RACIAL DISCRIMINATION, ACADEMIC SELF EFFICACY, SELF CONCEPT AND
STUDENT’S ACADEMIC SUCCESS

A Project

Presented to the faculty of the Department of Social Work
California State University, Sacramento

Submitted in partial satisfaction of the requirements for the degree of

MASTER OF SOCIAL WORK

by

Kathryn Anne Spuur

SPRING
2012
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Division of Social Work
The purpose of this project was to examine the degree to which there is a relationship between racial discrimination and academic self- efficacy and self concept as they relate to student academic success. Through purposive sampling the researcher surveyed 171 current undergraduate and graduate students at California State University, Sacramento. The questionnaire included subscales for racial discrimination, and academic self efficacy and self concept based on a 5 point Likert-type scale. The data was analyzed using PASW to run descriptive and inferential statistics. Results showed that students of color significantly experience more racial discrimination than White students, t(159)= 5.84, p< .05. A significant difference in levels of academic self efficacy and self concept between White and minority students was not found, t(168) = 1.18, p>.05. The researcher was interested in whether or not there was a difference in levels of academic self efficacy and self concept between ethnic groups. An independent t-test was run comparing White and African American students, and the results showed a statistically significant difference in the amount of academic self efficacy and self concept, t(78)= 2.32, p< .05. The Pearson correlation coefficient was used to identify significant correlations between variables.
The relationship comparing the racial discrimination section and the academic self efficacy and self concept sections did not show a significant correlation, $r (164) = .12$, $p > .05$. Significant correlations of questions found between constructs showed weak correlations. Question 2, “teased in school” was significantly correlated with “bounce back after facing disappointment”, $r (170) = .22$, $p = .003$; “stay optimistic in times of disappointment and success”, $r (170) = .20$, $p = .01$; and “…positive view of myself”, $r (171) = .21$, $p = .01$. “Bounce back after facing disappointment…” was significantly correlated with “…pushed, shoved, or hit due to race”, $r (170) = .21$, $p = .01$. “Teased due to race” showed a weak to moderate significant correlation with “…consider myself to be a leader”, $r (171) = .31$, $p = .00$. With this sample it does not appear that experiencing racial discrimination affected levels of academic self efficacy and self concept negatively, and may have contributed to greater levels of academic self efficacy and self concept within ethnic groups.

__________________________________, Committee Chair
Teiahsha Bankhead, Ph.D., L.C.S.W.

_______________________
Date
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I would like to give a special thanks to the people I have met and built friendships with in this program. You all made the process of sitting through classes and doing the assignments more enjoyable. Having friends taking the same journey I was made the stress manageable. Thank you for being such a great support system.

I would like to thank my advisor for her guidance and support. Even though she was tough on me I know she made me a better writer. And when I was stressed she reassured me I was right on track.

I would like to thank my friends for providing and encouraging me to take time away from school work. They were my outlet to de-stress, debrief, and let loose with. They could always get me to laugh and were always there to drink a beer with me when I wanted one.

I would like to thank my grandparents for supporting me through graduate school. I looked forward to yard work or house work and lunch with you every week. I will never forget the time I spent with you. And to my other grandma (RIP 5 March 2011) who always took an interest in hearing about school and always told me how proud you were of me. I miss you so much and I finally did it!

Lastly, I would like to thank my parents. Thank you for supporting me and listening to me when I was happy, sad, frustrated, stressed, etc. Without you graduate school would not have been possible. I am forever grateful for the love and support you provided me through this process.

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Chapter 1

THE PROBLEM

Introduction

As a White female growing up in a predominately minority community of Mexican and Asian Americans I was blind to the privileges my skin color provided me. My best friend, then and now, is Mexican American, and I was young and naive to differences in our ethnic background. It was not until I reached the end of high school to the beginning of college that I learned what it meant to have White privilege and an awareness of what my skin color shielded me from in society. About this time I also started developing a love of reading and found myself interested in reading memoirs of African Americans through the civil rights era, and other topics relating to people of color. My education in the psychology and social work departments at California State University, Sacramento helped me develop a better understanding of what it means to have “white privilege.” Learning about the civil rights era and what it means to have white privilege sparked my interest in learning about all forms of discrimination towards others and myself.

I have experienced discrimination against my age, gender, and religion. As a woman I strive to receive equal pay. As an atheist my morals and values are continuously in question by others with strong religious beliefs. Therefore, it cannot be argued that discrimination does not exist or that it is not a problem to individuals or the larger society. Discrimination has been a long standing problem for many Americans. Discrimination affects people’s lives in multiple ways whether it be socially, at work, or
in school. Over time society has witnessed different groups fight against discrimination from the women’s movement, to the civil rights movement, to the gay rights movement. I am interested in studying racial discrimination for two reasons: it is not a type of discrimination I have experienced, and I believe that racial discrimination is still prevalent in society. I believe that as an individual and as a social worker it is important to have an understanding of the issues others experience as a way of increasing knowledge and understanding. This study will focus on the impact that racial discrimination has within academia.

**Background of the Problem**

Prior to the civil rights movement in the 1960’s ethnic minorities, particularly African Americans, were largely excluded from obtaining a higher education, from attending universities. Student populations at universities have been transformed since the civil rights movement with a significant push to recruit ethnic minorities through affirmative action (Massey, Charles, Lundy, and Fischer, 2003, p. 1). Despite many retention rate efforts (increased financial aid, remedial education, tutoring, advising, and cultural and ethnic sensitive environments) once admitted into higher education African Americans and Latinos continued to underperform by earning lower grades, progressing at a slower pace, and obtaining higher dropout rates than their White and Asian peers (Bowen & Bok, 1998). Although, the reasons why there continues to be disparities of academic success between ethnic groups is unclear there has been a consensus among researchers that it is a problem within the education system (Kao, 2000; Museus, 2008;

Felice (1981) investigated the problem of minority students’ dropout behavior and evaluated the extent to which school policies and procedures influenced that behavior. The researcher found that the number of years of education is an important contributor to social mobility, in regards to occupational status and mobility, that dropping out of school is the most serious barrier that inhibits occupational success. The researcher associates exchange theory with a minority students’ choice to drop out of school, suggesting that as long as a minority student perceives the educational exchange relationship to be efficacious then that student will stay in school. The researcher identified three determinants to stay in school: the student’s perception of openness for occupational benefits, the students’ perception of prejudice and discrimination in the school, and the student’s perception of the teacher’s attitudes and expectations of minority students. The sample consisted of 226 students who dropped out and 400 ninth to twelfth grade current students. Students in school were surveyed and dropouts were interviewed. Teachers were also surveyed. The findings showed that the dropout students’ perceived opportunity for occupational success beyond school, perceived discrimination experiences in school, and treatment received from teachers were highly correlated with the educational exchange process.

**Statement of the Research Problem**

The problem of minority students’ academic success compared to White students’ academic success has been a problem dating back to slavery. The inability to assess
accurately and to what degree racial discrimination creates a barrier for a student to succeed in school may be associated with the on-going achievement gap in education. Even with the changes made with affirmative action and retention rate efforts, discrimination still contributes to a student’s learning environment. Other contributing factors; such as, school enrollment, teachers’ attitudes and efficacy, and lack of parental involvement continues to contribute to the academic achievement gap of some minority students.

**Purpose of the Study**

The purpose of this study is to explore the relationship between racial discrimination, academic self efficacy and self concept. The researcher is interested in the degree to which academic self efficacy and self concept act as a possible mediating factor for racial discrimination experiences and contribute to higher academic performance.

**Theoretical Framework**

Several theories have been developed as attempts at explaining academic success disparities. The theory of capital deficiency has been widely recognized as one explanation for poor academic performance (Massey et al. 2003). This theory explained that some people lack the necessary resources needed for academic success. The most commonly recognized is financial capital. Parents with more financial resources are able to purchase academic advantages in preparation for college; such as, private tutoring, and intellectual stimuli (Massey et al. 2003). Other forms of capital have been identified as relevant to education. Education itself is a multidimensional set of activities that serve social, political, and other services. This has been described as human capital. Human
capital is developed over a lifetime and is the accumulation of skills, abilities, and knowledge possessed by an individual (Schultz 1963; Becker 1975). Social capital is identified by Bourdieu (1986) as the actual or potential resources which are linked to a network through membership in a group. Connections through kinship or friendship to people who can help individuals prepare for college (socially, psychologically, culturally, and academically), constitutes social capital (Massey et al. 2003). Swindler (1986) defines cultural capital as an accumulation of symbols, stories, rituals, and world views that individuals use to solve different kinds of problems. Culture shapes action by what people want. In relation to academia Massey et al. (2003) reported that the relationship between academic ability and academic investment shows that an individual’s ability or talent is an investment of time and cultural capital.

Ogbu (2008) developed the cultural-ecological model that proposes that there are two separate parts that contribute to the problem of minority education and school performance: societal and school factors, and minority community factors. Societal and school factors include segregation, school funding, and staffing. Minority community factors include the treatment of minority students in the classroom, depth of curriculum, assessment tools and practices, and the rewards that society gives to minorities for their educational accomplishments. Ogbu and Simons (1998) explain Ogbu’s definition of the three types of minorities: autonomous, voluntary and involuntary. Autonomous minorities are small in number and may differ in race, religion, ethnicity or language than the dominate group. They may experience discrimination, but are not totally suppressed or dominated, as their minority status derives from adherence to a belief system that is
not part of the larger society. Examples of autonomous minorities are Jewish, Amish, Mormons. Voluntary minorities are those who willingly moved to the United States in the hope of better opportunities than in their homeland. Examples of voluntary minorities are immigrants from Korea, India, and Central and South America. Involuntary minorities are those that have been colonized, enslaved, or conquered against their will. Examples of involuntary minorities are: American Indians, Black Americans, Mexican Americans, and Puerto Ricans. Ogbu further developed a theory that contributes to involuntary minorities’ academic success.

Oppositional culture is one aspect in Ogbu’s research with Fordham that is one part of Ogbu’s cultural-ecological theory, which accounts as one of several factors that impact some African American students’ lower academic success (Ogbu, 2008). Irving and Hudley (2008) report that oppositional identity occurs when an individual’s cultural values and practices are in contrast with the dominant group. An individual’s cultural frame of reference frames appropriate behaviors and beliefs which can lead the individual to develop a sense of cultural mistrust toward the dominant group if they are not the same. Fordham and Ogbo (1986) studied the effects of oppositional cultural identity and an oppositional cultural frame of reference among high school students. They found that Black students rejected behaviors and attitudes associated with high academic performance because they regard them as ‘acting White’. Black students did not want to be viewed by their peers as acting White as they may pose a threat to group cohesion.

Miller and Dollard (1941) were the first to propose the idea of learning theory and imitation. Their idea was based on learning and they defined learning theory as the study
of the circumstances under which a response and a cue stimulus become connected. Miller and Dollard explained that in order to understand human behavior, either socially or individually, it is important to know the psychological principles involved in the learning and the social conditions under which the learning took place. They proposed a theory of social learning that rejected the behaviorist view of the time and failed to be recognized until Bandura and Walters reintroduced the theory in 1963. Bandura and Walters broadened the idea of social learning theory through their book *Social learning and Personality Development* using now familiar principles of observational learning and vicarious reinforcement (Pajeras, 2002).

Social learning theory emphasizes three main roles through symbolic, vicarious, and self regulating processes in psychological functioning (Bandura, 1977, 1994). Symbols allow people the ability to represent events, analyze conscious events, communicate from a distance, plan, create, imagine, and engage in forethought. Vicarious learning permits individual thought, affect, and behavior to be influenced by observation of other people’s behaviors, as well as individual experiences. Self regulating mechanisms allow for individuals to select, organize, and transform stimuli as a way of exercising self directed changes in their behavior (Bandura, 1977). In the 1970s, as social learning theory began gaining increased recognition, Bandura felt that there was something missing from the theory. At this time, in 1977, Bandura introduced self beliefs into his own social learning theory through his book *Self efficacy: Toward a Unifying Theory of Behavior Change* (Pajares, 2002). Self beliefs are explored in the following paragraphs.
Bandura (1994) defines self efficacy as a person’s perceived belief in their capabilities and ability to have an influence over events in their lives. Self efficacy beliefs have an influence on how people feel, think, behave, and motivate themselves. These beliefs impact four major psychological processes of human functioning: cognition, motivation, affect, and selection processes. Bandura (1994) and Chemers, Hu, and Garcia (2001) describe cognitive processing as involving personal goal setting, visualizing positive scenarios (which contributes to a more calm and thoughtful approach to problem solving), and use of personal knowledge to develop effective self regulation skills. Motivational processes are created by an individual’s beliefs about what they are able to accomplish. People motivate themselves by guiding their actions to anticipate positive outcomes. Courses of actions that are likely to produce valued outcomes are usually planned (Bandura, 1994). Affective processes are regulated by an individual’s ability to exercise control over stressors, environmental demands, and on the ability to control and manage potentially negative emotions. People with lower levels of self efficacy are more apt to interpret challenging situations by adopting feelings of anxiety. On the other hand, people with higher levels of self efficacy show better coping skills and tend to take on more taxing and threatening activities (Bandura, 1994 & Chemers et al., 2001). Bandura’s social learning theory is the foundation for this study.

