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RACIAL COLOR-BLINDNESS AND INTERRACIAL
RELATIONSHIP OUTCOMES

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Abstract

Given the rapid and steady increase in African American-White interracial relationships since 1967, it is imperative to conduct research examining factors that influence relationship outcomes within interracial relationships. The current study examined main effects of African American partner and White partner color-blind racial attitudes, as well as their interaction, in predicting relationship outcomes (i.e., relationship satisfaction and perceived support) from the perspective of African Americans involved in African American-White, heterosexual, interracial relationships. In addition, the links between color-blind racial attitudes and racial identity status were examined. Participants were 62 African American-White, heterosexual, interracial dyads. Contrary to expectation, results indicated that the main effect of White partner color-blind racial attitudes was not significant in predicting African American partner relationship outcomes. Instead, African American partners' color-blind racial attitudes were positively associated with African American partner relationship satisfaction and African American partner perceived support in his or her White partner. Also contrary to expectation, no significant interaction emerged between White partner color-blind racial attitudes and African American partner color-blind racial attitudes in predicting neither African American relationship satisfaction nor perceived support.

Correlation analyses of color-blind racial attitudes and racial identity statuses among African Americans revealed that Pre-Encounter Assimilation and Pre-Encounter Miseducation, as expected, were positively associated with *unawareness of racial privilege*, *unawareness of institutional discrimination,* and *unawareness of blatant racial issues*. Contrary to expectation, no significant correlations were found between more resolved racial identity statuses and color-blind racial attitudes for African American participants. Among White participants, consistent with expectation, a positive correlation was found between Disintegration and *unawareness of*

blatant racial issues; however, the Reintegration status was not significantly correlated with White color-blind racial attitudes. Contrary to expectation, Contact status was positively related to *unawareness of racial privilege* and *unawareness of blatant racial issues*. A detailed discussion of the findings, suggestions for future research, and clinical implications are presented.

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Acknowledgements

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RACIAL COLOR-BLINDNESS AND INTERRACIAL RELATIONSHIP OUTCOMES

Chapter 1: Introduction

Since 1967, when anti-miscegenation laws were deemed unconstitutional, interracial relationships have become more common (Lewis & Yancey, 1997). In fact, interracial marriages have doubled each decade since 1960 (Root, 2001). Most recently, the U.S. Bureau of the Census (2007) reported an increase in interracial married couples from 964,000 in 1990 to a total of 2,281,000 in 2007. Furthermore, Sandor (1994) estimated 2.5 million dating interracial couples in the U.S. Although there has been a dramatic increase in the number of interracial relationships, limited empirical research exists on this population (Bratter & King, 2008). Leslie and Letiecq (2004) found that, although interracial couples tend to minimize the significance and meaning of race in their relationships, racial attitudes are linked to relationship outcomes. Color-blind racial attitudes (beliefs that attempt to minimize the existence of race and racism in society; Bonilla-Silva, 2001, 2003; Carr, 1997) are one type of racial attitude that has garnered more empirical attention in recent years (Neville, Lilly, Duran, Lee, & Browne, 2000), although to date there are no known studies examining color-blind racial attitudes among interracial couples. The purpose of the present study was to examine interracial dating relationships between African American and White American romantic partners to better understand the role of each partners' racial attitudes in the African American partners' perspective on relationship outcomes. Specifically, the present study examined main effects of each partner's color-blind racial attitudes and explored the interaction between color-blind racial attitudes for each partner in predicting two relationship outcomes from the African American partner's perspective: relationship satisfaction and perception of the White partner as a source of support.

A secondary goal of this study was to better understand the relations between color-blind racial attitudes and racial identity attitudes. Racial identity attitudes are attitudes that describe the extent to which an individual understands and accepts his or her status with regard to race within a hierarchical social structure (Helms, 1995). Racial identity attitudes have been examined in a sample of interracial couples (Leslie & Letiecq, 2004). However, little research has examined links between racial identity and color-blind racial attitudes, with the notable exception of research by Gushue and Constantine (2007). Gushue and Constantine found that within a sample of 177 White counseling and clinical psychology trainees, lower levels of color-blind racism were related to more integrated White racial identity attitudes. Likewise, higher levels of color-blind racism were positively related to less integrated White racial identity statuses, with the exception of the Contact scale, which was negatively related to color-blind racial attitudes. The present study examines the link between racial identity attitudes and color-blind racial attitudes within a sample of African American-White interracial couples.

Interracial relationship formation and development. Theories of interracial unions typically focus on why individuals become involved in interracial relationships. During the 1960s and 1970s numerous theories argued that Black-White relationships were the result of Black sexual acting out, Black status seeking, and White neurotic acting out (see Foeman & Nance, 1999, for a review). The aforementioned theories have been called mythical and inaccurate because they were based on stereotypes regarding popular interracial couples at the time and/or lack sufficient empirical evidence (Foeman & Nance, 1999).

More recently, racial motivation, structural, and social exchange theories have been used to explain how interracial relationships form. Racial motivation theory proposes that partners involved in interracial relationships are intrigued or excited by being with someone of another race (Kouri & Lasswell, 1993). Structural theory argues that an increase in

opportunities for individuals of different groups to interact is the cause for interracial relationships (Kouri & Lasswell, 1993). Finally, social exchange theory holds that, in the case of African American-White unions, White women who marry African American men of high economic status exchange the prestige of their skin color for the economic status of their husband (Davidson, 1992; Kalmijn, 1993; Lewis & Yancey, 1997). Nevertheless, empirical research has concluded that mutual attraction is the primary reason partners involved in interracial relationships get together (Davidson, 1992; Porterfield, 1982; Kouri & Laswell, 1993; Shibazaki & Brennan, 1998).

One known model proposed that racial attitudes and partners' understanding of those attitudes are significant factors in interracial relationships. Foeman and Nance (1999) proposed a four-stage model of interracial relationship development. In stage one the authors propose that the longevity of an interracial relationship is partially contingent on each partner's development of sensitivity to the other partner's *racial place*, which is defined as the way a racial group is treated in society. In stage two it is believed that couples work to develop strategies for dealing with situations in which their interracial relationship may be questioned by society. In the third stage couples reframe their experience by viewing themselves as more modern and multiculturally progressive in comparison to others in society. Finally, in the fourth stage, couples are believed to have established strategies and perspective that will help them to continue to evolve and preserve their union. In the current study, interracial relationships are understood within the context of Foeman and Nance's four-stage model.

The present study is particularly focused on the importance of resolving issues of racial awareness presented in stage one of Foeman and Nance's (1999) model of interracial relationship development. Foeman and Nance speculated that relationship outcomes for an interracial relationship are contingent on each partner's awareness of his or her own sense of

racial place, his or her partner's sense of *racial place*, and each racial group's *racial place*. A few studies provide evidence that partners in interracial relationships have varying levels in awareness of and attentiveness to each other's *racial place*. Killian (2001) found that within Black-White interracial relationships Black spouses tended to demonstrate a greater awareness of and sensitivity to society's disapproval of the couple's relationship. Foeman and Nance (2002) interviewed couples and individuals involved in interracial relationships and found that White partners tended to discuss experiences of cultural privilege from a perspective that implied neutral or positive regard by others toward the relationship in public places. On the other hand, Black respondents reported that, as a result of past experiences, they spoke and behaved defensively when approaching new situations. Foeman and Nance (2002) proposed that Black partners are more likely to be aware of and sensitive to the role of race in interracial marriages because they experience more racism in society. On the other hand, Whites are more likely to see the world as fair and safe as compared to their Black partners.

The research on racial color-blindness that examines interracial interactions in general (as opposed to within romantic relationships in particular) provides evidence of both between-group differences and within-group individual differences in understanding *racial place*. As previously stated, color-blind racial attitudes are beliefs that attempt to minimize the existence of race and racism in society (Bonilla-Silva, 2001, 2003; Carr, 1997). Group differences between minority and majority group members were reported by Neville, Lilly, Duran, Lee, and Browne (2000), who found that African Americans and Latinos demonstrated lower color-blind racial attitudes as compared to Whites. The same study reported that Whites who were less aware of racial inequalities in society endorsed greater color-blind racial beliefs whereas those with low racial color-blindness were more aware of such inequities, indicating within group differences for Whites. Evidence of within group differences among minority group

members were found in a sample of African Americans; those with higher levels of racial color-blindness upheld justifications of racial stratification, blamed African Americans for socioeconomic inequalities, and internalized African American racial stereotypes; whereas those low in racial color-blindness reported significantly lower levels of endorsement in such beliefs (Neville, Coleman, Falconer, & Holmes, 2005).

Numerous studies have explored the significance of race in interracial relationship outcomes (Bratter & King, 2008; Fu, Tora & Kendall, 2001; Troy, Lewis-Smith & Laurenceau, 2006). These studies have tended to compare the relationship quality of interracial and intraracial couples but have reached no consensus on whether or not outcomes for interracial couples differ from those for intraracial couples. Some studies have found differences (Stevenson, 1995; Troy, Lewis-Smith, & Laurenceau, 2006), whereas other studies have found no differences between inter- and intra-racial couples' relationship quality (Bratter & King, 2008; Fu, Tora, & Kendall, 2001). Perhaps the cause of such mixed results is that the hypotheses of past research have been overly simplistic (Bratter & King, 2008) because they examine differences in relationship quality between interracial and intraracial relationships without taking into consideration the differences in *understanding* of race for each partner involved in an interracial relationship.

A study by Leslie and Letiecq (2004) is the only research known to have examined the links between differences in each partners' understanding of race and interracial relationship outcomes. Leslie and Letiecq examined marital quality and social support in African American-White interracial relationships. The most intriguing aspects of their study were the results regarding marital quality. Marital quality was measured by the amount of love felt in the relationship, the amount of ambivalence expressed toward the relationship, and the effort one was willing to put in to maintaining the relationship. Leslie and Letiecq (2004) found that,

within African American-White interracial relationships, African American partners, and to a lesser extent White partners, who scored high on a more resolved racial identity status reported having more positive evaluations of marital quality. Specifically, African American partners who scored high on Internalization, that is who had a more positive Black identity and who were more racially tolerant, were more likely to express love and belonging in their relationships, less likely to experience ambivalence about the relationship, and more likely to engage in behaviors that would tend to maintain the relationship. Conversely, African American partners who were high on the Immersion-Emersion subscale and thus idealized Black culture and degraded White culture, were less likely to express love and belonging in their relationships (although the results did not attain conventional levels of significance) and more likely to experience ambivalence toward their relationships. Participants who scored high on Pre-Encounter, that is, who idealized White culture and degraded Blacks and Black culture, were more likely to experience ambivalence about their relationships. On the other hand, White partners who were high on the Reintegration subscale and thus viewed White culture as superior to Black culture, were less likely to express love and belonging toward their African American partners.

The present study sought to expand on the findings of Leslie and Letiecq (2004). Whereas Leslie and Letiecq examined main effects for each partners' racial identity on each partner's perception of marital quality, the present study focused on the main effects and interaction effects of each partner's racial color-blind attitudes on only the *African American partners'* perspective on two relationship outcomes: relationship satisfaction and perceived support. Specifically, the present study examined the main effects for each partner's color-blind racial attitudes and the interaction between African American and White partners' color-blind racial attitudes in predicting relationship satisfaction and perceived support from the

African American partners' perspective. Color-blind racism was selected as an important

predictor of interracial relationship outcomes because of the theoretical importance of

understanding of the partner's *racial place* (i.e., a lack of color-blindness) in models of

interracial relationships.

      Relationship satisfaction. Relationship satisfaction is the first outcome of interest for

the current study. Interdependence and equity theories of social exchange have commonly

been used to conceptualize relationship satisfaction (Davidson, Balswick, & Halverson, 1983;

Drigotas, Safstrom, & Gentilia, 1999; Kelley & Thibaut, 1978; Walster, Walster, & Berscheid,

1978). Interdependence theory holds that an individual's commitment to or dependence on a

relationship will increase if the outcomes favor the current relationship over an alternative,

potential relationship (Kelley & Thibaut, 1978). Equity theory states that an imbalance of

outcomes causes dissatisfaction and distress within a relationship (Walster, Walster, &

Berscheid, 1978). However, neither theory addresses the significance of race in relationship

satisfaction in interracial couples. Foeman and Nance's (1999) model of *racial place* is the

only known model to propose race as a factor in relationship satisfaction for interracial

relationships. However, no empirical research has tested this theory. In the current study

color-blind racial ideology was used to conceptualize an individual's level of understanding of

his or her own *racial place*, as well as level of understanding of his or her partner's *racial

place*. Specifically, high levels of racial color-blindness would be an indication of low

awareness of *racial place* and low levels of racial color-blindness would be an indication of

high awareness of *racial place*. An individual with higher racial color-blindness denies the

existence of racism and believes the world is fair and just (Neville, Lilly, Duran, Lee, &

Browne, 2000). An individual with such a perspective on the world likely has a lower

understanding of the racial issues he or she faces in society or racial issues members of other

racial groups face in society. Thus, he or she has little understanding of *racial place*. On the other hand, an individual with lower racial color-blindness will have a better understanding of *racial place* because he or she is aware of the way his or her racial group and members of other racial groups are treated in society.   In the present study each partners' racial color-blindness, as well as the interaction between each partners' level of racial color-blindness, were examined as predictors of the African American partners' relationship satisfaction.

The study by Leslie and Letiecq (2004) serves as an important basis for the current study because of the links found between racial identity and relationship outcomes. Although racial identity status is not synonymous to color-blind racial attitudes, there are conceptual links between the two constructs. In the present study I proposed that color-blind racism would be related to the African American partner's relationship satisfaction in a way that parallels the findings of the study by Leslie and Letiecq. Leslie and Letiecq found that less resolved racial identity status in either partner was associated with lower marital quality. I argue that less resolved racial identity status would be associated with a lower level of understanding of *racial place* and that a lower level of understanding of *racial place* would be associated with higher levels of racial color-blindness. Thus, it was hypothesized that higher levels of White partner racial color-blindness would be associated with lower relationship satisfaction in the African American partner.

Considering the results of the study by Leslie and Letiecq (2004), it was more difficult to make predictions regarding links between African American partner color-blind racial attitudes and African American partner relationship satisfaction. Leslie and Letiecq found that African American partners' scores on Pre-Encounter (the least resolved racial identity status) were linked to greater ambivalence about their interracial relationships. One would expect that African American people high on Pre-Encounter would be high in color-blind racism because

of their internalization of a White worldview; thus, I hypothesized that African American partners with high levels of color-blind racial attitudes would tend to have poor interracial relationship outcomes. However, the Immersion-Emersion stage of Black identity development may be associated with lower levels of racial color-blindness because individuals high in Immersion-Emersion would likely be highly aware of racism. At the same time, Immersion-Emersion may also be linked to less positive relationship outcomes in an interracial romantic relationship with a White person. Thus, the Immersion-Emersion status was expected to be inversely related to color-blind racism because people who score high on Immersion-Emersion tend to identify with Black culture and look upon White culture negatively. Individuals scoring high on Immersion-Emersion would likely be aware of the racial inequalities in society, understand that the world is not fair and just, and would likely also not look very favorably on a relationship with a White person. In contrast, those scoring high on a more resolved racial identity status (i.e., Internalization) would also tend to have low levels of color-blind racism, but feel more positively about being in a relationship with a White person if desired. Being high on Internalization is associated with having a more positive Black identity and being more racially tolerant, despite having a greater awareness of racial injustice; thus, high levels of this more resolved racial identity status would be expected to be linked to having an awareness of the existence of racism in society and lower beliefs in a just world (i.e., low color-blind racism), as well as more positive attitudes about interracial relationships.

In sum, although it was hypothesized that higher levels of White partner color-blind racial attitudes would be linked to lowered perceptions of relationship outcomes by the African American partner, it was difficult to predict whether African American partner color-blind racism will be linked to African American partner relationship satisfaction. People who are low in racial color-blindness may vary in their attitudes towards people who are majority group

members; thus, opposing effects could cancel one another out and result in no association being found between African American partner racial color-blindness and African American partner relationship satisfaction. For this reason, no specific hypotheses were advanced in the present study regarding direct links between African American partner racial color-blindness and African American partner relationship outcomes.

African American partner color-blindness, however, was hypothesized to play an important moderating role in the hypothesized link between White partner color-blind racism and African American partner relationship satisfaction. It was expected that African American partner color-blind racism would affect how the African American person interpreted the White partner's actions and attitudes. Thus, the current study examined main effects for each partner's racial color-blindness, in addition to the interaction between African American racial color-blindness and White racial color-blindness, as a predictor of African American partners' relationship satisfaction.

Specific hypotheses were proposed for the main effect of White partner color-blind racial attitudes and the interaction of African American and White partners' color-blind racial attitudes on relationship satisfaction. No specific hypotheses were proposed regarding links between African American partner color-blind racial attitudes on relationship satisfaction. Instead, a research question regarding potential associations between African American partner color-blind racial attitudes and African American partner perceptions of relationship satisfaction were advanced.

Perceived support. Attachment (Bowlby, 1969/1982, 1973, 1980) is a well examined theory that has been used to increase understanding of support seeking in couples (Collins & Feeney, 2000; Crowell, Treboux, Gao, Fyffe, Pan, & Waters, 2002; Davila & Kashy, 2009; Feeney & Thrush, 2010). An attachment relationship is a bond between an individual and a

caregiver (Bowlby, 1969/1982, 1973, 1980). An attachment relationship consists of four components: proximity maintenance, separation distress, safe haven, and secure base. Proximity maintenance describes an individual's need to be close to his or her caregiver during times of distress (Bowlby, 1973). In the absence of a caregiver an individual is said to experience separation distress (Bowlby, 1973). A caregiver who is perceived to be a safe haven is said to serve as a source of comfort, support, and reassurance during times of distress (Bowlby, 1973). Caregivers who serve as a safe haven are also thought to provide a secure base or a secure place from which an individual can explore the environment (Bowlby, 1973; Trinke & Bartholomew, 1997). The present study focuses on the safe haven and secure base components of attachment theory. Safe haven and secure base are important because during adolescence individuals transfer secure base and safe haven functions from peers or parents to romantic partners and begin forming pair bonds (Doherty & Feeney, 2004; Fraley & Davis, 1997; Hazan & Zeifman, 1999; Mikulincer & Shaver, 2007; Trinke & Bartholomew, 1997). The nature of the pair-bond is different from earlier attachment bonds because it is more reciprocal (Weiss, 1982). In adult relationships, absence of a safe haven and secure base, for one or both partners, sets the stage for dysfunctional relations (Bowlby, 1979) and eventual separation and divorce (Feeney & Monin, 2008).

The secure base and safe haven components of attachment have been tested in empirical research by examining the degree to which one partner perceives the other partner as a source of support and encouragement (Collins & Feeney, 2000; Crowell, Treboux, Gao, Fyffe, Pan, & Waters, 2002; Davila & Kashy, 2009; Feeney & Thrush, 2010). However, such studies focus on individual differences in attachment as predictors of support seeking and do not use representative samples of interracial couples.

No research has focused on perceptions of partner as a source of support in interracial relationships. The present study investigated the relationship between racial color-blindness and perceptions of a partner as a source of support. Previous research has found that strain is experienced by relationships in which African American partners must identify and address incidents of discrimination for their White partners (Foeman & Nance, 2002; Killian, 2001). In addition, research has found that some partners in interracial relationships avoid sharing their thoughts and feelings regarding racial issues because they fear they will offend their partners or undermine the trust in their relationships (Rosenblatt, Karis, & Powell, 1995). I would argue that African American partners in interracial relationships who feel that they cannot discuss racial issues within their romantic relationships would tend to experience their White group partners as less of a source of support than would African American partners in interracial relationships who feel that they can discuss racial issues with their partners.

I proposed that White partners' color-blind racism would be inversely related to African American partners' perceptions of their White partner as a source of support. As previously stated, high color-blind racism is conceptualized in terms of having a low awareness of *racial place* and low color-blind racism is conceptualized in terms of having a high understanding of *racial place*. Thus, it was expected that White partners high in color-blind racism would have difficulty providing their African American partners with support because they have little understanding of their African American partners' (or their own) *racial place*. Consequently, the African American partner would find it difficult to turn to his or her White partner in times of need and have a low perception of his or her White partner as a source of support. Conversely, a White partner low in color-blind racism was expected to have awareness of the African American partner's *racial place* and thus be able to provide his or her African

American partner with support as needed. Subsequently, the African American partner is likely to have a high perception of the White partner as a source of support.

It was difficult to predict whether African American partner color-blind racism would be linked to African American partner support seeking. As described above, depending on racial identity development status, some African American partners with lower color-blind racial attitudes would likely be aware of the racial inequalities in society, understand that the world is not fair and just, and would likely also not look very favorably on a relationship with a White person (e.g., those high on Immersion-Emersion status). Nevertheless, depending on racial identity status, some African American individuals may tend to have low levels of color-blind racism yet feel more positively about being in a relationship with a White person, if desired (e.g., Internalization status). Thus, it was difficult to predict whether African American partner color-blind racism would be linked to African American partner perception of support. In the current study I proposed that African American partners who are low in racial color-blindness may vary in their attitudes towards White people; thus, opposing effects could cancel one another out and result in no association found between African American partner color-blind racism and African American partner perception of support.

African American partner color-blind racism was hypothesized to play an important *moderating* role in the hypothesized link between White partner color-blind racism and African American partner perceived support. It was expected that African American partner color-blind racism would affect how the African American person interprets the White partner's actions and attitudes. Thus, the current study examined each partner's racial color-blindness, as well as the interaction between each partners' level of racial color-blindness as predictors of the African American partner's perception of the White partner as a source of support. Specific hypotheses were only proposed for the main effect of White partner color-blind racial attitudes

and the interaction of African American and White partners' color-blind racial attitudes on perceptions of support seeking. No specific hypotheses were made regarding links between African American partner color-blind racial attitudes on support seeking. Instead, a research question about potential associations between African American partner color-blind racial attitudes and African American partner perceptions of support seeking was advanced.

Racial attitudes. A secondary goal of this study was to examine the link between racial identity attitudes and color-blind racial attitudes. With the exception of Gushue and Constantine (2007), no known study has examined the relationship between color-blind racial attitudes and racial identity attitudes. Yet, as mentioned above, a number of links could be expected between the two constructs.

Gushue and Constantine (2007) used the Color-Blind Racial Attitudes Scale (CoBRAS; Neville, Lilly, Duran, Lee, & Browne, 2000) and the White Racial Identity Attitudes Scale (WRIAS; Helms & Carter, 1990) to examine the relations between racial color-blind beliefs and White racial identity in a sample of 177 White counseling and clinical psychology trainees. A significant relation was found between *unawareness of White privilege* and the Immersion-Emersion status. Those lower on the Immersion-Emersion subscale, which describes Whites searching for an understanding of the personal meaning of racism and the ways by which one benefits from White privilege, were also higher on *unawareness of White privilege*.

In addition, Gushue and Constantine (2007) found that higher levels of denial of institutional awareness, as measured by the second subscale of the CoBRAS, were significantly predictive of higher levels of Disintegration, which measures confliction over irresolvable racial moral dilemmas often perceived as polar opposites. Reintegration, or idealization of one's own racial group and intolerance of other minority groups, was also found to be linked to higher levels of *unawareness of institutional discrimination*. Conversely, lower scores on

Immersion-Emersion were linked to higher levels of *unawareness of institutional discrimination*.

Gushue and Costantine (2007) also found that higher endorsement of the third subscale of the CoBRAS, *unawareness of blatant racism*, was linked to higher levels of both Disintegration and Reintegration. On the other hand, lower scores on more resolved White racial identity statuses were also predictive of higher *unawareness of blatant racism*. Specifically, lower Pseudo-Independence (the stage in which Whites attempt to interact with minorities and try to intellectually and conceptually understand racial, cultural, and sexual orientation differences), lower Immersion-Emersion and lower Autonomy (an increase in awareness of one's own Whiteness, reduced feelings of guilt, acceptance of one's own role in perpetuating racism, and a renewed determination to abandon White entitlement) were all related to higher *unawareness of blatant racism*.

One particularly interesting result of the Gushue and Constantine (2007) study were the associations found between the Contact status and color-blind racial attitudes. Contact describes White individuals oblivious to racism, lacking an understanding of racism, and having had minimal experiences with Black people. Gushue and Constantine found that higher levels of *unawareness of White racial privilege*, *unawareness of institutional discrimination,* and *unawareness of blatant racism* were predictive of lower levels of Contact. Based on the pattern of results presented, one might expect that the less resolved racial identity status would be positively related to higher levels of color-blind racial attitudes. Gushue and Constantine did not provide an explanation for the findings, however, this study speculated that trainees may be knowledgeable of the ideas of White privilege, institutional discrimination, and blatant racism, yet not be very advanced in their own racial identity development. Thus, he or she may report higher levels of color-blind racial attitudes and lower levels of Contact.

The current study sought to expand on the findings of Gushue and Constantine (2007). The participant sample used by Gushue and Constantine was all White, primarily women, and limited to trainees in psychology. In contrast, the current study included both women and men of African American and White race. Furthermore, racial attitudes were assessed within the context of African American – White interracial relationships. On the basis of Gushue and Constantine's findings, a hypothesized series of post hoc analyses were conducted to examine whether color-blind racial attitudes would be negatively linked to more integrated racial identity status and positively linked to less advanced racial identity status, with the exception of the White racial identity Contact status. The Contact status was hypothesized to be negatively related to color-blind racial attitudes.

