, 1990). Additionally, the current state of empirical research has not elucidated many of the factors that are presumed causes of academic achievement in Black youth. This study adds to the current body of research on factors that influence academic achievement by the inclusion of ethnic identity as a potential cause. Additional study needs to identify other factors of influence in this model.

This study has attempted to meet the requirements of path analysis, but complete fulfillment of the criteria can only be accomplished in the ideal, "true" experiment (Dickens, 1990). Nonetheless, the requirements stipulated in path analysis are those also necessary in other experimental regression techniques, but the advantage of path analysis is that it makes these requirements, and their adherence or violation, explicit rather than hidden (Kenny, 1990).

CHAPTER 4

Results

There are two sections in this chapter: preliminary analyses and path analyses. The preliminary analyses include descriptive statistics for scores on all measures used in the path analyses, Pearson correlation coefficients among these scores, and analyses of variance to ascertain any gender or program differences on the outcome variable, academic achievement. The preliminary analyses are followed by the results of the path analyses.

Preliminary Analyses

Descriptive Statistics. Descriptive statistics were calculated for the demographic information on the seventy-five subjects (see Table 1, Chapter 3) and for scores on the factors of interest. The factors include socioeconomic status, academic aptitude, domains of self-concept, ethnic identity, and academic achievement (presented in Table 2).

For comparison purposes, on the Hollingshead (1975) socioeconomic index, parental education is categorized on a 7-point scale. Level 4 indicates the parent was a high school graduate, level 5 corresponds to some college education, and level 6 indicates the parent was a college graduate. Occupation was categorized on a 9-point scale, whereby level 5 refers to positions such as clerical workers, level 6

corresponds to occupations like technicians and semi-professionals, and level 7 includes managers and minor professionals. Although Hollingshead's (1975) socioeconomic index provides a formula to calculate a family socioeconomic index (i.e., mother and father combination), there were substantially more subjects who reported information on their mothers' education and occupation compared to their parents' combined. Thus, mother's socioeconomic status was used as the SES index for this study.

The national range of scores on the individual Scholastic Achievement Tests is between 200 and 800. The range for the combined (total) SAT score is from 400 to 1600. Harter's (1985) Self-Perception Profile for Adolescents self-concept instrument has scores that range from 1 to 4. The averages of the norming sample of high school seniors were: global self-concept - 3.19; academic self-concept - 3.11; social self-concept - 3.55; and physical appearance self-concept - 2.92. Ethnic identity was measured with Phinney's (1989) Multigroup Ethnic Identity Measure, which also used a range of scores between 1 and 4. The average of the norming sample for high school students was 2.94 (standard deviation = .50) and for college students was 3.04 (standard deviation = .59).

Pearson Correlation Coefficients. The intercorrelations among the socioeconomic indices were computed using Pearson correlation coefficients. They were reported to demonstrate the interrelatedness of each of the socioeconomic indices,

Table 2**Descriptive Statistics for Measures included in Path Analyses**

	<u>Mean</u>	<u>SD</u>	<u>(Minimum, Maximum)</u>	<u>n</u>
<u>Socioeconomic Status Indicators¹</u> (Hollingshead, 1975)				
Mother education	5.32	1.29	(2, 7)	69
Father education	5.15	1.50	(2, 7)	66
Mother occupation	5.93	2.01	(1, 9)	58
Father occupation	6.21	2.34	(2, 9)	57
Mother's SES ²	45.84	12.54	(17, 66)	58
Father's SES	49.68	18.75	(16, 72)	57
Family SES ³	47.59	13.94	(21.5, 66.5)	49
<u>Academic Aptitude</u> (Scholastic Achievement Test)				
SAT-Verbal	438.43	74.88	(290, 650)	70
SAT-Math	508.43	82.96	(340, 790)	70
SAT Total	946.86	137.44	(700, 1430)	70

Note. ¹SES was calculated by Hollingshead's (1975) formula by multiplying parent's occupation score by a weight of five (5) and education score by a weight of three (3), then summing the weighted values. ²Mother's SES was the index of socioeconomic status used in this study. ³Family SES was calculated by the average of mother's and father's SES.

Table 2 (continued)

Descriptive Statistics for Measures included in Path Analyses

	<u>Mean</u>	<u>SD</u>	<u>(Minimum, Maximum)</u>	<u>n</u>
<u>Self-Concept</u> (SPPA; Harter, 1985)				
Global	3.14	0.64	(1, 4)	75
Academic	2.85	0.55	(1, 4)	75
Social	3.28	0.52	(1, 4)	75
Physical appearance	2.87	0.66	(1, 4)	75
<u>Ethnic Identity</u> (MEIM; Phinney, 1989)	3.33	0.39	(2, 4)	73
<u>Academic Achievement</u> ¹ (first semester college GPA)	2.38	0.64	(1.23, 3.79)	69

Note. Total sample size = 75. Sample sizes (n) vary because some individuals did not complete all items of the measures. Minimum and maximum scores obtained from these subjects are reported to describe the variability of the responses.

¹Academic achievement statistics reported exclude one subject who served as an outlier (grade-point average was 0.35)

although mother's socioeconomic status was used in the path analyses. The socioeconomic intercorrelations are presented in Table 3.

Pearson correlation coefficients were also calculated among the five variables (i.e., socioeconomic status, academic aptitude, ethnic identity, four domains of self-concept, academic achievement). The correlations were calculated to describe the relationships among the variables that were later included in the path analyses. The correlation coefficients are presented in Table 4.

Analyses of Variance. Analyses of Variance (ANOVA) were calculated to discern any group differences in gender or program (i.e., Summer Transition Program, Fall Transition Program, Peer Advisor Program, First-Year Focus) on the outcome variable, academic achievement. There were no significant gender differences. A one-way analysis of variance identified significant program differences in academic achievement, which was followed-up by the Scheffe post-hoc test. The one-way ANOVA on academic achievement revealed significant differences for programs, $F(3, 69) = 3.41, p < .05$. Follow-up analyses identified that significant differences in academic achievement exist between the Fall Transition ($M = 2.67$) and Summer Transition ($M = 2.09$) programs. An analysis of the raw data revealed that a subject in the Summer Transition Program had an academic achievement score that serves as an outlier with a grade point average of

Table 3**Intercorrelations Among Socioeconomic Measures**

	I	II	III	IV	V	VI
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Global Self-Concept

I. Mother's educ						
II. Father's educ	.60					
III. Mother's occu	.67	.44				
IV. Father's occu	.46	.78	.66			
V. Mother's SES	.80	.49	.98	.66		
VI. Father's SES	.46	.78	.66	1.00	.66	
VII. Family SES	.71	.73	.86	.95	.87	.95

Note. All correlations are significant at the .01 level.

Table 4

Descriptive Correlations for Measures included in Path Analyses

	I	II	III	IV
<u>Global Self-Concept</u>				
I. Mother's SES				
II. Academic Aptitude	-.49**			
III. Ethnic Identity	-.02	.14		
IV. Self-Concept	-.03	.08	.37**	
V. Academic Achievement	.77**	-.20	.15	.15
<u>Academic Self-Concept</u>				
I. Mother's SES				
II. Academic Aptitude	-.49**			
III. Ethnic Identity	-.02	.14		
IV. Self-Concept	.05	.25*	.40**	
V. Academic Achievement	.77**	-.20	.15	.20
<u>Social Self-Concept</u>				
I. Mother's SES				
II. Academic Aptitude	-.49**			
III. Ethnic Identity	-.02	.14		
IV. Self-Concept	-.15	.11	.22*	
V. Academic Achievement	.77**	-.20	.15	-.06

Table 4 (continued)

Descriptive Correlations for Measures included in Path Analyses

	I	II	III	IV
<u>Physical Appearance Self-Concept</u>				
I. Mother's SES				
II. Academic Aptitude	-.49**			
III. Ethnic Identity	-.02	.14		
IV. Self-Concept	.17	-.09	.26*	
V. Academic Achievement	.77**	-.20	.15	.10

Note. The sample size for the correlations is 73. *p < .05.

**p < .01. All correlations were Pearson correlation coefficients.

0.35. Once this outlier was removed from the data, the Scheffe post-hoc test no longer revealed program group differences at the .05 level of significance. Subsequently, this subject was removed from further analyses.

Results from Path Analyses

There was a total of four different models, each of which contains a different domain of self-concept. In each of the models, it was proposed that in Black first-year college students, socioeconomic status (entered first) and academic aptitude (entered second) would serve as two control variables. Ethnic identity (entered third) would influence self-concept (entered fourth), and self-concept would influence ethnic identity. Finally, these factors would significantly influence academic achievement (entered fifth). For an illustration of the path model, see Figure 1 (Chapter 2). Path coefficients were computed to estimate the direction and magnitude of various causal relations. The path analyses were computed using the method of Linear Structural Relations (LISREL; Joreskog and Sorbom, 1984). Results are presented in Figures 2 through 5.