**Definition of Terms**

**Racial discrimination:**

Conceptual definition: the act, practice, or an instance, of discriminating categorically rather than individually, and a prejudiced or prejudicial outlook,
action, or treatment on an individual or group of individuals associated with a racial minority group (Pachter, Bernstein, Szalacha, & Garcia Coll, 2010). Operational definition: the self reported score obtained from a questionnaire using a 5 point Likert scale pertaining to experiencing discrimination due to ones perceived race.

**Academic self efficacy:**

Conceptual definition: a persons’ self perceived ability on power to produce effects or effectiveness specifically pertaining to academic areas.

Operational definition: a self reported score obtained from a questionnaire pertaining to the student’s confidence to be effective in academia using a 5 point Likert scale.

**Academic self concept:**

Conceptual definition: a person’s self perceived abilities to perform academically.

Operational definition: a self reported score obtained from a questionnaire using a 5 point Likert type scale pertaining to the students’ attitudes and beliefs in their academic skills and performance individually and compared to other students.

**Academic Performance:**

Conceptual definition: a person associated with a school or college that reaches a desirable outcome and is successful.

Operational definition: self reported grade point average from the student.
Assumptions

After the questionnaires were passed out the participants were responsible for reading the directions and answering each question honestly and to the best of their ability. The reader is to assume that the participants answered the questionnaire honestly. After all of the data was collected it was the researcher’s responsibility to enter all the data into PASW. The reader is to assume all the data was input accurately by the researcher.

Justification

Many of our roles within social work involve working with the minority population. The outcomes of this study will add to the growing knowledge within the field about racial discrimination that our client experiences. Adding to the present knowledge may help social work professionals have a better understanding of the impact that racial discrimination has on the individual. Increasing our knowledge and understanding of the impacts discrimination can have on clients may help social workers develop skills that are better equipped at solving problems involving discrimination.

The results of the study will add to the present knowledge of racial discrimination and the education system. This study will contribute to the profession of social work by expanding our understanding of how racial discrimination affects learning, and how possible mediators assist in blocking the negative effects of racial discrimination and contribute positively to higher academic success.
Limitations

The sample used creates limitations in the researchers’ ability to generalize results. Given the use of a convenience sample of California State University, Sacramento students the results are limited to describing this population sampled. Another limitation is the sample size. Such a small sample size contributes to the difficulty to generalize results to society. Even though the researcher attempted to get a representative sample of students, a larger randomized sample may produce different results that can be generalized more broadly.
Chapter 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

People develop different competencies, interests, and social networks that determine life courses by the decisions they make. The effects of social influences on the direction of personal development in selected environments continue to promote competencies, values, and interests long after self efficacy determination of the decision renders its effect (Bandura, 1993). This idea can be applied to how people select their environments, who they interact with, and how others and the environment impact their decisions. A social environment that self regulated decision making is affected is within schools. One of the main contributing factors within school systems that affects student learning is racial discrimination (Pachter, Bernstein, Szalacha, and Garcia Coll, 2010; Seaton, 2010). Researchers have explored self regulating processes that students use to protect themselves from the harmful effects of discrimination.

Zimmerman (1990) identified three determinants that involve students’ efforts to regulate learning: personal processes, the environment, and one’s behavior. The researcher posits that self-regulated students use these three academic learning strategies in a cyclic manner. From social learning theory the physical context, material and social resources were identified as contributing factors of environmental influences that impact self regulation. In addition to self efficacy, there were several factors that were identified as contributing factors in a student’s self regulation which were: student’s goals and intentions, knowledge, metacognitive and affective processes. Bandura studied self regulating factors aimed at explaining human behavior.
Bandura (1993) proposed that human behavior is regulated by forethought cognized goals. These goals are influenced by self appraisal of capabilities. One of the major functions of thought is to enable people to predict events and develop skills to control the events that affect their lives. Bandura links cognitive processes to the conception of ability. He defines ability as a capability in which cognitive, social, motivational, and behavioral skills are organized and effectively used to serve multiple purposes. Affective processes are regulated by an individual’s ability to exercise control over stressors, environmental demands, and on the ability to control and manage potentially negative emotions (Bandura, 1994 & Chemers et al., 2001). The effects of the above mentioned self regulated processes impact the demands of everyday life. They are used by individuals who experience life stressors such as racial discrimination.

Racial Discrimination

Stereotypes, prejudices, and racial discrimination are everyday incidents that can leave long lasting impacts on people. Huynh and Fuligni (2010), and Seaton (2010) define racial discrimination as acts of differential treatment done by the dominant group members that are systematic and result in negative effects on the subordinate group members. Huynh and Fuligni (2010) extend their definition to include that discrimination involves daily hassles that lower status groups encounter. They go on to describe discrimination as a stressor that may impact an individual physiologically, lead to health problems; such as, hypertension, and impact academic performance through decreased motivation for achievement. Pachter, Bernstein, Szalacha, and Garcia Coll (2010) discuss the importance of racism and the effects it has on African American and Latino children,
stating racism is not a problem that just affects adults. These researchers report that racism is a stressor that can produce negative biological and psychological responses, as well as, affect health and well-being. They report factors that may be affected by racism are: socioeconomic status, exposure to risk factors and available resources, and psychological and physiological functioning. Seaton (2010) supports the notion of racial discrimination as a stressor stating that over extensive periods of time racially discriminatory acts may negatively impact the way one views themselves, their self-worth, relationships, intellectual ability and performance, and self efficacy.

Racial discrimination has been a problem for American society for centuries, although the type of discrimination experienced may be different. Huynh and Fuligni (2010) support this by suggesting that each minority group experiences different stereotypes which may elicit different types of discrimination. One example the researchers gave was Asian minorities may be seen as the “model minority” who are successful and excel in school; whereas, Latin American students may be seen as “bad” and unsuccessful and/or incapable of understanding the information in school as the stereotype reinforced by their teachers. Museus (2008) supports the notion that racial discrimination affects learning abilities of minority students and that racially subjective stereotypes are held in relation to particular racial groups. The researcher also reports that there is a responsibility of educators to fully understand the impacts that racial stereotypes can shape minority college student’s experiences. On college campuses stereotypes intersect between racial background and academic ability. The researcher reports that racial academic stereotypes influence the learning experiences of minority
college students. An overview of the different types of discrimination that impact each ethnic group is presented below.

Types of Discrimination

Utsey, Ponterotto, Reynolds, and Cancelli (2000), and Seaton (2010) define four different types of discrimination: individual, cultural, institutional, and collective. The researchers’ defined individual racism as degrading acts experienced on a personal level. For example, when a security guard targets an African American in a store and follows them. Cultural racism is defined as the beliefs and practices of the dominant group regarded by society as being superior to those of the subordinate groups. An example could be observed through the lack of acknowledgment of African American societal contributions in American history. Institutional racism is defined as subordinate groups being restricted or denied access to societal goods, services, and opportunities offered to other members in society through social and institutional policies. This type of racism is experienced when institutional policies exclude a group from full participation in the benefits offered to other groups in society. Collective racism is defined as the act of dominant members working to deny or restrict subordinate group members their basic rights and privileges. Note that sometimes institutional and collective racism are grouped together.

In order to face the above mentioned types of discrimination Utsey et al. (2000) suggest that coping mechanisms are developed by individuals faced with racial discrimination experiences. Awad (2007) suggests that the development of a racial identity may be a contributing factor as a way of coping with the effects of racial
discrimination, which may be related to academic achievement among minority students.

Racial identity is explored in further detail below.

**Development of Race as an Identity**

Evaluating ourselves as we interact with the people around us influences the way that we create our self-identify within society. Thompson (2010) argues that racial identity is socially constructed from past biological differences. An example the researcher provided was the historical reference of biological inherited differences to create the categories of “free” and “slave” within American history. He argues that the idea of “race” as a term used to define biologically inherited diversity continues to be used despite efforts of educating people of its socially constructed nature. Furthermore, the researcher states that there is a biological and cultural meaning attached to one’s racial identity, and that the context and connotations of the word race is not the same worldwide. Stages of racial identity have been identified.

Lockett and Harrell (2003) define Cross’s (1991) five stages of Black racial identity development as: pre-encounter, encounter, immersion/emersion, internalization, and internalization-commitment. According to Cross (1991) pre-encounter is when racial attitudes fall along a continuum ranging from being an insignificant part of identity to being devalued by the individual to the point of self hatred. Encounter is defined as attitudes about race are directly or indirectly challenged by a personal or social event that causes the individual to transform their preexisting conceptualizations of identity. Immersion/emersion is the individual’s previously held racial attitudes are discarded as an attempt at becoming more involved with their Black cultural heritage. Internalization
occurs when racial identity conflicts are resolved and the individual is able to positively internalize their identity. Lastly, internalization-commitment involves a long-term interest in Black affairs and commitment to ethnic concerns. Even though Cross’s theory is aimed at Black identity I believe it can be extended for other ethnic minority groups, such as Asian and Mexican Americans’ processes of identity development.

Thompson (2010) states that classification by ‘race’ is one way of separating people for the good or for the bad. More often than not an individual’s race is delegated from society’s view of what classification we fall under. Once given a race label then humans are stereotyped and oppressed based on these labels. Utsey, Ponterotto, Reynolds, and Cancelli (2000) state that experiencing racial discrimination is multidimensional and permeates many aspects of life. Different acts of discrimination and how they impact an individual’s life is explored next.

**Acts of Discrimination**

The act of oppression, as defined by Cudd (1994) involves some sort of physical or psychological harm done to individual members due to association with a particular group that provides some sort of benefit to the oppressor through acts of coercion or force. Oppression is a very strong word that carries a deep moral claim against those responsible for the oppression. Oppression is not to be regarded as being powered by one individual force, it’s very complex in nature. In support Alavi (2010) states oppression does not function in isolation but rather there are several criteria that work together in order to preserve people within their oppressed circumstances. If individuals blame
themselves for their misfortunes then it is more difficult to recognize and fight against institutionalized racism, which perpetuates oppression.

Alavi (2010) identifies that one aspect that reinforces oppression is stereotyping. Stereotypes emerge as a negative force within social structures to establish power differentials on a psychological level instead of a physical level. Although, an individual’s physical presentation may impact psychological power. Positive and negative stereotypes can have a negative impact on the way a person of a particular group self identifies which may lead the individual to internalize these stereotypes having a negative effect on identity and a limiting factor on the way they live their lives. The meanings behind these social inferiority expectations become a limiting factor to achievement within one’s own self expectations. Social inferiority ideas impact what choices are made in regards to life, jobs, and school.

Steele and Aronson (1995) contend that widespread negative stereotypes against a particular group may lead to stereotype threat. Furthermore, the researchers state that stereotype threat is experienced when anything one does or an individual’s features conform to make the stereotype more plausible to others, and perhaps to the individual. They argue that after a lifetime of being a potential target of prejudice and stereotypes that an individual can start to internalize the stereotypes and develop inferiority anxiety, which can be aroused by a variety of environmental cues. In response, anxiety may lead an individual to blame others for their troubles, leading to a form of victim’s identity. Alavi (2010) states that skin color can be used to rationalize harms on a group of people. Harmful acts may be a violation of one’s capabilities, which can impact personal rights.
Stereotyping through media, poor education, lack of access to health care and other services can contribute to a negative self-image. The perpetuation of a negative self image can be oppressive.

**Racial Discrimination and African, Mexican, and Asian Americans**

Much of the research that has been done regarding racial discrimination has consisted of African Americans’ psychological and physical well-being, and academic success (Rosenbloom & Way, 2004; Seaton, 2010;) however, in more recent years research has started to include the effects of racial discrimination on Latino, Asian, and other multiracial populations (Huynh & Fuligni, 2010). Utsey et al. (2000), and Seaton (2010) found for African Americans the occurrence of discrimination is often experienced daily over long periods of time and has become a major life issue in society that can have acute and chronic effects on an individual. The high frequency of encounters with discrimination has led to several stress related health concerns; such as, high blood pressure, hypertension, and cardiovascular disease. Utsey et al. (2000) identified discrimination becoming a high priority problem within counseling and the effects show an inverse relation to life satisfaction, self esteem, and achievement motivation.

Seaton’s (2010) study aimed at expanding the search for moderators for racial discrimination among African American adolescents. The study consisted of 324 urban African American high school adolescents ranging in age from 13-18 years of age. The participants were surveyed using a questionnaire which included the Index of Race-Related Stress (Ustey & Ponterotto, 1996); the Rosenberg Self-Esteem scale (Rosenberg,
1989); and the Center for Epidemiological Studies Depression Scale (Radloff, 1977). The study found no difference in racial discrimination variables based on cognitive reasoning. Although, the study did find that perceptions of collective/institutional racism was associated with lower levels of self esteem and increased depressive symptoms. Further analysis showed that females reported higher levels of depressive symptoms than males. Gibbons, Gerrard, Cleveland, Wills, and Brody (2004) also support the notion that racial discrimination is a high priority problem for African American adolescents. The researchers reported findings on the prevalence of perceived racial discrimination experiences among African American parents and their children and found that 91 percent of parents and children reported at least one discriminatory experience in the past year.