In conclusion, it is imperative to expand on research concerning interracial relationships given the rapid increase of such unions since 1967. Current research results conflict on whether or not differences in race impact relationship outcomes (Bratter & Eschbach, 2006; Fu, Tora & Kendall, 2001; Troy, Lewis-Smith, and Laurenceau, 2006). Furthermore, research has focused on perceptions of partner support in long-term, healthy relationships in general (Collins & Feeney, 2000; Pasch, Bradbury & Davila, 1997), however, no known studies have focused on perceptions of partner support in interracial relationships. For this reason, additional research is necessary to provide a greater understanding of factors that influence interracial relationship outcomes. Based on the above literature review, the following hypotheses were offered:

1. There would be an inverse relationship between White partner color-blind racism and African American partner relationship satisfaction.

2. There would be a significant African American partner racial color-blindness X White partner racial color-blindness interaction effect in predicting African American partner relationship satisfaction.

3. There would be an inverse relationship between White partner color-blind racism and African American partner perceived support.

4. There would be a significant African American partner racial color-blindness X White partner racial color-blindness interaction effect in predicting the African American partners' perception of the White partner as a source of support.

A series of planned post hoc analyses were conducted to examine hypotheses regarding the links between color-blind racial attitudes and racial identity development. These hypotheses include:

1. There would be a significant inverse relation between color-blind racial attitudes and more integrated Black and White racial identity statuses.

2. There would be a significant positive association between color-blind racial attitudes and less advanced Black and White racial identity statuses.

3. There would be a significant negative association between color-blind racial attitudes and the White racial identity Contact status.

Two research questions were also examined: (a) Is African American partner racial color-blindness associated with African American partner relationship satisfaction? And (b) Is African American partner racial color-blindness associated with African American partner perception of the White partner as a source of support? The proposed research questions were important because it was difficult to make specific hypotheses about a relation between African American color-blind racism and either African American relationship satisfaction or African

American perceived support. Finally, the current study ruled out mediation as a potential

alternative explanation.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

The present study examined main effects of each partner's color-blind racial attitudes and explored the interaction between African American and White partners' color-blind racial attitudes in predicting two relationship outcomes from the African American partner's perspective in African American-White interracial dating couples: relationship satisfaction and perceived support. As a secondary goal, links between color-blind racial attitudes and racial identity attitudes were examined.

Chapter two presents a theoretical review of interracial relationship formation and development, followed by theory and empirical findings on racial identity and racial color-blindness. Next, theoretical underpinnings of relationship satisfaction are discussed in association with literature on interracial couples. Finally, an empirical review of care-giving and support-seeking is provided using attachment as a theoretical basis.

Interracial Relationship Formation and Development

The racial motivation, structural, and social exchange theories are three theories that have been proposed to explain how interracial relationships form. Racial motivation theory proposes four reasons that racial differences are the cause of interracial couplings (Kouri & Lasswell, 1993). First, partners involved in interracial relationships may choose to be with someone outside of their race because they see them as more physically appealing (Kouri & Lasswell,). Second, becoming involved in an interracial relationship may be a form of social rebellion (Kouri & Lasswell). Third, some may be intrigued by an individual different than him or herself and experience an increase in sexual desire (Grier & Cobbs, 1968). Finally, others may be asserting their independence by becoming involved in an interracial romantic relationship (Kouri & Lasswell). Evidence of the racial motivation theory was found in a study conducted by Porterfield (1978). Porterfield interviewed forty Black-White couples. A small

number of the participants reported that they had a strong interest in persons of another race for reasons such as physical attraction and societal rebellion.

In contrast to racial motivation theory, structural theory proposes that interracial marriages occur in spite of racial differences as opposed to racial differences being the cause of interracial marriages. Structural theory states that interracial marriages occur when community structure allows for it (Kouri & Lasswell, 1993). Specific structural conditions that have contributed to interracial relationships include the following: neighborhood, school, and workplace desegregation have created opportunities for individuals of different races to establish interracial relationships (Farber, 1973); the higher socioeconomic status attainable by African Americans as a result of the civil rights movement has increased the potential mate selection (Heer, 1974); and the increase in interracial couplings has caused society to become less sensitive to the presence of such relationships (Kouri & Laswell). Porterfield (1978) argued that the structural theory explained many of the Black-White interracial unions of participants in his sample because majority of the study's respondents reported marrying because they were able to meet in integrated settings and fall in love.

Finally, social exchange theory examines the costs and benefits to two interacting parties. The theory assumes that individuals interacting with each other are both giving and receiving items of value from each other. The exchange between two parties continues if both parties feel they are gaining more from the interaction than they are losing (Baumester & Vohs, 2004). In the case of Black-White interracial marriages, social exchange theory suggests that White women who marry Black men of higher socioeconomic status than their own, exchange the prestige of their skin color for the economic status of their husband (Davidson, 1992; Kalmijn, 1993; Lewis & Yancey, 1997). The results of studies testing the social exchange theory among Black-White interracial marriages have been contradictory. Specifically,

Schoen, Wooldredge, and Thomas (1989) found evidence that Black men with higher levels of education do marry White women with less education; Gadberry and Dodder (1993) reported that Black-White couples are similar in educational status; and Monahan (1971) found that Black men who marry outside of their social class are likely to marry a White woman from a higher socioeconomic status.

Despite the propositions of theories of interracial relationship formation, empirical research has consistently found that the primary reasons partners involved in interracial relationships get together are a mutual attraction in terms of appearance, personality, beliefs, and interests (Davidson, 1992; Porterfield, 1982; Shibazaki & Brennan, 1998). Foeman and Nance (1999) concluded that an increase in social exposure, social equity, and social acceptability leads to an increase in the likelihood of interracial relationships. According to Foeman and Nance, greater equity rather than disparity contributes to the evolution of interracial couplings.

To conceptualize the evolution of interracial relationships, Foeman and Nance (1999) proposed a four-stage model of interracial relationship development. Stage one, racial awareness, requires both members of the interracial relationship to gain familiarity with their similarities and differences to develop a mutual belief in the feasibility of a relationship. In stage two, coping with the social definitions of race, couples develop proactive and reactive strategies for dealing with situations in which society may question their interracial relationship. Stage three is identity emergence. During this stage couples reframe their experience by drawing strength from their uniqueness and viewing themselves as more modern and multiculturally progressive than others in society. In the final stage, maintenance, couples have established "effective strategies and perspectives" to preserve their union and may continue to evolve and address issues of race when pertinent.

According to Foeman and Nance (1999), stage one is of primary importance in an interracial relationship because it addresses resolving issues of racial awareness. Foeman and Nance speculate that interracial relationships endure as a result of each partner's development of sensitivity to his or her partner's *racial place*: the way that members of a specific racial group are treated in society. Interracial partners must develop an awareness of his or her own sense of *racial place*, his or her sense of the partner's *racial place*, and each racial group's perspective of *racial place*. Theoretically, members of interracial couples learn about each other's *racial place* in society through discussion of daily life. For example, White partners may disclose experiences with racial privilege and African American partners may discuss incidents in which they were discriminated against (Foeman & Nance).

A few studies provide evidence that partners in interracial relationships have varying levels in awareness of and attentiveness to each other's *racial place*. Killian (2001) explored the negotiation of race and gender within interracial relationships. Descriptive data were obtained from a sample of ten Black-White couples. Researchers found that, in comparison to White spouses, Black spouses demonstrated a greater awareness and sensitivity to society's disapproval of their constitution as an interracial couple. Further, with regard to racial issues, the familial and personal histories of Black spouses sometimes went unacknowledged within the interracial relationship. Thus, White partners involved in Black-White interracial relationships tended to (a) be less aware of *racial place* than their spouses and (b) ignore the racial experiences of their Black partners (Killian).

Foeman and Nance (2002) examined the relationship strategies used by African American and White couples to meet challenges to their interracial relationships posed by society. Over 309 individuals and couples involved in interracial relationships were interviewed. The study found that White partners tended to discuss experiences revealing

cultural privilege from a perspective that implies neutral or positive regard by others toward the relationship in public places (Foeman & Nance, 2002). On the other hand, African American respondents reported that they spoke and behaved in more defensive ways when approaching new situations as a result of past experiences with racism.

Foeman and Nance (2002) speculated that since African American partners experience more racism in society as compared to White partners, they are more likely than their White partners to be aware of and sensitive to the part race plays in marriage. The authors held that Black individuals are more likely to understand the consequences of stepping outside the limitations imposed upon them by society, as a function of their race. In contrast, Whites are believed to be more prone than their Black partners to see the world as a fair and safe place. The proposed outcome is White partners who encourage Black partners to relax about race and perceive their Black partners as paranoid. Subsequently, the supposition is that Black partners may assume the burden of race in the relationship as they typically do in society (Foeman & Nance).

Racial Attitudes

Racial identity. It is important to recognize that members of a racial group may vary in their individual understandings of *racial place*. Racial ideologies are helpful in understanding individual differences in *racial place*. Racial ideology is a term used to characterize the set of theories that encompass beliefs and attitudes regarding race (Neville, Coleman, Falconer, & Holmes, 2005). Racial identity is one type of racial ideology that describes the process of how members of racial minority groups respond to and internalize race-related stress and discrimination into their identity (Alvarez & Helms, 2001). For example, Black racial identity theory describes the many ways Blacks do or do not identify with other Blacks (Helms, 1990). Specifically, Nigrescence or racial identity (NRID) perspectives (see Helms, 1990, for a review) explain the developmental process by which an individual becomes Black. From the

NRID perspective, self-actualization is viewed as the highest level of racial identity development, whereas less sophisticated racial identity resolutions represent responses to racial discrimination (Helms, 1990). For example, a profound identification with White culture and being White is considered a less sophisticated identity resolution caused by a need to endure a racist world (Akbar, 1979).

The most widely used model of nigrescence was developed by William E. Cross (1971). Since its development, Cross' model of Black racial identity development has been revised (Cross, 1991) and expanded on (Worrell et al., 2001). Cross' revised model includes four stages: Pre-Encounter, Encounter, Immersion-Emersion, and Internalization. With the exception of Encounter, each stage has identity markers that represent possible expressions of Nigrescence at a particular stage. In the Pre-Encounter stage, a Black individual views the world as non-Black or anti-Black and his or her worldview is based on Euro-American values (Cross, 1971). Individuals in the Pre-Encounter stage typically perceive Whites as superior and are themselves distrusting of other Blacks. The three identity makers that characterize the Pre-Encounter stage are Pre-Encounter Assimilation, Pre-Encounter Miseduction, and Pre-Encounter Self-Hatred (Worrell et al., 2001).

Individuals progress to the Encounter stage as the result of an event or series of events that make him or her question the role of race in American society (Vandiver, 2001). For example, racist encounters can change a Pre-Encounter individual's conception of him- or herself and challenge the person's understanding of self and society. During the Encounter stage a more Afrocentric person emerges and the anti-Black identity is dispelled (Cross, 1971).

The Immersion-Emersion stage is characterized by the Anti-White and Intense Black Involvement identity markers. An individual in the Immersion-Emersion stage is committed to change. The person is immersed into Blackness and being Black becomes his or her focus. He

or she may adopt a new style of clothing, become involved in exclusively Black activities, and assume a strong anti-White stance (Vandiver, 2001).

The final stage, Internalization, is marked by a return to one's familiar personality but with a deeper understanding of, appreciation for, and self-assured acceptance of the complexity of what it means to be Black. Afrocentricity, Biculturalist, Multiculturalist Racial, or Multiculturalist Inclusive identity markers characterize the Internalization stage. During the stage individuals form a new identity that gives high salience to Blackness (Cross, 1991) and shed stereotypical and unjustified pro-race and anti-race attitudes (Vandiver, Fhagen-Smith, Cokley, Cross, & Worrell, 2001).

A number of White racial identity models have also been proposed to conceptualize White people's quality of racial identity awareness (Hardiman, 1982; Helms, 1990, 1995; Rowe, Behrens, & Leach, 1995; Rowe, Bennett, & Atkinson, 1994). Helms' model of White racial identity development (Helms, 1990; 1995) is the most commonly referenced. The theory proposes that a healthy White racial identity emerges when Whites abandon their conscious or unconscious racist attitudes and progress toward more racially aware and nonracist identities. Helms' White racial identity model postulates six ego statuses or stages: Contact, Disintegration, Reintegration, Pseudo-Independence, Immersion-Emersion, and Autonomy. Individuals in the Contact status are oblivious to racism, lack an understanding of racism, and have minimal experiences with Black people (Helms, 1995). White people in the Contact stage do not see racial and cultural differences as important and may not perceive themselves as being part of the dominant group or having biases and prejudices (Helms).

Individuals in the Disintegration stage begin to experience some cognitive dissonance regarding conflicting racial and moral dilemmas (Helms, 1995). For example, one may not acknowledge that racism and oppression exist while witnessing it. Subsequently, individuals in

the Disintegration stage become increasingly aware of their own racial group membership and their ambivalence about being White because they are afforded more privileges than other racial groups. Additionally, individuals in this stage begin to accept the personal implications of being White.

The Reintegration status is characterized by a White person's idealization of their racial group as well as acceptance of the personal implications of being White (Helms, 1995). This status is seen more as a regression, as individuals may selectively acknowledge information that idealizes their own racial group and be intolerant of other minority groups. White individuals may have a firm, conscious belief in White racial superiority and place blame on minorities for their own problems (Helms).

Whites in the Pseudo-Independence status may be described as intellectually acknowledging racism and the ways in which they have perpetuated racism (Helms, 1995). Individuals may enter this status as the result of a painful or insightful encounter or event. Individuals in this status begin to understand and acknowledge how they have contributed to racism in society, however, they may still feel a sense of superiority and intolerance toward other racial groups. Whites in this status may attempt to understand racial and cultural differences as well as make efforts to interact with other racial groups; however, the decision is based on how similar the racial group is to him or her. Furthermore, attempts to understand other racial groups are not experiential or affective (Helms).

Individuals in the Immersion-Emersion status begin to appraise what it means to be White. Whites in this status search for understanding of the personal meaning of racism and the ways by which one benefits from White privilege (Helms, 1995). Individuals in Immersion-Emersion become more willing to confront their own biases, redefine Whiteness, and be more active in fighting racism and oppression. Unlike people in Pseudo-Independence,

people in Immersion-Emersion have more experiential and affective understanding of racial issues (Helms).

The Autonomy status is characterized by an increasing awareness of Whiteness. Individuals develop a positive racial identity through intellectual and emotional appreciation of racial similarities and differences (Helms, 1995). White people in the Autonomy status are knowledgeable about racial, ethnic, and cultural differences. Furthermore, they are no longer fearful, intimidated, or uncomfortable with the realities of racial issues (Helms).

It is my contention that *racial place* is related to racial identity because understanding of *racial place* can be conceptualized as a component of racial ideology. Racial identity is one type of racial ideology that represents a person's attitudes about how his or her racial group should live and interact with society (Chavous, 2000) and is the significance and qualitative meaning an individual attributes to race in their conceptualization of self (Sellers & Shelton, 2003). On the other hand, *racial place* describes the way a specific racial group is treated by others in society based on their race (Foeman and Nance, 1999). I argue that an individual's understanding and awareness of *racial place* is contingent on the significance and meaning he or she attributes to his or her race in how he or she self identifies (i.e., racial identity status). Furthermore, the importance an individual places on race in conceptualizing him or herself is based on his or her understanding of his or her own *racial place*. It is my contention that if an individual does not see his or her race as an important aspect of his or her identity, he or she is less likely to be aware of the significance his or her race plays in his or her interactions with other racial groups in society. Thus, the present study theorized that *racial place* is related to racial identity because racial identity status can be conceptualized as an individual's quality of understanding and quality of awareness of how significant race is to how his or her racial group is treated in society (i.e., *racial place*).

A number of empirical studies have found evidence that African Americans differ in their racial identity (e.g., Sellers, Smith, Shelton, Rowley, & Chavous, 1998; Vandiver, Cross, Worrell, & Fhagen-Smith, 2002), and that Whites differ in their racial identity (e.g., Claney & Parker, 1989; Helms & Carter, 1990). The differences in racial identity status found within each racial group provide evidence that members of a racial group vary in their racial identity status. From these results, it may be presupposed that members of a racial group can also differ in their understanding of their own *racial place* because understanding of *racial place* is related to an individual's racial identity status.

Color-blind racial attitudes. Color-blind racism is another type of racial ideology from which to examine individual differences in understanding *racial place*. Racial color-blindness is defined as a set of beliefs that minimizes, distorts or disregards racial characteristics and the existence of racism (Bonilla-Silva, 2001, 2003; Carr, 1997). Neville, Worthington, and Spanierman (2001) hypothesize that racial color-blindness has different meaning for racial minorities and Whites. Racial minorities who endorse greater beliefs in racial color-blindness are speculated to behave in ways that are harmful to themselves and their racial group as a whole (Neville, Coleman, Falconer & Holmes, 2005). Such individuals could be caught off-guard by racist incidents or be unsupportive of legislation created for the benefit of racial minorities because of their lack of awareness or high ascription to color-blind racial beliefs (Neville, Coleman, Falconer, & Holmes).

Neville, Coleman, Falconer, and Holmes (2005) conducted a study examining the relationship between racial color-blindness and psychological false consciousness. Psychological false consciousness is described as ascription to false beliefs that contradict an individual's social or personal interest and assist in maintaining the stagnation of the individual or individual's group (Neville, Coleman, Falconer, & Holmes). The authors found that among

African Americans higher levels of color-blind racial beliefs were associated with: (a) belief in and justification of a hierarchy of inferior and superior social groups; (b) blaming African Americans for inequalities in economic and social standing; and (c) internalization of Black racial stereotypes. The findings of Neville, Coleman, Falconer, and Holmes provide additional evidence that just as individuals can vary in their racial identity status, individuals can also vary in level of racial color-blindness. These findings can be interpreted in terms of differences in understanding of *racial place*.

Among Whites, a relationship has been found between ignorance or unawareness of inequalities in society and endorsement of color-blind beliefs (Neville, Lilly, Duran, Lee, and Browne, 2000). Specifically, belief in the idea that we live in a just world was related to high ascription to color-blind racial beliefs among White participants (Neville, Lilly, Duran, Lee & Browne). From this, it follows that level of racial color-blindness is associated with a White individual's ability to understand a minority's *racial place*. I argue that a White individual who is not attuned to the disproportionate treatment a racial minority group experiences within society is missing information that contributes to an accurate understanding of that racial minority group's racial perspective.

One known study has linked color-blind racial attitudes to White racial identity. Gushue and Constantine (2007) examined the relationship between racial identity attitudes and color-blind racial attitudes in a sample of 177 White counseling and clinical psychology trainees. The study used the Color-Blind Racial Attitudes Scale (CoBRAS; Neville, Lilly, Duran, Lee, & Browne, 2000) to measure color-blind racial beliefs and the White Racial Identity Attitudes Scale (WRIAS; Helms & Carter, 1990) to measure racial identity status in Whites. Higher scores on the first subscale of the CoBRAS, *unawareness of White racial privilege*, was linked to lower scores on Contact, which describes White individuals oblivious

to racism, lacking an understanding of racism, and having had minimal experiences with Black people. Likewise, those lower on the Immersion-Emersion subscale, and thus searching for an understanding of the personal meaning of racism and the ways by which one benefits from White privilege, were higher on *unawareness of White privilege*.

Higher scores on the second subscale of the CoBRAS, *unawareness of institutional discrimination*, were significantly predictive of higher levels of Disintegration; conflict over irresolvable racial moral dilemmas often perceived as polar opposites. Higher levels of Reintegration or idealization of one's own racial group and intolerance of other minority groups was also found to be linked to higher levels of *unawareness of institutional discrimination*. Unlike the Disintegration and Reintegration attitudes, lower levels of Immersion-Emersion attitudes were linked to higher levels of *unawareness of institutional discrimination*.

Finally, higher levels on the third subscale of the CoBRAS, *unawareness of blatant racism*, were linked to higher levels of both Disintegration and Reintegration attitudes. On the other hand, lower levels of more resolved White racial identity statuses were also predictive of higher *unawareness of blatant racism*. Specifically, lower Pseudo-Independence (the stage in which Whites attempt to interact with minorities and try to intellectually and conceptually understand racial, cultural, and sexual orientation differences is made), Immersion-Emersion, and Autonomy (an increase in awareness of one's own Whiteness, reduced feelings of guilt, acceptance of one's own role in perpetuating racism, and a renewed determination to abandon White entitlement) were all related to higher *unawareness of blatant racism*.

One unexpected finding of Gushue and Constantine (2007) were the associations between the Contact scale and each of the color-blind racial attitudes. Contact characterizes White individuals who have minimal experiences with Black people, are unaware of racism and

have little understanding of racism. In their study, Gushue and Constantine found that higher

levels of *unawareness of White racial privilege*, *unawareness of institutional discrimination,*

and *unawareness of blatant racism* were predictive of lower levels of Contact. However, the

pattern of results reported by Gushue and Constanine may lead one to expect that less resolved

racial identity statuses would be positively related to higher levels of color-blind racial

attitudes. Gushue and Constantine did not provide an explanation for the findings, however,

the present study speculated that, because of their educational background, the psychology

trainees who participated in the study may have an awareness of White privilege, institutional

discrimination, and blatant racism, yet not be very advanced in their own racial identity

development. Subsequently, he or she may report having higher levels of color-blind racial

attitudes and lower levels of Contact.

It was important to expand on the findings of Gushue and Constantine (2007) due to the

reported limitations in the study. The participant sample used by Gushue and Constantine was

all White, focused on trainees in psychology, and predominantly consisted of women. In

contrast, the present study focused on racial attitudes in interracial relationships and included

both women and men of African American race and White race. Given the findings of Gushue

and Constantine, a relationship between color-blind racism and racial identity status was

hypothesized for African Americans and Whites. Planned post hoc analyses were conducted to

examine the hypotheses. It was expected that endorsement of color-blind racial attitudes (i.e.,

attitudes that deny the existence of racism) would be inversely related to more resolved racial

identity statuses. Likewise, it was expected that endorsement of color-blind racial attitudes

would be positively related to less resolved racial identity statuses, excluding the Contact scale.

Contact was expected to be negatively related to color-blind racial attitudes.

Interracial Relationship Satisfaction and Quality

It is important to consider the *racial place* of each partner of an interracial couple in order to better understand interracial relationship outcomes. Theories that have been proposed to understand interracial relationship outcomes do not attend specifically to racial ideologies. Interdependence theory and equity theories of social exchange are examples of theories that do not consider race when conceptualizing relationship satisfaction (Davidson, Balswick, & Halverson, 1983; Drigotas, Safstrom, & Gentilia, 1999; Kelley & Thibaut, 1978; Walster, Walster, & Berscheid, 1978). Interdependence theory proposes that dependence on a relationship is related to the discrepancy between the expectations of rewards and costs of a current relationship and that of alternatives (Kelley & Thibaut, 1978). According to the theory, dependence or commitment to a relationship will increase if the outcomes favor the current relationship over a potential alternative relationship. Additionally, interdependence theory hypothesizes that people tend to remain in relationships that fulfill needs that cannot be satisfied elsewhere (Drigotas & Rusbult, 1992) and will stray from a relationship if they have less to lose and more to gain by leaving (Drigotas, Safstrom, & Gentilia, 1999).

Equity theory suggests that dissatisfaction and distress result from an imbalance of outcomes within a relationship (Walster, Walster, & Berscheid, 1978). The theory holds that individuals who contribute more to a relationship than they benefit or are rewarded more than they contribute will be less committed and satisfied with the relationship (Davidson, Balswick, & Halverson, 1983).

The social exchange theories attribute successful relationship outcomes to a balance between benefits and costs but do not specifically consider race as a potential factor. In contrast, Foeman and Nance (1999) hold that recognizing factors related to race is important to the development of an interracial relationship. Specifically, Foeman and Nance theorized that

successful relationship outcomes for partners involved in interracial relationships are related to a partner's understanding of his or her partner's *racial place*. Furthermore, empirical research implies that consideration of race is important in understanding interracial relationship outcomes (Bratter & King, 2008; Foeman & Nance, 2002; Fu, Tora, & Kendall, 2001; Killian, 2002; Rosenblatt, Karis, & Powell, 1995).

Empirical studies on interracial couples have investigated the relationship between marital quality and racial discrimination (Foeman & Nance, 2002; Killian, 2002; Rosenblatt, Karis, & Powell, 1995). A few studies have reported that strain is placed on Black-White interracial relationships in which Black partners must point out incidents of discrimination for their White partners and take on the role of combating occurrences of discrimination on behalf of the couple (Foeman & Nance, 2002; Killian, 2002). Rosenblatt, Karis, and Powell (1995) found that at times both partners in an interracial relationship are reluctant to share their thoughts and feelings about race for fear of offending their partner or undermining trust within the relationship.