In the models, socioeconomic status (SES) was assessed by mother's education and occupation and categorized by social status indices (Hollingshead, 1975). Academic aptitude was assessed by the combined verbal and mathematics scores from the Scholastic Achievement Test (SAT). Ethnic identity was

assessed by the Multigroup Ethnic Identity Measure (MEIM; Phinney, 1989). Four domains of self-concept (i.e., global, academic, social, physical appearance) were assessed by the Self-Perception Profile for Adolescents (SPPA; Harter, 1985). Academic achievement was represented by the subject's first-semester college grade point average.

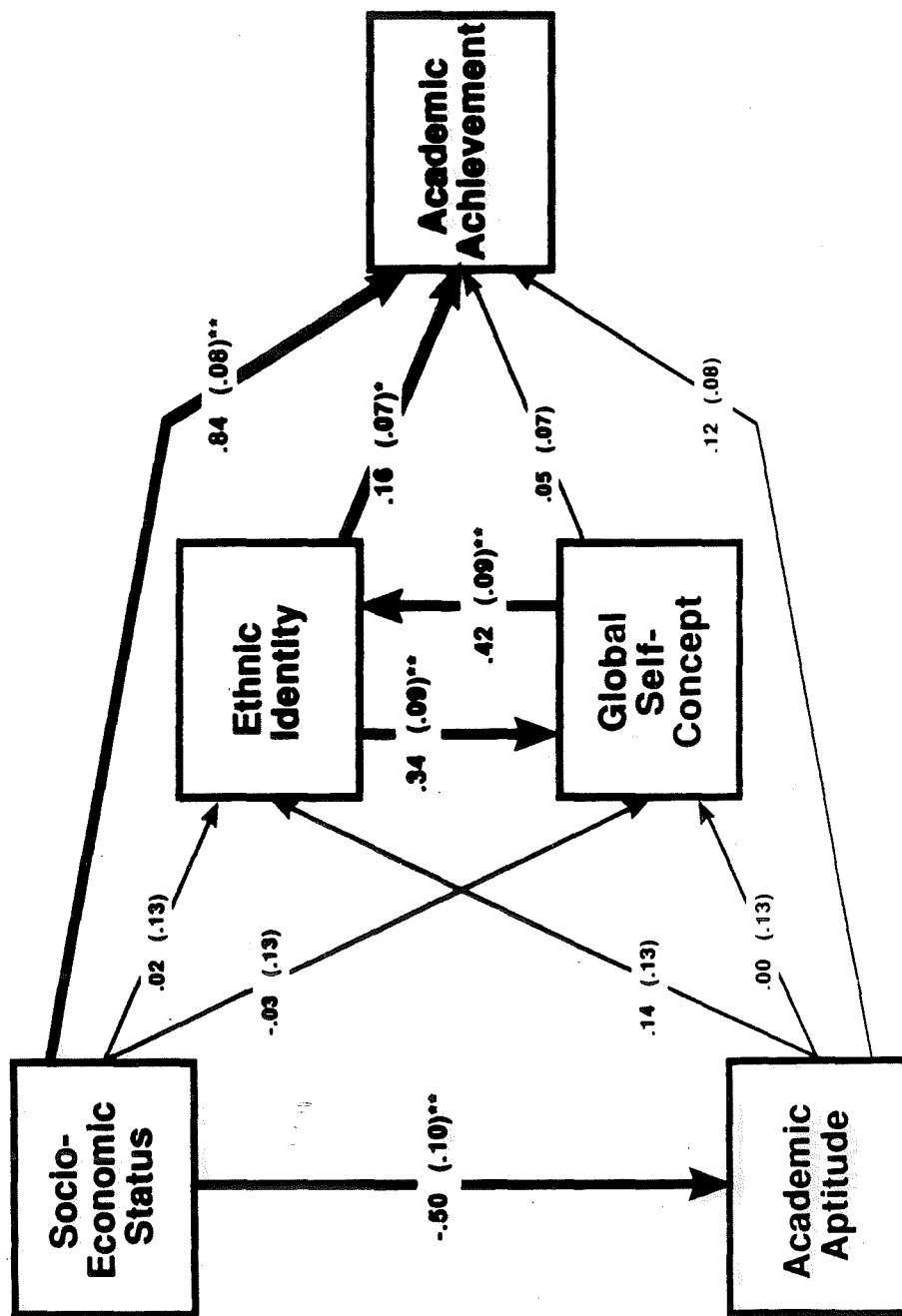
Because Figures 2 through 5 represent nonrecursive path models (represented by unidirectional arrows), the first number on the line of the path represents the path coefficient, or the standardized beta weight (β) for multiple regression analysis used as an estimate of the path (Pedhazur, 1982). The second number (in parentheses) represents the standard error. A path coefficient is significant at the .05 level if it is greater than 1.96 times the standard error, and is significant at the .01 level if it is greater than 2.58 times the standard error.

Figure 2: Global Self-Concept. In Figure 2 which includes global self-concept, socioeconomic status significantly negatively influences academic aptitude ($\beta = -.50$, $p < .01$) and positively influences academic achievement ($\beta = .84$, $p < .01$). There is also a significant positive path of influence from ethnic identity to global self-concept ($\beta = .34$, $p < .01$) and from global self-concept to ethnic identity ($\beta = .42$, $p < .01$). Additionally, there is a positive influential relationship between ethnic identity and academic achievement ($\beta = .16$, $p < .05$). In this model, there is no

evidence that socioeconomic status significantly influences ethnic identity ($\beta = .02$) or global self-concept ($\beta = -.03$). There is also no significant path of influence between academic aptitude and ethnic identity ($\beta = .14$), self-concept ($\beta = .00$), or academic achievement ($\beta = .12$). Nor did global self-concept significantly influence academic achievement ($\beta = .05$).

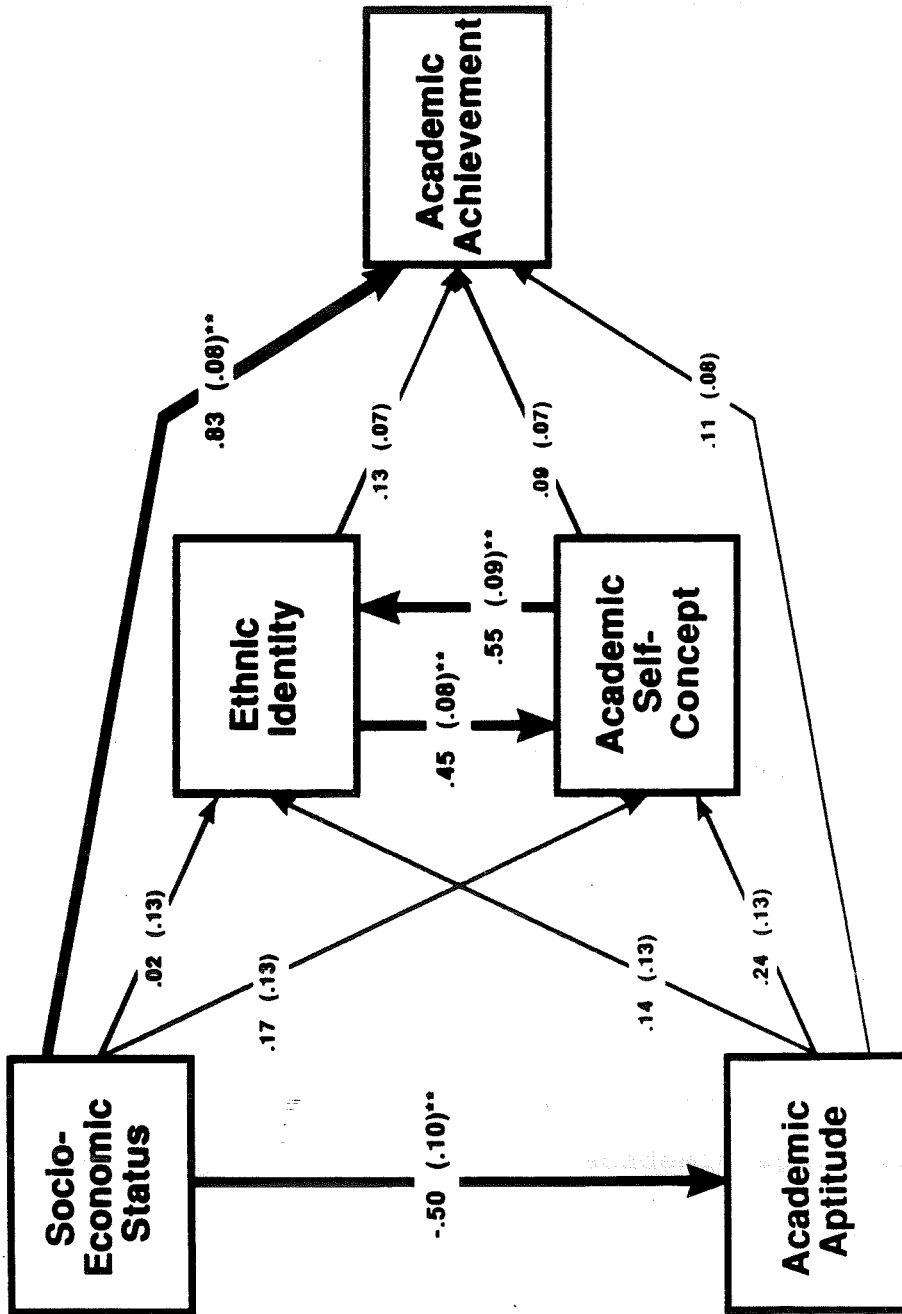
Figure 3: Academic Self-Concept. In Figure 3 which includes academic self-concept, socioeconomic status significantly negatively influences academic aptitude ($\beta = -.50$, $p < .01$) and positively influences academic achievement ($\beta = .83$, $p < .01$). There is also a significant positive path of influence from ethnic identity to academic self-concept ($\beta = .45$, $p < .01$) and from academic self-concept to ethnic identity ($\beta = .55$, $p < .01$). No other significant paths of influence exist in this model. However, the path between ethnic identity and academic achievement approaches statistical significance ($\beta = .13$), as does the path between academic aptitude and academic self-concept ($\beta = .24$). Socioeconomic status does not significantly influence ethnic identity ($\beta = .02$) or academic self-concept ($\beta = .17$). Nor does academic aptitude significantly influence ethnic identity ($\beta = .14$) or academic achievement ($\beta = .11$). Finally, academic self-concept does not significantly influence academic achievement ($\beta = .07$).