Museus (2008) reported that the most prevalent racial academic stereotype that many African American students are faced with is the idea of being academically inferior. In an interview with an African American identified student from Mid-Atlantic University the student expressed that she felt added pressure to disconfirm the “inferiority minority” myth. The student also reported that this stereotype caused her feelings of automatic tension when she entered a classroom, and hindered her desire to engage in the classroom setting.

As for Asian and Mexican Americans, Huynh and Fuligni (2010) attempted to expand discrimination research in three ways: first, they examined the frequency of discrimination among youth comparing ethnicity and gender; second, they explored the association of traditional and daily measures of discrimination with academic,
psychological, and physical well-being; lastly, they examined the moderating role of ethnic identity, socialization, and rejection sensitivity. The researchers surveyed 744 twelfth grade Asian, Latin American, and European students. Their results showed of the total sample 60 percent reported experiencing adult discrimination, 63 percent experienced peer discrimination, and 12 percent reported daily discrimination. For gender, there was not a significant difference reported in daily discrimination. Although, boys did report more adult and peer discrimination experiences than girls. After accounting for ethnicity and gender, racial discrimination was found to be a significant predictor of lower GPA’s, higher levels of depression and distress, lower levels of self-esteem, and more physical complaints. In this study all of the moderators were significantly associated with adult and peer discrimination, but not daily discrimination.

Rosenbloom and Way’s (2004) study was to explore a sample of 60 African American, Latino, and Asian students’ experiences with racial discrimination in urban high schools. Their research supports the findings that discrimination is often subtle in these contexts and often comes through two forms: institutional and structural discrimination, and discrimination by a teacher in the classroom. The researchers report that academic stereotypes in school are different between minority groups. They state that teachers’ low expectations of African American and Latino students, is a form of discrimination that the students face on a regular basis. On the other hand, Sue (1994) reports that stereotypes of Asian Americans support the “model minority” stating that Asians are hardworking, intelligent, successful, and mentally healthy, despite being a minority and victims of prejudice and discrimination.
Museus (2008) defines the racial academic stereotype of Asian Americans as the “model minority” as the assumption that Asian American students universally achieve academic success. The researcher explored the effects of the model minority stereotype and its effects by interviewing an Asian American student at a Mid-Atlantic University. The student reported feelings of added pressure to conform to the stereotype in the classroom with peers and professors. Pressures from the stereotype hindered her desire to seek help from professors and deterred social interactions inside and outside of the classroom. The extent of which direct experiences of discrimination negatively affect Asian and Latin American adolescents’ academic achievement would be revealing as they tend to rate higher on motivation than their White peers (Huynh & Fuligni, 2010). Opposite of Asian students Latino students are not viewed as a model student leading researcher to explore contributing factors.

Gloria, Castellanos, Lopez, and Rosales (2005) identify Latin Americans as the least well educated group in American society (Pew Hispanic Center Fact Sheet, 2000), and argue for a need for more research of personal, social, and environmental influences. The first purpose was to examine the interrelatedness of university comfort, social support, and self-beliefs of Latino students in higher education. The second purpose of this study was to evaluate the degree to which all three constructs predicted academic non-persistence decisions of Latino students. They report that Latino students’ perception of their academic environment can have an impact on their social and academic belonging. A total of 99 undergraduate students of Latino heritage were surveyed. Many Latino students experience culture shock due to having to navigate prejudices, social
biases, and negative stereotypes within academic settings. This study reported that 68 percent of the students reported that they felt other student’s lack of knowledge of their culture impacted experiences of discrimination, ethnic/racial tension, and feelings of comfort at the university. Overall, all three constructs were significantly interrelated and predicted academic non-persistence academic decisions. It is clear that there are several factors that impact discriminatory experiences which is why it is important to also explore factors that moderate those experiences.

Experiencing discrimination can affect many aspects of an individual’s life from health to achievement motivation to overall self concept. These effects can be short or long lasting, affecting job and academic performance, relationships, and social interactions. The purpose of this literature review is to explore whether or not higher levels of academic self efficacy and self concept act as moderators of racial discrimination experiences and their impact on overall academic performance. Other possible mediating factors for discrimination will be discussed.

**Self Efficacy**

The impact that racial discrimination can have on an individual may influence academic self efficacy. Often times we might wonder what contributes to the ways that humans function. Figuring out what causes us to react in a certain way to different events by the use of cognitive regulations on our motivation and behavior is important. A consensus among researchers is that self efficacy is a core belief within an individual. In that an individual believes they have the necessary power to produce effects which regulate functioning through cognitive, motivational, affective, and decision making
processes when faced with difficult situations (Bandura & Locke, 2003; Chemers, Hu, & Garcia, 2001; and Malone, 2002). Bandura and Locke (2003) explored the functional properties of self-efficacy beliefs and documented how self efficacy operated with goal systems. Bandura and Locke state that sociocognitive theory posits a dual control system in self regulation of motivation and action and a proactive discrepancy system working with discrepancy reduction. Essentially, people motivate and guide themselves proactively by setting challenging goals and then mobilize their efforts based on anticipatory results to fulfill those goals. The researchers examined nine large scale meta analyses across several subjects, which included academic achievement and persistence. The researchers found that self efficacy beliefs contributed significantly to motivation and performance. Self efficacy was found to be a strong predictor of coping behavior and to effect individual performance attainment. Specifically pertaining to academics, the higher the level of self efficacy in fulfilling educational requirements and occupational roles the better the individual prepares themselves educationally for different careers. The researchers also found that after individuals obtain a goal they have been pursuing, those with higher levels of self efficacy set higher standards for themselves. The effect of an individual’s level of self efficacy toward academic challenges is discussed next.

Chemers, Hu, and Garcia (2001) conducted a longitudinal study of first year university students’ adjustment that examined academic self efficacy and confidence related to students’ academic performance, stress, health, and commitment to stay in school. The researchers surveyed 373 students at the end of the fall and spring semesters. The researchers found that confidence in one’s abilities and optimism are important
factors when making challenging transitions from high school to college. They reported that youth that are transitioning from high school to college experience an increase in demands which requires these youth to have higher levels of independence, initiative, and self regulation. The researchers asserted that self efficacy and self confidence played a major role in the abilities of first year college students to adjust to the demands of college in order to achieve academic success.

Within the above study the mediating factors that were examined consisted of cognitive, motivational, and affective processes. For cognitive processes, the students who scored high in self efficacy used more effective cognitive strategies in learning, time management, and regulating their own effort. Academic self efficacy was found to be related to a students’ confidence in mastering a subject therefore predicting better grades. Motivational processes were linked to goal setting attainment and self regulation of effort. Higher goals were found to increase the positive effects of self efficacy. For affective processes self efficacy was related to an increased ability of effective problem solving and decision making strategies. The effects of self efficacy in the environment was theorized by Bandura.

Routed within Bandura’s social learning theory, now known as social cognitive learning theory, is the theoretical framework from which self efficacy comes. Bandura and Locke (2003) describe social cognitive learning theory as being rooted in an agentic perspective, in which people function as anticipative, purposive, and self evaluating, and that people are active participants in their own motivation, actions, and development (Bandura & Locke, 2003; Malone, 2002). Social cognitive learning theory believes in
learning by vicarious reinforcement, forethought, self regulating capabilities, and rewarding oneself. Within an educational setting self efficacy is the students’ belief/confidence that they possess the capabilities to learn and be able to effectively utilize the knowledge and skills needed to obtain valued outcomes (Malone, 2002). It is social cognitive learning theory that will be the theoretical base of this study. Self-efficacy beliefs were found to be predictive of academic persistence decisions and variance in GPAs for Latino American students (Robinson Kurpius, Payakkakom, Rayle, Chee, & Arredondo, 2008). The effect of self efficacy on academics among Latino American students is discussed below.

**Mexican/Latino Americans and Academic Self Efficacy**

Berkel et al. (2010) sought to determine how discrimination and Mexican American values influence adolescent mental health and academic outcomes over time. This longitudinal study conducted in-home computer assisted personal interviews of 750 Mexican American students and their family members. The researchers found that Mexican American adolescents were at an elevated risk for academic problems and mental health issues. The problems they identified were: depressive symptoms, externalizing behaviors, lower self efficacy, and higher school dropout rates. A high value is put on education within Mexican American families and despite this, adolescents show a higher drop-out rate and report lower levels of academic self-efficacy which is believed to be caused by experiences of discrimination. Research by Gonzales, Knight, Birman, and Sirolli (2004), sited in Berkel et al. (2010) found that the socialization process of Mexican American values relates to positive outcomes and provides resiliency
to discrimination stressors that allow for Mexican American youth to be successful in
school. This resiliency and perseverance to succeed in academics may mean there are
underlying mediators that are offsetting discrimination experiences.

Robinson Kurpius, Payakkakom, Rayle, Chee, and Arredondo (2008) investigated
the appropriateness of using the Valuing/Commitment to Education Scale (Gloria, 1993),
the Rosenberg Self-Esteem scale (Rosenberg, 1965), and the Educational Self-efficacy
scale (Gloria, 1993) with European American, Latino American, and Native American
first year college students. In this longitudinal study a total of 750 students were
surveyed. The study examined the appropriateness of the above mentioned scales to
assess students’ academic success and persistence in college. The researchers found that
while Latinos make up 6.7 percent of undergraduate students, only 46 percent of them
will get a bachelors degree within six years. Due to such low rates of graduation,
examining a students’ academic persistence is important. The researchers found self
beliefs to be positively related to academic performance. Self beliefs were defined as
commitment to and value of a college education, self esteem, and academic self efficacy.
Results showed that there were significant correlations between the academic self
efficacy scale and the valuing/commitment to education scale for both Latina/o and
European Americans. Self efficacy has been studied extensively among African
American students (Huges & Demo, 1989; Saunders, Davis, Williams, & Williams, 2004;
American students will be explored next.
Black/ African Americans and Academic Self Efficacy

Jaret and Reitzes (2009) investigated how college student identities and ethnic identities vary among Black, White, Asian, and first, second, and third generation students. Secondly, they explored how those identities are related to students’ sense of self esteem and efficacy and their academic performance. The researchers surveyed 652 students from an urban university. Findings showed White students had lower college student identity than Black students. White students scored lower than Black and Asian students on ethnic identity measures. Black students had higher self esteem and efficacy scores than White and Asian students. Although, White students had higher GPAs than Black and Asian students. Hughes and Demo’s (1989) study evaluated the generalizations that personal efficacy and self esteem are positively related and social class is a strong predictor of self efficacy. Then to apply their findings about how social processes influence why Black Americans have high self esteem but low self efficacy. Data came from The National Survey of Black Americans (1987) of 2,107 Black Americans. The researchers found that self esteem was enhanced by Black consciousness, contact with Whites, education, positive relationships with family and friends, and occupational prestige. Higher levels of self efficacy were related to higher socioeconomic status, quality relationships with family and friends, being male, and older in age. Religious involvement and quality of family and friendships were related to a strong Black identity and high self esteem. The researchers attributed Black students’ lower self efficacy to external forces, such as discrimination and institutional barriers, rather than personal agency.
In comparison, Massey, Charles, Lundy, & Fischer (2003) conducted a national longitudinal survey of freshman to test different theoretical explanations for minority underachievement in higher education. The total sample was 3,550 students (White, Black, Asian, and Latino) from 28 universities. The researchers administered questionnaires using laptops with follow up telephone interviews. Findings showed that students’ efficacy among elite colleges are generally high with Black and White students having scores that are comparable and showed Asians to have lower efficacy scores. In this study the effects of attending an elite university and the possible impact that may have on an individual’s level of self efficacy compared to attending a non-elite college was not explored. Perceptions of one’s abilities may be lower or higher in relation to the effects that discrimination have on the individual, which can influence academic success.

A study of African American high school students conducted by Saunders, Davis, Williams, and Williams (2004) found that there is a higher rate of African American females than males graduating from high school and going to college, but the reason for the disparity is unclear. The purpose of this study was to explore gender differences in the relationship between four different self perceptions and two academic outcomes. The 243 students that participated in the study were all high school sophomores from an urban Midwest school that was comprised of 99 percent African American students. The students who participated were surveyed during the school day in the beginning of the school year. This study examined how gender differences related to self perceptions, intention to complete the school year, and grade point average. The self perceptions consisted of self esteem, racial self esteem, academic self efficacy, and importance of
school completion. Results were that academic self efficacy and the importance of school completion were significantly correlated with GPA. Self esteem, academic self efficacy, and the importance of school completion were significantly correlated to students’ intentions of completing the school year. Racial self esteem and academic self efficacy were also correlated to self esteem. In addition, academic self efficacy was a stronger predictor of GPA for females than males. Research among Asian students’ self efficacy has focused more on cultural and other environmental factors.

**Asian Americans and Academic Self Efficacy**

Much of the research that has been done on self efficacy has been done in Western settings across different subjects; such as, education, athletics, and health. Klassen (2004) expands the concept of self efficacy by examining how self efficacy beliefs operate in non-Western individuals and across cultural groups. He examines the influence of individualism verses collectivism, and the differences of the concept of self within these cultural frameworks. In an examination of previous literature this study found Asian groups to rate their self-efficacy beliefs to be lower than American and European groups, but had higher academic performance. Higher performance rates were attributed to feelings of pleasing the family or the community instead of satisfying their own individual desires. Differences in cultural beliefs and its influence on academic achievement is further examined below.