Researchers have also examined the differences in relationship outcomes between interracial and intraracial couples (Bratter & King, 2008; Fu, Tora, & Kendall, 2001; Troy, Lewis-Smith, and Laurenceau, 2006), however the results have been mixed. For example, Bratter and King (2008) conducted a study comparing interracial and same-race couples. A data set from a nationally representative sample of men and women aged 15-44 was used. The authors included respondents who reported being involved in an interracial marriage. The study concluded that interracial couples experience higher rates of divorce as compared to same-race couples (Bratter & King). Similarly, a study of religiously homogeneous couples revealed differences in level of marital happiness between interracial and intraracial couples. In the study, interracial couples, mostly Asian, Caucasian or Pacific Islander in race, reported

lower levels of marital happiness as compared to intraracial couples (Fu, Tora, & Kendall, 2001). In contrast, Troy, Lewis-Smith, and Laurenceau (2006) also conducted two studies comparing the relationship satisfaction of interracial and intraracial couples. The initial study found that interracial couples had significantly higher relationship satisfaction as compared to intraracial couples (Troy, Lewis-Smith, & Laurenceau). A replication of the study revealed no significant differences in the relationship quality of interracial versus intraracial relationships (Troy, Lewis-Smith, & Laurenceau). In sum, findings across studies on interracial relationship outcomes have been inconsistent. Some studies suggest that discussions and situations involving racial discrimination can influence relationship outcomes for interracial couples, yet other studies imply that relationship satisfaction does not differ between couples in interracial and intraracial relationships.

The discrepancy in previous research may be attributed to a lack of attention to the interaction between partners' levels of racial attitudes, such as racial color-blindness, as a contributing factor to relationship outcomes. Theorists have proposed that differences in understanding of race are related to relationship satisfaction (Foeman & Nance, 1999), however Leslie and Letiecq (2004) is the only known study that has tested such a hypothesis. Leslie and Letiecq examined the strength of one's racial identity, perceived social support from friends and family, and perception of discrimination in predicting marital quality in a sample of 76 Black-White interracial couples. Marital quality was determined by the amount of love one felt in the relationship, the amount of ambivalence one expressed toward the relationship, and the effort one was willing to put in to maintaining the relationship. The authors found that African American partners, and to a lesser extent White partners, who scored high on a more resolved racial identity status reported having more positive evaluations of marital quality. Specifically, African American partners who scored high on Internalization, that is, had a more positive

Black identity and were more racially tolerant, were more likely to express love and belonging in the relationship, less likely to experience ambivalence about the relationship, and more likely to engage in behaviors that would maintain the relationship. Conversely, African American partners who were high on the Immersion-Emersion subscale and thus idealized Black culture and degraded White culture, were more likely to experience ambivalence toward their relationships and less likely to express love and belonging in their relationships; although the results did not attain conventional levels of significance. Participants who scored high on Pre-Encounter, that is, idealized White culture and degraded Blacks and Black culture, were more likely to experience ambivalence about their relationships. Significant results for White partners revealed that those who were higher on the Reintegration subscale and thus viewed White culture as superior to Black culture, were less likely to express love and belonging with their African American partners and less likely to work to maintain their marriage. Based on their findings, the authors speculated that the more comfortable an individual is with his or her racial identity, the more happiness he or she reports in his or her marriage.

It is important to expand on the findings of Leslie and Letiecq (2004). The study by Leslie and Letiecq examined only main effects for each partner's racial identity on marital quality in a sample of Black-White interracial married couples. In the present study, main effects for each partner's racial attitudes on relationship outcomes as well as the interaction between African American and White partners' color-blind racial attitudes in predicting relationship outcomes from the African American partners' perspective will be investigated.

The findings of Leslie and Letiecq (2004) are central in formulating the rationale for the hypotheses of the present study because of the links they found between racial identity and relationship outcomes in interracial couples. Racial identity status and color-blind racial attitudes are not synonymous, however, the two are conceptually linked. In the current study I

proposed that color-blind racism would be related to relationship satisfaction in a way that parallels the associations between racial identity status and marital quality found by Leslie and Letiecq.

Leslie and Letiecq (2004) found that Pre-Encounter African American partner racial identity status (i.e., less resolved racial identity status) was linked to greater ambivalence about the relationship. One would expect that people high on Pre-Encounter would also be high in color-blind racism because of their internalization of a White worldview that would tend to result in an unawareness of racism. Additionally, Leslie and Letiecq found that more resolved racial identity status (i.e., Internalization) was associated with more positive reports of marital quality. Consequently, one might expect that people high on Internalization status would also be low in color-blind racism, but feel more positively about being in a relationship with a White person if desired. Thus, the results of the study by Leslie and Letiecq may appear to suggest that higher levels of African American partner color-blind racism should be associated with less positive perceptions of the relationship by the African American partner, whereas lower levels of African American partner color-blind racism should be associated with more positive African American partner perceptions of the relationship. Nevertheless, predictions regarding links between African American partner color-blind racism and African American partner relationship satisfaction are more complicated.

One might be tempted to hypothesize that African American partners' color-blind racism would be inversely related to African American partners' relationship satisfaction. A complicating factor, however, is the middle statuses of racial identity development, such as the Immersion-Emersion stage of Black racial identity development. The Immersion-Emersion stage is defined as an idealization of Black culture while disparaging White culture. Individuals high on Immersion-Emersion may be aware of racism and thus report lower levels

of color-blind racism and experience lower levels of relationship satisfaction in a relationship with a White person because of their heightened awareness of racism, deep identification with Black culture, and disparagement of White culture. Thus, individuals in the Immersion-Emersion stage who are theorized to be low in color-blind racism, yet are also likely to be low in relationship satisfaction, do not fit the model of an inverse association between color-blind racism and relationship satisfaction. People at higher levels of color-blind racism (i.e., high on Pre-Encounter racial identity status) may be more ambivalent about their relationships. Conversely, people lower in color-blind racism (i.e., high on Internalization status) may be low in relationship satisfaction. Thus, the presence of people high on Immersion-Emersion may negate any inverse link between color-blind racism and relationship satisfaction. At the same time, however, it may be less likely for individuals high on Immersion-Emersion to be in an interracial relationship. Thus, it is difficult to predict what the link between African American color-blind racism and relationship satisfaction will be. Therefore, no hypothesis regarding links between African American person color-blind racism and African American person relationship satisfaction were proposed. Instead, a research question was posed: Is there an association between African American partner color-blind racism and African American partner relationship satisfaction?

Although it was not clear whether or not there would be an association between African American partner color-blind racism and African American partner relationship satisfaction, color-blind racism in the African American partner was hypothesized to moderate the link between White partner color-blind racism and African American partner relationship satisfaction. This moderating role was hypothesized because the African American partners' color-blind racism may influence how the African American partner interprets the White partners' behaviors and attitudes. From this, an African American partner racial color-

blindness X White partner racial color-blindness interaction effect was hypothesized in predicting African American relationship satisfaction. I proposed that an African American partner low in color-blind racism with a White partner high in color-blind racism may not feel satisfied in his or her relationship. The African American partners' low color-blind racial attitudes indicates his or her awareness of racial issues in society while his or her White partner who is high in color-blind racism is unable to see the racial inequities in society. Consequently, the African American partner may report low relationship satisfaction. In contrast, if the African American partner is high in color-blind racism and his or her White partner is low in color-blind racism, the African American partner would report high relationship satisfaction because he or she would be ignorant to the relationship between his or her race and how he or she may be treated in society. On the other hand, I argued that if both White and African American partner have the same level of color-blind racism (i.e., both high or both low), the African American partner would not see anything wrong with his or her partners' level of color-blind racism and report high relationship satisfaction.

Attachment Theory, Seeking Support, and Caregiving

According to Pasch and Bradbury (1998), individuals who report being in more satisfying relationships also report receiving more responsive support. Support seeking has been shown to be an important factor in the longevity of relationships in general (Collins & Feeney, 2000; Pasch, Bradbury & Davila, 1997). The experience of support is related to attachment theory. Bowlby's theory of attachment (Bowlby, 1969/1982, 1973, 1980) is a widely used model that has helped to increase understanding of romantic relationships (Hazan & Shaver, 1987; Feeney & Noller, 1990; Kirkpatrick & Davis, 1994; Pistole, 1989; Simpson & Rholes, 1994). An attachment relationship is defined as an affectional bond or tie between an individual and a caregiver (Bowlby, 1969/1982, 1973, 1980). Attachment theory was initially

developed to explain the interaction between infants and caregivers (Bowlby, 1969/1982).

Infants are theorized by Bowlby (1969/1982) to possess an innate attachment behavioral system

that enables them to seek attachment figures in stressful situations to promote survival. The

attachment system is characterized by four dynamics: proximity maintenance, separation

distress, secure base, and safe haven (Ainsworth, Blehar, Waters & Wall, 1978; Bowlby, 1988).

According to Bowlby (1973), proximity maintenance describes the desire or need to seek and

maintain proximity to an attachment figure, especially in times of distress. In the absence of an

attachment figure, individuals experience anxiety or separation distress (Bowlby, 1973). When

an attachment figure is present, individuals show interest in exploring their physical

environment. During exploration, the attachment figure is expected to serve as a secure base or

secure place from which an individual can explore his or her environment (Bowlby, 1973).

Infants typically seek out their attachment figure for comfort and reassurance or a safe haven if

a threat is perceived while exploring (Bowlby, 1973).

Bowlby's theory of attachment was initially validated by Ainsworth, Blehar, Waters,

and Wall (1978) in a naturalistic observation of infant-caregiver interactions. Subsequently,

Ainsworth et al. conceptualized three attachment styles to characterize interactions between

infants and attachment figures: insecure-avoidant, insecure-anxious, and secure. In 1990, Main

and Solomon identified a fourth attachment style, disorganized, to classify unusual behavior

unspecified by the three preexisting attachment styles.

Bowlby (1973; 1980) theorized that attachment is important throughout the lifespan.

Internal working models provide a mechanism through which the attachment system is

maintained into adulthood (Bowlby, 1988; Brennan, Clark, & Shaver, 1998; Hazan & Shaver,

1987*).* Internal working models are described as schema or mental representations of the self

and others developed through the relationship between caregiver and child (Bowlby, 1973).

Variations in an attachment figure's response to a child's desire for proximity and protection produce schema for internal working models (Bowlby, 1973). The quality of an attachment relationship and the nature of one's internal working models are proposed to be based on the caregiver's emotional availability and responsiveness to the child (Bowlby, 1973). Children who experience their caregiver as loving and consistently available develop internal working models of self as lovable and others as reliable and trustworthy (Bowlby, 1973). Children who are consistently rejected when seeking comfort from their caregivers develop internal working models of others as unreliable and self as unworthy of care or self-sufficient and not in need of such care (Bowlby, 1973). Once established during childhood and adolescence, internal working models of attachment are relatively stable throughout adulthood (Bowlby, 1979), unless the quality of caregiving changes (Egeland & Farber, 1984; Thompson, Lamb & Estes, 1982; Vaughn, Egeland, Sroufe & Waters, 1979).

Hazan and Shaver (1987) proposed the use of infant attachment styles as a framework for understanding adult romantic attachment. Adults are believed to relinquish attachment figures established during childhood and begin to focus on forming a pair bond (Ainsworth, 1989; Weiss, 1982). Beginning in adolescence, peers and romantic partners often become an individual's primary attachment figure (Doherty & Feeney, 2004; Fraley & Davis, 1997; Hazan & Zeifman, 1999; Mikulincer & Shaver, 2007; Trinke & Bartholomew, 1997). The developmental trajectory for principal attachment figures has been empirically identified as moving from parent to peers (i.e., best friend or romantic partners; Fraley & Davis, 1997; Hazan & Zeifman, 1994, 1999; Trinke & Bartholomew, 1997). In a study using a diverse sample of adults aged 18 to 82, Zeifman and Hazan (2008) found that individuals involved in relationships for at least two years used their partners as attachment figures. Individuals in relationships shorter than two years or no relationship at all, relied on parents to meet some

attachment needs (Zeifman & Hazan, 2008). For those in relationships of shorter duration, Campa, Hazan, and Wolfe (2008) state that, although partners may not serve as full-blown attachment figures, attachment behaviors may be present.

Security has been seen as important to adaptive romantic relationships (Hazan & Shaver, 1987; Johnson, 2004). Within relationships, the ability to use one's partner as a secure base is a fundamental part in establishing security (Feeney, 2004). Feeney (2007) proposed that some partners likely feel secure in their relationships because they can openly discuss their insecurities and receive support and reassurance in return.

Empirical research on attachment and romantic relationships has tested the centrality of the secure base function by examining the degree to which one partner perceives the other partner as an available and responsive source of support during times of need (Crowell, Treboux, Gao, Fyffe, Pan & Waters, 2002; Davila & Kashy, 2009; Feeney & Thrush, 2010). Not only has research shown that attachment is linked to actual caregiving provided by romantic partners (Feeney & Collins, 2001; Feeney & Hohaus, 2001; Simpson, Rholes, Oriña & Grich, 2002), but also that relationship satisfaction is related to perceptions of the quality of support offered by a partner (Collins & Feeney, 2004; Cutrona & Suhr, 1992; Kane et al., 2007; Rini, Schetter, Hobel, Glynn & Sandman, 2006). Taken together, the research implies that relationships are more satisfying when a romantic partner is perceived as serving as a secure base by providing needed support.

Responsive caregiving and the ability to seek support have been shown to be important to the development of long lasting, healthy relationships in general (Collins & Feeney, 2000; Pasch, Bradbury & Davila, 1997), and so are likely essential for interracial relationships as well. For example, in a general sample of romantic relationship partners, Collins and Feeney (2000) performed a study in which participants were videotaped while one partner, the support

seeker, disclosed a personal issue to his or her partner, the caregiver. The authors concluded that support seekers who rated their relationship as more satisfying had caregivers who demonstrated more responsiveness and less negative support. Similarly, Pasch and Bradbury (1998) concluded that observed social support behavior was positively associated with current marital satisfaction and an increase in marital satisfaction over time. Taken together, empirical findings on support seeking and caregiving indicate that an individual's ability to seek support from his or her partner is important in the development of a long lasting relationship. Furthermore, individuals in relationships with partners who are more responsive tend to view their relationship as more satisfying.

The results of the study by Leslie and Letiecq (2004) serve as a conceptual basis for hypothesized links between color-blind racism and perceived support. I proposed that racial color-blindness would be related to perceived support in a way parallel to the way in which racial identity was related to marital quality in Leslie and Letiecq. As previously stated, if a White partner is high in color-blind racism, then it will be difficult for him or her to understand his or her own and his or her African American partners' *racial place*. Thus, the African American partner with a White partner high in racial color-blindness was expected to have a lower perception of his or her White partner as a source of support than if the White partner is low in racial color-blindness. In this case, it was postulated that the African American partner would find it difficult to go to his or her White partner about issues regarding race due to the White partners' lack of understanding of *racial place*. In contrast, a White partner low in color-blind racism would tend to be viewed by an African American partner as a source of support. In this case a White partner low in color-blind racism would be more aware of how different racial groups are treated in society based on their race and thus have a better understanding of his or her own and his or her African American partners' *racial place*, than

would a White partner high in racial color-blindness. Subsequently, the African American partner would be pleased by his or her White partners' awareness of how race is related to how racial groups are treated in society and thus be more likely to seek the support of his or her White partner.

It was difficult to hypothesize a relationship between African American partner color-blind attitudes and African American partner perceived support. Considering the results of Leslie and Letiecq (2004), I proposed that people that identify with Black culture and look upon White culture negatively, that is, are high on Immersion-Emersion and thus low in color-blind racism, would likely be aware of the racial inequalities in society and understand that the world is not fair and just. Consequently, such African American individuals may tend to be low in perceived support. In contrast, those with more resolved racial identity, that is, those high on Internalization, may also be low in color-blind racism. Despite having a greater awareness of racial injustice, high levels of Internalization are associated with having a positive racial identity and being more racially tolerant. Thus, individuals expected to be low in color-blind racism may also tend to be high on perceived support. Accordingly, no hypothesis regarding links between African American partner color-blind racism and African American partner perceived support were proposed because African American partners scoring low in color-blind racism may tend towards differing levels of perceived support, thus it was possible that there would be no significant effect for African American partner color-blind racism. Instead, a research question was posed: Is there an association between African American partner color-blind racism and African American partner perception of White partner as a source of support?

Although the association between African American partner color-blind racism and African American partner perceived support is not clear, the level of color-blind racism in the

African American partner was hypothesized to play a moderating role in the link between White partner color-blind racism and African American partner perceived support. This moderating role was hypothesized because the African American partner's color-blind racism would likely influence how the African American partner interprets the White partners' attitudes and actions. Thus, an African American partner racial color-blindness X White partner racial color-blindness interaction effect was hypothesized in predicting African American partner perceived support. I hypothesized that an African American partner low in color-blind racism with a White partner high in color-blind racism may feel less comfortable discussing racial issues with his or her White partner because he or she is aware of the racial issues in society while his or her partner is not. The African American partner may be uncomfortable seeking support because his or her White partner views the world as fair and just and does not understand that members of other racial groups are treated differently by society because of their race. Consequently, the African American partner may report low perceived support. In contrast, an African American partner high in color-blind racism, involved with a White partner low in color-blind racism may report high perceived support. In this case, the African American partner would not see his or her White partners' understanding of *racial place* as important because he or she lacks awareness of the significance of race to how individuals are treated in society. On the other hand, if both African American and White partners had the same level of color-blind racism (i.e., both high or both low), then the African American partner would report high perceived support. In this case both partners would have similar understandings in *racial place*. Consequently, the African American partner would feel comfortable seeking the support of his or her White partner in any case.

The Present Study

In this study the main effects for each partner's racial color-blindness and the interaction between African American partner racial color-blindness and White partner racial color-blindness in predicting African American partners' relationship satisfaction and African American partners' perceptions of his or her partner as a source of support were investigated. In addition, a mediational model was tested to rule it out as an alternative explanation for the proposed moderation model. In the meditational model the White partners' level of color-blind racism was hypothesized to influence the African American partners' level of color-blind racism, which in turn would influence the African American partners' level of relationship satisfaction and level of perceived support. As a secondary goal, planned post-hoc analysis was performed to help in the interpretation of results regarding links between color-blind racial attitudes and racial identity attitudes.

Relationship satisfaction was chosen as an important outcome of interest because it is a subjective rating of how happy an individual is within a relationship. The present study sought to clarify the link between racial attitudes and relationship satisfaction in interracial relationships. Specifically, some studies have found that, as compared to intraracial relationships, interracial relationships are influenced by issues regarding race (Bratter & King, 2008; Fu, Tora, & Kendall, 2001), whereas other studies have found that issues regarding race do not account for differences between intraracial and interracial relationships (Stevenson, 1995; Troy, Lewis-Smith, & Laurenceau, 2006). Furthermore, current theories used to conceptualize relationships attribute relationship satisfaction and relationship quality to a balance between rewards and costs (Kelley & Thibaut, 1978) or an imbalance in relationship outcomes (Walster, Walster, & Berscheid, 1978) and do not consider race as a factor in relationship satisfaction. One study has found that more resolved issues of racial identity were

related to more positive evaluations of marital happiness (Leslie & Letiecq, 2004). The Leslie and Letiecq study, however, focused on the main effects of racial identity and marital quality and did not measure interaction effects. The present study examined the relations between each partner's racial color-blindness and African American partner relationship satisfaction as well as the interaction effect of African American partner racial color-blindness X White partner racial color-blindness in predicting African American partner relationship satisfaction.

Perceived support is also a relationship outcome of interest for the present study. Empirical research on support seeking and caregiving has found that the ability to seek support is important in the development of a long lasting, healthy relationship (Collins & Feeney, 2000; Pasch, Bradbury, & Davila, 1997). Furthermore, individuals who report being in more satisfying relationships also report receiving more responsive support (Pasch & Bradbury, 1998). The present study examined links between each partner's racial color-blindness and African American partner perceptions of White partner as a source of support as well as the interaction effect of African American partner racial color-blindness X White partner racial color-blindness in predicting an African American partners' perception of his or her White partner as a source of support.

It was also important to further examine the links between racial color-blind racial attitudes and racial identity. Currently, only one known study has examined the relationship between color-blind racism and racial identity (Gushue & Constantine, 2007). Within a sample of White counseling and clinical psychology trainees, Gushue and Constantine found that lower levels of color-blind racial beliefs were negatively related to more resolved racial identity statuses and higher levels of color-blind racial beliefs were positively related to less resolved racial identity statuses, with the exception of Contact, which was negatively related to color-blind racial beliefs. The present study sought to expand on the current research by replicating

the findings of Gushue and Constantine in a sample of participants with experiences in African

American-White interracial relationships and including a more diverse population with respect

to gender. Specifically, a planned post-hoc analysis was performed to help in the interpretation

of links between color-blind racial attitudes and racial identity status.

Research Hypotheses

Based on the above literature review, the following hypotheses were advanced:

Hypothesis for the main effect of White partner racial color-blindness as a predictor of

African American partner relationship satisfaction. It has been postulated that, within

interracial relationships, a contributor to relationship satisfaction is each partner's

understanding of his or her own and his or her partner's *racial place* (Foeman & Nance, 1999).

Leslie and Letiecq (2004) found that within African American-White interracial relationships,

African American partners, and to a lesser extent White partners, who scored high on a more

resolved racial identity status reported having more positive evaluations of marital quality. The

current study proposed that White partner color-blind racism would be related to African

American partner relationship satisfaction in the same way racial identity was related to marital

quality in the study by Leslie and Letiecq. Specifically, an inverse relationship between White

color-blind racism and African American relationship satisfaction was hypothesized.

Hypothesis for the interaction between African American partner racial color-blindness

and White partner racial color-blindness as a predictor of relationship satisfaction.

Researchers postulate that, within interracial relationships, a contributor to relationship

satisfaction is each partner's understanding of his or her own and his or her partner's *racial*

place (Foeman & Nance, 1999). Studies that have examined the significance of racial

differences for interracial relationship outcomes have had mixed results (Bratter & Eschbach,

2006; Fu, Tora, & Kendall, 2001; Troy, Lewis-Smith, & Laurenceau, 2006). The current study

proposed that the findings of previous studies may be mixed because the interaction between an African American partner's level of racial color-blindness and a White partner's level of racial color-blindness have not been examined together as predictors of relationship satisfaction. For example, an African American partner low in racial color-blindness in a relationship with a White partner high in racial color-blindness may report low relationship satisfaction. As such, a significant African American partner racial color-blindness X White partner racial color-blindness interaction effect was hypothesized to predict relationship satisfaction, such that higher levels of African American partner racial color-blindness and higher levels of White partner racial color-blindness would be linked to higher levels of African American partner relationship satisfaction; lower levels of African American partner racial color-blindness and higher levels of White partner racial color-blindness would be linked to lower levels of African American partner relationship satisfaction; lower levels of African American partner racial color-blindness and lower levels of White partner racial color-blindness would be linked to higher levels of African American partner relationship satisfaction; and higher levels of African American partner racial color-blindness and lower levels of White partner racial color-blindness would be linked to higher levels of African American partner relationship satisfaction.

Hypothesis for the main effect of White partner racial color-blindness as a predictor of African American partner perception of the White partner as a source of support. Perceptions of partner support and the ability to seek out support have been shown to be essential to the longevity and health of a relationship in general (e.g., Collins & Feeney, 2000; Pasch, Bradbury & Davila, 1997; Rini et al., 2006). Thus, it is important that African American group members involved in interracial relationships perceive their White partners as a source of support. Studies have shown that interracial relationships in which African American partners must

identify and address incidents of discrimination for their White partner experience strain (Foeman & Nance, 2002; Killian, 2002). Additionally, some partners in interracial relationships are reluctant to share their thoughts and feelings related to racial issues because they are worried they will offend their partners or undermine the trust in the relationship (Rosenblatt, Karis, & Powell, 1995). White partners who are high in racial color-blindness are likely to find it difficult to provide appropriate support to their African American partners regarding issues of race. Therefore, an inverse relationship between White color-blind racism and African American perceived support was hypothesized.

Hypothesis for the interaction between African American partner racial color-blindness and White partner racial color-blindness as a predictor of the African American partner's perception of the White partner as a source of support. It is important that African American group members involved in interracial relationships perceive their partners as a source of support because the ability to seek support has been shown to be essential to the longevity and health of a relationship in general (e.g., Collins & Feeney, 2000; Pasch, Bradbury & Davila, 1997; Rini et al., 2006). Research has shown that strain is experienced by relationships in which African American partners must identify and address incidents of discrimination for their White partners (Foeman & Nance, 2002; Killian, 2002). Furthermore, some partners in interracial relationships avoid sharing their thoughts and feelings regarding racial issues because they fear they will offend their partners or undermine the trust in their relationships (Rosenblatt, Karis, & Powell, 1995). Based on the aforementioned findings, the current study proposed that the interaction between an African American partner's level of racial color-blindness and a White partner's level of racial color-blindness may impact an African American partner's perception of his or her White partner as a source of support. For example, an African American partner low in racial color-blindness in a relationship with a White partner

high in racial color-blindness may not perceive his or partner as a source of support. As such, a significant African American partner racial color-blindness X White partner racial color-blindness interaction effect was hypothesized in predicting the African American partners' perception of the White partner as a source of support, such that higher levels of African American partner racial color-blindness and higher levels of White partner racial color-blindness would be linked to higher levels of African American partners' perception of the White partner as a source of support; lower levels of African American partner racial color-blindness and higher levels of White partner racial color-blindness would be linked to lower levels of African American partner perception of the White partner as a source of support; lower levels of African American partner racial color-blindness and lower levels of White partner racial color-blindness would be linked to higher levels of African American partner perception of the White partner as a source of support; and higher levels of African American partner racial color-blindness and lower levels of White partner racial color-blindness would be linked to higher levels of African American partner perception of White partner as a source of support.