**Figure 2: Global Self-Concept and Ethnic Identity
Factors Influencing Academic Achievement**



Note. The path coefficient (Beta) is followed by the standard error which is in parentheses. * $p < .05$ ** $p < .01$.

**Figure 3: Academic Self-Concept and Ethnic Identity
Factors Influencing Academic Achievement**

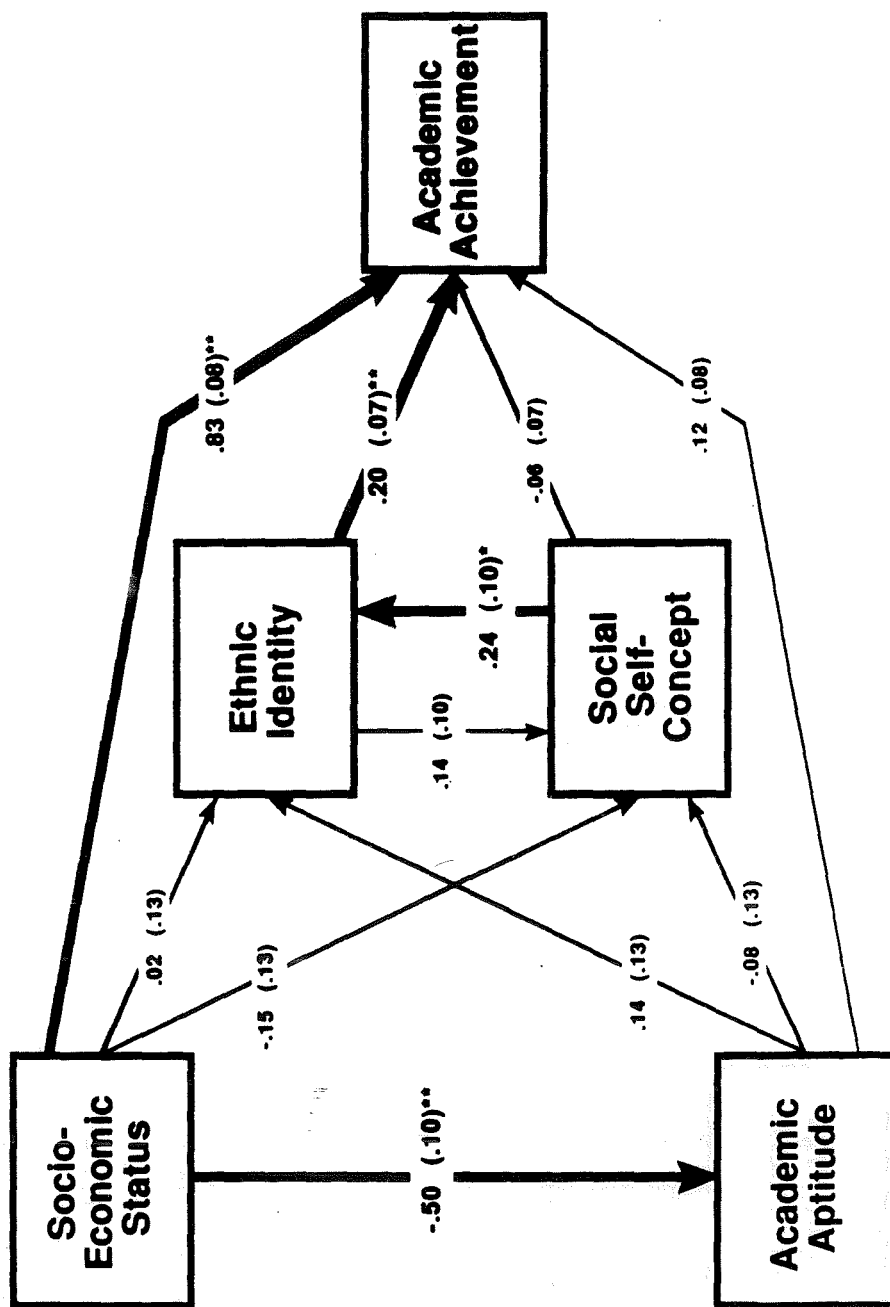


Note. The path coefficient (Beta) is followed by the standard error which is in parentheses. * $p < .05$ ** $p < .01$.

Figure 4: Social Self-Concept. In Figure 4 which includes social self-concept, there is a significant negative path of influence between socioeconomic status and academic aptitude ($\beta = -.50$, $p < .01$). There is a positive path of influence between socioeconomic status and academic achievement ($\beta = .83$, $p < .01$). There is also a significant positive path of influence between ethnic identity and academic achievement ($\beta = .20$, $p < .01$). Additionally, there is a significant positive path of influence from social self-concept to ethnic identity ($\beta = .24$, $p < .05$). There is no evidence that other statistically significant paths of influence exist in this model. Socioeconomic status does not significantly influence ethnic identity ($\beta = .02$) or social self-concept ($\beta = -.15$). Academic aptitude does not significantly influence ethnic identity ($\beta = .14$), social self-concept ($\beta = -.01$), or academic achievement ($\beta = .12$). Ethnic identity does not significantly influence social self-concept ($\beta = .14$). Social self-concept does not significantly influence academic achievement ($\beta = -.06$).

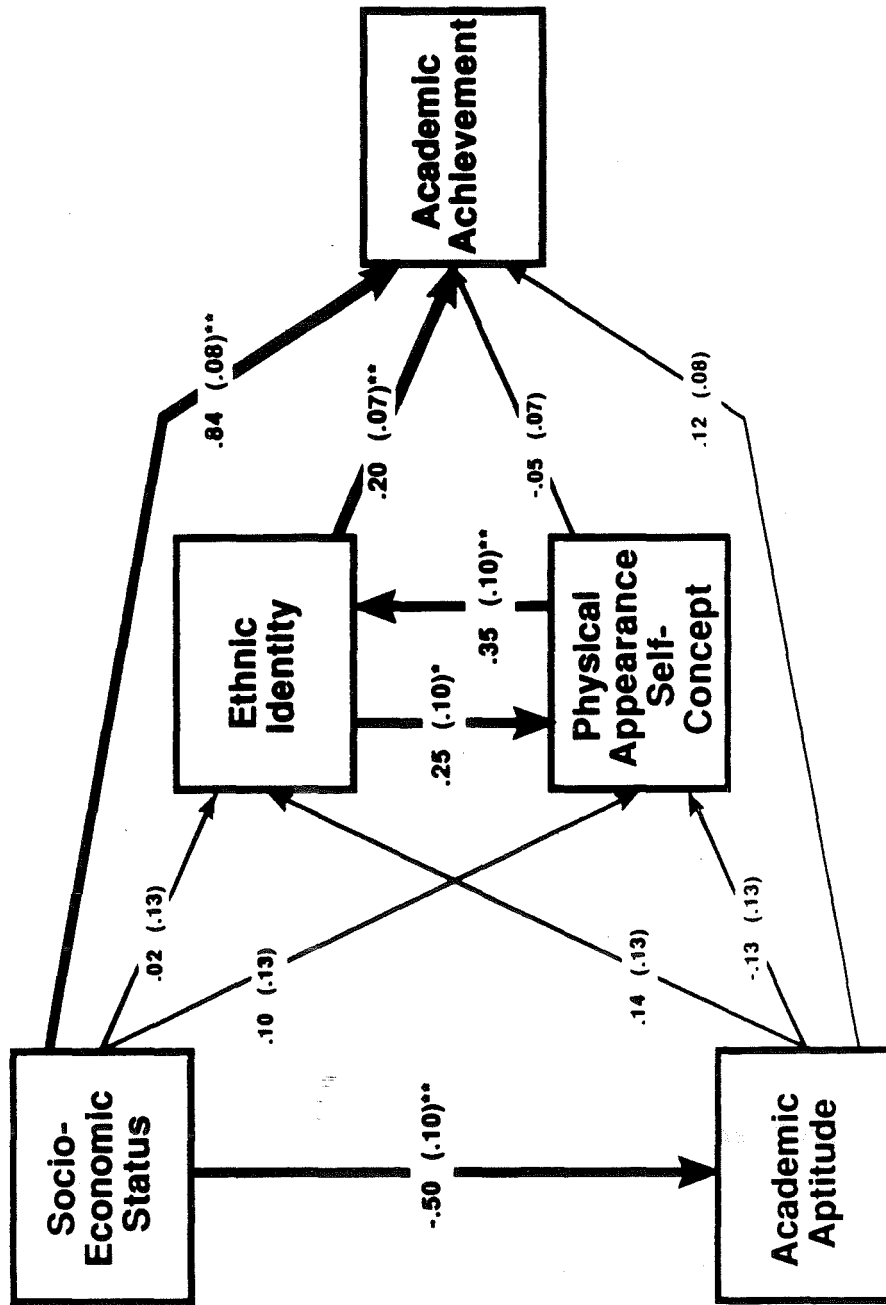
Figure 5: Physical Appearance Self-Concept. In Figure 5 which includes physical self-concept, socioeconomic status significantly negatively influences academic aptitude ($\beta = -.50$, $p < .01$) and positively influences academic achievement ($\beta = .84$, $p < .01$). Ethnic identity significantly positively influences physical appearance self-concept ($\beta = .25$, $p <$