Eaton and Dembo (1997) explored whether different motivational and cultural beliefs influence academic performance by comparing Asian and non-Asian ninth grade students. The purpose of this study was to investigate the extent to which motivational
beliefs have different relative importance for predicting achievement motivation for Asian and non-Asian students. The researchers also investigated if culturally influenced beliefs or self-efficacy beliefs better explained achievement motivation. Asian students identified as Chinese, Vietnamese, Korean, and Japanese. Non-Asian students identified as White, Mexican American, and African American. There were a total of 154 Asian American and 372 non-Asian participants that were surveyed via a questionnaire. There were nine variables examined: belief assessment, achievement behavior, reading ability, view of ability, fear of academic failure, self-efficacy beliefs, effort attribution, cultural identity, and parents’ level of education. Results of this study showed that Asian American students’ fear of academic failure, self-efficacy, reading ability, and view of ability were significantly correlated with academic performance. For non-Asian students there was a significant correlation between all of the variables except fear of failure.

In an effort to explain the differences found between motivation beliefs Eaton & Dembo (1997) found data from several researchers (Holloway, 1988; Reglin & Adams, 1990; Stevenson et al., 1991; Weisz et al., 1984; Yao, 1985) showing Asian students’ academic success and failure is related to effort over ability. Skinner, Wellborn, & Connell (1990) in Eaton and Dembo (1997) support this in their research explaining that Asian students’ overall higher achievement may occur due to their belief that effort is internal and controllable. This notion is in support of Bandura & Locke’s (2003) above stated social cognitive theory that self-efficacy is controlled internally. A possible explanation of Asian students’ fear of failure may be attributed to their parent’s academic expectations. The pressure to please parents corresponded to higher levels of fear of low
academic performance among Asian students verses non-Asian students (Eaton & Dembo, 1997).

A study by Leung (2001) used a sample of migrant and overseas Chinese students and non-immigrant students in Australia. The total sample size was 382 students which consisted of 189 Anglo- Australian, 72 Southern- European second generation, 33 Asian migrants, 33 Chinese migrants, and 55 Chinese from overseas. The purpose of this study was to examine psychological adaptation pertaining to individual variables that included: social self efficacy (a person’s expectancy they can successfully complete a behavior in academia or everyday social interaction), locus of control, loneliness, age, sex, and acculturating group membership. Data was obtained through a questionnaire consisting of five scales. The results showed that both Chinese groups reported higher loneliness, lower academic satisfaction, and lower social self efficacy than Anglo Australian and Southern-European second generation students. Locus of control and loneliness were the two common predictors for psychological stress for all groups. Furthermore, the results suggest that for migrant and overseas students social relationships were pertinent for psychological distress and academic satisfaction; whereas, for non-migrant students social relationships were less important for academic satisfaction. Cultural beliefs support the notion that individualistic verses collectivistic factors influence perceptions of themselves and others in academics. The above discussion focuses on aspects that are internalized but does not address aspects that are external. External influences, such as, type of school and school environment are explored as possible influences that may impact academic self efficacy.
Students’ perceptions of themselves and their environment change depending on what is influencing them. Does the type of college influence an individual’s academic success? Edman and Brazil (2007) explored whether campus climate, social support, academic efficacy, and students’ perceptions impacted academic success among different ethnic groups at a community college. Contrary to their prediction there were no ethnic differences between campus climate and social support as predictors of academic success. The researchers did find a difference for academic efficacy. Asian students were the only group in which academic efficacy was associated with semester and cumulative GPA. Latino students showed a positive correlation between academic efficacy and cumulative GPA, and there was no correlation for White or African American students. The researchers did not expect to find the lack of correlations between academic efficacy and GPA for White and African American students and they suggested these findings may be due to ineffective motivational goals and inauthentic high school academic feedback. Up until now the focus has been about the effects of self efficacy on academic achievement for ethnic minority groups, now let us focus on the effects of self efficacy for White students.

**European Americans and Academic Self Efficacy**

Massey et al. (2003) conducted a longitudinal study of college freshman to test theoretical explanations for minority underachievement in higher education. One construct they examined included the effects of self efficacy among different ethnic groups (White, Black, Asian, Latino students) and academic confidence. These researchers did not find a significant difference in the levels of self efficacy showing
Whites to be higher than minority groups. Over 96 percent of all ethnic groups reported positive feelings of self efficacy. In this study White students were found to be less confident in their academic success as they progress through college than Black and Asian students, but higher than Latino students.

Pajeras and Kranzler (1995) explored the effects of self efficacy on mathematics problem solving among 329 African American and White high school students. Their findings showed that White students had higher performance scores and higher self efficacy than African American students. Surprisingly, White students were less confident in their math capability. Overall, self efficacy beliefs on math capability was a strong predictor of math anxiety and math problem solving performance. Pajeras and Johnson (1996) expanded self efficacy effects in academics by examining whether writing self efficacy among ninth grade students acted as a predictive and meditational role ascribed by social cognitive theory. The researcher’s findings did find self efficacy as a strong predictor of writing performance. Overall, the findings showed White students had higher self efficacy, aptitude, and performance scores than Hispanic students.

Another possible mediator that may contribute to an individual’s academic achievement is how they form their academic identity which can be referred to as academic self concept. Academic identity may play as a significant mediator if one’s identity is viewed in a positive manner. Thinking of one’s self as a good student may contribute positively to academic success independently of discrimination and possibly contribute to a more positive academic self efficacy. The effects of academic self concept as a moderator for racial discrimination experiences will be explored. In addition, the
effects of a positive self concept may contribute to higher academic performance will be
examined.

**Self Concept**

Self concept has been studied extensively in the areas of psychology and sociology, and there is a recent development of more research being conducted in non-cognitive aspects of education as well (Reynolds, 1988). Shavelson, Hubner, and Stanton (1976) formulated a theoretical framework of self concept that identified seven aspects that underly the construct of self concept. In this theoretic framework self concept is viewed as: organized, hierarchical, stable, developmental, evaluative, and differentiable from other constructs. General self concept was stated to be at the top of the hierarchy with academic and non academic self concept as secondary facets, respectively (Reynolds, 1988). Shavelson and Bolus (1982) define self concept as the way one perceives him or herself. Awad (2007) defined academic self concept as a set of attitudes, beliefs, and perceptions the student holds pertaining to their academic skills and performance individually and in comparison to other students. These perceptions are formed from experiences and interpretations of one’s environment. Over time self concepts are influenced by reinforcements, evaluations by significant others, and an individual’s attributions of their own behavior. These influences are often dependent on environment, which may include gender and cultural differences in developing one’s self concept (Shavelson and Bolus, 1982). The effects of academic self concept are further explored in detail within different contexts below.
Markus and Kitayama (1991) suggest that the relationship of the self and others is influenced by and reflected through cultural differences. The researchers provided two different cultural views of the self. First, an independent view of the self described as an independent, self contained, autonomous entity is exemplified in American and many Western European cultures. A second view of the self as interdependent is described as “self in relation to others,” and is exemplified in Asian, African, Latin-American, and some Southern European cultures. Educational aspirations and what it means to be academically successful may differ across ethnicities, introducing the idea that culture may be influencing perceptions of what academic ‘success’ is (Jaret & Reitzes, 2009).

Kao’s (2000) purpose was to explore how adolescents define their goals by stereotypical images attached to their ethnic group within academics and extracurricular activities. The researcher also explored the persistence of minority youth’s focus on failure defined by group stereotypes. Socialization in the same-race peer group promotes comparable conceptions of success within racial groups. The sample population was taken from two racially diverse high schools. There were ten focus groups created with a total of 63 participants and six personal interviews conducted. The researcher found that due to different group norms and stereotypes among Asian, Hispanic, and Black students that they hold different ideas of what academic ‘success’ is. The group stereotype that was linked with Hispanics was manual labor, such as, cutting grass. Hispanic students associated academic success with not falling into the negative stereotypes of only being in ‘unskilled outdoor labor’. Black students associated academic success with graduating from high school on time, doing well enough to go to college, and secure a job. Asians
were found to hold themselves to higher expectations in their academic achievement and educational attainment. This was driven by the high expectations of others and fear of disappointing their parents.

Researchers Brookover and Passalacqua (1982) were among the first to study academic self concept in minority students. Their purpose was to explore self concept as it occurs for students in Michigan elementary schools and possibly other social contexts. Sample population came from 91 elementary schools across the state. They surveyed all fourth and fifth grade students, the exact number was not found. They found that African American students at predominantly Black schools have higher academic self concept than White and African American students at predominately White schools. The researchers also found that a students’ self concept of academic achievement is related to particular group norms which characterize the group.

Witherspoon, Speight, and Thomas’ (1997) conducted a study, their purpose being to examine the extent to which racial identity, self-esteem, and academic self-concept could predict academic achievement. Additionally the researchers examined the relationship between family and peer support and academic performance. The sample consisted of 86 African American high school students taken from Upward Bound programs. Upward Bound is a national precollegiate program that has a curriculum designed to encourage the development of skills, motivation, and sophistication needed for success in education. Data was collected through a questionnaire packet with four subscales: Student questionnaire, Personal Orientation Inventory/Self Regard subscale (POI; Shostrom, 1963), Academic self concept scale (Reynolds, Ramirez, Magrina, and
Allen, 1980), and the RIAS- short form B (Parham & Helms, 1981). Results from the study showed that self esteem and academic self concept were positively correlated. Internalized racial identity was positively correlated to self concept. Furthermore, students with stronger academic self concepts reported higher GPAs. Gender was also found to be a predictor of GPA, reporting females having higher GPAs than males. Other researchers have studied the effects of academic self concept among Asian students’ academic performance.

Whang and Hancock (1994) report that within academia differences have been found between Asian and non Asian students’ mathematic achievement. The researchers found in a previous study (Stigler, Smith, and Mao, 1985) that Asian students who out preformed their counterparts actually reported lower self concept pertaining to mathematical ability. Whang and Hancock found similar results in their study of 353 fourth, fifth, and sixth grade students. Asian students reported lower beliefs of their academic grades, including mathematics. Overall, the study found non Asian students appear more confident and satisfied with their mathematical ability. These differences could be due to a number of factors: Asian American students may be setting higher goals for themselves, non Asian students may not be realistically evaluating their performance, and Asian students may perceive their parents dissatisfaction with their school performance. There is a possibility that Asian students’ perception of their academic ability is a combination of their self concept and their parents’ concept of them.

House’s (1997) purpose was to investigate the efficacy of initial attitudes (such as academic self concept and achievement expectancies), parental characteristics, and prior
education as predictors of Asian American students’ performance in post secondary education. There were a total of 378 students who began as freshmen during four consecutive fall semesters. Participants completed the Cooperative Institutional Research Program Freshman Survey (CIRP, 1988). The researcher found that initial attitudes (academic self concept and achievement expectancies) were significant predictors of grade performance (GPA) among Asian college students. High school academic preparation was a significant predictor of first year achievement. Similar to Whang and Hancock’s study this study found Asian students’ attitudes toward education was influenced by their parents’ influences and cultural expectations. Much of the research above is focused on minority adolescents although researchers have explored self concept among adults in school.

Studies done by Cokley and colleagues (2003 and 2007) assessed for differences in academic self concept by analyzing the Academic Self Concept scale (Reynolds, Ramirez, Magrina, & Allen, 1980) among Black, White, and Asian college students and found their academic concerns were based on different things. Cokley, Komarraju, King, Cunningham, and Muhammad (2003) examined the validity and reliability of the ASCS among 291 European American and 396 African American college students. The study found differences in the theoretical structure of academic self concept between ethnic groups. For European American students self doubt was related to beliefs about their ability to perform well academically; whereas, for African American students self doubt was related to how they perceived their academic preparation compared to others. Another difference showed that European American students believed that effort results
in good grades; whereas, African American students may develop negative expectations about their academic performance while being satisfied with their efforts. This is important because it suggests that African American students may develop negative expectations about their academic performance that are related but separate from their beliefs about their efforts. Cokley and Patel (2007) expanded the use of the ASCS among 198 Asian American college students, since it had not been done before. In addition to completing the ASCS the participants completed the Asian Values scale (Kim, Atkinson, & Yang, 1999), which measures the enculturation of Asian values and traditional Asian behaviors and completed the European American Values Scale for Asian Americans (Wolfe, Wong, & Atkinson, 2001) which measures the acculturation of European American values. Findings showed that Asian students who were more acculturated to European American norms and values showed higher academic self concept than those more acculturated to Asian norms and values.

Experiences of racial discrimination affect people in different ways and in different contexts. In this regard it is hard to know what kinds of coping mechanisms work for individuals within different contexts. It is assumed that as one experiences racism that the individual is emotionally affected and in response personality characteristics are affected. In addition to exploring academic self efficacy and self concept other mediators for the effects of racial discrimination are proposed.