Hypotheses for the relationships between racial identity status and color-blind racial attitudes. Gushue and Constantine (2007) found that, within a sample of White counseling and clinical psychology trainees, more integrated White racial identity status were negatively related to lower levels of color-blind racial attitudes. Likewise, less resolved forms of White racial identity status were positively related to higher levels of color-blind racial attitudes, with the exception of the Contact status, which was negatively related to color-blind racial attitudes. The present study expanded on the findings of Gushue and Constantine by examining the relationship between racial identity status and color-blind racial attitudes within a sample of African American and White participants who reported involvement in African American-

White interracial relationships. A series of planned post hoc analyses were conducted to examine the relationship between racial identity status and color-blind racial attitudes. First, it was expected that endorsement of color-blind racial attitudes (i.e., attitudes that deny the existence of racism) would be negatively associated with more resolved racial identity statuses. Second, less resolved racial identity statuses were expected to be positively associated with color-blind racial attitudes, with the exception of the Contact status, which was hypothesized to be negatively related to color-blind racial attitudes.

Research Questions

Based on the above literature review, the following two research questions were posed:

Research question concerning the relation between African American partner racial color-blindness and African American partner relationship satisfaction. Foeman and Nance (1999) proposed that relationship satisfaction for interracial relationships is partially contingent on each partner's understanding of his or her own, as well as of his or her partner's *racial place*. Leslie and Letiecq (2004) found that within African American-White interracial relationships, African American partners, and to a lesser extent White partners, who scored high on a more resolved racial identity status reported having more positive evaluations of marital quality. The current study proposed that color-blind racism would be related to African American partner relationship satisfaction in a way parallel to the way racial identity is related to marital quality. However, as previously stated, it is difficult to predict whether African American partner color-blind racism would be linked to African American partner relationship satisfaction. African American partners scoring low in color-blind racism may differ in their attitudes toward White people because they may report either higher levels of Internalization status or higher levels of Immersion-Emersion status and thus tend towards differing levels of relationship satisfaction. Consequently, opposing effects could negate one another and result in

no significant effect for African American person color-blind racism. Nonetheless, African American partners who are high on Immersion-Emersion may tend to avoid interracial relationships. Consequently, people in the sample low in color-blind racism may tend to have positive attitudes about their relationships. Thus it was difficult to hypothesize links between African American person color-blind racism and African American person relationship satisfaction. As a result, the present study examined the following research question: Is there an association between African American partner color-blind racism and African American partner relationship satisfaction?

Research question concerning the relation between African American partner racial color-blindness and African American partner perception of the White partner as a source of support. It has been proposed that, within interracial relationships, each partner's understanding of his or her own and his or her partner's *racial place* are contributors to relationship satisfaction (Foeman & Nance, 1999). Leslie and Letiecq (2004) found that within African American-White interracial relationships, African American partners, and to a lesser extent White partners, who scored high on a more resolved racial identity status reported having more positive evaluations of marital quality. The current study proposed that color-blind racism would be related to perceived support in a way parallel to the way in which racial identity was related to marital quality. However, African American persons scoring low in color-blind racism may tend towards differing levels in their attitudes toward White individuals (because they may fall primarily into either the more resolved racial identity status of Internalization or into the less resolved racial identity status of Immersion-Emersion) and thus vary in their perceived support by the White person. Thus, it is possible that there would be no significant effect for African American person color-blind racism. Yet, African American partners who are high on Immersion-Emersion may tend to avoid interracial relationships; if

this is the case, people low in color-blind racism in the sample may tend to have positive attitudes about their relationships. Consequently, it was difficult to hypothesize links between African American person color-blind racism and African American person perceptions of support. As a result, the current study examined the following research question: Is there an association between African American partner color-blind racism and African American partner perceptions of support?

Tests of Mediation

A meditational model was tested to rule it out as an alternate explanation for the proposed moderation model. In the mediational model it was proposed that the White partners' level of color-blind racism would influence the African American partners' level of color-blind racism, which in turn would influence the African American partners' level of relationship satisfaction and level of perceived support.

Chapter 3: Methods

Participants

A total of 158 individuals completed the study, including 62 couples in which both partners in the dyad completed the study (124 participants; 23 African American women-White men couples and 39 African American men-White women couples), as well as an additional 34 individuals whose partners did not complete the study (9 African American men, 7 African American women, 5 White men and 13 White women). In the total sample, 30.4% were African American men, 19% were African American women, 17.7% were White men and 32.9% were White women. Dyad participants ranged in age from 18 to 57 years old ($M = 32.1$, $SD = 8.6$). The average length of time dyad participants reported being in their interracial relationship was 5.08 years ($SD = 6.92$). Among the dyad participants, 39.5% reported that they were dating, 44.1.1% reported being in a committed relationship, and 16.1% reported being married. Participants were also asked which region of the United States he or she resided in. Among the dyad participants, 34.7% resided in the West (AZ, CO, ID, NM, MT, UT, NV, WY, AK, CA, HI, OR and WA), 8.9% in the Midwest (IN, IL, MI, OH, WI, IA, KS, MN, MO, NE, ND, and SD), 33.1% in the South (DE, DC, FL, GA, MD, NC, SC, VA, WV, AL, KT, MS, TN, AR, LA, OK, and TX), and 23.4% reported residence in the Northeast (CT, ME, MA, NH, RI, VT, NY NY, and PA). Demographic information for the full sample is presented in Table 1.

Procedure

A power analysis was conducted to determine the minimum sample size required to obtain sufficient power to detect effects in the present study. The expected effect size was

Table 1

Demographic Characteristics of the Sample (*N* = 158)

Demographic Variable	Frequency	Percent
Participants		
African American Men	48	30.4%
African American Women	30	19%
White Men	28	17.7%
White Women	52	32.9%
Relationship Status		
Single	3	1.9%
Dating	61	38.6%
Committed	70	44.3%
Married	24	15.2%
Age in years		
18-24	26	16.5%
25-34	87	55%
35-44	36	22.8%
45-54	3	1.9%
55-64	6	3.8%
Relationship Duration		
0-5 years	117	74.1%
6-10 years	21	13.2%
11-20 years	14	8.9%
21-30 years	2	1.3%
31-40 years	4	2.5%
Cohabitation		
Live together	76	48.1%
Live separately	82	51.9%
Region		
West	51	32.3%
Midwest	18	11.4%
South	47	29.7%
North	42	26.6%

determined based on previous research. Effect sizes for studies measuring variables similar to those in the current study have typically been moderate (e.g., Gushue, 2004). Therefore, in the present study a moderate effect size ($f^2 = .15$) was assumed. An a priori power analysis (Faul, Erdfelder, Lang & Buchner, 2007) indicated that in order to examine a medium effect size, with power $= .80$ and $\alpha = .05$, a sample size of 91 dyads ($N = 182$) was needed.

Participants were recruited if they were aged 18 years and older; identified as African American (i.e., Non-Hispanic) or White (i.e., Non-Hispanic); and had a previous or current involvement in a heterosexual, African American-White interracial relationship. Participants were recruited through chain sampling, flyers, and social media to obtain the necessary sample size. The current study was open for recruitment for a period of seven months. During the seven-month period, there was a decline in participant enrollment over the course of three months. In an effort to increase participant numbers, the researcher sent emails to encourage prospective participants to complete the study, reposted flyers on social networking sites (i.e., Facebook and online community forums), and reposted flyers in businesses and the community (e.g., fitness centers and laundry mats). These additional recruitment efforts were not successful, thus, after consultation with the dissertation committee members, data collection was discontinued.

Individuals participated in the study online using PsychData, which is a web-based company that hosts social science research. Recruitment materials included a website address for participation in the study. On the PsychData website participants were instructed to electronically sign an informed consent form before beginning the study (see Appendix C). Once the participant provided an electronic signature, the study website prompted the participant to enter his or her own email address and his or her partner's. Each partner was instructed to enter the first name and last initial of his or her partner to assist in matching

couples for data analysis. African American and White participants completed the Color-Blind

Racial Attitudes Scale. African American participants were directed to complete the Revised

Dyadic Adjustment Scale, Support subscale from the Quality of Relationships Inventory, and

Cross Racial Identity Scale. White participants were directed to complete the White Racial

Identity Attitudes Scale. At the end of each measure, participants submitted their responses

electronically by clicking on a continue button. Data obtained from participants that did not

meet complete inclusion criteria were excluded from the analysis. After taking each

questionnaire, participants were given the option to invite their partner and other individuals

they knew to be involved in African American-White interracial relationships, to take part in

the study. Participants were able to refer additional participants by providing the email address

of their contacts and sending a recruitment invitation directly from the study website or copying

the study link and sending it through their own means. The average time to complete the study

was approximately 15 minutes. After completing the questionnaires, participants were invited

to enter a raffle for a chance to win one of four $25 Visa gift cards for their participation in the

study.

Measures

  Demographic questionnaire (see Appendix D). The demographic questionnaire asked

participants about their sex, age, race, history of interracial relationship involvement,

relationship status, relationship type, relationship duration, living situation, and region of

residence in the United States.

  Color-blind racial attitudes. The *Color-Blind Racial Attitudes Scale* (CoBRAS;

Neville, Lilly, Duran, Lee & Browne, 2000; see Appendix E) was developed to measure an

individual's lack of awareness or extent to which an individual may deny racism and its effect

on people's lives. The scale is a 20-item self-report measure consisting of three subscales. The

first subscale includes 7 items and assesses *unawareness of White racial privilege*. An example

of an item assessing White racial privilege is, "White people in the U.S. have certain

advantages because of the color of their skin." The second subscale has 7 items and measures

unawareness of institutional discrimination. An example of an item assessing institutional

discrimination is, "Social policies, such as affirmative action, discriminate unfairly against

White people." The third subscale assesses *unawareness of blatant racial issues* and has 6

items. An example of an item assessing blatant racial issues is, "Talking about racial issues

causes unnecessary tension." Items are assessed on a Likert-type scale ranging from 1

(*strongly agree)* to 6 (*strongly disagree*). Scores on ten items (2, 4, 5, 6, 8, 11, 12, 15, 17 & 20)

are reversed. Item scores are summed to obtain subscale scores and a total score. Total scores

can range from 20 to 120. A higher score indicates a higher level of unawareness and denial of

the effects of racism. Scores on the *unawareness of White racial privilege* and *unawareness of*

institutional discrimination subscale range from 7 to 42. Scores on the *unawareness of blatant*

racial issues subscale range from 6 to 36. In the present study, results were discussed in terms

of both the total score and individual subscale scores.

      Construct validity of the CoBRAS was established by Neville, Lilly, Duran, Lee &

Browne (2000) using additional measures of racial and social attitudes. All subscales of the

CoBRAS were negatively related to the Global Belief in a Just World Scale (Lipkus, 1991) and

sociopolitical dimensions of the Multidimensional Belief in a Just World Scale (Furnham &

Procter, 1989). Weak correlations were found between factors of the CoBRAS and a measure

of social desirability (Marlowe-Crowne Social Desirability Scale; Reynolds, 1982). Subscale

scores and total scores of the CoBRAS were positively correlated with a measure of racial and

gender intolerance (Quick Discrimination Index; Ponterotto et al., 1995) and a measure of

racial prejudice (Modern Racism Scale; McConahay, 1986). The alpha coefficients for the

three subscales and total score range between .81 (Awad et al., 2005) to .91 (Neville, Lilly,

Duran, Lee, & Browne, 2000).

The mean scores for *unawareness of White racial privilege*, *unawareness of*

institutional discrimination, *unawareness of blatant racial issues*, and total color-blind attitudes

were $M = 19.42$ ($SD = 4.32$), $M = 20.21$ ($SD = 3.67$), $M = 19.99$ ($SD = 4.50$), and $M = 59.63$

($SD = 9.80$), respectively, for African Americans in the current study. In extant research on

samples of undergraduate students and community members aged 18 to 88 (Neville, Coleman,

Falconer & Holmes, 2000; Neville, Lilly, Duran, Lee & Browne, 2005), mean scores for

African Americans range from $M = 19.63$ to $M = 28.97$ ($SD = 3.35$) for *unawareness of White*

racial privilege; $M = 15.97$ to $M = 18.56$ ($SD = 1.30$) for *unawareness of institutional*

discrimination; $M = 11.09$ to $M = 20.65$ ($SD = 4.78$) for *unawareness of blatant racial issues*;

and $M = 49.28$ to $M = 65.52$ ($SD = 8.12$) for total color-blind racial attitudes. For White

participants in the current study, subscale means were $M = 24.08$ ($SD = 4.17$), $M = 24.45$ ($SD =$

3.49), and $M = 24.13$ ($SD = 4.38$) for *unawareness of White racial privilege*, *unawareness of*

institutional discrimination, *unawareness of blatant racial issues*, and total color-blind

attitudes, respectively. Previous studies using the CoBRAS (Neville, Coleman, Falconer &

Holmes; Neville, Lilly, Duran, Lee & Browne) reported mean scores for White participants

ranging between $M = 25.36$ to $M = 29.11$ ($SD = 1.58$) for *unawareness of White racial*

privilege, $M = 21.18$ to $M = 26.65$ ($SD = 3.26$) for *unawareness of institutional discrimination*,

$M = 13.46$ to $M = 18.20$ ($SD = 2.11$) for *unawareness of blatant racial issues*, and $M = 62.06$ to

$M = 66.46$ ($SD = 2.77$) for total color-blind racial attitudes.

Black racial identity status. The *Cross Racial Identity Scale* (CRIS; Vandiver et al.,

2000; see Appendix F) is a 40-item instrument developed to measure six Nigrescence attitudes

proposed in the expanded Nigrescence model. The six subscales measured are Pre-Encounter

Assimilation, Pre-Encounter Miseducation, Pre-encounter Self-Hatred, Immersion-Emersion Anti-White, Internalization Black Nationalist, and Internalization Multiculturalist Inclusive; Worrell, Vandiver & Cross, 2004). High scores on the Pre-Encounter Assimilation subscale characterize Blacks for whom race has low salience and who have a positive reference group orientation toward being American (Vandiver, Cross, Worrell, & Fhagen-Smith, 2002). An example of a Pre-Encounter Assimilation subscale item is, "I think of myself primarily as an American and seldom as a member of a racial group." High scores on the second subscale, Pre-Encounter Miseducation, describe negative stereotypical views an individual may have about the Black community. An example of a Pre-Encounter Miseducation subscale item is, "Blacks place more emphasis on having a good time than on hard work." High scores on the Pre-Encounter Self-Hatred subscale characterize Blacks who view themselves negatively as a result of their race (Vandiver, Cross, Worrell, & Fhagen-Smith). An example of a Pre-Encounter Self-Hatred subscale item is, "I go through periods where I am down on myself because I am Black." High scores on the Immersion-Emersion Anti-White subscale describe Blacks who demonize Whites and reject White culture. An example of an Immersion-Emersion Anti-White subscale item is, "I hate the White community and all that it represents." High scores on the Internalization Black Nationalist subscale reflect the belief that Afrocentric values and principles are useful in solving African American problems. An example of an Internalization Black Nationalist subscale item is, "I see and think about things from an Afrocentric perspective." Finally, high scores on the Internalization Multiculturalist Inclusive subscale describe Black self-acceptance and the acceptance of other cultural groups (Vandiver, Cross, Worrell, & Fhagen-Smith). An example of an Internalization Multiculturalist Inclusive subscale item is, "I embrace my own Black identity, but I also respect and celebrate the cultural

identities of other groups (e.g., Native Americans, Whites, Latinos, Jews, Asian Americans, gays and lesbians, etc.)." Ten of the 40 items are fillers used to control for response bias.

Each of the six CRIS subscales is measured by five items randomly distributed among the 10 filler items. The items are rated on a 7-point Likert rating scale ranging from 1 (*strongly disagree)* to 7 *(strongly agree).* In the current study, subscale scores were calculated by summing the scores for the five items in each subscale to obtain scores ranging from 5 to 35. Lower scores on a subscale indicate lower levels on the racial attitudes represented by that subscale. Cronbach's alphas for the six subscales of the CRIS were .83 for Pre-Encounter Assimilation, .77 for Pre-Encounter Miseducation, .70 for Pre-Encounter Self-Hatred, .83 for Immersion-Emersion Anti-White, .85 for Internalization Black Nationalist, and .77 for Internalization Multiculturalist Inclusive (Worrell et al., 2004). The reliability estimates for the remaining five subscales ranged from .69 to .89 (Worrell et al.).

Vandiver et al. (2002) reported that the convergent validity of the CRIS was supported by high correlations of the five subscales of CRIS with the seven subscales of the Multidimensional Inventory of Black Identity in theoretically-expected directions (MIBI; Sellers, Smith, Shelton, Rowley, & Chavous, 1998). Specifically, the Pre-Encounter Assimilation scores were positively correlated with the Humanist scores (.33) and negatively correlated with Centrality and Nationalist scores (-.40 and -.31 respectively) on the MIBI. Also, Immersion-Emersion Anti-White and Internalization Black Nationalist scores had positive correlations with the Nationalist scores (.54 and .59 respectively), and Internalization Multiculturalist Inclusive had positive correlations with Humanist and Oppressed Minority subscales (.32 and .30 respectively) on the MIBI. Only the Pre-Encounter Miseducation scale did not show sufficient convergent validity with the MIBI.

Vandiver et al. (2002) also provided support for the discriminant validity of the CRIS by finding low relationships between most CRIS subscales and the Big Five Inventory (BFI; John, Donhue, & Kentle, 1991), the Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale (RSES; Rosenberg, 1965), and the Balanced Inventory for Desirable Responding (BIDR; Paulhus, 1984, 1991) subscales. None of the CRIS subscales had high correlations with subscales of the BIDR, except for the Internalization Multiculturalist Inclusive's significant correlation with the impression management scale of the BIDR and the Pre-Encounter Self Hatred's significant correlation with self-deceptive enhancement scale of the BIDR. Also, none of the correlations between the CRIS and the BFI subscales were significant, except for a positive correlation between Pre-Encounter Self-Hatred and the Neuroticism scale on the BFI (.17). In addition, among all the CRIS's subscales, only Pre-Encounter Self-Hatred had a significant negative correlation with the RSES (-.34).

The mean scores for the current study were $M = 6.02$ ($SD = 2.27$) for Pre-Encounter Assimilation; $M = 6.49$ ($SD = 1.90$) for Pre-Encounter Miseducation; $M = 6.39$ ($SD = 1.07$) for Pre-Encounter Self-Hatred; $M = 5.82$ ($SD = 2.17$) for Immersion-Emersion Anti-White; $M = 5.80$ ($SD = 2.17$) for Internalization Black Nationalist; and $M = 8.16$ ($SD = .79$) for Internalization Multiculturalist Inclusive, which were within the range of means for previous research measuring CRIS subscales among African American undergraduate students aged 17 to 59 (Cokley, 2002; Cokley & Helm, 2007; Jones, Cross & DeFour, 2007). The aforementioned studies reported means ranging from $M = 3.18$ to $M = 17.01$ ($SD = 6.44$) for Pre-Encounter Assimilation, $M = 3.71$ to $M = 18.12$ ($SD = 7.21$) for Pre-Encounter Miseducation; $M = 1.88$ to $M = 8.35$ ($SD = 2.80$) for Pre-Encounter Self-Hatred; $M = 2.00$ to $M = 8.56$ ($SD = 3.10$) for Immersion-Emersion Anti-White; $M = 3.74$ to $M = 17.75$ ($SD = 6.66$)

for Internalization Black Nationalist; and $M = 5.02$ to $M = 24.88$ ($SD = 9.31$) for Internalization Multiculturalist Inclusive.

   White racial identity status. The *White Racial Identity Attitude Scale (WRIAS;* Helms & Carter, 1990; see Appendix G) is a 50-item self-report measure designed to assess self-conceptions of White individuals with respect to membership in their own racial group in contrast to how they react to people of other racial groups. The WRIAS has five White racial identity subscales that measure five White racial identity schemas: Contact, Disintegration, Reintegration, Pseudo-Independence, and Autonomy. Each schema refers to different strategies for interpreting and responding to one's own understandings of race. The Contact subscale measures Whites' lack of awareness of their own racial group membership and the minimization of racial issues. An example of a Contact subscale item is, "I hardly think about what race I am." The second subscale, Disintegration, refers to confusion and self-disorientation with respect to one's own Whiteness as well as ambivalent awareness of the implications of race for members of other racial groups. An example of a Disintegration subscale item is, "I do not understand what Blacks want from Whites." The Reintegration subscale assesses Whites' idealization of their racial group along with acceptance of the personal implications of being White. An example of a Reintegration subscale item is, "A Black person who tries to get close to you is usually after something." The Pseudo-Independence subscale measures Whites' intellectual acknowledgement of racism and the ways in which they have perpetuated racism. An example of a Pseudo-Independence subscale item is, "It is possible for Blacks and Whites to have meaningful social relationships with each other." Finally, the Autonomy subscale assesses Whites' internalization of a positive racial identity through intellectual and emotional appreciation of racial similarities and differences. An example of an Autonomy subscale item is, "I am comfortable wherever I am." Helms

(1990, 1996) later proposed a sixth schema, Immersion-Emersion, that was not included in the original WRIAS and is not included in the present study to reduce participant burden.

Items on the WRIAS are assessed on a 5-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (*strongly disagree)* to 5 (*strongly agree*). Scores on each subscale are determined by summing the items. Subscale score ranges are from 10 to 50. Statuses that receive the highest scores are referred to as dominant statuses and used most frequently for interpreting racial stimuli in one's internal and external environment. Statuses that receive the lowest scores are referred to as recessive statuses and are infrequently used for interpreting racial stimuli.

Reliability and validity data for the WRIAS has been presented in several studies. Carter (1984) found internal consistency reliabilities to be in the .90s for all subscales of the WRIAS. In three separate studies, Helms and Carter (1990) reported internal consistency reliabilities of .55 to .67 for Contact, .75 to .77 for Disintegration, .75 to .82 for Reintegration, .65 to .77 for Pseudo-Independence, and .67 to .74 for Autonomy subscale using Cronbach's Alpha. Results from a factor analysis performed by the authors showed that the WRIAS assesses the multidimensionality of White racial identity development. In addition, correlations between the subscales and psychological constructs such as anxiety, symbolic racism, and experiences in counseling were found to be consistent with Helms' (1984) theory.

Even though Helms' model of White racial identity development and the scale constructed by Helms and Carter (1990) to measure the identity profiles has been used in many studies, many questions have been raised regarding the validity of the model and scale. According to Rowe, Bennett, and Atkinson (1994), Helms' model of White racial identity development parallels her model of people of color racial identity development, however, White racial identity develops very differently than the racial identity of people of color. Additionally, Rowe, Bennett, and Atkinson argued that Helms' model appears to be concerned

with attitudes toward other groups and not attitudes about being White. In fact, the Contact

scale has demonstrated low reliability in many studies, yielding coefficient alphas between .18

and .33 (Alexander, 1993; Davidson, 1992; Sodowsky, Seaberry, Gorji, Lai, & Baliga, 1991).

Tokar and Swanson (1991) suggested that the factor structure of the WRIAS does not support

the constructs suggested by Helms (1984). Bennett, Behrens, and Rowe (1993) and Behrens

(1997) found similar findings in a confirmatory factor analysis. Specifically, in his meta-

analysis of studies on White racial identity, Behrens (1997) found that the measures of

Disintegration and Reintegration are actually the same scale. He also claims that Pseudo-

Independence and Autonomy are the same scale. Helms (1997) responded to these claims by

pointing out many weaknesses in Behrens' (1997) meta-analysis, including researcher bias and

the use of different sample sizes across studies. Despite criticism, the WRIAS remains the

most commonly used formulation of White racial identity development.

In the current study the means for the WRIAS subscales Contact, Disintegration,

Reintegration, Pseudo-Independence, and Autonomy were $M = 30.54$ ($SD = 11.48$), $M = 32.73$

($SD = 9.49$), $M = 31.83$ ($SD = 5.37$), $M = 28.75$ ($SD = 10.96$), and $M = 28.41$ ($SD = 11.20$),

respectively, which are similar to the range of mean subscale scores for extant research

measuring WRIAS among White undergraduate students ages 17 to 46 (Carter, 1990;

Constantine, 2002; Swanson, Tokar & Davis, 1994). Mean scores for the aforementioned

studies were $M = 30.21$ to $M = 33.00$ ($SD = 1.20$) for Contact; $M = 19.45$ to $M = 25.61$ ($SD = 2.77$) for Disintegration; $M = 19.32$ to $M = 25.56$ ($SD = 2.73$) for Reintegration; $M = 37.24$ to

$M = 37.79$ ($SD = .22$) for Pseudo-Independence; and $M = 35.2$ to $M = 35.06$ ($SD = 1.73$) for

Autonomy.

Relationship satisfaction. *The Revised Dyadic Adjustment Scale* (RDAS; Busby,

Crane, Larson, & Christiansen, 1995; see Appendix H) is an updated version of the Dyadic

Adjustment Scale developed by Spanier (1976). The RDAS is a self-report questionnaire intended to measure adjustment in relationships. Participants respond to 14 items using a five- or six-point Likert scale. The RDAS consists of three subscales: Consensus, Satisfaction, and Cohesion. The dyadic consensus subscale measures the degree to which couples agree on matters of importance to their relationship. An example of consensus scale item is, "Demonstrations of affection." The next subscale, dyadic satisfaction, measures the degree to which the couple is satisfied with the relationship. An example of an item on the dyadic satisfaction subscale is, "How often do you and your partner quarrel?" Finally, the dyadic cohesion subscale measures the degree of closeness and shared activities experienced by the couple. An example of an item found on the dyadic cohesion subscale is, "Do you and your mate engage in outside interests together?" Total scores on the RDAS range from 0 to 60. In the current study relationship satisfaction was assessed using a participant's total score. A total score of 48 is the cutoff score between distressed and non-distressed populations (Busby, Crane, Larson, & Christensen, 1995; Crane, Middleton, & Bean, 2000), with lower scores indicating greater distress.