**Figure 4: Social Self-Concept and Ethnic Identity
Factors Influencing Academic Achievement**



Note. The path coefficient (Beta) is followed by the standard error which is in parentheses. * $p < .05$ ** $p < .01$.

**Figure 5: Physical Appearance Self-Concept and Ethnic Identity
Factors Influencing Academic Achievement**



Note. The path coefficient (Beta) is followed by the standard error which is in parentheses. * $p < .05$ ** $p < .01$.

.05), and physical appearance self-concept significantly positively influences ethnic identity ($\beta = .35$, $p < .01$). For this model, the final significant path of influence exists between ethnic identity and academic achievement ($\beta = .20$, $p < .01$). However, the path diagram and path coefficients do not provide evidence of other significant paths of influence. Socioeconomic status does not significantly influence ethnic identity ($\beta = .02$) or physical self-concept ($\beta = .10$). Academic aptitude non-significantly influences ethnic identity ($\beta = .14$), physical self-concept ($\beta = -.13$), and academic achievement ($\beta = .11$). A significant path of influence does not exist between physical appearance self-concept and academic achievement ($\beta = .05$).

As illustrated in Figures 2 through 5, each of the models consistently demonstrates that there are significant paths of influence from socioeconomic status to both academic aptitude and to academic achievement and from self-concept to ethnic identity. Additionally, three of the four models demonstrate significant paths of influence between ethnic identity and academic achievement, while the fourth model (academic self-concept) approached statistical significance between those factors. This is also true for three of the four path models in the paths from ethnic identity to self-concept. The only model in which there was not a statistically significant path from ethnic identity to self-concept involved social self-concept. However, contrary to the original hypotheses in

which all the paths in the models involving the main factors (i.e., ethnic identity, domains of self-concept, academic achievement) would be significant, the remaining paths of influence were not significant. The following chapter will discuss these results.

CHAPTER 5

Discussion

The purpose of this study was to investigate the impact of several factors on the academic achievement of Black first-year college students. Socioeconomic status and academic aptitude were examined as control factors, while ethnic identity and domains of self-concept were examined as potentially influencing each other and academic achievement. There were four separate investigations, each of which included different domains of self-concept (i.e., global, academic, social, physical appearance).

It was hypothesized that there would be a significant relationship among all the main factors that influence academic achievement for each domain of self-concept. Once socioeconomic status and academic aptitude were controlled, significant paths of influence were proposed to exist from ethnic identity to self-concept; ethnic identity to academic achievement; self-concept to ethnic identity; and self-concept to academic achievement. Descriptive statistics for each of the variables of interest were calculated in addition to the correlations among these variables. The hypothesized presumed cause and effect relationships were illustrated in a path diagram (see Figure 1, Chapter 2 for path model).

The outline for the remainder of this chapter includes a discussion of the results from the analyses. The discussion

of the results will be followed by a discussion of the limitations of this study, suggestions for future research, and implications for the enhancement of academic achievement of Black college students.

Discussion of the Results

In this section, various patterns of results of the path analyses will be discussed. First, significant paths that involve the control variables are discussed. Second, the significant results from the paths involving the main variables of interest will be discussed. Third, the nonsignificant results from the path analyses will be discussed.

The path analyses involving the domains of self-concept generally yielded similar results. It was hypothesized that, having controlled for the Black college students' socioeconomic backgrounds and academic aptitudes, ethnic identity would positively influence domains of self-concept and academic achievement. Additionally, it was predicted that domains of self-concept would positively influence ethnic identity and academic achievement. Only some of these paths of influence are significant.

Significant Paths: Socioeconomic Status and Academic Aptitude. Socioeconomic status has a negative direct effect on academic aptitude. Thus, the higher the Black college students' socioeconomic status backgrounds, the lower their

academic aptitude scores were. The results of the path analyses imply that the educational and occupational backgrounds of the students' mothers negatively affects the academic aptitude levels of the students. This is a surprising finding, and represents a complicated relationship because of the multitude of factors that are related to socioeconomic status.

One possible explanation of the results is related to criteria used to admit the students to the university. Students are selected for admission based on a variety of criteria (e.g., high school grades, class rank, and curricula; Scholastic Achievement Test scores; recommendations; co- and extra-curricular involvements; legacy status; state residence), all with the intention of selecting a diverse population of students who will ultimately succeed at the university. It seems that flexible, more nontraditional methods of selection are particularly used for admitting minority students. For example, Black students with SAT scores lower than White students may be admitted because the admissions department recognizes that SAT scores for Black students do not predict college performance as reliably as for White students. In those cases, the admissions department may recognize the importance of emphasizing other compensating areas of strength in the students' backgrounds, such as advantages reflected by parental education and occupation, sometimes additionally requiring the students to attend

special programs. This practice helps explain the inverse relationship between socioeconomic status and academic aptitude. There is a need to investigate the specific factors that influence socioeconomic status, which in turn influence the academic aptitude of Black students.

Significant Paths: Socioeconomic Status and Academic Achievement. Socioeconomic status significantly positively influenced the academic achievement of the Black students. This suggests a direct relationship such that higher students' socioeconomic backgrounds contribute to higher grade point averages. This interpretation makes the relationship too simplistic. In this study, socioeconomic status was used as a control variable to help control for the discrepancies between the subjects' backgrounds. Many factors are related to the economic and social backgrounds of students which may influence their academic achievement. Examples of these factors are: quality of high school education, academic preparation for college, educational role models, expectations for success, and financial pressures.

Another potential influence of socioeconomic status on academic achievement is the continuity between the students' home and college backgrounds. The ease in the students' adjustment to college influences their academic success, particularly their first-semester grades (as used in this study). It is expected that those students whose backgrounds are similar to the University of Virginia environment (i.e.,

the students from the comparatively higher socioeconomic backgrounds) would have an easier social, emotional, and academic adjustment than the students from backgrounds substantially discrepant from their college experience. This adjustment may be reflected in their academic achievement, among other areas, which would produce the effect observed in this study.

Significant Paths: Ethnic Identity and Self-Concept.

Among all four of the path models, self-concept significantly positively influenced ethnic identity. In three of the four path models (all except social self-concept), ethnic identity significantly positively influenced self-concept. Thus, generally, there was a bi-directional influential relationship between ethnic identity and domains of self-concept in the Black college students. Increased or strengthened levels of ethnic identity contributed to and were influenced by increased or strengthened self-concept.

These findings are consistent with most of the related previous research. Cross (1987) implied a positive conceptual relationship between ethnic identity and self-concept. A study by Phinney (1989) demonstrated that the process of ethnic identity development is a key factor in understanding the self-esteem and psychological adjustment of minority youth. Other studies of minority youth revealed significant relationships between self-concept and own-race preferences (Ward and Braun, 1972) and pride in ethnic heritage (Comas-

Diaz, Arroyo, & Lovelace, 1982). More recently, Phinney (in press) also found that self-concept is related to ethnic identity in minority youth.

The current findings were contradictory to the findings of a study of the relationship between ego identity and ethnic identity (Looney, 1988). Looney (1988) found that there was some independence between ethnic identity and the development of the self or ego. It was suggested that if an individual has a strong sense of self, he or she does not have a positive sense of their "Blackness." The definition of ego development used in Looney's (1988) study was diffuse (i.e., development of control of the self) and difficult to measure. It is not equivalent to the more specific, operationalized definition of self-concept used in this study. The contradictory findings may be partially due to the incongruence between the definition/measurement of ego development and self-concept.

The interrelationship between ethnic identity and self-concept suggests that they are factors influenced by Black students' own and others' perceptions of competence and adequacy in different realms. In terms of self-evaluations, the value judgments most significant to one's psychological development are self-imposed estimates (Branden, 1969). This self-evaluation is particularly important in understanding minority youth (Powell, 1989). The impact of a Black student's views of his or her racially-biased status in the

social structure (i.e., ethnic identity) and his or her competence or adequacy in different domains (i.e., self-concept) is not only substantial, but also influences each other. Indeed, this was found in this study by the significant correlations and path coefficients between ethnic identity and self-concept.