Possible Mediators of Discrimination

In relation to racial discrimination experiences Bandura (1994) and Chemers et al. (2001) support self efficacy as a mediator which impacts academic success, suggesting
that some people who are exposed to more discrimination may view situations as threatening instead of challenging, and may not have the same coping skills. Chemers et al. (2001) describes the challenge-threat concept as the perception of whether a situation is challenging or threatening depends on the individual’s experience between situational demands and coping mechanisms. A challenge is perceived when resources are sufficient for the demand, and a perceived threat occurs when the demand exceeds available resources. Within this concept, demand evaluations are based on the required amount of effort, danger, and uncertainty involved in a situation.

The challenge-threat theory assumes that past experiences of racial discrimination would provide an individual with the ability to perceive a situation as being a challenge or threat depending on situational demands and coping resources. A strong sense of resources may increase one’s self efficacy in relation to affective and physiological demands (effort, danger, and uncertainty) required to meet a particular academic performance (Chemers et al., 2001). Essentially, the researcher’s prediction is that perceiving past discrimination experiences as a challenge will have already contributed to the individual’s level of self efficacy providing them with the skills/resources needed to be a successful student. Chemers et al. (2001) affirm that students high in academic self efficacy should see themselves as more capable of meeting the demands required of college level work; therefore, regarding it as a challenge instead of a threat. Even though the challenge-threat concept is not being studied in this project I believe it may be a related factor that deserves attention.
There has been a substantial amount of research conducted pertaining to racial identity, racial discrimination, and academic performance, although the research has yielded mixed results (Huynh & Fuligni, 2010; Jaret & Reitzes, 2009; Awad, 2007; Sellers, Caldwell, Schmeelk-Cone, & Zimmerman, 2003; Shelton et al., 2005; and Wong, Eccles, & Sameroff, 2003; Neblett, Shelton, and Sellers, 2004; Yoo and Lee, 2008). Research on African American adolescents in multiple studies (Sellers, Caldwell, Schmeelk-Cone, & Zimmerman, 2003; Shelton et al., 2005; and Wong, Eccles, & Sameroff, 2003) reported that a stronger association to one's ethnic identity may act as a moderator from the negative effects of discrimination. Sellers, Caldwell, Schmeelk-Cone, and Zimmerman (2003) suggest that African American adolescents with higher racial identities may possess more effective coping skills for dealing with racial experiences. Another possible explanation suggests that higher racial discrimination could act as a buffer from racial discrimination acts because higher self confidence about being African American may help to dismiss rather than internalize experiences. Neblett, Shelton, and Sellers (2004) found among African American adolescents who held a strong sense of ethnic identity discrimination was not related to well being, but those who did not feel that their ethnic identity was central in their life experienced more anxiety, stress, and depression. Chavous, Bernat, Schmeelk-Cone, Caldwell, Kohn-Wood, and Zimmerman (2003) supports racial identity as a buffer finding that African American students who had high identity salience and an awareness of societal discrimination related positively to academic performance.
Conversely, there have been several studies that have shown ethnic identity does not act as a moderator to racial discrimination (Yoo and Lee, 2008; Lockett and Harrell, 2003; Awad, 2007; Fordham & Ogbu, 1986; and Witherspoon et al., 1997). Yoo and Lee (2008) addressed the mixed results between racial discrimination and ethnic identity of Asian American college students. The researchers used a single incident versus a multiple incident vignette with 128 students. In addition, participants completed the Multigroup Ethnic Identity Measure (Phinney, 1992), and the Positive and Negative Affect Schedule (Watson, Clark, & Tellegen, 1988). They found that ethnic identity did not consistently act as a buffer against the effects of discrimination for Asian American college students.

In relation to racial identity acting as a buffer for academic success there are mixed findings as well. Lockett and Harrell (2003) examined the relationship between racial identity, self esteem, and academic performance among 128 African American college students. Participants were surveyed using the Racial Identity Attitude Scale (Helms & Parham, 1990), the Rosenberg Self esteem scale (Rosenberg, 1965), and a background questionnaire. The researchers found that the effects of racial identity are positively associated with GPA but minimal. The effects of racial identity on academic performance are predicted by individual differences in self esteem. Sellars, Chavous, and Cooke (1998) examined the relationship between racial centrality, racial ideologies, and academic performance among a sample of 248 African American college students. The researchers found that racial centrality was positively correlated with academic performance. Racial ideologies pertaining to nationalism and assimilation showed a negative correlation with academic performance. Racial centrality was found to act as a
moderator in the relationship between racial ideologies and academic performance. Fordham & Ogbu (1986) examined the effects that “acting white” had on African American high school students. “Acting white” was defined by studying in the library, working hard, and getting good grades. The researchers found that many African American students (underachieving and high achieving) would purposefully perform at lower standards to avoid being seen as ‘acting white’. Students would use strategies; such as, clowning around, athletics, and not talking about grades, as ways of camouflaging their academic success. This implies that there are internal and external factors that affect African American students’ academic success. Witherspoon et al. (1997) examined the relationship between racial identity, self esteem, and academic self concept and their effect on academic achievement among 86 African American high school students. Findings showed that African American students who internalized positive racial identity had higher self concepts and GPAs. It is obvious that there are several factors that may contribute as a mediating factor to racial discrimination and also influence self efficacy leading to higher academic success. There is no way to test every possible factor at once, which is why it is important for researchers to continue to examine how different factors are related. It is not a surprise that past research confirms the notion that racial discrimination is a problem for all ethnic minorities or that discrimination is complex affecting multiple aspects in life (Huynh & Fuligni, 2010; Patcher et al., 2010; Seaton, 2010; Utsey et al., 2000).
Conclusions

Social influences have been found to impact personal development in selective environments. Racial discrimination has been identified as a problem in American society that can affect the lives of minority individuals in academics. Different types of discrimination, the development of a racial identity, and acts of discrimination were discussed among African American, Mexican American, and Asian American students. The two concepts of academic self efficacy and self concept were explored as moderators of racial discrimination and the extent to which they positively affect academic success.

In addition, other possible moderators and theories were explored. For the purpose of this project the researcher is particularly interested in exploring the relationship between racial discrimination and academic self efficacy as they relate to academic performance. The researcher is also interested in the degree to which self concept acts as a possible mediating factor to racial discrimination and yields positive academic performance. The theoretical foundation of this project is routed within Bandura’s social cognitive learning theory.
Chapter 3

METHODOLOGY

Design

This research study is centered on exploring the degree to which academic self-efficacy and self concept contribute to an individual’s ability to succeed in academics even when experiencing past or present racial discrimination. The research approach that was used is quantitative and exploratory. Data was collected via a 5 point Likert type questionnaire. Participant’s consent was obtained prior to filling out the questionnaire. The questionnaire was passed out by the researcher in undergraduate and graduate level social work and anthropology classes with professor permission. Descriptive statistics were obtained for each variable. T-tests and correlations were used for variables of interest. The researcher used PASW to conduct statistical analysis.

The purpose of administering a questionnaire was to allow the research participants the ability to report their experiences of racial discrimination and perceptions of themselves and their confidence in their ability to perform well in a confidential and safe way. This process will assist the researcher in gaining a greater understanding of the effects of racial discrimination on students of differing ethnicities. In addition this process will assist the researcher in exploring the effects of self efficacy and self concept as moderators to racial discrimination experiences in an effort to understand how they influence academic performance. The researcher hopes the conclusions of this study will further expand the knowledge of racial discrimination experiences effects on academic
performance. In addition, the researcher hopes to help understand the moderators of this phenomenon that contribute to academic success.

**Sampling Procedures**

The researcher used purposive sampling of current California State University, Sacramento students, at both the undergraduate and graduate levels. The researcher recruited students to survey from classes that have an ethnic or multicultural focus from social work and anthropology departments on campus. An initial contact to familiar professors was done and consent from the professors was obtained to survey their students. The participants were used from one anthropology lower division undergraduate class, two upper division anthropology undergraduate classes, and two social work classes. One social work class was undergraduate level and one was at the graduate level. The participants were selected based on who was enrolled in the class. Any student was able to participate who was enrolled in the class and was at least 18 years old. The total sample size was 171 participants.

**Instrument and Measurement**

The researcher used one questionnaire that included subscales for racial discrimination, academic self efficacy, and self concept (Appendix A). The racial discrimination section (created by the researcher) consists of 20 questions pertaining to possible racial discrimination experiences using a 5 point Likert- type scale. The scale ranged from 0= never to 4= happens all the time. The scale is scored so that higher numbers represent more experiences of discrimination and lower numbers equal less discrimination experiences. The self efficacy and self concept section was adapted from
Noble, Roberts, Sawyer, & ACT, (2006). This section consists of 11 statements total using a 5 point Likert-type scale. The scale ranges from 1= strongly disagree to 5= strongly agree. The scale is scored so that the higher total scores represent greater feelings of self efficacy and self concept, and lower scores represent lower feelings of those concepts. The self efficacy part consists of 7 statements pertaining to the participants’ agreement reflecting their confidence in their ability to perform well academically. The academic self concept part consists of 4 statements pertaining to the students’ attitudes and beliefs in their academic skills and performance individually and compared to other students. Demographic information was also included at the end of the questionnaire.

**Data Collection Plan**

After receiving approval from the CSUS Division of Social Work Human Subjects Review Committee the researcher contacted the professors that had previously given permission to survey their classes. This secondary contact was initiated in order to set up a day and time for the researcher to collect data. The researcher informed the professors that data collection would only take about 15 minutes of their class time. The researcher provided the professors with a sample of the intended questionnaire being used to review prior to the researcher coming to the classroom.

In order to recruit participants for this study I asked for the consenting professors to announce to the class my appearance and encourage the students to participate. The first participation inclusion criteria was that the student was enrolled in classes at California State University, Sacramento. The second criteria was that the participants
were 18 years of age or older. Participation was voluntarily for each participant in the study. Students were given the option of not participating. Participants were informed that they could withdraw from the study without any penalty. There was no monetary or academic credit given to students who chose to participate. Conflict of interest was avoided by the researcher by not surveying students in the same practice/research class that the researcher was in.

Upon agreement to participate, each participant was given a copy of the consent form (Appendix B). Signed consent was obtained from each participant prior to receiving the questionnaire. Each student was asked to read, ask any questions, and sign the consent form. Then all the signed consent forms were collected. Participants were asked not to put any identifying information on the research materials. The participant’s identities were kept separate by the researcher and were not able to be linked to the data. This was achieved by collecting the consent forms and data in separate folders. Confidentiality was upheld by keeping all private and indentifying information secure and not disclosing data to anyone other than the researcher.

Next, the researcher distributed the questionnaire, asked the participants to read the instructions and each statement carefully before answering. The researcher asked that the participants answer each statement truthfully and to the best of their knowledge. After participants completed the questionnaire they were requested to put it in a folder at the front of the classroom. Data was kept either in the possession of the researcher or in a locked file cabinet at the researcher’s home. Each participant was informed that once the study was completed that all of the data would be destroyed via shredding. Each
participant was given a means of contacting the researcher if they were interested in the
results of the study, and a sincere “thank you” for contributing their time for the integrity
of the study was given.

Data Analysis

The researcher used PASW to run statistics and demographic information. The
researcher gathered descriptive statistics (mean, median, mode, and standard deviation)
for age, GPAs, ethnic background, gender, and education level. Range, variance, and
standard deviation were used for measures of dispersion. Tables were used to visually
represent the dispersion of data. The researcher used inferential statistics to analyze the
variables. T-tests and correlations were used to infer the relationship between variables.

Human Subjects’ Protection

Taking all aspects of this exploratory study into consideration, the researcher
considers the risk level for this study would be categorized to be “minimal risk”. In this
research study, “minimal risk” is defined by the researcher’s educated anticipation that
the risk level of any discomfort experienced by a participant from this study is no greater
than what they would encounter in their daily activities. The racial discrimination section
pertains to personal experiences from past experiences and may trigger feelings from past
experiences. The feelings experienced should not be any greater than what is experienced
in life or discussions/readings related to classes. The researcher’s consideration of the
study being “minimal risk” is based solely on the above mentioned questions as the
researcher did not perceive the other sections to elicit any risk.
As an effort to minimize harm to the participants, as stated in the Informed Consent form (Appendix B), participants had the choice to not answer any question within the questionnaire without receiving any consequences. In addition, participants were informed that they may choose to withdraw some or all of their data from the study without any consequences. Participants were provided with information for mental health services on the Informed Consent form (Appendix B). Participants could choose to utilize these services as a means to process their thoughts and feelings elicited from this study. The only physical exertion asked from the participants was the use of a writing instrument to sign the Informed Consent form (Appendix B) and to fill out the questionnaire (Appendix A).

In regards to confidentiality, the Informed Consent form is the only thing that can link the identities of the participant to the study. The Informed Consent forms were kept separately from the questionnaires. The researcher used a numbering system in order to keep track of the data. Both the informed consent forms and questionnaires were kept in separate folders in a locked cabinet at the researcher's house. The forms and data will be destroyed upon completion of this project.