The authors of the RDAS reported a Cronbach's Alpha for the total score to be .90. Cronbach's Alpha reliability coefficients for the dyadic consensus, dyadic satisfaction, and dyadic cohesion subscales were reported to be .91, .81, .85, and .80, respectively (Busby, Christensen, & Crane, 1995). Additionally, support for the validity of the RDAS was provided by findings of a correlation of .97 between the RDAS total score with the original Dyadic Adjustment Scale and .66 with the Marital Adjustment Test (Spanier, 1976; Busby et al., 1995), another measure of marital satisfaction.

Perceptions of the partner as a source of social support. Perceptions of the partner as a source of social support will be measured using the perceived social support subscale from

the *Quality of Relationships Inventory* (QRI; Pierce, Sarason, & Sarason, 1991; see Appendix I). The QRI consists of 29 items and three subscales (Support, Conflict, and Depth) designed to assess expectations about the availability of support, the extent to which a relationship is a source of conflict, and the extent to which a relationship is perceived as being positive, important, and secure. The Support subscale assesses perceptions of social support related to specific relationships (Pierce, Sarason, & Sarason). The subscale is composed of 7 items assessed on a Likert-type scale ranging from 1 to 4, in which 1 is *Not at all*, 2 is *A little*, 3 is *Quite a bit*, and 4 is *Very much*. An example of an item is, "To what extent can you turn to this person for advice about problems?" The total score for the Support subscale is obtained by summing each of the seven items, then dividing the total by seven (i.e., the number of items in the scale). The total score on the Support subscale ranges from 1 to 7.

Psychometric properties for the QRI were established using a sample of 94 male and 116 female undergraduate students (Pierce, Sarason, & Sarason, 1991). No additional demographic information was provided by the authors. Pierce, Sarason, and Sarason instructed participants to complete the QRI for each of the following relationships: mother, father, and up to four other important relationships, however, only results related to the mother, father, and friend relationship categories were selected by the investigators to be reported in the study. The authors found internal reliability coefficients for the QRI Support subscale for mother, father, and friend to be .83, .88, and .85, respectively. In a factor analysis, the seven items on the subscale loaded strongly on support with minimal overlap with items on the Conflict and Depth subscales. The QRI Support scale was also negatively correlated with scores on the UCLA Loneliness Scale, providing additional evidence of validity.

Psychometric properties for the current use of the Support subscale were established in a study conducted by Kane et al. (2007). The demographic characteristics of the study's

sample provide justification for its use with the current sample. Two samples of primarily dating couples were used to make a combined sample of 305 heterosexual couples. Within the population, female participants ranged in age from 16-39 and male participants ranged in age from 17 to 40. Within the sample of 103 couples, 67% were Caucasian, 13% were Asian/Pacific Islander, 9% were Latino/Hispanic, and 4.5% were African American. Racial and ethnic data were not provided for participants in the second sample. Reliability coefficients for the sample were .85 and .83 for males and females, respectively (Kane et al.). Furthermore, attachment and relationship satisfaction were related to perceived support in theoretically expected ways. For example, individuals with a secure attachment style perceived their partners as more caring and supportive, and individuals were more satisfied with their relationships when they felt more supported by their partners (Kane et al.).

Chapter 4: Results

Analysis of Data

As previously stated, the sample size needed (i.e., $N = 91$) to detect the medium effect size typical for studies measuring variables of this type was not obtained; therefore, the data analysis plan was re-considered. After consulting with the dissertation committee, it was determined that no changes would be made and data analysis would be carried-out as planned with the 62 dyads obtained.

Preliminary analyses. In order to ensure the appropriateness of the data for analysis, the author examined missing values, normality, and homoscedasticity in the full data set (i.e., including dyadic and non-dyadic data). A frequency table examining data for the total study sample ($N = 158$) identified no missing values in any participant's data. As previously stated, no partner data was provided for thirty-four participants (i.e., 9 African American men, 7 African American women, 5 White men, and 13 White women) as a result of his or her partner not participating in the study, as such, complete data for thirty-four participants was also absent. A visual inspection of box plots for the independent and dependent variables revealed no univariate outliers. Skewness and kurtosis for each variable were examined and there were no values greater than the absolute value of one (see Table 2 for descriptive statistics for key study variables in the sample of dyads), suggesting reasonably normal distributions. The presence of multivariate outliers in the dyadic-only data set was examined by calculating Mahalanobis distances. No probability values less than or equal to .001 emerged, indicating no multivariate outliers (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2001). Homoscedasticity was checked through visual examination of the scatter plot of the standardized residuals by the regression standardized predicted values. Random scatter of residuals did not produce a relatively even distribution around the horizontal line, so a log10 transformation was applied to the data to

reduce heteroscedasticity. This transformation was not effective, however, so the data were used unchanged in the analyses. Consequently, the assumption of homoscedasticity was not met so results should be interpreted with caution. All variables were standardized prior to running analyses in the present study.

Table 2
Dyad Descriptive Statistics (*n* = 62)

Variables	Mean	*SD*	Skew	Kurtosis
African American Partner Relationship Satisfaction	47.35	6.27	.235	-.811
African American Partner Perceived Support	3.59	.472	.045	-.845
African American Partner Color-Blind Racial Attitudes Total Score	60.83	9.84	-.035	-.542
White Partner Color-Blind Racial Attitudes Total Score	72.88	9.03	-.388	-.174

Correlation analyses, *t*-tests and a series of ANOVAs were performed to explore the associations between study demographic variables and African American relationship outcomes as well as color-blind racial attitudes and racial identity status for the full sample of both African American and White study participants. First, a correlation analysis was performed to examine intercorrelations between relationship outcomes (i.e., relationship satisfaction and perceived support) and age as well as relationship duration among African American participants from the full sample (*n* = 78; see Table 3). In the full sample, age was positively correlated with relationship satisfaction, with a small-to-medium effect size (according to Cohen (1988) benchmarks for small [.10], medium [.30], and large [.50] effect sizes), indicating that older African American participants had higher levels of relationship satisfaction than younger African American participants. Likewise, age and relationship duration were positively correlated, with medium effect size, indicating that as age increases so does relationship longevity. A positive relation was also found between perceived support and

relationship satisfaction, with medium effect size, suggesting that African American

participants who have higher reports of their White partner as a source of support also report

higher levels of relationship satisfaction. No significant correlations were found between

relationship duration and relationship satisfaction among African American participants from

the full sample. Furthermore, perceived support was not significantly correlated with either age

or relationship duration.

Table 3
Intercorrelations Between African American Participant Relationship Outcomes, Age, and
Relationship Duration (n = 78)

Variables	Relationship Satisfaction	Perceived Support	Relationship Duration
Relationship Satisfaction	——		
Perceived Support	.453**	——	
Relationship Duration	.035	.180	——
Age	.293**	.099	.424**

Note. ** indicates significant at the .01 level

An independent samples *t*-test was conducted for the full sample of African American

participants (n = 78) to examine whether there were significant differences in means between

African American men and women on either relationship satisfaction or perceived support.

Results of the *t*-test are presented in Table 4. According to the analysis, no statistically

significant differences were found between African American men and women in relation to

their relationship satisfaction. Likewise, no significant difference between men and women

was found in relation to perceived support.

A series of ANOVAs were conducted to examine the differences in means on

relationship outcomes for African American participants across relationship status categories

(i.e., single, dating, committed relationship, and married; see Table 5), cohabitation (i.e.,

together or separately); see Table 6), and region (see Table 7). Among African American

participants from the full sample ($n = 78$), no statistically significant differences in means were

found for relationship satisfaction across relationship statuses. Likewise, no statistically

significant differences in means emerged for perceived support based on relationship status.

Table 4
*Means and Standard Deviations for African American Partner Relationship Outcomes
According to Gender*

Variables	Men ($n = 48$)		Women ($n = 30$)		*t*- test
	M	*SD*	*M*	*SD*	
Relationship Satisfaction	48.35	5.90	45.92	6.17	1.63
Perceived Support	3.61	.42	3.56	.56	-1.74

Note. All *p* values > .05

Table 5
*ANOVA of African American Participant Relationship Outcomes and Relationship status
($n = 78$)*

Source	*df*	*SS*	*MS*	*F*(*p*)	η^2
Dependent Variable: Relationship Satisfaction					.029
Between	3	1.49	.493	.75 (.527)	
Within	74	48.70	.658		
Dependent Variable: Perceived Support					.012
Between	3	.738	.246	.29 (.832)	
Within	74	62.73	.848		

Table 6
ANOVA of African American Participant Relationship Outcomes and Cohabitation ($n = 78$)

Source	*df*	*SS*	*MS*	*F*(*p*)	η^2
Dependent Variable: Relationship Satisfaction					.077
Between	3	3.88	1.29	2.07 (.112)	
Within	74	46.30	.626		
Dependent Variable: Perceived Support					.033
Between	3	2.10	.701	.85 (.474)	
Within	74	61.37	.829		

Table 7
ANOVA of African American Participant Relationship Outcomes and Region (n = 78)

Source	df	SS	MS	F(p)	η²
Dependent Variable: Relationship Satisfaction					.013
Between	3	.68	.23	.34 (.798)	
Within	74	49.50	.67		
Dependent Variable: Perceived Support					.043
Between	3	2.74	.913	1.11 (.350)	
Within	74	60.73	.821		

A correlation analysis was performed to examine links between demographic variables (i.e., age and relationship duration) and color-blind racial attitudes for both African American (see Table 8) and White participants (see Table 9). Among the full sample of African American participants (*n* = 78), age was correlated with *unawareness of institutional discrimination*, with a large effect size (according to Cohen (1988) benchmarks for small [.10], medium [.30], and large [.50] effect sizes) and total color-blind racial attitudes, with a medium effect size. Thus, older African American participants had higher levels of *unawareness of institutional discrimination* and total color-blind racial attitudes than did younger African American participants. No significant correlations were found between age and *unawareness of White racial privilege* or *unawareness of blatant racial issues*. Furthermore, relationship duration was not significantly correlated with color-blind racial attitudes among African American participants. For the full sample of White participants (*n* = 80), a significant positive correlation was found between age and *unawareness of institutional discrimination*. Thus, older White participants had lower awareness of institutional discrimination than did younger White participants, with a small effect size. In contrast, age was not significantly correlated with *unawareness of White racial privilege*, *unawareness of blatant racial issues,* or total color-blind racial attitudes. Similarly, no significant correlations were found between

relationship duration and *unawareness of White racial privilege, unawareness of blatant racial issues*; or total color-blind racial attitude score among White participants as shown in Table 9.

Table 8
Intercorrelations Between African American Participant Color-Blind Racial Attitudes, Age, and Relationship Duration (n = 78)

Variables	Age	Relationship Duration
Unawareness of White Racial Privilege	.180	-.089
Unawareness of Institutional Discrimination	.431**	.186
Unawareness of Blatant Racial Issues	.130	.041
Total Color-blind Racial Attitudes	.290**	.038

Note. ** indicates significant at the .01 level.

Table 9
Intercorrelations Between White Participant Color-Blind Racial Attitudes, Age, and Relationship Duration (n = 80)

Variables	Age	Relationship Duration
Unawareness of White Racial Privilege	.023	-.086
Unawareness of Institutional Discrimination	.238*	.137
Unawareness of Blatant Racial Issues	-.012	-.019
Total Color-blind Racial Attitudes	.102	.004

Note. * indicates significant at the .05 level.

To examine gender differences in relation to color-blind racial attitudes, an independent samples *t*-test was conducted. Results of the *t*-test for the full sample of African American participants (*n* = 78) are presented in Table 10. Among African American participants a statistically significant difference in means between men and women was found for *unawareness of White racial privilege*, *unawareness of institutional discrimination*, *unawareness of blatant racial issues,* and total color-blind racial attitudes across gender. Overall, African American women reported significantly higher levels of total color-blind

racial attitudes than African American men. In contrast, among the full sample of White

participants ($n = 80$), no statistically significant sex differences in color-blind racial attitudes

emerged (see Table 11).

Table 10
Means and Standard Deviations for African American Participant Color-Blind Racial Attitudes According to Gender

Variables	Men ($n = 48$)		Women ($n = 30$)		t- test
	M	SD	M	SD	
Unawareness of White Racial Privilege	17.27	2.87	23.11	3.88	-3.94**
Unawareness of Institutional Discrimination	18.79	3.02	22.64	3.41	-1.16*
Unawareness of Blatant Racial Issues	17.56	1.99	24.14	4.59	-3.56**
Color-blind Racial Attitudes Total Score	53.56	6.11	69.89	5.33	-4.39*

* p value < .05, *** p* value < .001

Table 11
Means and Standard Deviations for White Participant Color- Blind Racial Attitudes According to Gender

Variables	Men ($n = 48$)		Women ($n = 30$)		t- test
	M	SD	M	SD	
Unawareness of White Racial Privilege	23.75	4.09	24.25	4.24	.19
Unawareness of Institutional Discrimination	23.96	3.63	24.71	3.42	-.32
Unawareness of Blatant Racial Issues	22.71	4.39	24.88	4.23	.176
Color-blind Racial Attitudes Total Score	70.46	8.01	73.85	9.23	.05

Note. All *p* values > .05

A series of ANOVAs was conducted to examine the differences in means across region, relationship status, and cohabitation on color-blind racial attitudes for both African American and White participants. For the full sample of African American participants ($n = 78$), no significant differences in means were found for relationship status (see Table 12), cohabitation (see Table 13), and region (see Table 14) across color-blind racial attitudes. Likewise, for the full sample of White participants ($n = 80$) no significant difference in means were found for relationship status (see Table 15), cohabitation (see Table 16), and region (see Table 17) across color-blind racial attitudes.

Table 12
ANOVA of African American Participant Color-Blind Racial Attitudes by Relationship Status ($n = 78$)

Source	df	SS	MS	$F(p)$	η^2
Dependent Variable: *Unawareness of White Racial Privilege*					.014
Between	3	1.28	.43	.36 (.783)	
Within	74	88.47	1.20		
Dependent Variable: *Unawareness of Institutional Discrimination*					.027
Between	3	2.03	.68	.68 (.570)	
Within	74	74.27	1.00		
Dependent Variable: *Unawareness of Blatant Racial Issues*					.030
Between	3	2.60	.87	.75 (.526)	
Within	74	85.45	1.16		
Dependent Variable: Total Color-Blind Racial Attitudes					.028
Between	3	2.34	.78	.70 (.554)	
Within	74	82.16	1.11		

Table 13

ANOVA of African American Participant Color-Blind Racial Attitudes by Cohabitation (n = 78)

Source	df	SS	MS	F(p)	η²
Dependent Variable: *Unawareness of White Racial Privilege*					.033
Between	3	3.00	1.00	.36 (.783)	
Within	74	86.76	1.17		
Dependent Variable: *Unawareness of Institutional Discrimination*					.061
Between	3	4.70	1.56	.68 (.570)	
Within	74	71.61	.97		
Dependent Variable: *Unawareness of Blatant Racial Issues*					.003
Between	3	.26	.09	.75 (.526)	
Within	74	87.79	1.19		
Dependent Variable: Total Color-Blind Racial Attitudes					.022
Between	3	1.90	.63	.70 (.554)	
Within	74	82.60	1.12		

Table 14

ANOVA of African American Participant Color-Blind Racial Attitudes by Region (n = 80)

Source	df	SS	MS	F(p)	η²
Dependent Variable: *Unawareness of White Racial Privilege*					.007
Between	3	.60	.20	.17 (.920)	
Within	74	89.15	1.21		
Dependent Variable: *Unawareness of Institutional Discrimination*					.018
Between	3	1.41	.47	.46 (.709)	
Within	74	74.90	1.01		
Dependent Variable: *Unawareness of Blatant Racial Issues*					.062
Between	3	5.48	1.83	1.64 (.188)	
Within	74	82.57	1.12		
Dependent Variable: Total Color-Blind Racial Attitudes					.015
Between	3	1.25	.42	.37 (.775)	
Within	74	83.25	1.13		

Table 15
ANOVA of White Participant Color-Blind Racial Attitudes by Relationship Status (*n* = 80)

Source	*df*	*SS*	*MS*	*F*(*p*)	η²
Dependent Variable: *Unawareness of White Racial Privilege*					.000
Between	1	.01	.01	.01 (.910)	
Within	78	76.00	.97		
Dependent Variable: *Unawareness of Institutional Discrimination*					.001
Between	1	.05	.05	.05 (.820)	
Within	78	79.57	1.02		
Dependent Variable: *Unawareness of Blatant Racial Issues*					.000
Between	1	.00	.00	.00 (.964)	
Within	78	79.83	1.02		
Dependent Variable: Total Color-Blind Racial Attitudes					.000
Between	1	.03	.02	.03 (.866)	
Within	78	72.81	.93		

Table 16
ANOVA of White Participant Color-Blind Racial Attitudes by Cohabitation (*n* = 80)

Source	*df*	*SS*	*MS*	*F*(*p*)	η²
Dependent Variable: *Unawareness of White Racial Privilege*					.048
Between	2	3.65	1.82	1.94 (.151)	
Within	77	72.37	.94		
Dependent Variable: *Unawareness of Institutional Discrimination*					.025
Between	2	2.01	1.00	1.00 (.374)	
Within	77	77.62	1.00		
Dependent Variable: *Unawareness of Blatant Racial Issues*					.033
Between	2	2.65	1.32	1.32 (.273)	
Within	77	77.18	1.00		
Dependent Variable: Total Color-Blind Racial Attitudes					.042
Between	2	3.05	1.53	1.68 (.193)	
Within	77	69.79	.91		

Table 17
ANOVA of White Participant Color-Blind Racial Attitudes by Region (n = 80)

Source	df	SS	MS	F(p)	η²
Dependent Variable: *Unawareness of White Racial Privilege*					.063
Between	3	4.83	1.61	1.72 (.170)	
Within	76	71.19	.94		
Dependent Variable: *Unawareness of Institutional Discrimination*					.060
Between	3	4.77	1.59	1.61 (.193)	
Within	76	74.86	.99		
Dependent Variable: *Unawareness of Blatant Racial Issues*					.031
Between	3	2.50	.83	.82 (.488)	
Within	76	77.33	1.02		
Dependent Variable: Total Color-Blind Racial Attitudes					.068
Between	3	4.92	1.64	1.84 (.148)	
Within	76	67.92	.89		

A correlation analysis was performed to examine intercorrelations among racial identity statuses, age, and relationship duration for African American participants (see Table 18). Among African American participants in the full sample (*n* = 78), age was significantly and positively correlated with Pre-Encounter Assimilation, with a small effect size (according to Cohen (1988) benchmarks for small [.10], medium [.30], and large [.50] effect sizes) and Pre-Encounter Miseducation, with a medium effect size. Results suggest that older African American participants had higher Pre-Encounter Assimilation and Pre-Encounter Miseducation beliefs and attitudes. A negative correlation was found between age and the Internalization Black Nationalist Status (with a small effect size) among African American participants, indicating that younger participants in the sample reported being higher on this more resolved racial identity status. Age was not significantly correlated with Pre-Encounter Self-Hatred, Immersion-Emersion Anti-White, and Internalization Multiculturalist Inclusive.

For relationship duration among the full sample of African American participants ($n =$ 78; see Table 18), no significant correlations were found with Pre-Encounter Assimilation, Pre-Encounter Self-Hatred, Immersion-Emersion Anti-White, and Internalization Multiculturalist Inclusive. However, relationship duration was positively correlated with Pre-Encounter Miseducation, with a small effect size (according to Cohen (1988) benchmarks for small [.10], medium [.30], and large [.50] effect sizes). Thus, African American participants who reported being in their relationship for longer were also higher on the Pre-Encounter Miseducation status.

A correlation analysis examining intercorrelations among racial identity, age, and relationship duration was also performed for White participants in the full sample ($n = 80$). In contrast, among White participants, neither age nor relationship duration were correlated with White Racial Identity Attitude Statuses. Results for intercorrelations among White racial identity statuses, age, and relationship duration are presented in Table 19.

An independent samples *t*-test was conducted to examine differences between men and women in relation to racial identity status for African American participants and White participants. Results of the *t*-test for the full sample of African American participants ($n = 78$) are presented in Table 20. Among the full sample of African American participants ($n = 78$), a statistically significant difference in means was found for Pre-Encounter Assimilation and Pre-Encounter Miseducation across gender. Specifically, African American women were higher on Pre-Encounter Assimilation and Pre-Encounter Miseducation than were African American men on Pre-Encounter Assimilation and Pre-Encounter Miseducation. No statistically significant differences in means were found for Pre-Encounter Self-Hatred, Immersion-Emersion Anti-White, Internalization Black Nationalist, and Internalization Multiculturalist Inclusive across gender.

Table 18

Intercorrelations Between African American Participant Racial Identity Statuses, Age, and Relationship Duration (*n* = 78)

Variables	Age	Relationship Duration
Pre-Encounter Assimilation	.240*	.170
Pre-Encounter Miseducation	.433**	.243*
Pre-Encounter Self-Hatred	.161	.047
Immersion-Emersion Anti-White	.049	-.045
Internalization Black Nationalist	-.262*	-.013
Internalization Multiculturalist Inclusive	-.110	.012

Note. * indicates significant at the .05 level; ** indicates significant at the .01 level

Table 19

Intercorrelations Between White Participant Racial Identity Statuses, Age, and Relationship Duration (*n* = 80)

Variables	Age	Relationship Duration
Contact	-.168	-.110
Disintegration	.037	-.116
Reintegration	-.016	-.028
Pseudo-Independence	.153	.083
Autonomy	.176	.145

Note. All *p* values non-significant

An independent samples *t*-test for the full sample of White participants also revealed significant gender differences in relation to White racial identity statuses. Results of the *t*-test for the full sample of White participants (*n* = 80) are presented in Table 21. A

Table 20

Means and Standard Deviations for African American Participants on Racial Identity Statuses According to Gender

Variables	Men (*n* = 48)		Women (*n* = 30)		*t*- test
	M	*SD*	*M*	*SD*	
Pre-Encounter Assimilation	5.15	2.26	7.41	1.46	-4.51[**]
Pre-Encounter Miseducation	6.23	1.84	6.93	1.94	-4.88[**]
Pre-Encounter Self-Hatred	6.32	1.07	6.51	1.07	.82
Immersion-Emersion Anti-White	6.68	1.88	4.43	1.89	-.38
Internalization Black Nationalist	6.60	1.88	4.53	2.01	.23
Internalization Multiculturalist Inclusive	8.11	.69	8.24	.94	-1.10

** *p* value <.001

Table 21

Means and Standard Deviations for White Participant Racial Identity Statuses According to Gender

Variables	Men (*n* = 48)		Women (*n* = 30)		*t*- test
	M	*SD*	*M*	*SD*	
Contact	28.21	12.87	31.79	10.58	5.60[**]
Disintegration	31.64	11.20	33.31	8.48	1.90
Reintegration	30.68	4.99	32.44	5.51	.79
Pseudo-Independence	30.96	10.90	27.56	10.91	-5.97[**]
Autonomy	30.43	10.99	27.33	11.27	-5.15[**]

** *p* value <.001

statistically significant difference in means was found between men and women on Contact, Pseudo-Independence, and Autonomy. Specifically, White men were lower on Contact than White women; White men were higher on Pseudo-Independence than White women; and White men were higher on Autonomy than White women. Results indicate that, on average, White men in the full sample reported higher ratings on Pseudo-Independence and

Autonomy statuses as compared to White women who, on average, were lower on Pseudo-

Independence and Autonomy, and higher on the less resolved Contact status. No statistically

significant differences in means were found for Disintegration or Reintegration across gender

for White participants.

Table 22
ANOVA of African American Participant Racial Identity Attitudes by Relationship Status
(n = 78)

Source	df	SS	MS	F(p)	η^2
Dependent Variable: Pre-Encounter Assimilation					.015
Between	3	5.82	1.94	.367 (.777)	
Within	74	391.79	5.29		
Dependent Variable: Pre-Encounter Miseducation					.036
Between	3	10.04	3.35	.928 (.432)	
Within	74	266.98	3.61		
Dependent Variable: Pre-Encounter Self-Hatred					.046
Between	3	4.05	1.35	1.19 (.319)	
Within	74	83.83	1.13		
Dependent Variable: Immersion Emersion Anti-White					.046
Between	3	16.83	5.61	1.20 (.317)	
Within	74	346.99	4.69		
Dependent Variable: Internalization Black Nationalist					.023
Between	3	8.50	2.83	.593 (.621)	
Within	74	353.46	4.78		
Dependent Variable: Internalization Multiculturalist Inclusive					.018
Between	3	.87	.290	.450 (.718)	
Within	74	47.64	.64		

A series of ANOVAs were performed to examine differences in means on racial identity status across relationship status categories, cohabitation, and region. For the full sample of African American participants ($n = 78$), no statistically significant difference in means in racial identity statuses were found based on relationship status (see Table 22), cohabitation (see Table 23) or region (see Table 24). Likewise, among the full sample of White participants ($n = 80$), no significant differences in means on racial identity status emerged based on relationship status (see Table 25), cohabitation (see Table 26) or region (see Table 27).