Relatedly, in terms of other people's evaluations, self-concept is partially a function of other people's perceptions such that it results from how individuals believe they are perceived by others in their environment (Cooley, 1902; Harter, 1983; Marsh, Smith, & Barnes, 1983; McCandless & Trotter, 1977). Similarly, this is true for ethnic identity such that ethnic identity varies with the social context in which the person is involved, and varies with an individual's development and experience (Atkinson, Morten, & Sue, 1983; Cross, 1978; Parham & Helms, 1985; Phinney, in press; Weinreich, 1988). Other people's perceptions influencing ethnic identity and self-concept is consistent with the current study's findings of a significant bi-directional relationship between the two factors.

The social science literature has popularized the tremendous importance of positive, strong self-concepts in minority people (e.g., Smith, Burlew, Mosley, & Whitney, 1979). There is an additional need to strengthen the development of the many factors that are influenced by and contribute to self-concept, which -- as found in this study --

- includes ethnic identity. Within the last decade, researchers have elucidated the importance of strong, well-developed ethnic identities for minority youth. For example, it is now clear that stronger developed ethnic identities imply a sense of liberation (Cross, 1971; Hall & Cross, 1970; Thomas, 1971), self-understanding (Rosenthal, 1987), and self-validation and strength (Stikes, 1984). Similarly, self-concept involves confidence in one's strengths in different realms. Collectively, this study and past research suggests ethnic identity plays a significant role in minority people's healthy psychosocial functioning (e.g., Atkinson, Morten, & Sue, 1983; Parham & Helms, 1985; Phinney, 1989; Phinney, Lochner, & Murphy, in press).

Significant Paths: Ethnic Identity and Academic Achievement. Among the global-, social-, and physical appearance self-concept models, ethnic identity was found to have a significant positive influence on academic achievement. More specifically, once the influences of socioeconomic background and academic aptitude had been removed from ethnic identity, ethnic identity was found to positively contribute to the academic achievement of the Black college students.

Although there is a deficit of empirical research on the relationship between ethnic identity and academic achievement in Black college students, there is some research which relates to this study. For example, the current findings are consistent with previous research which suggests that Black

students' racial awareness is associated with academic achievement (Corner & Poussaint, 1975; Jackson, McCullough, & Gurin, 1981).

Fordham (1988) and Fordham and Ogbu's (1986) qualitative research on the relationship between ethnic identity and academic achievement in Black students generally suggests that there is an inverse relationship between the two factors which is inconsistent with the current study's empirical findings. One reason there may be a discrepancy between Fordham and Ogbu's and the current study's findings is related to the subject differences. Although both groups of studies involved Black students, Fordham and Ogbu studied high school students, some of whom were high achievers and some of whom were underachievers. Comparatively, the subjects in the current study are "high" achievers in the sense that they are students who have already succeeded in secondary education to the extent that they were admitted to a competitive university.

A second reason there may be a discrepancy between Fordham and Ogbu's conclusions and the current study's findings on the influence of ethnic identity on academic achievement in Black students is related to other subject differences. Their research is based on Black high school students attending an urban, predominantly Black school and this study is based on Black college students attending a predominantly White college. There may be differences in the ethnic identities of these students that are related to

setting differences. Nonetheless, for the Black students in this college population, ethnic identity is clearly an important factor that positively influences academic achievement.

Nonsignificant Paths involving the Social Self-Concept Model. The discussion of the bi-directional influence of ethnic identity and self-concept on Black college students indirectly included all the domains of self-concept (i.e., global, social, academic, physical appearance). Nonetheless, the bi-directional relationship was not significant for the social domain of self-concept. It was a surprising finding, but was consistent with a previous study of minority adolescents in which strengthened or increased ethnic identities did not significantly affect the students' social self-concepts, although other domains of self-concept were enhanced (Comas-Diaz, Arroyo, & Lovelace, 1982).

This study's findings suggest that ethnic identity does not significantly influence the social self-concepts of Black college students. In other words, Black students' acceptance and commitment to their ethnic group as they relate to the dominant culture (i.e., ethnic identity) does not significantly impact their perceptions of their social acceptance with peers in the social environment (i.e., social self-concept). Notwithstanding, the opposite influential relationship was found to exist such that Black students' competence in social relationships with peers influence how

they accept themselves and commit to their ethnic group. The difference appears to exist between society at large and known individuals or peers. The difference needs to be further investigated to delineate where the actual difference(s) exist in ethnic minority youth and how the paths of influence develop in this social realm.

Nonsignificant Paths Involving the Academic Self-Concept Model. In the academic self-concept model, although it approached significance, ethnic identity did not significantly influence academic achievement. Academic self-concept may have an interactive influence on the relationship between ethnic identity and academic achievement that is different from the influence of the other domains of self-concept. The difference in the findings lends support for the need to investigate self-concept as a multidimensional factor, which is consistent with past research (e.g., Byrne, 1984; Cauce, 1987). The true relationships among these factors is unclear, but there is enough support to warrant further investigation of the relationship between domains of self-concept, ethnic identity, and academic achievement of Black students.

Additional Nonsignificant Path Relationships. There were four notable, consistently nonsignificant path relationships. First, conspicuously absent from the significant relationships in this study was the hypothesized causal relationship between academic aptitude and academic achievement. Scholastic aptitude scores are purported to predict the academic success

of college students, which clearly was not the case for the Black students in this study. One reason this study did not find that academic aptitude had a significant influence on the academic achievement of the students may be related to socioeconomic status. Socioeconomic status was found to have a very strong predictive relationship with academic achievement. Once this influence was factored out of the students' academic aptitude scores, a more accurate representation of the effects of academic aptitude was available. For this Black college population, academic aptitude, represented by Scholastic Achievement Test scores, is not predictive or causally related to college academic success.

Second, although the correlation between these factors was significant, academic aptitude did not significantly influence the academic self-concepts of the Black students in the path analyses (although the path approached significance). That is, Black college students' perceptions of their academic abilities (academic self-concept) are not significantly related to overt measures of their academic ability (academic aptitude) in the path analysis. A reason for this difference may be that the influence of socioeconomic status was removed from academic aptitude in the path model. This finding further supports the complex, multidimensional influence socioeconomic background has on the academic achievement of Black students and the need for further investigation of this

relationship.

Third, none of the domains of self-concept significantly influenced the academic achievement of the Black students, not even academic self-concept. Nor were the domains of self-concept significantly correlated with academic achievement. This is inconsistent with some of the previous literature which reports a strong relationship between self-concept and achievement (e.g., Brookover & Thomas, 1963; Purkey, 1970; Yamamoto, 1972), particularly among ethnic minority people (e.g., Epps, 1969; Giddings, 1965; Hirsch & Borowitz, 1967; Jordan, 1981; Miller & Woock, 1970; Myers, 1966; Solomon et al., 1967).

The Black students in this study had relatively high self-concepts, but their self-concepts did not significantly correlate with or influence their academic achievement. Even though the majority of past research reports such a relationship, some other researchers did not find a significant relationship between self-concept and academic achievement (e.g., Circirelli, 1977; Jordan, 1981; Powell, 1989; Soares & Soares, 1969).

A longitudinal study of self-perception and achievement among Black adolescents found that Black students' global self-concepts were strong even though their academic achievement was relatively worse than their White peers (Hare, 1985). Another researcher (Powell, 1989) reported observing the same phenomenon, which is also consistent with the current

study. For the Black students in this study, how capable they believe they are in several different domains of their development (i.e., global self-worth, academic, social, physical appearance) is not related to their actual academic success. Other factors, including those already discussed (i.e., socioeconomic status, ethnic identity), are influencing the Black students' academic achievement. The influence of even more factors on academic achievement needs to be identified through further investigations.

Fourth, it was encouraging to find that socioeconomic status did not significantly affect the Black students' ethnic identities or self-concepts. Thus, regardless of the social and economic backgrounds of the students, they had equal opportunities to develop their ethnic identities and self-concepts. This is important given the demonstrated contributions both ethnic identity and self-concept make to Black college students' psychosocial and academic success.

Limitations of this Study and Suggestions for Further Research

The generalizability of the findings of this study is limited to Black first-year college students who attend a predominantly White university. In its design, the current study attempted to include the most important psychosocial factors influencing academic achievement. However, it is doubtful that this study involved a model that included all the common variables, as stipulated by path analysis. One

difficulty is that it is impossible to identify and involve all potential variables in one study (Dickens, 1990). The current state of empirical research has not elucidated many of the factors that are presumed causes of academic achievement in Black youth. This study identified the significant influence that socioeconomic status has on the academic aptitude and academic achievement of Black college students. It emphasizes the need to investigate the factors related to socioeconomic status that more directly affect Black students' academic achievement. This study also adds to the current body of research on factors that influence academic achievement by the inclusion of ethnic identity as a potential cause. Further studies will need to identify and include other factors in this model which influence academic achievement of Black youth.