**Conclusion**

The researcher used a quantitative and exploratory research approach to examine the degree to which academic self efficacy and self concept act as moderators of past or present racial discrimination experiences and contribute to academic success. A questionnaire was used to collect data. Using PASW descriptive and inferential statistics were used to analyze the data. The researcher followed all University and ethical
guidelines for collecting data, using human subjects and maintaining confidentiality.

Overall, the researcher believes the outcomes of this project will provide a greater understanding of the effects that racial discrimination has on students from different ethnicities and the learning environment as a whole. The findings from the analysis of the statistics follow.
Chapter 4

RESULTS

Introduction

Descriptive and inferential statistics were used to analyze the data. The researcher was interested in the degree to which racial discrimination experiences impact academic self efficacy and self concept. The researcher was also interested in the degree to which self efficacy and self concept act of moderators and have a positive effect on academic performance. The researcher has two hypotheses: H1: minority students report experiencing more discrimination than White students; and H2: White students have higher academic self efficacy and self concept than minority students.

Descriptive Statistics

Table 1 represents the total number of participants, their gender, and their proportion as a whole. There were a total of 171 surveys that were collected. There were a total of 122 female participants and a total of 46 male participants.

Table 1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gender of the participant</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
<th>Valid Percent</th>
<th>Cumulative Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>122</td>
<td>72.6</td>
<td>72.6</td>
<td>72.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>27.4</td>
<td>27.4</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Missing</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1.8</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>171</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

There were a total of 166 participants who reported their age. The participants’ ages ranged from 18 to 56 years old, (M (166) = 23.85, sd= 6.03). Student’s self reported their overall grade point average (GPA), (M (165) = 3.22, sd= .48). The lowest GPA reported was 1.60 and the highest reported was 4.00. The researcher surveyed graduate students (N=24) and undergraduate students (N=142). Five participants did not report their level of education. Refer to Table 2 for a complete breakdown of participants’ year in college.

Table 2
Participants’ year in college

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
<th>Valid Percent</th>
<th>Cumulative Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Graduate</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>First year</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>13.5</td>
<td>13.9</td>
<td>13.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Second year</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.6</td>
<td>.6</td>
<td>14.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Undergraduate</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Freshman</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>3.5</td>
<td>3.6</td>
<td>18.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sophomore</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>24.0</td>
<td>24.7</td>
<td>42.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Junior</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>27.5</td>
<td>28.3</td>
<td>71.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Senior</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>28.1</td>
<td>28.9</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Missing</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>2.8</td>
<td>-</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>171</td>
<td>100</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 3 shows the frequency distribution of the ethnic backgrounds of the participants. There was an option to mark “Other” as an ethnic background if none of the above applied to the participant. The “Other” category was comprised of participants who identified with an ethnic background other than those mentioned above and those that marked two or more ethnic backgrounds. For the purposes of this project the researcher only compared participants who identified as being Caucasian, Black/African American, Asian, and Mexican American/Latino origin.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ethnic background of participants</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
<th>Valid Percent</th>
<th>Cumulative</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Hispanic/Latino</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>27.5</td>
<td>28.1</td>
<td>28.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>American Indian</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.6</td>
<td>.6</td>
<td>28.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asian American</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>11.1</td>
<td>11.4</td>
<td>40.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>African Am./ Black</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>8.8</td>
<td>9.0</td>
<td>49.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Caucasian</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>38.0</td>
<td>39.0</td>
<td>88.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>11.7</td>
<td>11.9</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Missing</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2.3</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>171</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**Racial Discrimination Section**

The racial discrimination section of the questionnaire was based on a 5 point Likert-type scale ranging from 0 = never, 1 = seldom, 2 = sometimes, 3 = often to 4 = all the time. The minimum score of 0 represents a participant reporting never experiencing racial discrimination. The highest score that could be recorded would be 80 which would represent experiencing racial discrimination all the time in their life. In this sample the self reported scores of experiencing racial discrimination ranged from 0 to 61. Table 4 represents the average of each participants’ score on the racial discrimination section of the questionnaire. Overall, the average scores of all participants represent experiencing very little racial discrimination. Implications for these results are discussed in further detail in the next chapter.

Table 4

Descriptive statistics for racial discrimination section

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Valid</th>
<th>165</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mean</td>
<td>16.08</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Median</td>
<td>13.00</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mode</td>
<td>12.00</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Std. Deviation</td>
<td>11.91</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minimum</td>
<td>.00</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maximum</td>
<td>61.00</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The cumulative percent of answers for each racial discrimination question was computed. The following percentages for each question will represent the cumulative amount of responses representing very little to never experiencing that type of discrimination. There were 171 responses for question one and 69 percent of responses were either never or seldom. There were 171 responses for question two with 70.2 percent responding seldom or never. There were 73.7 percent of participants that seldom or never experienced being told they were unable to perform at the same level as their peers. 91.8 percent reported seldom or never being pushed, shoved, or hit due to their race. There was 67.8 percent that reported seldom or never being called abusive names due to their race. 86 percent reported seldom to never experienced being ignored by teachers in the classroom. 71.9 percent of participants reported seldom or never having their intelligence belittled by a teacher. There was 88 percent who reported never to seldom receiving unfair grading when compared to White students. Only 28.2 percent of participants reported never to seldom hearing or reading positive things in the media about people of color. Therefore, the majority (66.5-91.8 percent) of participants, of all ethnicities, notice that people of color are often represented in a negative way through social media. Implications of what this means will be discussed further in chapter five. There were 40.9 percent of participants who reported that aspects of their culture have been belittled by someone of a different culture. This means that the majority of people reported that they experience their culture being belittled either sometimes, often, or all the time. Almost 91 percent reported that other people seldom or never move to the other side of the street, and 91.1 percent seldom or never experienced being denied a promotion.
due to race. There were 87 percent of responses that seldom or never were made fun of for speaking a foreign language, and 76 percent of participants reported seldom or never experiencing being teased due to their cultural background. Number 15 was the only question that had the majority (35.7 %) of responses as “all the time” with the rest fairly evenly spread among the other response options (64.4 cumulative percent). There was 87.1 percent that responded seldom or never to being pulled over due to racial profiling and not taken seriously due to race. About 71 percent replied seldom or never feeling like an outsider because of their race. About 77 percent of participants have seldom or never been called cruel remarks by peers for cultural differences. Lastly, almost 94 percent replied seldom or never being denied into an establishment based on race.

From the data reported above overall the scores on the racial discrimination section represent having experienced very little or no discrimination corresponding with answers representing seldom and never, respectively. Out of all the questions “seldom read or hear anything positive in media” and “aspects of culture have been belittled by someone of a different culture” were the only two that had the majority of participants’ responses as either sometimes or often. The frequency distributions of each score reported was obtained which shows the dispersions of central tendencies are very close. These data support the descriptive statistics for each question reported above. Descriptive and frequency distributions will be presented next for the academic self efficacy and self concept section next.
**Academic Self Efficacy and Self Concept Section**

Table 5 summarizes the descriptive statistics for the academic self efficacy/self concept section. The academic self efficacy and self concept scale was based on a 5 point Likert-type scale. It ranged from 1= strongly disagree, 2= disagree, 3= neither agree or disagree, 4= agree, to 5= strongly agree. Possible scores ranged from a minimum of 11 to a maximum of 55. Lower scores represent less confidence in one’s abilities and higher scores represent more confidence in one’s ability to succeed. Based on this set of data overall it appears as though this sample has medium to high confidence in their ability to succeed academically.

Table 5

Descriptive statistics for academic self efficacy/self concept section

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>N</th>
<th>Valid</th>
<th>170</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Missing</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mean</td>
<td>45.53</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Median</td>
<td>46.00</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mode</td>
<td>45.00</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Std. Deviation</td>
<td>6.23</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minimum</td>
<td>11.00</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maximum</td>
<td>55.00</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
A frequency distribution of all the participants’ scores for each question was run. The majority of answers reported for each question on the academic self efficacy and self concept section were agree or strongly agree. About 81 percent of participants reported that they strongly agreed in their ability to succeed in college. About 67 percent either agreed or strongly agreed that they considered themselves to be a leader. The majority (52 percent) of participants agreed, while 32 percent of participants strongly agreed, that they are able to bounce back after disappointment and success. About half strongly agreed that they considered themselves to be confident and capable person. The majority (44 percent) of participants marked “neither agree or disagreed” that they ranked in the top 20 percent in overall academic ability. Only 21 percent of responses were reported for agree and strongly agree for this question. There was about 80 percent that reported they agreed or strongly agreed that they had a positive view of themselves. About 86 percent reported that they work hard to improve personal shortcomings. Only 43 percent of participants agreed that they focused on their own goals instead of comparing themselves with others. While an equal amount of participants (23 percent) reported neither agree or disagree and strongly agree for this question. About 61 percent of participants felt that they strongly agreed that they would succeed even if they needed help or support, while another 32 percent reported that they agreed to this same question. About half of the participants agreed that they remain optimistic in times of disappointment and success, while 30 percent reported they strongly agreed. Lastly, about 78 percent reported that they agree or strongly agree that they are fast learners.
There was one participant who declined to answer the academic self efficacy and self concept section of questionnaire. There were 22 participants that reported scores between 30 to 39 points, representing low to mid confidence levels of self efficacy and self concept. There were 98 participants that reported scores between 40 to 49. This group represent mid to high levels of self efficacy and self concept. There were 49 participants that had scores between 50 to 55. This group represents those that report high levels of self efficacy and self concept in themselves. Given such a large proportion of participants’ scores being between 40 to 55 it is safe to say that overall this sample has moderate to high self efficacy and self concept pertaining to their confidence in their ability to academically succeed. Overall, with just evaluating descriptive statistics it appears as though this sample has experienced minimal discrimination and is highly confident in their academic abilities.

Next, the means of each ethnic background for the racial discrimination section was evaluated. The mean represents the average all of the scores reported by all the participants within each racial background category, that represents the amount of racial discrimination experienced. All of the minority groups had mean scores between 17 and 26. Participants who identified as Hispanic/ Latino origin reported experiencing the least amount of racial discrimination as a group, while participants who identified as African American/ Black reported experiencing the most racial discrimination as a group. Those that identified as Caucasian had a mean score lower than all minority groups. The data shows that as a group Caucasian students report experiencing the least racial discrimination and African American/ Black students report experiencing the most racial
discrimination. Table 6 summarizes the mean scores of each racial background group based on the amount of self reported racial discrimination experienced.

Table 6

Mean scores of racial discrimination reported for each ethnic group

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ethnic Background</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std. Deviation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>African American</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>26.00</td>
<td>15.15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asian American</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>23.00</td>
<td>15.81</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>19.74</td>
<td>13.51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hispanic/ Latino</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>17.09</td>
<td>10.88</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>American Indian</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>16.00</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Caucasian</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>10.50</td>
<td>6.94</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No answer</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>12.25</td>
<td>5.38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>165</td>
<td>16.08</td>
<td>11.91</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The means of each ethnic background for the academic self efficacy and self concept section was evaluated. The mean represents the average all of the scores reported by all the participants within each racial background category that represents the amount of confidence in one’s abilities to academically succeed. All of the mean scores reported are relatively close with the mean total of all groups equaling 45.53. African American/ Black students reported having the highest mean score of academic self efficacy and self concept (M= 48.60, sd= 6.07). Asian American students reported the second highest mean score of confidence in academic abilities (M= 46.89, sd= 4.84). The participants in
the Other group had the third highest score (M=45.30, sd= 6.78). Hispanic/Latino students had the fourth highest score (M=45.13, sd= 7.42). White students had the lowest score representing the least amount of academic self efficacy and self concept as a group (M= 44.82, sd= 5.61). Table 7 shows a summary of the mean scores of the levels of academic self efficacy and self concept for each ethnic group. It is interesting to note that White students, who reported experiencing the lowest amount of discrimination, also reported the least amount of academic self efficacy and self concept. Whereas, African American students reported experiencing the most amount of discrimination also reported the highest amount of academic self efficacy and self concept. This will be discussed further in chapter five.

Table 7

Mean scores of academic self efficacy and self concept for each ethnic group

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ethnic Background</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std. Deviation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>African American</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>48.60</td>
<td>6.07</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asian American</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>46.89</td>
<td>4.84</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>45.30</td>
<td>6.78</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hispanic/Latino</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>45.13</td>
<td>7.42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>American Indian</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>45.00</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Caucasian</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>44.82</td>
<td>5.61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No Answer</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>45.50</td>
<td>1.91</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>170</td>
<td>45.53</td>
<td>6.23</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Inferential Statistics

After running descriptive statistics inferential statistics were analyzed. An alpha level of (p < .05) was established prior to running inferential statistics. The researcher was interested in finding out if there was a significant difference in the amount of self-reported experiences of racial discrimination comparing White students as one group and African American, Mexican/Latino, and Asian students as a second group. An independent t-test was used to compare White and minority students on the racial discrimination section of the questionnaire. The results showed that minority students as a group experience significantly more racial discrimination than White students, t(159) = 5.84, p < .05, and that the results are not likely due to chance.