Table 23
ANOVA of African American Participant Racial Identity Attitudes by Cohabitation ($n = 78$)

Source	df	SS	MS	F(p)	η²
Dependent Variable: Pre-Encounter Assimilation					.015
Between	3	5.96	1.99	.375 (.771)	
Within	74	391.66	5.29		
Dependent Variable: Pre-Encounter Miseducation					.012
Between	3	3.27	1.09	.294 (.829)	
Within	74	273.57	3.70		
Dependent Variable: Pre-Encounter Self-Hatred					.005
Between	3	.40	.13	.114 (.952)	
Within	74	87.47	1.18		
Dependent Variable: Immersion Emersion Anti-White					.028
Between	3	10.21	3.41	.713 (.548)	
Within	74	353.61	4.78		
Dependent Variable: Internalization Black Nationalist					.026
Between	3	9.53	3.18	.667 (.575)	
Within	74	352.43	4.76		
Dependent Variable: Internalization Multiculturalist Inclusive					.013
Between	3	.62	.21	.321 (.810)	
Within	74	47.89	.65		

Table 24

ANOVA of African American Participant Racial Identity Attitudes by Region (n = 78)

Source	df	SS	MS	F(p)	η²
Dependent Variable: Pre-Encounter Assimilation					.012
Between	3	4.88	1.63	.306 (.821)	
Within	74	392.74	5.31		
Dependent Variable: Pre-Encounter Miseducation					.032
Between	3	8.84	2.95	.813 (.491)	
Within	74	268.18	3.62		
Dependent Variable: Pre-Encounter Self-Hatred					.003
Between	3	.24	.08	.068 (.977)	
Within	74	87.63	1.18		
Dependent Variable: Immersion Emersion Anti-White					.10
Between	3	3.77	1.26	.258 (.855)	
Within	74	360.06	4.87		
Dependent Variable: Internalization Black Nationalist					.002
Between	3	.75	.25	.051 (.985)	
Within	74	361.21	4.88		
Dependent Variable: Internalization Multiculturalist Inclusive					.017
Between	3	.81	.27	.421 (.739)	
Within	74	47.70	.65		

Table 25

ANOVA of White Participant Racial Identity Attitudes by Relationship Status (*n* = 80)

Source	df	SS	MS	F(p)	η²
Dependent Variable: Contact					.026
Between	1	2.03	2.03	2.10 (.151)	
Within	78	75.14	.96		
Dependent Variable: Disintegration					.021
Between	1	1.64	1.64	1.66 (.201)	
Within	78	77.09	.99		
Dependent Variable: Reintegration					.000
Between	1	.01	.01	.008 (.929)	
Within	78	76.83	.99		
Dependent Variable: Pseudo-Independence					.002
Between	1	.18	.18	.176 (.676)	
Within	78	79.64	1.02		
Dependent Variable: Autonomy					.000
Between	1	.01	.01	.014 (.907)	
Within	78	78.55	1.01		

Table 26

ANOVA of White Participant Racial Identity Attitudes by Cohabitation (*n* = 80)

Source	df	SS	MS	F(p)	η²
Dependent Variable: Contact					.014
Between	2	1.07	.53	.54 (.585)	
Within	77	76.10	.99		
Dependent Variable: Disintegration					.026
Between	2	2.01	1.01	1.01 (.369)	
Within	77	76.72	1.00		
Dependent Variable: Reintegration					.050
Between	2	3.86	1.93	2.04 (.137)	
Within	77	72.98	.95		
Dependent Variable: Pseudo-Independence					.005
Between	2	.42	.21	.203 (.817)	
Within	77	79.41	1.03		
Dependent Variable: Autonomy					.007
Between	2	.53	.26	.259 (.772)	
Within	77	78.04	1.01		

Table 27

ANOVA of White Participant Racial Identity Attitudes by Region ($n = 80$)

Source	df	SS	MS	F(p)	η^2
Dependent Variable: Contact					.016
Between	2	1.24	.41	.41 (.744)	
Within	77	75.93	1.00		
Dependent Variable: Disintegration					.063
Between	2	4.97	1.66	1.71 (.173)	
Within	77	73.77	.97		
Dependent Variable: Reintegration					.009
Between	2	.70	.23	.23 (.872)	
Within	77	76.14	1.00		
Dependent Variable: Pseudo-Independence					.015
Between	2	1.18	.40	.38 (.767)	
Within	77	78.64	1.04		
Dependent Variable: Autonomy					.014
Between	2	1.10	.37	.36 (.782)	
Within	77	77.47	1.02		

Primary analyses. The first two primary analyses involved two separate hierarchical multiple regressions to examine White partner color-blind racial attitudes and African American partner color-blind racial attitudes, as well as the interaction between the two, as predictors of two relationship outcomes from the African American partners' perspectives: relationship satisfaction and perceived support. The first hierarchical multiple regression focused on the relationship outcome variable of African American partner relationship satisfaction. Preliminary analysis revealed a significant, positive correlation between African American participant age and African American participant relationship satisfaction; thus, age was included as a control variable in block one. Block two of the analysis examined the main effect of White partner color-blind racial attitudes and the main effect of African American partner color-blind racial attitudes in predicting African American partner relationship

satisfaction. It was hypothesized that there would be a significant inverse relationship between

White partner color-blind racial attitudes and African American partner relationship

satisfaction, such that White partner color-blind racial attitudes would be negatively related to

African American partner relationship satisfaction. No specific hypothesis was proposed

regarding the link between African American partner color-blind racism and relationship

satisfaction because it was expected that African American partners scoring low in color-blind

racism may differ in their attitudes toward White people because they may report either higher

levels of Internalization status or higher levels of Immersion-Emersion status and thus tend

towards differing levels of relationship satisfaction. Therefore, a research question was

proposed: Is there an association between African American partner color-blind racism and

African American partner relationship satisfaction? This research question was examined

using the results of block 2. Results of the hierarchical multiple regression are presented in

Table 28. After controlling for the effects of age for both White and African American

participants, the addition of the variables White color-blind racial attitudes and African

American color-blind racial attitudes in block two of the hierarchical regression model was

significant ($p < .05$) with a medium effect size (12% of the variance in the outcome variable

explained by the model as a whole; according to Cohen and Cohen (1983) benchmarks for

small [1%], medium [9%], and large [25%] effect sizes). However, contrary to expectation the

main effect of White partner color-blind racial attitudes in predicting African American partner

relationship satisfaction was not significant (with a small effect size, 5% of the variance

explained).

 With regard to the proposed research question concerning the relation between African

American partners' color-blind racial attitudes and African American partners' relationship

satisfaction, block two of the regression analysis indicated that only the African American

partner color-blind racial attitudes significantly predicted African American partner relationship satisfaction. Specifically, higher levels of African American color-blind racial attitudes predicted higher levels of African American partner relationship satisfaction (with a small-to-medium effect size, 9% of the variance explained).

The second hypothesis was that there would be a significant African American partner racial colorblindness X White partner racial colorblindness interaction effect in predicting African American partner relationship satisfaction. Specifically, higher levels of African American partner and White partner color-blind racial attitudes were proposed to be associated with higher levels of African American partner relationship satisfaction; lower levels of African American partner color-blind racial attitudes and higher levels of White partner color-blind racial attitudes were proposed to be linked to lower levels of African American partner relationship satisfaction; lower levels of African American partner and White partner color-blind racial attitudes were proposed to be linked to higher levels of African American partner relationship satisfaction; and higher levels of African American partner color-blind racial attitudes and lower levels of White partner color-blind racial attitudes were proposed to be linked to higher levels of African American partner relationship satisfaction. Thus, in the third block of the hierarchical multiple regression, the interaction between White partner color-blind racial attitudes and African American partner color-blind racial attitudes was examined in predicting African American partner relationship satisfaction. Contrary to the proposed hypothesis, results of the hierarchical multiple regression indicated that the interaction between African American partner color-blind racial attitudes and White partner color-blind racial attitudes did not significantly predict African American partner relationship satisfaction. Addition of the interaction term resulted in no significant change in the variance explained in

the model, and the effect size for the interaction term was essentially zero (see Table 28).

Thus, the interpretation of the results was based on block two of the regression analysis.

In sum, African American partners' relationship satisfaction was significantly and

positively correlated with African American color blind racial attitudes, but was not

significantly linked to White partners' color blind racial attitudes. It is possible that there may

have been a small, but non-significant, inverse relation between White partners' color blind

racial attitudes and African American partners' relationship satisfaction that the present study

was not sufficiently well-powered to detect.

Table 28.

Summary of Hierarchical Regression Analysis for Variables Predicting African American Partner Relationship Satisfaction ($n = 62$)

Variable	B	β	t	sr^2	R^2	ΔR^2
Block 1					.069	.069
White partner age	-.184	-.229	-1.81	.05		
African American partner age	-.133	-.165	-1.30	.03		
Block 2					.184	.115*
White partner age	-.212	-.263*	-2.17	.07		
African American partner age	-.141	-.175	-1.43	.03		
White Color-blind Racial Attitudes Total	-.156	-.225	-1.81	.05		
African American Color-blind Racial Attitudes	.230	.319*	2.56	.09		
Block 3					.189	.005
White Partner Age	-.230	-.286*	-2.23	.07		
African American Partner Age	-.152	-.188	1.51	.04		
White Color-blind Racial Attitudes	-.153	-.221	-1.76	.04		
African American Partner Color-blind Racial Attitudes	.207	.326*	2.59	.10		
Interaction	-.636	-.075	-.586	.00		

* indicates $p < .05$

The second hierarchical multiple regression analysis focused on the relationship outcome African American partner perceived support. In the preliminary analyses no demographic variables were found to be significantly associated with perceived support; thus, it was not necessary to control for any variables in this analysis. Block one of the analysis examined the main effect of White partner color-blind racial attitudes and the main effect of African American partner color-blind racial attitudes in predicting African American partner perceived support. It was hypothesized that there would be a significant inverse relationship between White partner color-blind racial attitudes and African American partner perceived support, such that White partner color-blind racial attitudes would be negatively related to African American partner perceived support from his or her White partner. No specific hypothesis was proposed regarding the link between African American partner color-blind racism and perceived support because it was expected that African American partners scoring low in color-blind racism may differ in their attitudes toward White people because they may report either higher levels of Internalization status or higher levels of Immersion-Emersion status and thus tend towards differing levels of perceived support. Therefore, a research question was proposed: Is there an association between African American partner color-blind racism and African American partner perceived support? The research question was examined using the results of block 2. Results of the hierarchical multiple regression are presented in Table 29. Overall, block one of the hierarchical multiple regression model was significant, with a medium effect size (11% of the variance in the outcome variable was explained by the model as a whole); however, the inverse relationship between White partner color-blind racial attitudes and African American partner perceived support was not significant, and the effect size was essentially a zero value.

With regard to the proposed research question concerning the relation between African American partners' color-blind racial attitudes and African American partners' perceived support, block one of the regression analysis indicated that African American partners' perceived support was positively related to African American color blind racial attitudes (with a medium effect size), but was unrelated to White partners' color blind racial attitudes (or the interaction of both partners' color blind racial attitudes). Specifically, higher levels of African American color-blind racial attitudes predicted higher levels of African American partner perceived support in his or her White partner (with a medium effect size, i.e., 10% of the variance explained).

The second block of the hierarchical multiple regression examined the interaction of White partner color-blind racial attitudes and African American partner color-blind racial attitudes in predicting African American partner perceived support. It was hypothesized that there would be a significant African American partner racial colorblindness X White partner racial colorblindness interaction effect in predicting African American partner perceived support. Specifically, higher levels of African American partner and White partner color-blind racial attitudes were proposed to be associated with higher levels of African American partner perceived support; lower levels of African American partner color-blind racial attitudes and higher levels of White partner color-blind racial attitudes were proposed to be linked to lower levels of African American partner perceived support; lower levels of African American partner and White partner color-blind racial attitudes were proposed to be linked to higher levels of African American partner perceived support; and higher levels of African American partner color-blind racial attitudes and lower levels of White partner color-blind racial attitudes were proposed to be linked to higher levels of African American partner perceived support. Contrary to hypothesis, results of the hierarchical regression indicated that addition of the

interaction term did not result in a significant change in the variance explained in the model and the effect size was essentially zero (see Table 29).

Given that the addition of block two was non-significant, block one served as the basis for interpretation of the results. In sum, African American partners' perceived support was significantly and positively related to African American color blind racial attitudes (with a medium effect size), but was not significantly related to White partners' color blind racial attitudes (or the interaction of both partners' color blind racial attitudes).

Table 29.
Summary of Hierarchical Regression Analysis for Variables Predicting African American Partner Perceived Support (n = 62)

Variable	B	β	t	sr^2	R^2	ΔR^2
Block 1					.106	.106
White Color-blind Racial Attitudes Total	-.001	-.011	-.086	.00		
African American Color-blind Racial Attitudes Total	.016	.328[*]	2.58	.10		
Block 2					.109	.003
White Color-blind Racial Attitudes Total	.024	.466	.441	.00		
African American Color-blind Racial Attitudes Total	.046	.949	.692	.00		
Interaction	.000	-.874	-.455	.00		

  * indicates $p < .05$

Planned post hoc analysis. *Planned post hoc analysis of links between color-blind racial attitudes and racial identity statuses.* A series of planned post hoc analyses were performed to examine the links between color-blind racial attitudes and racial identity development for each participant. It was expected that endorsement of color-blind racial attitudes (i.e., attitudes that deny the existence of racism) would be negatively associated with more resolved racial identity statuses and less resolved racial identity statuses would be positively associated with color-blind racial attitudes. First, the links between African

American partners' racial identity statuses and African American partner's color-blind racial attitudes were examined. A Pearson product-moment correlation coefficient was computed to assess the relationship between African American color-blind racial attitudes and Cross' Racial Identity Statuses in the full sample of African American participants. Pearson correlations are presented in Table 30. As expected, less resolved racial identity statuses were found to be positively associated with color-blind racial attitudes. Specifically, Pre-Encounter Assimilation, and Pre-Encounter Miseducation were each positively correlated with *unawareness of White racial privilege, unawareness of institutional discrimination*, and *unawareness of blatant racial issues.* Cohen and Cohen (1983) effect size values suggest that each color-blind racial attitude subscale was moderately associated with the less resolved Pre-Encounter Assimilation and Pre-Encounter Miseducation subscales. Contrary to expectation, significant negative correlations were not found to support the proposed link between more resolved Cross Racial Identity Statuses and African American partners' color-blind racial attitudes; instead, there were no significant correlations.

Second, the links between White racial identity statuses and White partner's color-blind racial attitudes were examined using Pearson correlations (see Table 31). It was expected that endorsement of color-blind racial attitudes would be positively associated with the less resolved Disintegration and Reintegration statuses. Consistent with expectation, a significant positive relation, with small effect size, was found between the Disintegration scale and *unawareness of White racial privilege, unawareness of institutional discrimination,* and *unawareness of blatant racial issues*; however, contrary to expectation, no significant correlations were found between the Reintegration status and color-blind racial attitudes reported by White participants. Finally, the Contact status was hypothesized to be negatively related to color-blind racial attitudes. Contrary to the proposed hypothesis, a significant positive correlation with small effect size

was found between the Contact status and *unawareness of White racial privilege*. Similarly, a significant positive correlation with moderate effect size was found between Contact and *unawareness of blatant racial issues* among White participants. It was also anticipated that endorsement of color-blind racial attitudes (i.e., attitudes that deny the existence of racism) would be negatively associated with more resolved racial identity statuses (i.e., Pseudo Independence and Autonomy). The expected significant negative correlations, however, were not found; rather no significant relation emerged.

   Post hoc analysis. *Post hoc analysis of links between racial identity statuses and relationship outcomes.* A series of post hoc analyses were performed to examine the links between African American partner racial identity status and African American partner relationship outcomes (i.e., relationship satisfaction and perceived support) in the full sample of African American participants ($n = 78$). First, the links between African American partners' racial identity statuses and African American partner's relationship satisfaction were examined. A Pearson product-moment correlation coefficient was computed to assess the relationship between Cross' Racial Identity Statuses and relationship satisfaction. Pearson correlations are presented in Table 32. A significant positive correlation with small effect size was found between relationship satisfaction and Pre-Encounter Assimilation. Results indicate that higher ratings of Pre-Encounter Assimilation are associated with higher reports of relationship satisfaction. A positive correlation was observed between the Pre-Encounter Miseducation subscale, that describes negative stereotypical views an individual may have about the Black community, and relationship satisfaction, however, this association approached but did not reach conventional levels of significance ($r(76) = .218$, $p = .056$). A significant negative association with medium effect size was found between Internalization Black Nationalist and relationship satisfaction, indicating that higher endorsement of Internalization Black Nationalist

Table 30
Pearson Correlations for African American Participant Color-Blind Racial Attitudes and Racial Identity Statuses (*n* = 78)

Variable	*Unawareness of White Racial Privilege*	*Unawareness of Institutional Discrimination*	*Unawareness of Blatant Racial Issues*	Total Color-blind Racial Attitudes
Pre-Encounter Assimilation	.512**	.410**	.441**	.517**
Pre-Encounter Miseducation	.401**	.450**	.438**	.480**
Pre-Encounter Self-Hatred	.020	.055	-.046	.013
Immersion-Emersion Anti-White	.136	.037	.116	.112
Internalization Black Nationalist	-.183	-.189	-.135	-.192
Internalization Multiculturalist Inclusive	.104	.073	.111	.109

Note. ** indicates significant at that .01 level; * indicates significant at the .05 level

Table 31
Pearson Correlations for White Participant Color-Blind Racial Attitudes and Racial Identity Statuses (*n* = 80)

Variable	*Unawareness of White Racial Privilege*	*Unawareness of Institutional Discrimination*	*Unawareness of Blatant Racial Issues*	Total Color-blind Racial Attitudes
Contact	.512**	.410**	.441**	.517**
Disintegration	.401**	.450**	.438**	.480**
Reintegration	.020	.055	-.046	.013
Pseudo-Independence	.136	.037	.116	.112
Autonomy	-.183	-.189	-.135	-.192

Note. ** indicates significant at that .01 level; * indicates significant at the .05 level

Table 32

Pearson Correlations for African American Participant Relationship Outcomes and racial identity statuses (n = 78)

Variable	Relationship Satisfaction	Perceived Support
Pre-Encounter Assimilation	.229*	.250*
Pre-Encounter Miseducation	.218	.193
Pre-Encounter Self-Hatred	-.053	.067
Immersion-Emersion Anti-White	.145	.268*
Internalization Black Nationalist	-.373**	.014
Internalization Multiculturalist Inclusive	-.176	-.119

Note. ** indicates significant at the 0.01 level; * indicates significant at the 0.05 level

beliefs are associated with higher ratings of relationship satisfaction. No significant correlations were found between relationship satisfaction and Pre-Encounter Self-Hatred, Immersion-Emersion Anti-White, and Internalization Multiculturalist Inclusive.

Next, the links between African American partners' racial identity statuses and African American partner's perceived support were examined for the full sample of African American participants (*n* = 78). A Pearson product-moment correlation coefficient was computed to assess the relationship between Cross' Racial Identity Statuses and perceived support. Pearson correlations are presented in Table 32. A significant positive correlation with small effect size was found between perceived support and Pre-Encounter Assimilation, indicating that higher ratings of Pre-Encounter Assimilation are linked to African American partners' higher reports of perceived support in his or her White partner. Immersion-Emersion Anti-White was also significantly and positively correlated with perceived support, with small effect size. Results indicate that higher ratings of Immersion-Emersion Anti-White are related to higher reports of African American partner perceived support in his or her White partner. No significant correlations were found between perceived support and Pre-Encounter Miseducation, Pre-

Encounter Self-Hatred, Internalization Black Nationalist, and Internalization Multiculturalist Inclusive.

Mediation analyses. *Test of White partner color-blind racial attitudes as a mediator of African American partner color-blind racial attitudes and African American partner relationship outcomes.* Results are presented above regarding a hierarchical regression testing a moderation model in which it was expected that African American partner color-blind racial attitudes and White partner color-blind racial attitudes would interact to predict two relationship outcomes from the African American partners' perspective: relationship satisfaction and perceived support. To rule out mediation as a potential alternative model to the proposed moderation model, the Baron and Kenny (1986) method for establishing mediation was applied. The Baron and Kenny method uses a series of regression analyses following four steps to establish partial or complete mediation. Partial mediation exists when the link between the predictor (African American color-blind racial attitudes) and the dependent variable (African American partner relationship satisfaction) are significantly reduced with the addition of the mediator (White partner color-blind racial attitudes). Complete mediation exists if inclusion of the mediation variable reduces the relationship between the independent variable and dependent variable to zero.

In this study, the Baron and Kenny (1986) approach was first applied to test White partner color-blind racial attitudes as a mediator of African American partner color-blind racial attitudes and African American partner relationship satisfaction. Statistical results are summarized in Table 33. The first step in the Baron and Kenny method examined the direct relation between the dependent variable (i.e., African American partner relationship satisfaction) and the independent variable (i.e., African American partner color-blind racial attitudes). A regression analysis was performed in which the independent variable was correlated with the dependent variable to establish that an effect exists that may be mediated.

Results for the regression were not significant, $\beta = .23$, $t(60) = 1.83$, $p > .05$, $R^2 = .05$,

indicating that African American partner color-blind racism is not significantly associated with

African American partner relationship satisfaction.

In step two of the Baron and Kenny (1986) approach, the direct relation between the

independent variable (i.e., African American partner color-blind racial attitudes) and the

mediator (i.e., White partner color-blind racial attitudes) was examined. A regression analysis

was performed in which the independent variable was correlated with the mediator. Results

indicated that a significant association exists between African American partner color-blind

racism and White partner color-blind racism, with the model explaining 6% of the variance, $\beta =$
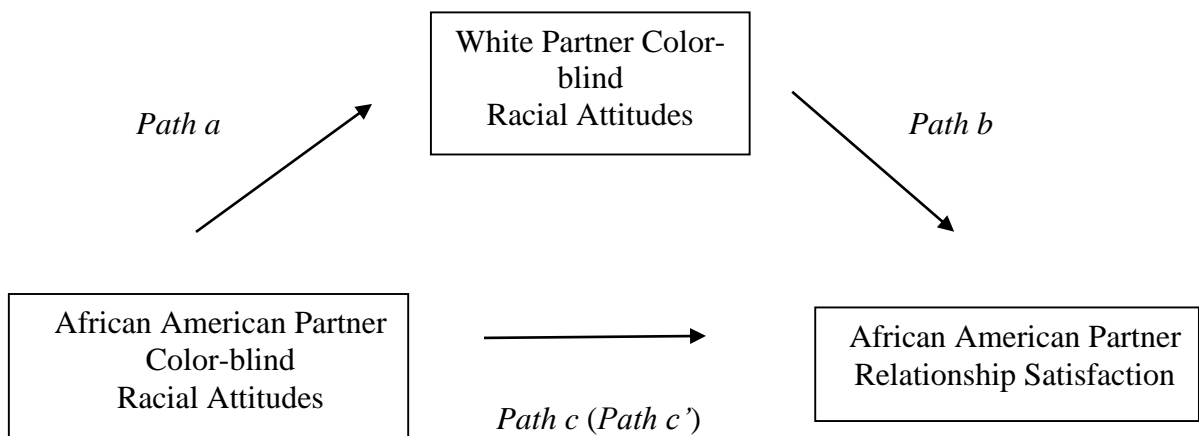
.25, $t(60) = 2.00$, $p \leq .05$, $R^2 = .06$.

Figure 1. Model testing White Partner Color-blind Racial Attitudes as a Mediator of African American Partner Color-blind Racial Attitudes and African American Partner Relationship Satisfaction.

In step 3 of the Baron and Kenny (1986) approach, the relation between the mediator

(i.e., White partner color-blind racial attitudes) and the dependent variable (i.e., African

American partner relationship satisfaction) were examined while controlling for the

independent variable (i.e., African American partner color-blind racial attitudes) in order to

determine if the mediator is linked to the dependent variable. The results of block 2 of the

hierarchical regression indicated that there was not a significant relationship between White partner color-blind racial attitudes and African American partner relationship satisfaction when controlling for African American partner color-blind racial attitudes, $\beta = -.22$, $t(60) = -1.73$, $p > .05$, $R^2 = .10$.

Typically, after steps 1-3 of the Baron and Kenny (1986) method yield non-significant results, it is concluded that mediation is not possible or likely. However, it is important to follow through with the remaining steps because, due to Type II error, a mediation effect may exist (MacKinnon, Fairchild, & Fritz, 2007). In step four of the Baron and Kenny approach, links between the independent variable, African American partner color-blind racial attitudes, and the dependent variable, African American partner relationship satisfaction (see Figure 1, *Path c'*), were examined while controlling for the mediator (i.e., White partner color-blind racial attitudes) in order to determine whether White partner color-blind racial attitudes completely mediate the relationship between African American partner color-blind racial attitudes and African American partner relationship satisfaction. Complete mediation exists if the strength of the relationship between the independent variable and dependent variable is reduced to zero by controlling for the mediator. Results of the second block of the hierarchical regression indicated that controlling for White partner color-blind racial attitudes did not significantly affect the strength of the relationship between African American partner color-blind racial attitudes and African American partner relationship satisfaction, $\beta = .29$, $t(60) = 2.23$, $p < .05$, $R^2 = .10$, therefore evidence of complete mediation is not present. Although the necessary conditions were not met to suggest partial or complete mediation, to demonstrate competency with the procedure, the Sobel test (Sobel, 1982) was performed. The Sobel test uses the unstandardized regression coefficients and the standard errors of the pathways between the independent variable and the mediator and the mediator and the dependent variable to test

Table 33

Hierarchical Regression Analysis Testing White Partner Color-Blind Racial Attitudes as a Mediator of African American Color-Blind Racial Attitudes and African American Partner Relationship Satisfaction (*n* = 62)

Variable	R^2	*B*	*SE*	β	Sobel *z*
Step 1: *Path c*	.05				
DV: Af. Am. Relationship Satisfaction					
IV: Af. Am. CBR Attitudes		.23	.13	.23	
Step 2: *Path a*	.06				
DV: White CBR Attitudes					
IV: Af. Am. CBR Attitudes		.25	.13	.25	
Step 3: *Path b*	.10				
African American CBR Attitudes					
Mediator: White CBR Attitudes		-.22	.13	-.22	
Step 4: *Path c'*	.10				
Block 1					
DV: Af. Am. Relationship Satisfaction					
Block 2					
Mediator: White CBR Attitudes		-.22	.13	-.22	
IV: Af. Am. CBR Attitudes		.29	.13	.29	-1.36

Note. All *p* values non-significant. DV = dependent variable; IV= independent variable; Af. Am. = African American partner; CBR = color-blind racial

the significance of the mediation effect. The Sobel *z* statistic was not significant (*z* = -1.36, *p* > .05), suggesting that there is not a significant mediation effect.

The Baron and Kenney (1986) method was then applied to test White partner color-blind racial attitudes as a mediator of African American partner color-blind racial attitudes and African American partner perceived support. Statistical results are summarized in Table 34. The first step in the Baron and Kenny approach examined the direct relation between the dependent variable, African American partner perceived support, and the independent variable, African American partner color-blind racial attitudes (see Figure 2, *Path c*). A regression analysis was performed in which the independent variable was correlated with the dependent

variable to establish that an effect exists that may be mediated. Results for the regression were significant, $\beta = .33$, $t(60) = 2.66$, $p < .05$, $R^2 = .11$, indicating that African American partner color-blind racism is correlated with African American partner perceived support.

In step two of the Baron and Kenny (1986) approach, the direct relation between the independent variable, African American partner color-blind racial attitudes, and the mediator,

Figure 2. Model testing White Partner Color-blind Racial Attitudes as a Mediator of African American Partner Color-blind Racial Attitudes and African American Partner Perceived Support
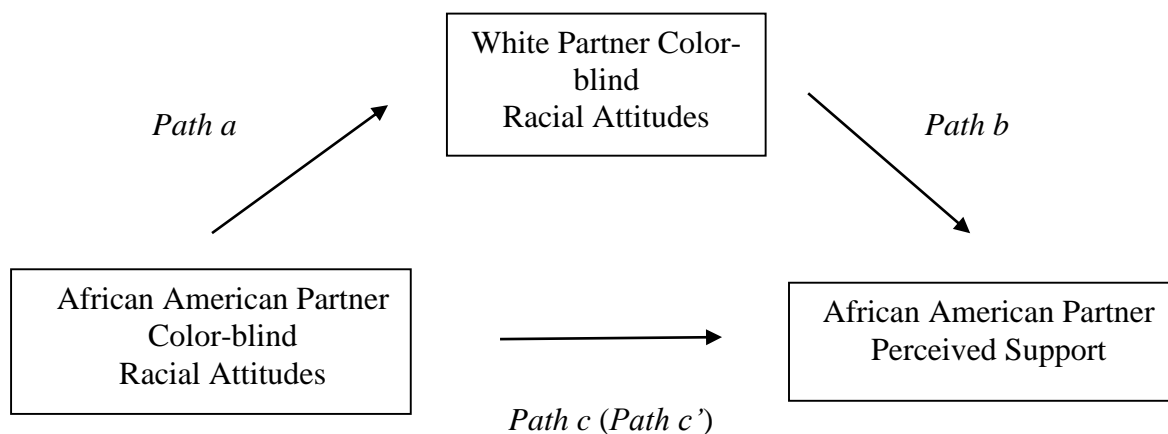
White partner color-blind racial attitudes (see Figure 2, *Path a*), was examined. A regression analysis was performed in which the independent variable was correlated with the mediator. Results indicated that a significant association exists between African American partner color-blind racism and White partner color-blind racism, with the model explaining 6% of the variance, $\beta = .25$, $t(60) = 2.00$, $p \leq .05$, $R^2 = .06$.

In step 3 of the Baron and Kenny (1986) approach, the relation between the mediator, White partner color-blind racial attitudes, and the dependent variable, African American partner perceived support, was examined while controlling for the independent variable, African American partner color-blind racial attitudes (see Figure 2, *Path b*), in order to determine if the mediator affects the dependent variable. The results of block 2 of the hierarchical regression

indicated that there was not a significant relationship between White partner color-blind racial attitudes and African American partner perceived support when controlling for African American partner color-blind racial attitudes, $\beta = -.01$, $t(60) = -.09$, $p > .05$, $R^2 = .11$.

As previously stated, although steps 1-3 yielded non-significant results, researchers argue that it is important to follow through with the remaining steps because, due to Type II error, a mediation effect may actually exist (MacKinnon, Fairchild, & Fritz, 2007). In step four of the Baron and Kenny (1986) approach, links between the independent variable, African American partner color-blind racial attitudes, and the dependent variable, African American partner perceived support (see Figure 2, *Path c'*), were examined while controlling for the mediator (i.e., White partner color-blind racial attitudes) in order to determine whether White partner color-blind racial attitudes completely mediate the relationship between African American partner color-blind racial attitudes and African American partner perceived support. As previously stated, complete mediation exists if the strength of the relationship between the independent variable and dependent variable is reduced to zero by controlling for the mediator. Results of the second block of the hierarchical regression indicated that controlling for White partner color-blind racial attitudes did not significantly affect the strength of the relationship between African American partner color-blind racial attitudes and African American partner perceived support, $\beta = .33$, $t(60) = -.09$, $p > .05$, $R^2 = .11$, thus, a mediation effect does not exist.

Although the necessary conditions were not met to suggest partial or complete mediation, to verify the results of the test of mediation the Sobel test (Sobel, 1982) was performed. The Sobel *z* statistic was not significant ($z = -.09$, $p > .05$), verifying that there was not a significant mediation effect. Statistical results testing White partner color-blind racial attitudes as a mediator of African American partner color-blind racial attitudes and African American partner perceived support are summarized in Table 34.

Table 34

Hierarchical Regression Analysis Testing White Partner Color-Blind Racial Attitudes as a Mediator of African American Color-Blind Racial Attitudes and African American Partner Perceived support ($n = 62$)

Variable	R^2	B	SE	β	Sobel z
Step 1: *Path c*	.11				
DV: Af. Am. Perceived Support					
IV: Af. Am. CBR Attitudes		.33	.12	.33	
Step 2: *Path a*	.06				
DV: White CBR Attitudes					
IV: Af. Am. CBR Attitudes		.25	.13	.25	
Step 3: *Path b*	.11				
Af. Am. CBR Attitudes					
Mediator: White CBR Attitudes		.13	.13	-.01	
Step 4: *Path c'*	.11				
Block 1					
DV: Af. Am. Perceived Support					
Block 2					
Mediator: White CBR Attitudes		-.01	.13	-.01	
IV: Af. Am. CBR Attitudes		.33	.13	.33	-.09

Note. All *p* values non-significant. DV = dependent variable; IV= independent variable; Af. Am. = African American partner; CBR = color-blind racial

Chapter 5: Discussion

This chapter discusses the results presented in Chapter Four and potential implications of the findings. Results are discussed in reference to possible explanations for the findings and their consistency or inconsistency with existing research. The limitations of the current study will be reviewed, followed by suggestions for future research, and implications for clinical practice.

Summary and Interpretation of the Findings

Primary Analyses Predicting African American Partner Relationship Satisfaction and Perceived Support. In summary, the results of the current study did not provide sufficient support for the proposed primary hypotheses. First, it was hypothesized that White color-blind racial attitudes would be inversely related to African American partner relationship outcomes: relationship satisfaction and perceived support. Contrary to expectation, White partner color-blind racial attitudes did not significantly predict either African American partner relationship satisfaction or African American partner perceived support in his or her White partner. Second, it was anticipated that there would be a significant African American partner color-blind racial attitude X White partner color-blind racial attitude interaction effect in predicting African American partner relationship satisfaction and African American partner perceived support in his or her White partner. Contrary to expectation, there was no significant interaction between White partner color-blind racial attitudes and African American partner color-blind racial attitudes in predicting neither African American partner relationship satisfaction nor African American partner perceived support in his or her White partner.

No significant inverse relationship was found between White partner color-blind racial attitudes and African American partner relationship satisfaction. Although the *p* value was non-significant, the coefficient was negative and the effect size was small, with 5% of the variance explained. Some researchers argue that significance testing relies too heavily on

sample size, so the *p* value should be supplemented with additional elements such as effect size

(Cohen, 1994; Thompson, 1996; Thompson & Snyder, 1997, 1998). In addition, this study did

not achieve the necessary *n* of 78 to detect the medium effect typical of this type of study (e.g.,

Gushue, 2004). Therefore, although the main effect of White partner color-blind racial

attitudes in predicting African American partner relationship satisfaction was not significant, it

is possible that a more well-powered study would result in a statistically significant outcome.

Relatedly, a non-significant result was found for the main effect of White partner color-blind

racial attitudes in predicting African American partner perceived support in his or her White

partner. In this case, however, the effect size was essentially zero. In sum, given the limited

sample size of the present study, more research is needed before conclusions can be drawn

about the inverse relationship between White partner color-blind racial attitudes and

relationship outcomes from the African American partners' perspective.

In contrast to the findings suggesting White partners' color-blind racial attitudes are not

significantly linked to their African American partners' perceptions of the relationship, the

present study found that African American partners' color-blind racial attitudes were associated

with their own perceptions of the relationship. An unexpected finding was that African

American partner color-blind racial attitudes were positively and significantly associated with

African American partner relationship satisfaction. This finding implies that African American

partners who tended to minimize the existence of racism in society also reported a higher

degree of agreement with their White partners on important matters, satisfaction in the

relationship, as well as closeness and shared activities with their partner.

The same pattern of results was observed for African American partners' perceived

support as for their relationship satisfaction. Specifically, African American partners higher on

color-blind racial attitudes also perceived their White partners to be more supportive. The

result indicates that African American partners in African American-White interracial

relationships, who reported higher *unawareness of White racial privilege*, institutional discrimination, and blatant racial issues, also had higher perceptions of their White partners as someone they could turn to for advice about problems.

The patterns of findings for the two relationship outcomes suggest that African American partners who are unaware of or dismiss the differential treatment of their racial group by society, may also experience higher relationship satisfaction and perceived support in African American-White interracial relationships. It is possible that, for African Americans, denying the existence of differential treatment based on race allows for them to be more likely to experience satisfaction and support in an African American-White interracial relationship. Yet another explanation may be that African Americans who are happy within an interracial relationship with a White partner, may also find that their experience with the White partner lessens their perceptions of differential treatment of their racial group by society. It is also possible that the positive relationship with the White partner creates a sense of cognitive dissonance with perceptions of differential treatment of their racial group by society, which must then be minimized. Research on cognitive dissonance suggests that individuals engage in efforts to minimize dissonance (Festinger & Carlsmith, 1959). Because this study relies on cross-sectional, rather than longitudinal data, it is impossible to ascertain the direction of effects. Thus, it is not clear whether African American individuals with higher levels of color blind racial attitudes are more likely to be happy in (and perhaps even more likely to engage in) interracial relationships with White partners, or whether the experience of having a positive relationship with a White partner shifts racial attitudes towards greater colorblindness. Future research could examine such questions, as well as potential mechanisms (e.g., reductions in cognitive dissonance).

One puzzle presented by the findings is the contrast between pre-existing research showing links between color-blind racial attitudes and negative outcomes, and the present study

results showing a link between higher levels of African American color-blind racial attitudes and positive perceptions of the relationship. The present finding of a positive association between relationship satisfaction and color-blind racism, for African Americans, suggests that being color-blind in an interracial relationship is a good thing. However, research on racial color-blind beliefs provides evidence that higher color-blind racial attitudes are linked to less healthy psychological outcomes for African Americans (Barr & Neville, 2008; Neville, Coleman, Falconer, & Holmes, 2005). For example, research examining color-blind racial attitudes among samples of African American undergraduates has found that higher color-blind racial attitudes are linked to race-related stress, including increased internalization of Black racial stereotypes; blame of African Americans for economic and social disparities; and belief in a social hierarchical system based on the idea that some racial groups are inferior to others (Barr & Neville, 2008; Tynes & Markoe, 2010). Coleman, Chapman and Wang (2013) found that higher levels of color-blind racial attitudes were negatively correlated with lower levels of positive affect (i.e., interested, excited, strong, enthusiastic, proud, alert, inspired, determined, attentive, and active). No known research has examined the associations between color-blind racial attitudes and psychological well-being within interracial relationships. However, taken together, existing research and the results of the current study regarding color-blind racial beliefs, evoke questions about the potential greater implications of being color-blind in an African American-White interracial relationship.

Nonetheless, the positive associations between African American color-blind racial attitudes and relationship satisfaction as well as perceived support are consistent with previous research investigating relationship satisfaction and support-seeking among couples in general (i.e., not limited to interracial pairings). Pasch and Bradbury (1998) found that individuals who report being in more satisfying relationships also report receiving more responsive support. Additionally, a number of studies found relationship satisfaction to be related to perceptions of

the quality of support offered by a partner (Collins & Feeney, 2004; Cutrona & Suhr, 1992; Kane et al., 2007; Rini, Schetter, Hobel, Glynn & Sandman, 2006).

As previously stated, no evidence emerged for the hypothesized White partner color-blind racial attitudes X African American partner color-blind racial attitudes interaction effect in predicting either African American partner relationship satisfaction or perceived support. It was anticipated that an African American partner's level of color-blind racism may interact with his or her White partners' level of color-blind racism and influence how the African American partner interprets his or her White partner's behaviors and attitudes. Addition of the interaction term, however, resulted in no significant change in variance and the effect size was essentially zero for the hierarchical regression predicting African American partner relationship satisfaction and the hierarchical regression predicting African American partner perceived support. The non-significant results for the interaction effect in this study may serve as support for the idea that interracial couples find racial issues to be of little importance in their relationships with each other (Kouri & Lasswell, 1993; Leslie & Letiecq, 2004).

At the very least, the overall patterns of findings examining relationship outcomes for this study suggest that, within African American-White interracial relationships, racial attitudes held by the White partner are not linked to relationship outcomes for the African American partner, either alone as a main effect or in combination with African American partner racial attitudes. Instead, an African American partner's perception of satisfaction and support within the relationship appears to be related only to his or her own racial attitudes. These results are similar to Leslie and Letiecq (2004), who reported that African Americans' racial identity was a strong contributor to their level of marital quality in their study examining the strength of each partner's racial identity in predicting his or her own interracial marital quality. The consistency in results between color-blind racial attitudes and relationship outcomes in the current study, with racial identity status and marital quality in Leslie and Letiecq, are

noteworthy because as outlined in Chapter Two, the rationale for the current study rests on the argument that because racial identity and color-blind racial attitudes are conceptually linked as racial ideologies, color-blind racial attitudes would be related to African American partner relationship satisfaction in a way that parallels the findings of Leslie and Letiecq.

Planned Post Hoc Analysis: Links between Color-Blind Racial Attitudes and Racial Identity Development. A secondary goal of the current research was to examine the associations between color-blind racial attitudes and racial identity in a series of planned post hoc analyses. Based on the findings of Gushue and Constantine (2007), three predictions were made. First, it was expected that scores on the more integrated racial identity statuses for African Americans (i.e., Internalization Black Nationalist and Internalization Multiculturalist Inclusive) and for White individuals (i.e., Autonomy) would be negatively related to color-blind racial attitudes. Contrary to expectation, there was no significant correlation between more resolved racial identity statuses and color-blind racial attitudes for either racial group. This was an unexpected result because theory would suggest that those scoring high on the more resolved racial identity statuses would have greater awareness of racial issues in society, such as White privilege and racism. For example, African American individuals high on Internalization Black Nationalist are theorized to have a positive racial group orientation, be knowledge about the historical experience and contributions of Blacks, and immerse themselves in African American culture (Cross, 1991). These attributes would seem to be consistent with also having an awareness of the unearned privilege of Whites, institutional discrimination, and racial issues in society, and thus score low color-blind racial attitudes. It is also peculiar that color-blind racial attitudes were not significantly (and inversely) linked to the Internalization Multiculturalist Inclusive status, which describes African Americans who are knowledgeable of racial issues in society, are accepting of all racial groups and have the desire to establish a sense of communalism that expands outside of the Black community (Vandiver,

Cross, Worrell and Fhagen-Smith, 2002). Likewise, the qualities ascribed to White people high on Autonomy are also very consistent with low color-blind racial attitudes. Specifically, White individuals high on Autonomy are described as being more knowledgeable about racial and cultural similarities; accepting and appreciative of both minority and White individuals; and fully aware of their White privilege and how it effects minority group members. Thus, one would expect a significant, negative association between the Autonomy status and color-blind racial attitudes. Even with the lack of statistical power reported in the current study, it is peculiar that significant negative correlations were not found between more resolved racial identity status and color-blind racial attitudes. Also, it is important to note that the effect sizes for these non-significant links were small.

Second, it was proposed that less resolved forms of racial identity status would be positively related to higher levels of color-blind racial attitudes. As anticipated, among African American participants, *unawareness of White racial privilege*, *unawareness of institutional discrimination, unawareness of blatant racial issues*, and total color-blind racial attitudes were each positively and significantly associated with less resolved racial identity statuses (i.e., Pre-Encounter Assimilation and Pre-Encounter Miseducation). The positive association between color-blind racial attitudes and Pre-Encounter Assimilation makes sense because higher scores on the status indicate a strong reference group orientation centered on being American and low race salience (Vandiver, Cross, Worrell, & Fhagen-Smith, 2002), while high racial colorblindness is also linked to attitudes that minimize the significance of race and emphasize a pro-American attitude by denying the differential treatment of racial groups in society (Neville, Coleman, Falconer, & Holmes, 2005). On the other hand, it also follows that the Pre-Encounter Miseducation status was positively associated with color-blind racial attitudes because African Americans high on this status have negative, stereotypical views about African Americans that are internalized as self-hate (Cross, 1991; Vandiver, Fhagen-Smith, Cokley,

Cross, & Worrell, 2001). Thus, it is possible that individuals high on Pre-Encounter

Miseducation would tend to act in ways that are harmful to themselves and their racial group,

because of their high, negative race salience, and engage in behaviors indicative of high color-

blind racial attitudes; such as opposing race-targeted legislation designed to benefit racial

minorities or perpetuating racial inequalities based on the idea that some racial groups are

inferior to others (Neville, Coleman, Falconer, & Holmes). Interestingly, among White

participants, the correlation of color-blind racial attitudes with Autonomy was negative, though

not significant at the .05 level. Given that the effect size was small according to Cohen (1988;

benchmarks for small [.10], medium [.30], and large [.50] effect sizes), it is possible that future

studies that are better-powered could detect such an effect, therefore, more research will be

needed.

Third, Contact, which characterizes a lack of awareness of their own racial group

membership and minimization of racial issues in White participants, had been hypothesized to

be negatively related to color-blind racial attitudes in Whites. This inverse link was

hypothesized because Gushue and Constantine (2007) found that participants lower on Contact

were higher on *unawareness of White racial privilege, unawareness of institutional*

discrimination, and unawareness of blatant racial issues. Contrary to expectation, a

significant, positive association was found between scores on Contact status and *unawareness*

of White racial privilege, *unawareness of blatant racial issues,* and that total score on color-

blind racial attitudes (*unawareness of institutional discrimination* was not significantly

associated with Contact status). These results suggest that White individuals with high scores

on Contact, that is those who have little experiences interacting with African Americans and

lacking in awareness of racism, were also high on unawareness in the privilege held by Whites

and the occurrences of blatant racial issues in society. Despite the fact that the present results

regarding the link between Contact and racial-colorblind racial attitudes contrasted with those

of Gushue and Constantine (2007), the findings may also be understandable.

The Contact status describes White individuals oblivious to racism and lacking an

understanding of racism (Helms, 1995). Similarly, *unawareness of White racial privilege*

refers to an individual's tendency to deny, avoid or distort the unearned advantages and

privileges of Whites (Neville, Lilly, Duran, Lee, and Browne, 2000). If an individual is

oblivious and lacks an understanding in racism, it would also follow that the individual is

unaware of privileges and advantages a person may have as a result of their racial membership.

Thus, consistent with the findings of the current study, one might expect a positive association

between the Contact Status and *unawareness of White racial privilege* based on the theoretical

similarities between the constructs. Nevertheless, Gushue and Constantine (2007) found a

negative relation between the two.

One possible explanation for the discrepant findings between the present study and the

study by Gushue and Constantine (2007) could be a social desirability bias. The items on the

White Racial Identity Attitudes Scale (WRIAS; Helms & Carter, 1990) directly reference

Blacks with regard to strong emotional feelings one may have or racist opinions one may hold

(e.g., "I feel hostile when I am around Blacks," and "I believe Blacks are inferior to Whites.").

Whereas items on the Color-Blind Racial Attitudes Scale (CoBRAS) are more ambiguous with

regard to race (e.g., "Race plays an important role in who gets sent to prison.") or discuss

minority groups in general (e.g., Racial and ethnic minorities in the U.S. have certain

advantages because of the color of their skin."). Considering the differences in the sensitivity

of the language used in each measure, it is possible that the White participants in the Gushue

and Constantine study may have avoided responses on the WRIAS that appeared racist, even if

those responses reflected their true opinions, yet felt more comfortable answering honestly to

questions on the Co-BRAS because the items were worded more discreetly. In contrast, for the

current study, it may not have been so important to respondents that they provide socially acceptable responses because of the anonymity provided by participating in the study via the internet.

Finally, Disintegration, which describes individuals who may be conflicted over racial and moral dilemmas that are polar opposites (Helms, 1995), had been hypothesized to be positively related to color-blind racial attitudes in Whites. As anticipated, *unawareness of White racial privilege*, *unawareness of institutional discrimination*, *unawareness of blatant racial issues*, and total color-blind racial attitudes were each positively and significantly associated with the less resolved Disintegration status. The positive association between Disintegration and color-blind racial attitudes makes sense because individuals high on Disintegration deny oppression exists although there are examples of it in their daily life, likewise, individuals high on color-blind racism minimize or disregard the existence of racism (Bonilla-Silva, 2001, 2003; Carr, 1997).

Post Hoc Analysis: Links between Racial Identity Statuses and African American relationship outcomes. A number of statistically significant correlations emerged in the post hoc analyses of associations between Racial Identity Statuses and African American relationship outcomes. Both relationship satisfaction and perceived support (as rated by the African American partner) were positively linked to the African American partner's ratings of Pre-Encounter Assimilation racial identity development status. High scores on Pre-Encounter Assimilation represent African Americans for whom race has little salience and who identify with a pro-American racial group orientation (Vandiver, Fhagen-Smith, Cokley, Cross, & Worrell, 2001). The positive association between Pre-Encounter Assimilation and positive perceptions of the relationship suggests that, for African Americans, adopting a pro-American group orientation is linked to the experience of happiness and support from their White partners in African American-White interracial relationships. One other interpretation is that, for

African Americans in the Pre-Encounter Assimilation stage, being with a White person is symbolic of their strong reference group orientation centered on being an American, and is thus linked to their positive reports of their relationship with their White partner. On the other hand, the desire of Pre-Encounter Assimilative African Americans to be viewed as an American, as opposed to a member of a racial group, may drive them to have higher perceptions of happiness and support in their relationship with their White partner in order to satisfy the need to be seen as an American that characterizes this stage.

Notably, the results showing a link between Pre-Encounter Assimilation and relationship outcomes (i.e., relationship satisfaction and perceived support) are consistent with the current study's finding that African Americans high on racial colorblindness are also high on relationship outcomes. For African Americans in the Pre-Encounter Assimilation stage, racial group membership is not important - they tend to minimize the significance of race and see themselves as Americans, as opposed to a member of a specific racial group (Vandiver, Cross, Worrell, & Fhagen-Smith, 2002). Likewise, high colorblind racial attitudes among African Americans indicate a tendency to minimize and/or ignore the importance of race in social interactions (Neville, Coleman, Falconer, & Holmes, 2005). Thus, it follows that high color-blind racial attitudes and being high on Pre-Encounter Assimilation would both be positively correlated with relationship outcomes.

The African American partner's score on Immersion-Emersion Anti-White racial identity status was positively associated with his or her ratings of perceived support. This finding suggests that African Americans who idealized Black culture and denigrated White culture were also high on perceptions of their White partner as a source of support. This finding is interesting, as one would not expect that an African American, who glorifies their Black identity while denigrating Whites and actively avoiding symbols of Whiteness, would be in a relationship with a White person. However, during the Immersion-Emersion Anti-White

stage, White-focused anger dissipates because African Americans focus on individual and group exploration of aspects of their history and culture (Worrell et al., 2001). Perhaps, African Americans scoring as high in the Immersion-Emersion Anti-White stage and in a romantic relationship with a White person, also feel supported by their White partner in their exploration of their racial identity and tend to report that their White partner as a source of support.