Mother's socioeconomic status (combination of education and occupation) was used as a socioeconomic index. It most likely would have been more desirable to use in this study an index that combined both mother's and father's education and occupation. Family SES was not used in this study because there were substantially fewer subjects who reported both mothers' and fathers' education and occupation compared to those who reported their mothers' education and occupation. Because of the minuscule differences in actual mother versus father versus family socioeconomic status (see Table 2, Chapter 4 for descriptive SES statistics), it is not believed

that the results of this study are significantly altered by using mother's socioeconomic status. Nonetheless, particularly for Black youth, there is a need to devise an index that more readily assesses socioeconomic status and that would yield a higher report rate for their families.

Self-report questionnaires were used to measure both ethnic identity and self-concept. Both instruments (i.e., Multigroup Ethnic Identity Measure, Phinney, 1989; Self-Perception Profile for Adolescents, Harter, 1985) provide reliable and valid information for the factors they purport to measure (see Measures, Chapter 3). Nonetheless, the strength of the results may have been increased with multiple measures of those constructs. Alternative measures include structured and unstructured interviews of ethnic identity (e.g., Multigroup Ethnic Identity Interview, Phinney, 1990). Additionally, measures of ethnic identity stages of development could be administered to provide a more detailed assessment of ethnic identity.

Additionally, only one measure of academic achievement was used. The first-semester grade point averages of the students may be influenced by multiple factors, including the ease of their adjustment to college. Grade point average was selected as an index of academic achievement because it is the standard measure of academic success used by colleges. First-semester grade point average was used because it was closest in time to the data collection of the other main factors.

Presumably, it is the academic achievement indicator most accurately representing the other factors at that time. As in the assessment of the other factors, multiple measures of academic achievement may have improved the study.

Harter's (1985) self-concept questionnaire was designed for adolescents. The late teenage years represent the upper-limits of adolescence. Because the average age of the subjects in this study was eighteen years of age (ages ranged from sixteen to nineteen), it is believed that the Self-Perception Profile for Adolescents (Harter, 1985) is still valid for this age range. Perhaps the inclusion of multiple measures of self-concept for young adults would have improved the study.

It is important to comment on the size or magnitude of the statistically significant path coefficients (alpha levels ranged from .05 to .01). Some of them are just barely significant at the .05 level. As such, it is important to note the tenuous nature of those findings. Certainly, the small number of subjects included in some of the final path analyses affected the statistical significance of the findings. Thus, it is recommended that this study is replicated using a very large group of subjects.

Additionally, further research might involve a longitudinal design by reassessing the subjects on ethnic identity, self-concept, and academic achievement at the end of their first-year of college, comparing those results to the

first-semester. Annual follow-up assessments on these variables through the subjects' senior year of college would allow additional comparisons to the freshman year (to provide a total of four-years of data). Both ethnic identity (Atkinson, Morten, & Sue, 1983; Cross, 1978; Parham & Helms, 1985; Phinney, in press; Weinreich, 1988) and self-concept (Olszewski, Kulieke, & Willis, 1987) are believed to be psychosocial variables that change over time, depending on development and experience. This longitudinal design would permit the assessment of change in ethnic identity, self-concept, and academic achievement of Black college students. Subjects could be interviewed to gain qualitative information about the experiences they have had that contribute to changes in these variables.

This study could be conducted on different samples such as Black students attending other predominantly White colleges, predominantly Black colleges, and other ethnic minority groups attending both. Researching other populations and comparing the results would expand the understanding of the similarities and differences in the academic achievement of ethnic minority college students. Expanded knowledge of the factors that influence the achievement of ethnic minority college students would contribute to the development of relevant practices to increase academic success.

Implications for Enhancement of Academic Achievement

The results of this study provide support for several implications for interventions with Black college students. First, socioeconomic status was found to significantly affect the academic achievement of the Black first-year college students. Although many factors are related to the social and economic backgrounds of the students, it is believed that the adjustment of the students to college is influenced by their home environments. Thus, those students from higher socioeconomic backgrounds may have an easier adjustment to the rigors of college academic and social life, which is reflected in their higher first-semester grades. Black students from all socioeconomic backgrounds may benefit from summer transition programs designed to facilitate their adjustment to college, particularly programs focusing on the amelioration of setting or background differences.

Second, academic aptitude (Scholastic Achievement Test) scores are not significant predictors of academic achievement of the Black students in this study. This has important implications on the admissions criteria used to select incoming college students. The Scholastic Achievement Test purports to predict academic success of college students, thus is heavily weighted as a factor in the college admissions process. For Black students applying for admission to college, academic aptitude tests should be recognized as being inconsistent, unreliable predictors of their first-semester

academic success.

Ethnic identity is an important influence on the academic achievement of these Black students. Although ethnic identity is related to self-concept, self-concept does not significantly influence the academic achievement of these students. Thus, in trying to increase academic success, general programs designed to enhance students' confidence in their global, academic, social, or physical appearance competence may not be as effective for Black students as culturally-relevant programs designed to enhance their ethnic identity.

Specifically, special programs to enhance ethnic identity may involve African-American or Minority Affairs departments. Their provisions for culturally-relevant interventions specifically designed for ethnic minority students may involve several aspects. Examples of Afrocentric interventions include increased Black role models, Black literature and didactic resources, Black support groups, and liaisons to other ethnic groups and mainstream resources.

Lastly, college curricula and special programs should work to directly enhance the development of positive ethnic identities. For example, the involvement of multicultural, pluralistic perspectives is one trend in college curricula which may enhance ethnic identity. Another example that may increase the ethnic identities of Black college students is to increase the numbers of Black faculty in colleges, thus

providing role models and increased pluralistic perspectives in course material. Additionally, more ethnic minority faculty would enhance multicultural perspectives in the administration and policies of the universities. These interventions may strengthen the ethnic identities of Black college students, thereby increasing their academic success.

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Appendix A

LETTER TO PARENTS AND CONSENT FORM

Dear UVA Transition Program Parents:

My name is Michele Cooley, and I am a fourth year graduate student in Clinical Psychology at the University of Virginia. I am presently working on my Doctoral Dissertation and need your assistance.

I am conducting a study on factors related to how Black students see themselves as college students. I have carefully chosen to work with the students in the University of Virginia Transition Program, and the participation of each student will be greatly valued. Dr. Ron Simmons, Associate Provost for Student Academic Support, and Michael Mallory, Assistant Dean of Admissions, fully support my study and join me in encouraging you and your son and/or daughter's cooperation.

Your consent will allow your son and/or daughter to participate in my study. It will allow me to ask him or her to spend about 30 minutes of their time after one of their monthly Transition Program meetings completing three short questionnaires. All of the information that they provide me with will be confidential, and only shared with my direct supervisors. Once I receive their completed questionnaires, I will assign each a student a code number and delete the corresponding name. Therefore, your son and/or daughter will retain complete anonymity and will only identified by a code number, age, and gender.

In addition to your son and/or daughter's participation in completing the questionnaires, I am requesting your consent to review your son and/or daughter's college records on file with Dr. Simmons and Dean Mallory. Once again, this information will be kept strictly confidential.

Results from the study will probably be available in the summer of 1991, and I will be happy to share a brief and general summary with you and your son and/or daughter upon request. Every effort will be made to protect the privacy of each person who participates in this study. I believe that the information gained will be valuable to educators and program directors, and will assist them in their continuing efforts to promote the success of our youth.

If you have any questions, you may call me (804-295-4344) or Dr. Simmons (804-982-2272). **A parental permission form is attached. Please sign and mail it to me (a self-addressed, stamped envelope is enclosed for your convenience) as soon as possible. Thank you in advance for your cooperation.**

Sincerely,

Michele R. Cooley, M.Ed.

MICHELE R. COOLEY
CURRY PROGRAMS IN CLINICAL AND SCHOOL PSYCHOLOGY
147 RUFFNER HALL
UNIVERSITY OF VIRGINIA
CHARLOTTESVILLE, VA 22903

PARENTAL PERMISSION FORM

This form must be completed by the parent or guardian of the Transition Program student who is given permission to participate in the study on factors related to how Black students see themselves as college students.

I, _____, hereby grant permission

(name of parent/guardian)

to _____
(name of student)

to participate in the above mentioned study. I also give my permission to Michele Cooley to review my son and/or daughter's college records on file with the University of Virginia Office of Admissions and the Office of Academic Support. Even though I give my permission, my son and/or daughter retains the right to decline participation in the study. I understand that the information gained will be used only in regard to Ms. Cooley's project.

(signature of parent/guardian)

(date)

MICHELE R. COOLEY
CURRY PROGRAMS IN CLINICAL AND SCHOOL PSYCHOLOGY
147 RUFFNER HALL
UNIVERSITY OF VIRGINIA
CHARLOTTESVILLE, VA 22903

STUDENT PERMISSION FORM

I, _____, hereby grant my permission to participate in the study on factors related to how Black students see themselves as college students. This will take about 30 minutes and involve completing three short self-report questionnaires. In addition, I give my permission to Michele Cooley to review my college records on file with the University of Virginia Office of Admissions and the Office of Academic Support. My participation is voluntary; if I choose to decline participation, I may do so at any time. I just need to tell the experimenter and leave the room. I understand that my responses are completely confidential. Once the experimenter receives my completed questionnaires, she will assign each a code number and delete my corresponding name. My data will be identified by my code number which can only be linked to my name by a code list. The list is also confidential and will be destroyed after the data has been analyzed. Reports written about this study will not identify me in any way. This information will be used only in regard to Ms. Cooley's project. I may direct any questions I have regarding this study or my participation in it directly to Michele Cooley at the address above.

I agree to participate in the study described above:

(signature of student)

(date)

LETTER TO STUDENTS AND CONSENT FORM

Dear UVA First-Year Student:

My name is Michele Cooley, and I am a fourth year graduate student in Clinical Psychology at the University of Virginia. I am presently working on my Doctoral Dissertation and need your assistance.

I am conducting a study on factors related to how Black students see themselves as college students. I have carefully chosen to work with the first-year Black students at UVA, and the participation of each of you will be greatly valued. Ron Simmons, Associate Provost for Student Academic Support, Sylvia Terry, Assistant Dean of Student Services of the Office of Afro-American Affairs, and Michael Mallory, Assistant Dean of Admissions, fully support my study and join me in encouraging your cooperation.

Your participation in my study would require about 30 minutes of your time. You would complete three short questionnaires. All of the information you would provide me with will be confidential, and only shared with my direct supervisors. Once I receive your completed questionnaires, I will assign each a code number and delete the corresponding name. Therefore, your responses will be completely anonymous and will only be identified by a code number, age, and gender.

In addition to your participation in completing the questionnaires, I am requesting your consent to review your college records on file with Dr. Simmons, Dean Terry, and Dean Mallory. Once again, this information will be kept strictly confidential.

Results from the study will probably be available in the summer of 1991, and I will be happy to share a brief and general summary with you upon request. Every effort will be made to protect the privacy of every participant in this study. I believe that the information gained will be valuable to educators and program directors, and will assist them in their continuing efforts to promote students' success.

If you have any questions, you may call me (804-295-4344), Dr. Simmons (804-982-2272). Thank you in advance for your help.

Sincerely,

Michele R. Cooley, M.Ed.

Appendix B

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

NAME: _____

PROGRAM (check all that apply):

Fall Transition Program _____ Summer Transition Program _____ Peer Advisor Program _____

AGE: _____
year _____

BIRTH DATE: month _____ day _____

GENDER: male _____ female _____

HOME COMMUNITY DEMOGRAPHICS:

1. Name of home county/city and state: _____
2. Location: urban _____ rural _____ suburban _____
3. What proportion of your home town is populated by Black people?
more than 2/3 _____ less than 1/3 _____ in between 1/3 and 2/3 _____

YOUR PARENTS:

1. Mother
 - a) Highest level of education completed (indicate year in blank):
elementary _____ high school _____ college _____ graduate/professional school _____
 - b) Occupation: _____
2. Father
 - a) Highest level of education completed (indicate year in blank):
elementary _____ high school _____ college _____ graduate/professional school _____
 - b) Occupation: _____

What I Am Like

Name _____ Age _____ Birthday _____
Month _____ Day _____ Group _____

SAMPLE SENTENCE

	Really True for Me	Sort of True for Me			Sort of True for Me	Really True for Me
a)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Some teenagers like to go to movies in their spare time	BUT	Other teenagers would rather go to sports events.	<input type="checkbox"/>
1.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Some teenagers feel that they are just as smart as others their age	BUT	Other teenagers aren't so sure and wonder if they are as smart.	<input type="checkbox"/>
2.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Some teenagers find it hard to make friends	BUT	For other teenagers it's pretty easy.	<input type="checkbox"/>
3.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Some teenagers do very well at all kinds of sports	BUT	Other teenagers don't feel that they are very good when it comes to sports.	<input type="checkbox"/>
4.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Some teenagers are not happy with the way they look	BUT	Other teenagers are happy with the way they look.	<input type="checkbox"/>
5.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Some teenagers feel that they are ready to do well at a part-time job	BUT	Other teenagers feel that they are not quite ready to handle a part-time job.	<input type="checkbox"/>
6.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Some teenagers feel that if they are romantically interested in someone, that person will like them back	BUT	Other teenagers worry that when they like someone romantically, that person won't like them back	<input type="checkbox"/>
7.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Some teenagers usually do the right thing	BUT	Other teenagers often don't do what they know is right	<input type="checkbox"/>
8.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Some teenagers are able to make really close friends	BUT	Other teenagers find it hard to make really close friends.	<input type="checkbox"/>
9.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Some teenagers are often disappointed with themselves	BUT	Other teenagers are pretty pleased with themselves.	<input type="checkbox"/>
10.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Some teenagers are pretty slow in finishing their school work	BUT	Other teenagers can do their school work more quickly.	<input type="checkbox"/>
11.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Some teenagers have a lot of friends	BUT	Other teenagers don't have very many friends.	<input type="checkbox"/>
12.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Some teenagers think they could do well at just about any new athletic activity	BUT	Other teenagers are afraid they might not do well at a new athletic activity.	<input type="checkbox"/>

	True for Me	True for Me			True for Me	True for Me
13.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Some teenagers wish their body was different	BUT	Other teenagers like their body the way it is.	<input type="checkbox"/>
14.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Some teenagers feel that they don't have enough skills to do well at a job	BUT	Other teenagers feel that they do have enough skills to do a job well.	<input type="checkbox"/>
15.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Some teenagers are not dating the people they are really attracted to	BUT	Other teenagers are dating those people they are attracted to.	<input type="checkbox"/>
16.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Some teenagers often feel guilty about certain things they do	BUT	Other teenagers hardly ever feel guilty about what they do.	<input type="checkbox"/>
17.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Some teenagers can be trusted to keep secrets that their friends tell them	BUT	Other teenagers have a hard time keeping secrets that their friends tell them.	<input type="checkbox"/>
18.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Some teenagers don't like the way they are leading their life	BUT	Other teenagers do like the way they are leading their life.	<input type="checkbox"/>
19.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Some teenagers do very well at their classwork	BUT	Other teenagers don't do very well at their classwork.	<input type="checkbox"/>
20.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Some teenagers are very hard to like	BUT	Other teenagers are really easy to like.	<input type="checkbox"/>
21.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Some teenagers feel that they are better than others their age at sports	BUT	Other teenagers don't feel they can play as well.	<input type="checkbox"/>
22.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Some teenagers wish their physical appearance was different	BUT	Other teenagers like their physical appearance the way it is	<input type="checkbox"/>
23.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Some teenagers are proud of the work they do on jobs they get paid for	BUT	For other teenagers, getting paid is more important than feeling proud of what they do.	<input type="checkbox"/>
24.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Some teenagers feel that people their age will be romantically attracted to them	BUT	Other teenagers worry about whether people their age will be attracted to them	<input type="checkbox"/>
25.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Some teenagers are usually pleased with the way they act	BUT	Other teenagers are often ashamed of the way they act.	<input type="checkbox"/>
26.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Some teenagers don't really have a close friend to share things with	BUT	Other teenagers do have a close friend to share things with.	<input type="checkbox"/>
27.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Some teenagers are happy with themselves most of the time	BUT	Other teenagers are often not happy with themselves.	<input type="checkbox"/>
28.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Some teenagers have trouble figuring out the answers in school	BUT	Other teenagers almost always can figure out the answers.	<input type="checkbox"/>

	Really True for Me	Sort of True for Me			Sort of True for Me	Really True for Me
29.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Some teenagers are popular with others their age	BUT	Other teenagers are not very popular.	<input type="checkbox"/>
30.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Some teenagers don't do well at new outdoor games	BUT	Other teenagers are good at new games right away.	<input type="checkbox"/>
31.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Some teenagers think that they are good looking	BUT	Other teenagers think that they are not very good looking.	<input type="checkbox"/>
32.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Some teenagers feel like they could do better at work they do for pay	BUT	Other teenagers feel that they are doing really well at work they do for pay.	<input type="checkbox"/>
33.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Some teenagers feel that they are fun and interesting on a date	BUT	Other teenagers wonder about how fun and interesting they are on a date.	<input type="checkbox"/>
34.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Some teenagers do things they know they shouldn't do	BUT	Other teenagers hardly ever do things they know they shouldn't do.	<input type="checkbox"/>
35.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Some teenagers find it hard to make friends they can really trust	BUT	Other teenagers are able to make close friends they can really trust.	<input type="checkbox"/>
36.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Some teenagers like the kind of person they are	BUT	Other teenagers often wish they were someone else.	<input type="checkbox"/>
37.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Some teenagers feel that they are pretty intelligent	BUT	Other teenagers question whether they are intelligent.	<input type="checkbox"/>
38.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Some teenagers feel that they are socially accepted	BUT	Other teenagers wished that more people their age accepted them	<input type="checkbox"/>
39.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Some teenagers do not feel that they are very athletic	BUT	Other teenagers feel that they are very athletic.	<input type="checkbox"/>
40.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Some teenagers really like their looks	BUT	Other teenagers wish they looked different.	<input type="checkbox"/>
41.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Some teenagers feel that it's really important to do the best you can on paying jobs	BUT	Other teenagers feel that getting the job done is what really counts.	<input type="checkbox"/>
42.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Some teenagers usually don't get asked out by people they would like to date	BUT	Other teenagers do get asked out by people they really want to date.	<input type="checkbox"/>
43.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Some teenagers usually act the way they know they are supposed to	BUT	Other teenagers often don't act the way they are supposed to.	<input type="checkbox"/>
44.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Some teenagers don't have a friend that is close enough to share really personal thoughts with	BUT	Other teenagers do have a close friend that they can share personal thoughts and feelings with.	<input type="checkbox"/>
45.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Some teenagers are very happy being the way they are	BUT	Other teenagers wish they were different	<input type="checkbox"/>

THE MULTIGROUP ETHNIC IDENTITY MEASURE

In this country, people come from a lot of different cultures and there are many different words to describe the different backgrounds or ethnic groups that people come from. Some examples of the names of ethnic groups are Mexican-American, Hispanic, Black, Asian-American, American Indian, Anglo-American, and White. Every person is born into an ethnic group, or sometimes two groups, but people differ on how important their ethnicity is to them, how they feel about it, and how much their behavior is affected by it. These questions are about your ethnicity or your ethnic group and how you feel about it or react to it.

Please fill in:

In terms of ethnic group, I consider myself to be _____

Use the numbers given below to indicate how much you agree or disagree with each statement.

4: Strongly agree	3: Somewhat agree	2: Somewhat disagree	1: Strongly disagree
----------------------	----------------------	-------------------------	-------------------------

- 1- I have spent time trying to find out more about my own ethnic group, such as its history, traditions, and customs. _____
- 2- I am active in organizations or social groups that include mostly members of my own ethnic group. _____
- 3- I have a clear sense of my ethnic background and what it means for me. _____
- 4- I like meeting and getting to know people from ethnic groups other than my own. _____
- 5- I think a lot about how my life will be effected by my ethnic group membership. _____
- 6- I am happy that I am a member of the group I belong to. _____
- 7- I sometimes feel it would be better if different ethnic groups didn't try to mix together. _____
- 8- I am not very clear about the role of my ethnicity in my life. _____
- 9- I often spend time with people from ethnic groups other than my own. _____
- 10- I really have not spent much time trying to learn more about the culture and history of my ethnic group. _____
- 11- I have a strong sense of belonging to my own ethnic group. _____

Use the numbers given below to indicate how much you agree or disagree with each statement.

4: Strongly agree	3: Somewhat agree	2: Somewhat disagree	1: Strongly disagree
----------------------	----------------------	-------------------------	-------------------------

- 12- I understand pretty well what my ethnic group membership means to me, in terms of how to relate to my own group and other groups. _____
- 13- In order to learn more about my ethnic background, I have often talked to other people about my ethnic group. _____
- 14- I have a lot of pride in my ethnic group and its accomplishments. _____
- 15- I don't try very hard to become friends with people from other ethnic groups. _____
- 16- I participate in cultural practices of my own group, such as special food, music, or customs. _____
- 17- I am involved in activities with people from other ethnic groups. _____
- 18- I feel a strong attachment towards my own ethnic group. _____
- 19- I enjoy being around people from ethnic groups other than my own. _____
- 20- I feel good about my cultural or ethnic background. _____

Write in the number that gives the best answer to each question.

- 21- My ethnicity is _____
 - (1) Asian, Asian-American, or Oriental
 - (2) Hispanic or Latino
 - (3) White, Caucasian, European, not Hispanic
 - (4) Black or Afro-American
 - (5) American Indian
 - (6) Mixed; Parents are from two different groups
 - (7) Other (write in): _____
- 22- My father's ethnicity is (use numbers above) _____
- 23- My mother's ethnicity is (use numbers above) _____

Appendix C

STATEMENT TO SUBJECTS**TRANSITION PROGRAM INTRODUCTION:**

Good afternoon. My name is Michele Cooley, as Ms. Leffler stated. I am a fourth year graduate student in Clinical Psychology here at the University. I met some of you this past summer when I spoke to the summer prep. group during a panel discussion. I am working on my Doctoral Dissertation and need your participation in my study on factors related to how Black students see themselves as college students.

PEER ADVISOR AND FIRST-YEAR FOCUS PROGRAM INTRODUCTIONS:

Good afternoon. My name is Michele Cooley and I am a fourth year graduate student in Clinical Psychology here at the University. I am working on my Doctoral Dissertation and need your participation in my study on factors related to how Black students see themselves as college students.

If you are under 18 years old, you may know that I have contacted your parents to ask their permission to work with you today. In any event, you are free not to participate if you choose, although your input will be greatly valued.

I am going to ask each of you to complete three brief questionnaires. They will not take you very long to complete, but you must answer each of the items for you forms to be useful. All of the information that you provide to me will be completely confidential. Once I receive your completed forms, I will assign each a code number and delete the corresponding name. I will keep a master code list which will have your names and code numbers, but this list will be destroyed after I analyze the data. Each of you will retain complete anonymity and will only be identified by a code number, age, and gender.

In turn, I ask that you do not discuss your responses among each other or with other Black first-year students because they may participate in this same study at a later time. If you are interested in the results of this study, which will probably be available next summer, I will be happy to share a brief summary with you. Of course, though, there will not be any information that would disclose your identity.

Does anyone have any questions? If not, let us begin.

[Distribute questionnaires and pencils]

In general with these questionnaires:

- 1) give the responses that best describe you;
- 2) answer each question;
- 3) select the responses that you believe to be true of yourself, rather than those that you would like to be true;
- 4) do not share your responses with other people;
- 5) there are not right or wrong answers or trick questions.

Find the form entitled, "Background Information":

Most of the information requested on this form is self-explanatory, but you may have a few questions regarding:

- location. Urban refers to the city, Rural refers to the country, and Suburban refers to communities that are outside of cities;
- proportion of your home community comprised of Black people. You will probably have to guess, so just do your best to make the crude distinction between less than one-third, more than two-thirds, or in between one-third and two-thirds Black;
- parents' highest level of education completed. Indicate in the most appropriate blank which grade they achieved. For example, if your mother went to college and completed three years of college, put a "3" in the college blank.

Find the next survey form entitled, "What I Am Like" and I will read the directions:

- As you can see from the top of your sheet where it says, "What I Am Like," I am interested in what each of you is like, what kind of person you are. Of course, this is a survey, not a test. There are no right or wrong answers. Because each of you is very different from one another, each of you will put down something different.

Let me explain how these questions work. There is a sample question at the top, marked (a). This question talks about two kinds of people (or "teenagers," as it states), and I want to know which is most like you.

(1) So, what I want you to decide first is whether you are more like the person, or "teenager," on the left side who would rather go to the movies or whether you are most like the person on the right side who would rather go to a sports event. Do not mark anything yet, but first decide which kind of person is most like you, and go to that side of the sentence.

(2) Now, decide whether that type of person is only sort of true for your or really true for you. If it is only sort of true, then put an "X" in the box under sort of true. If it is really true for you, then put an "X" in the box under really true.

(3) For each sentence you can only check one box. Sometimes it will be on one side of the page, another time it will be on the other side of the page, but you can only check one box for each sentence. You do not check both sides, just the one side that is most like you.

(4) OK, that one was just for practice. For the remaining 45 items, just check one box for each item, the one that goes with what is true for you, what you are most like.

Finally, find the last form entitled, "Multigroup Ethnic Identity Measure":

The directions for this questionnaire read, "In this country, people come from a lot of different cultures and there are many different words to describe the different backgrounds or ethnic groups that people come from. Some examples of the names of ethnic groups are Mexican-American, Hispanic, Black, Asian-American, American Indian, Anglo-American, and White. Every person is born into an ethnic group, or sometimes two groups, but people differ on how important their ethnicity is to them, how they feel about it, and how much their behavior is affected by it. These questions are about your ethnicity or your ethnic group and how you feel about it or react to it."

First, fill in the ethnic group you consider yourself to be a member. Then, indicate the extent you agree or disagree with each statement. Place a "1" in the blank if you strongly disagree with the statement, a "2" if you somewhat disagree, and "3" if you somewhat agree, or a "4" if you strongly agree.

Thank you again for your cooperation. Bring your completed questionnaires to me once you finish. I will then give you a Debriefing Form. Are there any questions? Please begin.

Appendix D

DEBRIEFING FORM

You have just participated in a study to investigate the factors related to how Black students see themselves as college students. Two of these factors are self-concept and ethnic identity. In this study, I wanted to determine if the way you feel about yourself in general and/or the way you feel about or see yourself as a Black person has anything to do with your college success. The information I gain from your responses may help may some implications that will benefit educators and directors of programs that are designed to promote the success of Black college students.

Thank you for your participation. If you have any questions regarding this study or its outcome, please feel free to contact me. You may leave a note for me in my mailbox in the Curry Programs for Clinical and School Psychology student office in 135 Ruffner Hall. Please do not discuss this research project with your Black first-year peers, because they may be participants at a later date.

Thanks again for your participation...It's really appreciated!