The researcher then ran an independent t-test comparing White (M = 10.50, sd = 6.94) and African American (M = 26.00, sd = 15.15) students, since both groups represent the lowest and highest scores of self-reported racial discrimination, respectively. The researcher was interested in whether or not there is a significant difference in the amount of racial discrimination between racial groups individually. The results showed that African American/Black students experience significantly more racial discrimination than White students, t(14) = 3.74, p < .05. The researcher can say with some certainty that the difference between White and African American students is not likely due to chance.

After finding a significant difference between White and African American students the researcher decided to compare Asian and Mexican American students as well.

An independent t-test was run comparing the amount of racial discrimination experienced between White (M = 10.50, sd = 6.94) and Asian American (M = 23.00, sd =
15.81) students. The results showed that Asian students experience a statistically significant more amount of racial discrimination than White students, $t(18)= 3.18$, $p< .05$.

An independent t-test was run comparing the amount of racial discrimination experienced between White students ($M=10.50$, $sd= 6.94$) and Hispanic/Latino students ($M= 17.09$, $sd= 10.89$). The results also showed a statistically significant difference in the amount of racial discrimination experiences reported suggesting that the significant difference was not due to chance, $t(71)= 3.61$, $p< .05$.

Out of curiosity the researcher also ran an independent t-test comparing White students ($M=10.50$, $sd= 6.94$) and students in the Other category ($M= 19.74$, $sd= 13.51$). The researcher wanted to know if there was a significant difference of racial discrimination reported when a student identifies with more than one ethnicity. The results showed that there was a statistically significant difference of racial discrimination experiences reported for students identifying with two or more ethnicities, $t(21)= 2.87$, $p< .05$. The results suggest that the statistical difference is the result of something other than chance. The results of all ethnic backgrounds having a statistically significant difference in the amount of racial discrimination experiences when compared to White students was reported to the researcher, and the researcher is able to reject the null H1, which is that there is no difference in the amount of racial discrimination between ethnicities.

Independent t-tests were run to test the relationship between ethnic background and academic self efficacy and self concept. Results are discussed next.
T-test Results for Academic Self Efficacy and Self Concept

An independent t-test was run comparing White students and students of color on the academic self efficacy/ self concept section of the questionnaire. The results show there was not a statistically significant difference in levels of academic self efficacy and self concept between White students and students of color, t(168) = 1.18, p> .05. The insignificant difference may be attributed to the sample being of individuals already admitted into college with an established level of academic confidence. Based on this result the researcher was unable to reject the null hypothesis 2, which is that there is no difference between White and minority students in their levels of academic self efficacy and self concept.

The researcher was interested in whether or not there was a difference in levels of academic self efficacy/self concept between ethnic groups. An independent t-test was run comparing White students (M= 44.82, sd= 5.61) and African American students (M=48.60, sd= 6.07), and the results showed a statistically significant difference in the amount of academic self efficacy and self concept between White and African American students, t(78)= 2.32, p< .05. Unfortunately the researcher did not originally hypothesize differences between ethnicities. The implications for these results are discussed further in chapter 5.

Correlations

The Pearson product-moment correlation coefficient was used to identify significant correlations between variables. The relationship comparing the racial discrimination section and the self efficacy/ self concept section did not show a
statistically significant correlation, $r_{164} = .12$, $p > .05$. Therefore, the researcher is unable to suggest that the amount of racial discrimination an individual experiences tends to affect levels of self efficacy and self concept.

Table 8

| Correlation table for racial discrimination and academic self efficacy/ self concept |
|---------------------------------|----------------|----------------|
|                                 | Self efficacy/concept | racial discrimination |
| Self efficacy/concept           |                |                |
| Pearson r                       | 1               | .199           |
| Sig (2 tailed)                  | .130            |                |
| N                               | 170             | 164            |
| Racial discrimination           |                |                |
| Pearson r                       | .119            | 1              |
| Sig (2 tailed)                  | .130            |                |
| N                               | 164             | 165            |

The researcher analyzed the results of the correlations comparing all the questions in the racial discrimination section to each other. The researcher was interested in this analysis because strong correlations suggest that each question relates to the other and maybe measuring the same construct from the same scale. Most of the racial discrimination questions showed a strong correlation ranging from, $r = .58$ to .83. Question 9 was the only one that showed a moderate correlation, $r_{165} = .33$, $p < .05$. Question 15 was the only one that showed a negative, weak to moderate correlation, $r$
The negative correlation suggests that the more a participant agreed with other questions in this section, the less they agreed to that question. The same analysis was done for the academic self efficacy and self concept section. All of the academic self efficacy/self concept questions were significantly correlated to the self efficacy/self concept section, suggesting that they were related to each other and were measuring the same construct. Most correlations showed a strong relationship ranging from, $r = .60$ to $.82$. Question 30 was the only one that had a moderate correlation, $r(170) = .47$, $p < .05$.

Since the racial discrimination and academic self efficacy/self concept sections did not show a significant correlation the researcher was most interested in questions from either section that were correlated to the other section (i.e., racial discrimination question correlated with self efficacy/concept question).

Question 22 “I consider myself to be a leader” was statistically significantly correlated with the racial discrimination scale, $r(165) = .20$, $p = .01$. The correlation coefficient showed a weak correlation but the results imply that an individual continues to consider themselves to be a leader after experiencing racial discrimination. Question 23 “I bounce back after facing disappointment…” showed a statistically significant correlation with the racial discrimination scale, $r(164) = .19$, $p = .02$. Even though it is a weak correlation the results suggest that an individual who experiences racial discrimination also has confidence in their ability to “bounce back after disappointment and success”.

Question 1 “…watched or followed in a store due to my race” showed a statistically significant correlation to the academic self efficacy/self concept scale, $r$
This result is weakly correlated but suggests that even when racial discrimination is experienced outside of an academic setting that the individual has confidence that they can be academically successful. Question 2 “…teased in school due to race” was statistically significantly correlated with the academic self efficacy/ self concept scale, r (170) = .23, p= .002. This correlation suggests that when individuals are teased in an academic setting about their race that they still maintain a positive self concept of their abilities to succeed in school.

Question 23 “Bounce back after facing disappointment as well as success” was statistically significantly correlated with several questions from the racial discrimination scale. There was a significant correlation with question 1 “…watched or followed in a store…”, r (170) = .16, p= .03; question 2 “…teased in school due to race”, r (170) = .22, p= .003; question 4 “…pushed, shoved, or hit due to race”, r (170) = .21, p= .01; and question 12 “…denied a promotion due to race”, r (168) = .19, p=.02. All of these are very weak correlations which is not surprising because the two sections did not show a significant correlation initially. Although the correlations are weak the results suggest that people continuously strive for success tends to be maintained despite experiencing multiple aspects of racial discrimination.

Question 2 “…teased due to race” was very weakly correlated with question 24 “…confident and capable person”, r (171) = .17, p=.03; question 26 “…stay optimistic in times of disappointment and success”, r (170) = .20, p=.01; and question 31 “…positive view of myself”, r (171) = .21, p=.01. These results suggest that individuals who are teased due to their race are still optimistic that they can be successful. Students sustain a
level of confidence as a capable individual to academically succeed. Internally such students have a positive view of themselves despite being teased due to their race.

Question 31 showed a very weak statistically significantly correlation with question 15 “…never experienced discrimination due to race”, \( r (171) = -.16, p = .01 \). This implies that students who never or very rarely experience racial discrimination should have even higher views of themselves. Question 29 “…focus on own goals instead of comparing myself to others” and question 15 “…never experienced discrimination due to race” showed a statistically significant correlation, \( r (171) = -.23, p = .003 \). This negative correlation implies that the more racial discrimination one experiences the less likely they are to focus on their own goals. This relationship is interesting because overall ethnic minority groups had relatively high academic self efficacy and self concept.

Question 22 “…consider myself to be a leader” was weak to moderately significantly correlated with question 2 “teased due to race”, \( r (171) = .31, p = .00 \). This was the strongest correlation found. This finding was the only one that the researcher was able to suggest there may be a slight positive relationship between racial discrimination and an individual’s self concept.

**Summary**

The researcher evaluated descriptive and inferential statistics of the data collected. Demographic information was also collected and evaluated. Descriptive statistics that were analyzed were means and frequencies. These were used to give the researcher summary statistics and a sense of central tendencies in the data. Inferential statistics that were gathered were correlations of all the variables comparing all the questions from the
racial discrimination and academic self efficacy/ self concept sections of the questionnaire and t-tests comparing each ethnic group for variances.

Based on means gathered for each ethnic group the researcher decided to use t-tests to test the degree to which the groups were different. The results gathered from the t-tests comparing each ethnic background group of students to White students was used to test the null hypotheses. The results of each t-test on racial discrimination showed a statistically significant difference concluding that students of color experience more racial discrimination than White students. Therefore, the researcher was able to reject the null hypothesis in these cases.

The researcher also used t-tests to test the degree to which the amount of academic self efficacy/ self concept differ between ethnic groups. The researcher did not find a significant difference in the amount of academic self efficacy and self concept between White students and students of color. The greatest difference in scores were found when White and African American students were compared. The researcher used these two ethnic groups to test for a significant difference between groups. There was a significant difference found between White and Black students on their level of academic self efficacy and self concept but the results could not be attributed to something other than chance. Therefore, the researcher could not reject the null hypothesis.

Correlation statistics were used to test the relationship between both sections and each question individually. Even though there was not a significant correlation between racial discrimination and academic self efficacy and self concept, there were specific questions that were significantly correlated. The questions that did show a significant
correlation were very weak, with one instance being weak to moderately correlated. The strength of the significant correlations were not high enough for the researcher to say confidently that there is a relationship between racial discrimination and academic self efficacy and self concept. With this sample it does not appear that experiencing racial discrimination effected levels of confidence negatively, and may have actually contributed to greater levels of academic self efficacy and self concept within ethnic groups. What these results mean and how they relate to past research will be discussed further in the next chapter.
Chapter 5

DISCUSSION

Introduction

The act of one individual discriminating against another has been a problem in American society for a long time, with different groups of people being discriminated against for different reasons. American society has witnessed fights against discrimination through the women’s movement, gay rights movement (which is still prevalent today), and the civil rights movement. The civil rights movement in the 1960s was the landmark era to achieving equality for African Americans. During this time in history people of color gained more access to finding employment, obtaining higher education, and marked the beginning of recognizing racial discrimination to be unconstitutional. Despite efforts to increase admittance into universities through affirmative action, and efforts to increase retentions rates people of color showed a higher amount of dropout rates and less academic success compared to White students (Bowen & Bok, 1998). It is not clear what factor(s) contribute to this disparity, but it has remained a problem in academia.

Several theories have been developed as a way of giving meaning to disparities of academic success between White and minority students. Capital deficiency, which is the lack of necessary resources to be successful, is one theory that has been used by researchers to explain how differences in resources can impact academic achievement (Massey et al. 2003). The cultural-ecological model proposes that two separate factors (school and societal, and minority community) contribute to minority students’ education
and underperformance in school compared to White students (Ogbu 2008). In the 1970s, Bandura’s social learning theory gained increased recognition to explain human behavior and social phenomenon. Social learning theory states that people learn through symbols, vicariousness, self-regulation, and self-beliefs (Bandura 1977, 1994; Pajeras 2002). Social learning theory was the foundation for this project. The purpose of this project was to examine the degree to which there is a relationship between experiencing racial discrimination and academic self-efficacy and self-concept as they relate to a student’s academic success.

**Review of Important Research Findings for Racial Discrimination**

Overall, the researcher was able to reject the null hypothesis that there is no difference in the amount of racial discrimination experienced between White and minority students. The results showed that African, Mexican, and Asian American students all reported experiencing significantly more racial discrimination than White students. Each of the ethnic groups had relatively high academic self-efficacy and self-concept scores that were fairly close. The researcher was unable to reject the null hypothesis which was that there was no difference in the levels of academic self-efficacy and self-concept between White and minority students. The results in this sample did not show a significant difference between White and minority students’ levels of academic self-efficacy and self-concept. The researcher did find a significant difference in the levels of academic self-efficacy and self-concept between White and African American students, with African American student’s reporting a higher score. Even though a significant difference was found between these two ethnic groups the researcher is
unclear of the foundation for this difference. The researcher did not find a significant correlation between the racial discrimination and academic self-efficacy sections of the questionnaire. There were some correlations between questions from each section of the questionnaire, but the significance was very low. Given the present findings the researcher was unable to say with certainty that there is a relationship between the amount of racial discrimination an individual experiences and their confidence levels of self-efficacy and self-concept within academics. As a whole group the participants had a high GPA, (M (165) = 3.22, sd= .48) so I cannot say that racial discrimination had a negative impact on a student’s ability to academically succeed in this sample.