African American partners' scores on Internalization Black Nationalist were negatively associated with relationship satisfaction. The negative correlation between the two variables indicates that African Americans who have a positive racial identity; are more racially tolerant; and believe Afrocentric values and principles are useful in solving African American problems, experienced less satisfaction in their relationship (see Worrell et al., 2001). This finding is in contrast to the results of Leslie and Letiecq (2004), in which Internalization Black Nationalist was positively linked to marital quality. More research will be needed in order to better understand the reasons for the discrepant findings between the two studies.

Strengths, Limitations, and Directions for Future Research

The findings from the current study represent an important contribution to the literature. First, much of what is known about interracial relationships has been derived from public records (e.g., census or court records; Lewis, 1994) or interviews and other qualitative methods (e.g., Foeman, 2002, McNamara et al., 1999; Killian, 2001; Rosenblatt et al., 1995). This study is one of only a few (e.g., Leslie & Letiecq, 2004; Reiter, Krause, & Stirlen, 2004) that have used quantitative methods to focus exclusively on relationship functioning within heterosexual, interracial relationships. In addition, this study is the first known study to investigate the influence of color-blind racial attitudes on relationship outcomes within heterosexual, interracial relationships. These findings indicate that, for heterosexual African Americans in

interracial relationships, the level of relationship satisfaction and perceived support he or she experiences is linked to his or her own color-blind racial attitudes.

Despite the strengths of this study, the limitations warrant cautious interpretation of the results. Social desirability bias is a factor that may have influenced the results. This study used self-report measures of racial attitudes. Constantine and Ladany (2000) noted that participants may respond in socially desirable ways on self-report measures of racial attitudes. In this case, African American participants responding to the Cross Racial Identity Attitudes Scale (Vandiver et al., 2000) and White participants responding to the White Racial Identity Attitudes Scale (Helms & Carter, 1990) might have avoided responses that appeared racist, even if those responses reflected their true attitudes, for fear of being judged as having discriminatory or racist beliefs.

Social desirability has also been linked to above average reports of relationship satisfaction among couples (Edmonds, 1967; Russell & Wells, 1992). Thus, in this study African American partners may have inflated their relationship evaluations, perhaps, so as not to reinforce the belief that interracial relationships are not successful (e.g., Stevenson, 1995; Troy, Lewis-Smith, Laurenceau, 2006). Future research should include a social desirability scale to help determine if participants are answering honestly to questions measuring relationship satisfaction and racial attitudes. Nevertheless, because the study allowed for anonymous responses by participants, the hope is that social desirability bias may have been minimized in the present study.

The nature of this study also made it susceptible to self-selection bias. In this case, participants who were comfortable discussing issues related to race and relationship outcomes may have self-selected themselves to participate in the study at a much higher rate than people with more complex racial attitudes and relationship issues. Consequently, the sample may not be random and thus may not be representative of the broad range of racial attitudes and

perspectives on relationship outcomes individuals involved in African American-White interracial relationships may hold.

The reliability and validity of the White Racial Identity Attitudes Scale (WRIAS; Helms & Carter, 1990) may also be of concern for this study. Although the WRIAS has been used in many studies, a number of questions have been raised by previous researchers regarding the validity and reliability of the model and scale. As stated in Chapter 3, some have expressed a concern that Helms' model of White racial identity does not accurately represent the identity development of Whites (Rowe, Bennet, & Atkinson, 1994). Tokar and Swanson (1991) argued that the constructs suggested by Helms (1984) are not adequately supported by the factor structure of the WRIAS. Others have argued that the WRIAS measures concerns about attitudes toward other groups and not attitudes about being White (Bennet, Behrens, & Rowe, 1993; Behrens, 1997; Tokar & Swanson, 1991). Furthermore, in some studies the Contact scale has demonstrated low reliability (Alexander, 1993; Davidson, 1992; Sodowsky, Seaberry, Gorji, Lai, & Baliga, 1991) and one author claims that Disintegration and Reintegration should be considered the same scale, and likewise, that the Pseudo-Independence and Autonomy scales could be combined into a single scale (Behrens, 1997). The issues reported by others regarding reliability and validity, taken together with the concerns regarding social desirability bias that emerged in the present study, could conceivably raise the question of whether the WRIAS should be considered the measure of choice for assessing White racial identity. Future studies should take these issues into consideration if selecting the WRIAS as a measure of White racial identity. Nevertheless, there are few options available for researchers interested in White racial identity development, therefore, future work to better understand and assess White racial identity that builds on Helms' seminal work in this area will benefit the field.

Collecting relationship perception ratings from only the African American partner was a potential limitation of the present study. It would have been interesting to assess the extent to

which partners agreed about the quality of their relationship and perceived support from his or her partner, yet the current data do not allow examination of this important question. Although the current study found that higher color-blind racial attitudes were linked to higher relationship satisfaction in African American partners, research also shows that higher color-blind racial attitudes predict less healthy psychological outcomes, including race-related stress and negative affect in African Americans. It is probable that race related stress and negative affect expressed directly or indirectly by the African American partner could negatively effect the White partner's experience of relationship satisfaction and perceived support in his or her African American partner. Thus, replication of the current study should investigate relationship outcomes from the perspective of both partners in order to learn more about each partner's experience of satisfaction in the relationship and his or her partner's provision of support. Also, the associations between color-blind racial beliefs, psychological well-being, and relationship outcomes within African American-White interracial relationships should be examined. Including a qualitative component to the study in which interviews are conducted and measures assessing race-related stress and affect may help to better tease out the links among the three variables.

Another drawback of this study was the cross-sectional design. Over the course of a person's lifetime color-blind racial attitudes develop (Neville, Coleman, Falconer, & Holmes, 2005) and dimensions of racial identity status continuously change (Cross, 1971; Helms, 1984, 1995; Parham, 1989), however, the cross-sectional design is only able to provide a snapshot of the sample at a particular stage or phase of life. In addition, use of the cross-sectional study design made it difficult to determine the direction of the effect, that is, whether or not racial attitudes caused relationship outcomes or relationship outcomes caused racial attitudes. Future research should utilize a longitudinal design to look at changes in color-blind racial attitudes and racial identity over time and examine the direction of effects.

Finally, this study also has a number of limitations related to external validity and statistical power. To begin with, because over 70% of the sample included dating couples, the results are less generalizeable to African American-White interracial married couples. In addition, less than 6% of this study's participants were over 45 years of age (approximately 84% of the study sample was between the ages of 18 and 44). The fact that the sample tended to include younger men and women may have contributed to non-significant findings for the expected inverse relations between colorblind racial attitudes and the more resolved racial identity status. Younger individuals may not have had sufficient time to develop more resolved racial identity statuses, resulting in fewer people with high scores on the more resolved racial identity statuses. A lack of variability on the more resolved racial identity statuses could have resulted in attenuation of links between colorblind racial attitudes and more resolved racial identity status. African American men-White women couples comprised 63% of the sample, whereas only 37% of the sample included African American women-White men couples. This weighting of the sample towards African American men-White women couples could limit generalizability. Furthermore, the current study was underpowered because it did not obtain the necessary number of participants to detect the medium effect size typical for studies measuring similar variables; studies with low statistical power have reduced chance of detecting a true effect (Cohen, 1988). To address these limitations in external validity and statistical power, future research should include a more broad, representative sample of married couples; African American-White interracial couples over 45 years of age; and, specifically, more African American woman-White man interracial couples in order to confirm the relationship between racial attitudes and relationship outcomes found in the study.

Clinical Implications

This study has important implications for clinicians working with interracial couples. Historically, research investigating interracial relationships has tended to focus on differences

in relationship quality between interracial and intraracial couples (Bratter & King, 2008; Fu, Tora & Kendall, 2001; Troy, Lewis-Smith & Laurenceau, 2006) as well as the influence of experiences with discrimination on relationship outcomes for interracial couples (Foeman & Nance, 2002; Killian, 2002; Rosenblatt, Karis & Powell, 1995). The results of the current study indicate the importance of assessing the role of color-blind racial attitudes in experiences of relationship satisfaction and perceived support when providing clinical services to African American-White interracial couples. Although the results of this study indicate that high color-blind racial attitudes are linked to higher relationship satisfaction and perceptions of the partner as supportive, previous studies have found that endorsement of color-blind racial attitudes are also linked to less healthy psychological outcomes, including race-related stress and negative affect. It seems probable that such issues could, over time, negatively affect other aspects of relationship quality and even negatively influence either or both partners' experience of relationship satisfaction and perceived support. Yet, it is possible that working to lower color-blind racial attitudes may then lead to issues in the relationship, such as lowered relationship satisfaction. As such, it may be important for clinicians to evaluate racial attitudes within African American-White interracial relationships and determine how such attitudes may or may not be contributing to the presenting issues of the couple. If racial attitudes are a primary issue in the presenting concerns of the couple, it will be important for the clinician to provide careful support as he or she encourages conscious exploration of race-related attitudes and beliefs and assists the couple in processing the information that emerges. To conclude, in light of the increasing rates of interracial relationships, there is still a great deal of research that needs to be done on this topic. The data indicates that there is a need to explore and address the significance of racial attitudes and beliefs in interracial relationships. Specifically, researchers will have to recognize the importance of investigating the relevance of racial identity and color-

blind racial attitudes in the functioning of interracial relationships and reports of satisfaction as well as perceived support.

Appendix A

Email Recruitment Announcement

Hello,

I am a Counseling Psychology doctoral student at Pennsylvania State University and I am asking for your help in research to better understand interracial relationships. I am looking for African American-White interracial couples to participate in my research study. You may participate if you are aged 18 and older and are currently or have been part of a heterosexual interracial couple consisting of one African American partner and one White partner. The purpose of the study is to research the influence of perceptions of race on heterosexual interracial relationships. I am interested in understanding both partners' perspectives.

If you would like more information about this study, please contact me at rna106@psu.edu. If you would like to participate, you can access the study website by clicking here.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,
Rubyna Abbey, M.A.

Appendix B

Newspaper/Website Recruitment Announcement

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED
FOR RESEARCH STUDY

African American-White heterosexual

interracial couples needed for a study of

perceptions of race on relationships.

Participants have a chance to win a

$25 Visa Gift Card

Must be aged 18 or older.

Go to (web address) for more information.

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

African American individuals and White

individuals needed for a study of perceptions of

race on interracial romantic relationships.

Participants must be currently or previously

involved in a heterosexual, interracial, romantic

relationship.

Must be aged 18 or older. *Participants have a*

chance to win a $25 Visa Gift Card.

Go to (web address) for more information.

Appendix C

Study of Interracial Relationships
Informed Consent Form

1. Purpose of the Study:
   The purpose of this study is to examine perceptions of race within the context of heterosexual interracial (African American-White) romantic relationships.

2. Procedures to be followed:
   The research study procedure involves completing four questionnaires online. You will be asked to answer questions about your thoughts and feelings about your current relationship and your thoughts and feelings about racial issues in society.

3. Discomforts and Risks:
   There are no risks associated with participating in this research study beyond those experienced in everyday life. Some discomfort or embarrassment could occur while responding to survey questions. A remote risk may include some increased self-consciousness about your relationship.

4. Benefits:
   There are no known benefits to you for participating. This research might provide a better understanding of factors that contribute to heterosexual, interracial couples' relationship outcomes.

5. Duration/Time:
   Participation in the research will require approximately 15 minutes to complete the questionnaires online.

6. Statement of Confidentiality:
   Your participation in this research is confidential. The data will be collected via PsychData, an online social sciences research database. PsychData employs multiple forms of enterprise-level security features to protect the confidential information of research participants. All participants' responses are encrypted using 256-bit SSL Technology (Secure Socket Layer) that is equivalent to the industry standard for securely transmitting credit card information over the Internet. All information submitted through PsychData is password protected and only accessible by the Principal Investigator. Your confidentiality will be kept to the degree permitted by the technology used. If results of this research are published or presented at research conferences, results will be presented in an aggregated form; no information that would identify you will be provided to anyone.

   To ensure the safety and protection of study participants, the following may review and copy records related to this research: The Office of Human Research Protections in the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Pennsylvania State University's Social Science Institutional Review Board, and Pennsylvania State University's Office of Research Protections.

7. Right to Ask Questions: You can ask questions about this research by contacting the principal investigator, Rubyna Abbey, M.A., via email at rna106@psu.edu.

8. Payment for participation:
    For participating in this study, your name will be submitted for a raffle to win one of four $25 Visa gift cards.

9. Voluntary Participation: Your decision to be in this research is voluntary. You can stop at any time. You do not have to answer any questions you do not want to answer. There is no penalty for refusing to take part in or withdrawing from this study.

10. Age Requirement: You must be aged 18 years or older to participate in this research study.

By providing your electronic signature below you agree that you have read and understand the information provided here and you agree to take part in this research study.

_____

Participant's electronic signature   Date

Appendix D

Demographic and Relationship Questionnaire

Instructions: Questions 1 through 10 request information regarding your personal background and involvement in a past or present interracial relationship. Please fill in the appropriate information and answer all questions.

1. Your sex: ( ) Female   ( ) Male

2. Your age: _____

3. Which of the following best describes your race?
    ( ) White-Non Hispanic   ( ) Black-Non Hispanic   ( ) Hispanic

    ( ) Asian   ( ) Native American/Pacific Islander

4. Have you ever been/are you involved in an interracial romantic relationship?
    ( ) Yes   ( ) No

5. Are you currently involved in an interracial romantic relationship?
    ( ) Yes   ( ) No

6. If you are <u>currently</u> in an interracial romantic relationship, what is your current relationship Status OR what was your relationship status at the time you were in an interracial relationship?
    ( ) Single (Not dating or involved in a steady relationships)

    ( ) Dating

    ( ) In a committed relationship (In a steady relationship/Not dating others)

    ( ) Married

    ( ) Separated

    ( ) Divorced

7. Interracial relationship Type:
    ( ) Heterosexual   ( ) Same sex

    ( ) Not in a relationship

8. I have been/ was involved in my interracial relationship for _____years and_____ months.

9. Living situation:

   ( ) My partner and I are currently in a relationship and live together

   ( ) My partner and I are currently in a relationship and <u>do NOT</u> live together

   ( ) My partner and I are <u>not</u> currently in a relationship but we <u>did</u> live together when we were in a relationship

   ( ) My partner and I are <u>not</u> currently in a relationship and we <u>did NOT</u> live together when we were in a relationship

10. What region of the U.S. do you currently reside in:

   ( ) West (AZ, CO, ID, NM, MT, UT, NV, WY, AK, CA, HI, OR, and WA)

   ( ) Midwest (IN, IL, MI, OH, WI, IA, KS, MN, MO, NE, ND, and, SD)

   ( ) South (DE, DC, FL, GA, MD, NC, SC, VA, WV, AL, KT, MS, TN, AR, LA, OK, and TX)

   ( ) Northeast (CT, ME, MA, NH, RI, VT, NJ, NY, and PA)

Appendix E

Color-Blind Racial Attitudes Scale

(CoBRAS; Neville, Lilly, Duran, Lee, & Brown, 2000)

Instructions: Below is a set of questions that deal with social issues in the United States. Using the 6-point scale provided, please give your honest rating about the degree to which you personally agree or disagree with each statement. Please be as open and honest as you can; there are no right or wrong answers.

1. Everyone who works hard, no matter what race they are, has an equal chance to become rich.

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |

Strongly Disagree   Strongly Agree

2. Race plays a major role in the type of social services (such as type of health care or day care) that people receive in the U.S.

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |

Strongly Disagree   Strongly Agree

3. It is important that people begin to think of themselves as American and not African American, Mexican American or Italian American.

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |

Strongly Disagree   Strongly Agree

4. Due to racial discrimination, programs such as affirmative action are necessary to help create equality.

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |

Strongly Disagree   Strongly Agree

5. Racism is a major problem in the U.S.

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |

Strongly Disagree   Strongly Agree

6. Race is very important in determining who is successful and who is not.

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |

Strongly Disagree   Strongly Agree

7. Racism may have been a problem in the past, but it is not an important problem today.

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |

Strongly Disagree   Strongly Agree

8. Racial and ethnic minorities do not have the same opportunities as White people in the U.S.

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |

Strongly Disagree   Strongly Agree

9. White people in the U.S. are discriminated against because of the color their skin.

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |

Strongly Disagree   Strongly Agree

10. Talking about racial issues causes unnecessary tension.

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |

Strongly Disagree   Strongly Agree

11. It is important for political leaders to talk about racism to help work through or solve society's problems.

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |

Strongly Disagree   Strongly Agree

12. White people in the U.S. have certain advantages because of the color of their skin.

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |

Strongly Disagree   Strongly Agree

13. Immigrants should try to fit into the culture and adopt the values of the U.S.

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |

Strongly Disagree   Strongly Agree

14. English should be the only official language in the U.S.

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |

Strongly Disagree   Strongly Agree

15. White people are more to blame for racial discrimination in the U.S. than racial and ethnic minorities.

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |

Strongly Disagree   Strongly Agree

16. Social policies, such as affirmative action, discriminate unfairly against White people.

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |

Strongly Disagree   Strongly Agree

17. It is important for public schools to teach about the history and contributions of racial and ethnic minorities.

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |

Strongly Disagree   Strongly Agree

18. Racial and ethnic minorities in the U.S. have certain advantages because of the color of their skin.

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |

Strongly Disagree   Strongly Agree

19. Racial problems in the U.S. are rare, isolated situations.

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |

Strongly Disagree   Strongly Agree

20. Race plays an important role in who gets sent to prison.

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |

Strongly Disagree   Strongly Agree

Appendix F

Cross Racial Identity Scale

(CRIS; Vandiver et al., 2000)

Instructions: The following statements concern how you feel about racial and social issues. Please read each item and indicate to what degree it reflects your own thoughts and feelings, using the 7-point scale below. There are no right or wrong answers. Base your responses on your opinion at the present time.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Somewhat Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree

Sample Items:

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

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

I go through periods where I am down on myself because I am Black

I hate the White community and all that it represents.

I see and think about things from an Afrocentric perspective

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

Appendix G

White Racial Identity Attitudes Scale

(WRIAS; Helms & Carter, 1990)

Instructions: The following statements concern people's attitudes about social and political issues. There are no right or wrong answers. Different people have different viewpoints, so try to be as honest as you can. Using the scale found under each statement, circle the number that best describes how you feel.

1. I hardly think about what race I am.

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

2. I do not understand what Blacks want from Whites.

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

3. I get angry when I think about how Whites have been treated by Blacks.

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

4. I feel as comfortable around Blacks as I do around Whites.

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

5. I involve myself in causes regardless of the race of the people involved in them.

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

6. I find myself watching Black people to see what they are like.

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

7. I feel depressed after I have been around Black people.

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

8. There is nothing that I want to learn from Blacks.

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

9. I seek out new experiences even if I know a large number of Blacks will be involved in them.

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

10. I enjoy watching the different ways that Blacks and Whites approach life

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

11. I wish I had a Black friend.

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

12. I do not feel that I have the social skills to interact with Black people effectively.

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

13. A Black person who tries to get close to you is usually after something.

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

14. When a Black person holds an opinion with which I disagree, I am not afraid to express my viewpoint.

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

15. Sometimes jokes based on Black people's experiences are funny.

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

16. I think it is exciting to discover the little ways in which Black people and White people are different.

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

17. I used to believe in racial integration, but now I have my doubts.

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

18. I'd rather socialize with Whites only.

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

19. In many ways Blacks and Whites are similar, but they are also different in some important ways.

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

20. Blacks and Whites have much to learn from each other.

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

21. For most of my life, I did not think about racial issues.

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

22. I have come to believe that Black people and White people are very different.

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

23. White people have bent over backwards trying to make up for their ancestors' mistreatment of Blacks, now it is time to stop.

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

24. It is possible for Blacks and Whites to have meaningful social relationships with eachother.

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

25. There are some valuable things that White people can learn from Blacks that they can't learn from other Whites.

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

26. I am curious to learn in what ways Black people and White people differ from eachother.

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

27. I limit myself to White activities.

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

28. Society may have been unjust to Blacks, but it has also been unjust to Whites.

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

29. I am knowledgeable about which values Blacks and Whites share.

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

30. I am comfortable wherever I am.

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

31. In my family, we never talked about racial issues.

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

32. When I must interact with a Black person I usually let him or her make the first move.

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

33. I feel hostile when I am around Blacks.

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

34. I think I understand Black people's values.

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

35. Blacks and Whites can have successful intimate relationships.

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

36. I was raised to believe that people are people regardless of their race.

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

37. Nowadays, I go out of my way to avoid associating with Blacks.

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

38. I believe that Blacks are inferior to Whites.

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

39. I believe I know a lot about Black people's customs.

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

40. There are some valuable things that White people can learn from Blacks that they can't learn from other Whites.

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

41. I think that it's okay for Black people and White people to date each other as long as they don't marry each other.

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

42. Sometimes I'm not sure what I think or feel about Black people.

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

43. When I am the only White in a group of Blacks, I feel anxious.

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

44. Blacks and Whites differ from each other in some ways, but neither race is superior.

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

45. I am not embarrassed to admit that I am White.

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

46. I think White people should become more involved in socializing with Blacks.

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

47. I don't understand why Black people blame all White people for their social misfortunes.

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

48. I believe that White people look and express themselves better than Blacks.

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

49. I feel comfortable talking to Blacks.

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

50. I value the relationships that I have with my Black friends.

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

Appendix H

Revised Dyadic Adjustment Scale

(RDAS; Busby, Crane, Larson, & Christiansen, 1995)

Instructions: The following questions concern your thoughts about your romantic relationship. Most people have disagreements in their relationships. Using the scale provided, please indicate below the approximate extent of agreement or disagreement between you and your partner for each of the items below.

1. Religious matters

Always Agree	Almost Always Agree	Occasionally Agree	Frequently Disagree	Almost Always Disagree	Always Disagree
5	4	3	2	1	0

2. Demonstrations of affection

Always Agree	Almost Always Agree	Occasionally Agree	Frequently Disagree	Almost Always Disagree	Always Disagree
5	4	3	2	1	0

3. Making major decisions

Always Agree	Almost Always Agree	Occasionally Agree	Frequently Disagree	Almost Always Disagree	Always Disagree
5	4	3	2	1	0

4. Sex relations

Always Agree	Almost Always Agree	Occasionally Agree	Frequently Disagree	Almost Always Disagree	Always Disagree
5	4	3	2	1	0

5. Conventionality (correct or proper behavior)

Always Agree	Almost Always Agree	Occasionally Agree	Frequently Disagree	Almost Always Disagree	Always Disagree
5	4	3	2	1	0

6. Career decisions

Always Agree	Almost Always Agree	Occasionally Agree	Frequently Disagree	Almost Always Disagree	Always Disagree
5	4	3	2	1	0

7. How often do you discuss or have you considered divorce, separation, or terminating your relationship?

All the Time	Most of the Time	More often than not	Occasionally	Rarely	Never
0	1	2	3	4	5

8. How often do you and your partner quarrel?

All the Time	Most of the Time	More often than not	Occasionally	Rarely	Never
0	1	2	3	4	5

9. Do you ever regret that you married (or live together)?

All the Time	Most of the Time	More often than not	Occasionally	Rarely	Never
0	1	2	3	4	5

10. How often do you and your mate "get on each other's nerves"?

All the Time	Most of the Time	More often than not	Occasionally	Rarely	Never
0	1	2	3	4	5

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11. Do you and your mate engage in outside interests together?

Every Day	Almost Every Day	Occasionally	Rarely	Never
4	3	2	1	0

How often would you say the following events occur between you and your mate?

12. Have a stimulating exchange of ideas

Never	Less than once a month	Once or twice a month	Once or twice a week	Once a day	More often
0	1	2	3	4	5

13. Work together on a project

Never	Less than once a month	Once or twice a month	Once or twice a week	Once a day	More often
0	1	2	3	4	5

14. Calmly discuss something

Never	Less than once a month	Once or twice a month	Once or twice a week	Once a day	More often
0	1	2	3	4	5

Appendix I

Perceived Social Support Subscale of Quality of Relationships Inventory

(QRI; Pierce, Sarason, & Sarason, 1991)

Instructions: The following questions concern how you may think or feel about a romantic relationship. Using the scale found under each question, select the number that best describes your relationship with your partner.

1. To what extent can you count on this person to listen to you when you are very angry at someone else?

1	2	3	4
Not at all	A little	Quite a bit	Very much

2. To what extent can you turn to this person for advice about problems?

1	2	3	4
Not at all	A little	Quite a bit	Very much

3. To what extent can you really count on this person to distract you from your worries when you feel under stress?

1	2	3	4
Not at all	A little	Quite a bit	Very much

4. To what extent could you count on this person for help with a problem?

1	2	3	4
Not at all	A little	Quite a bit	Very much

5. If you wanted to go out and do something this evening, how confident are you that this person would be willing to do something with you?

1	2	3	4
Not at all	A little	Quite a bit	Very much

6. To what extent could you count on this person to help you if a family member very close to you died?

1	2	3	4
Not at all	A little	Quite a bit	Very much

7. To what extent can you count on this person to give you honest feedback, even if you might not want to hear it?

1	2	3	4
Not at all	A little	Quite a bit	Very much

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9/2010 – 6/2011   **Psychology Extern**,
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