The researcher’s first hypothesis stating that minority students experienced more racial discrimination than White students was supported by the data. The data gathered from this sample supports the argument that racial discrimination is still a problem in today’s society. Descriptive statistics collected from the racial discrimination section showed that all ethnicities reported experiencing discrimination and that overall the majority of participants had experienced minimal racial discrimination. Consistent with previous research Huynh and Fuligni (2010) stated that each racial group is subjected to different stereotypes which elicit different types of discrimination. A relatively low overall mean on the racial discrimination section could be attributed to living in a fairly diverse city and consequently a diverse university that perhaps exposure to discrimination is not high. It could be attributed to family and social background, or a disproportionate number of participants in each ethnic background group.
The results of the mean scores of self-reported racial discrimination of each ethnic group showed that African American/Black students reported experiencing the most racial discrimination. This finding was not surprising to the researcher as African American/Black people’s fight for racial equality has been monumental in American history. The researcher found this to be congruent with previous literature stating that racial discrimination is a significant life stressor that affects the lives of many African American youth and adult students (Utsey et al., 2000; Seaton, 2010; Gibbons, Gerrard, Cleveland, Wills, and Brody, 2004). In contrast, the results showing White students experiencing the least amount of discrimination is consistent with what the researcher expected given that White people make up the dominant and privileged race within society. Inferential statistics also supported the hypothesis stating that there is a significant difference in the amount of racial discrimination Asian and Hispanic/Latino students experience compared to White students. What the researcher concludes from these results is that all ethnic minority groups may not experience racial discrimination in large amounts but the instances they do experience racial discrimination are significantly more than White people.

After all of the data was collected and was being analyzed the researcher realized that there was not an option for participants to identify as biracial or multiracial as an option for the ethnic background question. Consequently, the researcher decided to put all participants who marked two or more ethnicities into the Other category. This was done to ensure consistency among reporting and analyzing ethnic groups. Even though participants in the Other category were not a focus of this project the researcher decided
to analyze the amount of racial discrimination reported compared to White students and found a significant difference. The participants in that category are likely bi-racial or mixed raced individuals who are experienced as people of color in society, which may have contributed to the significant difference in the amount of racial discrimination they self reported compared to White students.

**Review of Important Findings for Academic Self Efficacy and Self Concept**

The researcher was not able to reject the null hypothesis saying that there is no difference in the level’s of academic self efficacy and self concept comparing White and minority students. Descriptive statistics showed that this sample had overall high levels of self efficacy and self concept across all ethnic groups. In fact, mean scores of each ethnic group showed African American students reporting the highest score, while White students reported the lowest score. Inferential statistics comparing White and minority students did not show a significant difference. These results were a bit disappointing to the researcher because she was unable to show a relationship between the amount of racial discrimination reported above and how that may affect levels of self efficacy among different ethnic groups. Past research suggests that racial discrimination over extensive periods of time may negatively impact the way one views themselves, their self-worth, relationships, intellectual ability and performance, and self efficacy (Seaton 2010). One reason why the researcher did not find a significant difference between White and minority students in this sample may be attributed to the fact that the participants were already in college and had established belief in their ability to succeed in college.
Although, when the researcher ran inferential statistics comparing levels of self efficacy between White and African American students a significant difference was found. This result was particularly interesting to find because white students reported the least amount of racial discrimination and academic self efficacy and self concept, while African American/black students who reported the most racial discrimination also had the highest academic self efficacy and self concept. It is possible to say that an individual’s level of self efficacy and self concept may moderate the effects of racial discrimination experiences. Reporting higher levels of self efficacy may be in relation to the amount of racial discrimination reported and used as a buffer. Therefore, an individual may feel the need to report higher levels of confidence in their ability to succeed in order to overcome negative past experiences.

**Important Findings for Correlations**

The researcher did not find a significant correlation between the racial discrimination section and the academic self efficacy and self concept section of the questionnaire. The strongest correlation was between ‘teased due to race’ and ‘consider myself to be a leader’. These two questions were positively, and low to moderately correlated. Unfortunately, this was the only correlation that suggested there may be a relationship between racial discrimination and confidence in one’s self.

**Limitations**

The sample population and sample size were limitations in this study. The researcher was limited to using a convenience sample of college level students. The number of graduate students compared to undergraduate level students was not relatively
equal and the sample size was small. Due to non-random and size of the sample the researcher is unable to generalize the results.

The researcher noticed a few limitations with the questionnaire used. The questionnaire’s reliability and validity were not established for two reasons: the racial discrimination section was created by the researcher, and a pilot test was not established prior to collecting the data for the project. Being a project the researcher did not have the time to run a pilot study in order to test the reliability and validity of the questionnaire. Therefore, the results can only be applied to the sample used. The second aspect the researcher found to be limitations pertained to some of the questions used in the racial discrimination section. In hindsight the researcher would throw out some of the questions and create new ones that are more relevant to the time era. For example, I would omit question 20 which relates to an act of discrimination that is no longer tolerated in society causing the report of that discrimination experience to be low. The researcher believes that having too many questions that are not relevant to how an individual might experience discrimination in society today skewed the results and most likely provided a misconception of how prevalent discrimination still is. The researcher also noticed that question 15 was stated with a double negative which most likely confused the participants and made it difficult for them to answer. In the future the researcher would reword that question.

**Suggestions for future Research**

A larger sample size and random sampling would be suggested in order to generalize results to greater society. I would suggest that future researchers use scales
that have been used in previous research that have already been shown to be reliable and valid, which will assist in the results being generalized. Using scales that have already been shown to be reliable and valid will eliminate problems pertaining to relevancy, double negatives, and reduce the possibility of confusing the participants. Researchers can also consider using yes/no answers instead of a Likert-type scale for reporting data.

The researcher suggests future research include an option on the demographics to include bi-racial or multi-racial as an ethnic group in order to expand the ability to compare group differences between ethnic backgrounds. It could be interesting for future research to explore the extent to which multiculturalism impacts an individual’s perceptions of discrimination and their view of their academic self-efficacy and self-concept. Researchers could explore differences between those that identify with two or more minority ethnicities compared to someone who identifies with being White and some other ethnicity.

Unfortunately the researcher did not originally hypothesize differences between ethnicities and levels of academic self-efficacy and self-concept. From the results of the t-test comparing White and African American students it suggests that there may be a relationship between experiencing racial discrimination and confidence in one’s academic abilities to succeed. Further research comparing the relationship between racial discrimination and personality characteristics across different ethnicities would be beneficial to social workers and other professionals.
**Implications for Social Work**

It is my hope as a researcher that the results of this project have brought an increased awareness to all students and educators that racial discrimination is still a problem in American society and the effects it can have on an individual’s confidence in their ability to be academically successful. As social workers we are suppose to be culturally competent in order to understand and be able to let others’ culture guide us to better understand our clients so that we are better equipped to help them. My hope is that my results showing that minority students experience more discrimination then White students contributes to the previous research in diversity education. It is important for educators, as well as social workers, to be knowledgeable about how communities, family environment, and how personal characteristics may impact internal confidence and academic success.

I hope that the results showing the amount of racial discrimination that minority students experience expresses the importance for schools and universities to create and enforce policies against racial discrimination. One of the aspects about being a social worker is advocating for equality for all people. It is imperative that universities continue to have policies to protect individuals who experience and report discrimination in academic environments. It is equality important that administrators in academic environments uphold policies against racial discrimination and reprimand the perpetrators. Making sure that policies are in place to provide safe and comfortable spaces for all students to learn and be successful.
**Conclusion**

As a White woman I realize that I am not faced with racial discrimination the same way that some of my friends and/or peers in and outside of the academic environment are faced with. As a White woman I realize that I may have grown up in an environment that enriched my growth and encouraged me to succeed, and I was fortunate enough to have the capital to do so. But, as a social worker I realize that racial discrimination is still very much a problem for people of color. As a social worker I understand that social and family environments help to shape people’s values, beliefs, goals, and personality characteristics that help an individual continue to strive for success when faced with hardships. I know that I cannot control how other people treat others, but I do know that I control how I treat the people around me. It frustrates me to know that discrimination, of any type, persists in a country that prides itself on equality. As an individual who is a social worker I believe it important to continue advocating for policies that strengthen and encourage early learning for young children, continue putting money towards schools so that everyone is sufficiently prepared for higher education, and continue to improve retention rates in schools and universities. In order to eliminate racial discrimination, educators, administrators, and policy makers need to continue to create and improve upon policies addressing the effects of racial discrimination so that students of all ethnicities are able to reach their full potential.
APPENDICES
APPENDIX A

Questionnaire

The survey will only take about 15 minutes to complete. Please respond to each item carefully and honestly; there are no right or wrong answers. This data will be collected anonymously and kept confidential. Please do not place your name on any of the materials. When you have completed the survey please place it in the folder at the front of the room. You may withdraw at any time or leave items blank. Thank you for participating.

Section 1: For questions 1-20 please use the following scale. Please read each question carefully and answer honestly according to your experiences.

4- All the time (100% Agree)
3- Often (75% Agree)
2- Sometimes (50 % Agree)
1- Seldom (Agree 25%)
0- Never (Agree 0%)

_____ 1. I have been watched or followed in a store due to my race.

_____ 2. I have been teased in school due to my race.

_____ 3. I have been told that I am unable to academically perform at the same level as my peers.

_____ 4. I have been pushed, shoved, and or hit due to my race.

_____ 5. I have experienced being called abusive names due to my race.

_____ 6. I have experienced being ignored by teachers in the classroom due to my race.

_____ 7. My intelligence has been belittled by a teacher.

_____ 8. I have received unfair grading by a teacher in comparison to my White peers.

_____ 9. I seldom hear or read anything positive about minority people in the media.

_____ 10. Aspects of my culture have been belittled by someone of a different culture.
11. People move to the other side of the street when they see me walking toward them.

12. I have been denied a promotion I deserved due to my race.

13. I have been made fun of because I speak a language other than English.

14. I have experienced being teased because of my cultural background.

15. I have never experienced discrimination due to my race.

16. I have been wrongfully pulled over while driving due to racial profiling.

17. I am not taken seriously due to my race.

18. I have been made to feel like an outsider because of my race.

19. Peers have made cruel remarks towards me in regard to cultural differences.

20. I have been denied access into an establishment based on my race.

Section 2: For questions 21-31 please use the following scale. Please read each question carefully and answer honestly according to your feelings of how strongly you agree with the statement.

1- Strongly disagree (0% Agree)  
2- Disagree (25% Agree)  
3- Neither agree or disagree (50% Agree)  
4- Agree (75% Agree)  
5- Strongly agree (100% Agree)

21. I believe in my own ability to succeed in college.

22. I consider myself to be a leader

23. I bounce back after facing disappointment as well as success.

24. I am a confident and capable person.

25. I am confident that I will succeed even if I need help and support.

26. I stay optimistic in times of disappointment as well as success.
27. I am a fast learner.
28. I work hard to improve when I have a personal shortcoming.
29. I focus on my own goals instead of comparing myself with others.
30. Compared to other students my age, I rank in the top 20% in overall academic ability.
31. I have a positive view of myself.

Section 3: For numbers 32-37 please answer each of the following according to self report.

32. Gender: Male_____ Female:______
33. Ethnic Background:
   ______ Hispanic, Mexican, Latino(a), or of Spanish Origin
   ______ American Indian, Eskimo, or Aluet
   ______ Asian or Pacific Islander
   ______ Black/African American
   ______ White, Caucasian
   ______ Other, specify: ____________________________
34. Graduate student: _____ yes _____ no
   Indicate year:
   ______ first year ______ second year ______ third year
35. Undergraduate student: _____ yes ______ no
   
   Indicate year:
   ______ freshman _____ sophomore _____ Junior _____ Senior

36. What is your cumulative grade point average (GPA): _____._____

37. Age:_______
APPENDIX B

Consent Form

You are being asked to participate in research for a MSW project that is being conducted by Kathryn Spuur, an MSW II student. The topics in this study are racial discrimination, self efficacy, and self concept. The researcher is interested in researching whether racial discrimination experiences will impact an individuals’ self efficacy and self concept.

Procedures:
Please do not put your name on any of the materials as this will help to ensure that your confidentiality is protected. Please read the directions for the questionnaire passed out. There are a total of 37 statements, 31 are using Likert type scales. Please place your completed surveys in the labeled folder in the front of the classroom. Only the researcher will see the materials. The data collection will take place in the classroom and require about 10-15 minutes of your time.

Purpose of the research:
The purpose of this study is to see if there is a relationship between racial discrimination and academic self efficacy. The researcher is also interested in whether or not academic self concept acts as a possible mediating factor of racial discrimination experiences and contributes to positive academic performance.

Risks and Benefits:
I understand that this research may have the following risk(s):
Due to the nature of some of the questions on the questionnaires I may experience some mild psychological discomfort.

I understand that this research may have the following benefits:
I will learn more about a topic pertaining to the field of Social Work.
I will be contributing to existing research already in the field.

If you so desire, you may contact the Psychological Counseling Services located in The Well on campus at 916.278.6416.

I understand that this is an adult research project and by signing below, I am acknowledging that I am 18 years of age or older. I understand that I am contributing to our expanding body of research knowledge and I will not be receiving any compensation for participating. I understand that my participation is voluntary and I may choose to withdraw some or all of my participation at any time without penalty and that the researcher may choose not to use my data.

This information was provided to me by Kathryn Spuur. I understand that she can answer any questions I may have now or in the future pertaining to this research and can be
reached at dr2b1day@gmail.com. The advisor of this study is Teiahsha Bankhead, Ph. D. and she can be reached at bankhead@csus.edu.

Signature:____________________________________ Date:__________________
REFERENCES


Museus, S. D. (2008). The model minority and the inferior minority myths:


