STRESS, RESIELINCE, AND ACHIEVEMENT

MOTIVATION IN COLLEGE STUDENTS: THE FULL

HALF OF THE GLASS

By

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Title of Study: STRESS, RESILIENCE, AND ACHIEVEMENT MOTIVATION IN COLLEGE STUDENTS: THE FULL HALF OF THE GLASS

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Abstract: Scope and Method of Study: The scope of this study was limited to students at Eastern Washington University who chose to participate. The purpose was to examine the relationship between stress, resilience, and achievement motivation in relation to family structure and racial/ethnic status. Participants answered five separate measures, one measure for stress, one measure for resilience, two measures of achievement motivation, and a general information form. A sample of 186 students volunteered to participate. Independent sample T tests and an ANOVA were used to examine stress, resilience, and achievement motivation in relation to the home environment, racial/ethnic status, and the home environment. In addition to T tests, Pearson correlations were used to examine the associations amongst the family structure for under-represented students.

Findings and Conclusions: There was a positive relationship between achievement motivation and self-reported levels of GPA in regard to the intact home and racial/ethnic status. There was not a relation between resilience, stress, and achieving tendency in regards to the intact home and racial and ethnic status. Furthermore, there was a negative relationship between racial/ethnic status and cumulative GPA's.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Over half of all students who enter higher education will fail to complete a bachelor's level degree (Museus, 2009). Lower rates of attainment among the general college student population include troubling racial and ethnic inequalities in college student graduation rates (Museus, 2009). Researchers attribute low educational attainment to the effects of an individual's demographic background and its contribution to stress in higher educational settings (Evans 2004; Murry, Bynum, Brody, Willert, & Stephens, 2001;VerPloeg 2000; Whitehouse 2006).In spite of racial/ethnic under-represented students entering college at higher rates in comparison to past decades, many racial/ethnic under-represented students continue to graduate at distinctly lower rates than their majority counterparts (Bland et. al, 2011).

While one-third of the majority racial/ethnic background students do not complete their bachelor's degrees within a six-year time frame, one half of students from the underrepresented background do not complete a college level degree in any form (Bland et. al. 2011; Cokley et.al, 2011).

Household family structure also affects college graduation rates. College students today have had less of an opportunity to grow up in an intact household, defined as a household populated by both biological parents (Carlson & Trapani, 2006). Students who were born during the 1980's or 1990's have a 50 % chance of living in a non-intact household at some point before entering higher education (Murryet.al, 2001). Research affirms students from the non-intact home may have fewer resources than their intact counterparts in preparing for the college setting (Murryet.al. 2001). While researchers have focused on students of the racial/ethnic underrepresented background and students from non-intact households, Baldwin et. al (2003) stated it is important to focus on students who may come from both demographic backgrounds concomitantly. Researchers also illuminate that racial/ethnic under-represented students come from intact households at higher rates than racial/ethnic majority students (Baldwin, et. al, 2003).

Statement of the Problem

While researchers have devoted much attention to the shortcomings and negative outcomes of students from racial/ethnic minority backgrounds and/or from non-intact households, few have looked at factors that may contribute to why students from these non-traditional backgrounds succeed (Carver, 1998). Hartley (2011) argues that although the environmental demands related to these demographic backgrounds are exceedingly

stressful, students from these environments often demonstrate a high level of commitment to academic persistence. Hartley (2011) states students from these underrepresented backgrounds often demonstrate high levels of interpersonal resilience and high levels of achievement. The situations these students face are often analogous to the "half-full, half-empty" glass depiction (Murry et. al., 2001). A preponderance of research focuses on the "half-empty" aspect of the glass when assessing these students. However, the characteristics and qualities of the half-full glass consist of resilience and achievement motivation. These qualities assist the student from a non-intact household and or underrepresented racial background in succeeding in the academic and professional environment (Edwards et al., 2007; Greer, 2008 Murry et. al., 2001). The lack of information on racial/ethnic minority students from non-intact households begs the question: how and why do some of these students thrive?

Significance of the Study

Data collected at a Northwestern United States public university during the academic school year of 2009-2010 was analyzed to examine perceived academic achievement, resiliency, achievement motivation, and stresses among college students. More specifically, these factors were analyzed in college students from non-intact households and those with racial/ethnic minority backgrounds compared to majority students from intact, two-parent family households. Relationships between these factors such as resilience and achievement motivation which may help students who are from non-intact households, low socioeconomic status and/or of racial/ethnic minority backgrounds overcome additional stressors in college were explored. The analysis of this

data adds to information on possible strengths such students have to succeed in higher education in spite of multiple obstacles and stresses.

Definition of Terms

Non-intact/disrupted households. The term *single-parent/non-intact households* is defined as households where parents may be separated, divorced, or never married, and the household may contain other related adults such as grandparents, or it may contain unrelated adults, as in cohabitation (Carlson & Trapani,2006). VerPloeg (2002) coined the term *disrupted families*, defined as *single*-parent family/non-intact household. In this paper I use the term *non-intact household*, rather than *single*-parent family/non-intact household because it is more inclusive. Non-intact families are more likely to be characterized by multiple family transitions than by long-term stability (Carlson & Trapani 2006). Thus, the term "disrupted" stresses this instability, and interruptions of the non-intact household's daily life.

Intact household. The term *intact ho*usehold will be used to describe students who were raised in the same two-parent/legal guardian home throughout childhood and adolescence. The term *intact* will be used as not all children were born into the traditional nuclear family household of the biological mother and father. This term will be utilized in that not all cultures operate under the traditional nuclear family system of both biological parents in the household.

Underrepresented student racial backgrounds consists of students who come from African American (Black), Hispanic, and Native American racial/ethnic backgrounds. Researchers have found students from these racial/ethnic backgrounds are often underrepresented in higher education institutions, specifically predominantly White

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institutions (Richardson, 2011). Furthermore, statistics show that students of the under-represented racial/ethnic background often enter the college setting with fewer means to prepare them (e.g., emotional and financial) for the rigorous stressors of higher education (Perez, 2000). The term *under-represented* is used because these students make up less than the majority of their represented counterparts even though students from this population are steadily entering higher education settings (Hartley, 2011; Wie et.al, 2010; Museus &Quaye, 2009).

   Represented students. Students with Asian, Middle Eastern, and Caucasian racial/ethnic statuses are labeled as *represented students* in the current study. Students of these racial backgrounds will be considered represented because these students consistently achieve in higher education settings (Perez, 2000).

   Stress. The concept of stress can be rather vague, and for many scientific professionals, it lacks clear definition. Hess and Copeland (2006) state there have been two prevailing definitions of stress. The first definition given is environmental circumstances or conditions that threaten, challenge, exceed, or harm psychological or biological capacities of the individual. Lazarus and Folkman's model, which views stress as a relationship between environmental events or conditions and the individual's cognitive appraisals of the degree and type of challenge, threat, harm, or loss (Hess & Copeland, 2006). While Lazarus and Folkman's model has been widely used, it is now receiving much criticism and questioning. Hess and Copeland (2006) state that this criticism is because of the suggestion that cognitive appraisal may not always be present with the stressor. In addition, theoretical models are becoming more sophisticated, and there is a growing understanding of the role of mediating and moderating processes in

stress that influence the relationship between stressors and psychopathology across development. That is, mediators can help explain the relationship between stressors and particular outcomes, and moderators are thought to influence this relationship. These authors suggest a broad definition of stress that "refers not only to the environmental stressors themselves but also to the range of processes set into motion by exposure to environmental stressors" (Hess & Copeland, 2006, p.255). Despite this new theory, numerous researchers employ Lazarus and Folkman's model of stress, that if the event is perceived stressful, then indeed it was stressful (Baldwin, Chambliss, &Towler, 2003; Carver, 1998; D'Imperio et. al., 2000; Greer, 2008; Murff, 2000; Phinney& Haas, 2003; Steindhardt & Dolbier, 2008; Towbes& Cohen, 1996).

Resilience. The most common definition of resilience is the ability to bounce back, resist illness, and adapt to stress or thrive in the face of adversity (D'Imperio et.al, 2000; Smith et al., 2008; Spencer, 2009; Steinhardt &Dolbier, 2008). However Carver (1998) suggests that the experience of resilience is the capacity to recover from a downturn to a former state of relative wellbeing, not thriving. In this paper, the term *resilient* will be used as a preponderance of research employs this term (Hartley, 2011; Liem, Martin, Porter, & Colmar,2012)

Achievement motivation. Achievement motivation refers to an individual's desire for accomplishment, mastering of skills, and high standards (Dweck, 2002). Putting the two terms, *motivation* and *achievement* together, Dweck (2002) suggests that motivation is the key to outstanding achievement. Mehrabian (2000) defines achievement motivation as a personality trait that refers to a need and desire to succeed in work and in life through hard work and perseverance. Liem et.al. (2012) noted that while students may have

higher levels of achievement motivation, achievement motivation can be seen as beneficial or detrimental.

Perceived achievement. In this study, perceived achievement is defined by the participants self-reported accumulative GPA at the time of participation in the study.

Research Questions

Question 1. Will there be a difference in scores of stress, resilience, achievement motivation, and grade point average based on self-reported family structure?

Question 2. Will there be a difference in scores of stress, resilience, achievement motivation, and grade point average based upon self-reported racial/ethnic background?

Question 3. Will there be a difference in scores of stress, resilience, achievement motivation, and grade point average based on self-reported social economic class?

Question 4. Will students of the underrepresented background demonstrate higher levels of stress verses their non-under-represented peers regardless of family structure?

Question 5. Will students who score higher levels in achievement motivation report higher levels of self-reported grade point averages?

Hypotheses

Hypothesis 1. (A) Students from non-intact homes will score higher on a measure of stress than students from intact households. (B) Students from non-intact households will score higher on a measure of resilience than students from intact households. (C)Students from non-intact households will score higher on a measure of achievement

motivation than students from intact households (C1:Achieving Tendency, C2:Disciplined Goal Orientation). (D)Students from non-intact households will report lower cumulative GPA's than students from intact households.

Hypothesis 2. (A)Students with underrepresented racial backgrounds will score higher on a measure of stress than students with represented racial backgrounds. (B)Students with underrepresented racial backgrounds will score higher in levels of resilience than students of the non-underrepresented racial backgrounds. (C) Students with underrepresented racial backgrounds will report higher levels of achievement motivation than their represented counterparts (C1:Achieving Tendency, C2: Disciplined Goal Orientation). (D)Students with underrepresented racial backgrounds will report lower GPA's verses students of the non-underrepresented racial backgrounds.

Hypothesis 3. (A) Students from lower SES households will score higher on a measure of stress than students from higher SES households. (B)Students from lower SES households will score higher on a measure of resilience than students from higher SES households. (C) Students from lower SES households will score higher than students from higher SES households in levels of Achievement Motivation (C1:Achieving Tendency, C2: Disciplined Goal Orientation). (D)Students from lower SES households will report lower GPA's then students from higher SES households.

Hypothesis 4. Students with underrepresented racial background will have higher levels of stress regardless of family status.

Hypothesis 5. There will be a positive relationship between achievement motivation and self-reported GPA's..

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

The Student from the Non-Intact Household

Prevalence of non-intact household. The non-intact household has become a significant socio-economic trend, a U.S. cultural phenomenon, and a culture within itself. The number of non-intact/single-parent households rose from 22% in 1990 to 28% in 2000 (Carlson & Trapani, 2006). In 2012, the U.S. Bureau of Census reported that 40.6% of students were born into single/non-intact households in 2008 (Roberts et.al. 2012). Furthermore, in the year of 2009, the number of children born into this family structure increased from 27% of to 29.5%. Murry et. al. (2001) and Carlson and Trapani (2006) found that the largest group of single parent households are composed of divorced mothers, with never-married young adults not too far behind, followed by older, economically stable unmarried women.

Murry et. al (2001) quoted the U.S. Bureau of Census to reveal that regardless of the parents' marital histories, births to non-intact households constitute 28% of all births. Of these, single mothers in these non-intact homes are 11% Asian American, 20% White, 37% Hispanic, and 67% African American. The Census data illuminates how these percentages are steadily rising, with students from non-intact households constituting 24% White, 66% African American, 52% American Indian, 16% Asian and Pacific Islander, and 41% Hispanic or Latino. These constitute 34% of single parent families in the year of 2010 (US Bureau of Census, 2012).

What defines the non-intact household? Although the number of students from non-intact/single-parent households is large, obtaining a true depiction of the living arrangements of this environment is very complex and warrants much attention. The terms *single-parent household* and non-intact households are defined as household's in which parents may separated, divorced, or never married, and the household may contain other related adults, such as grandparents, or it may contain unrelated adults, as in cohabitation (Carlson & Trapani, 2006). The term "disrupted families", constitutes the same definition as the term single parent in that the single parent household is not considered intact (VerPloeg, 2002). Although the two terms share the same definition, as indicated above in this paper I use the term non-intact families as the primary focus in this study was on the stressors and lack of resources that these students undergo. Additionally, single parent families are more likely to be characterized by multiple family transitions than by long term stability (Carlson & Trapani, 2006).

The environment of non-intact households. Carlson and Trapani (2006) assert that a notable feature of this family form is their economic strain. These authors illuminate

that economic well-being of children is clearly linked with family structure. Sixty five percent of children in single mother families, 45% of single father families, and 61% of children in households with neither parent present are below the poverty level. With this finding, it is important to look at the disrupted family in terms of not only family structure but socio-economic status (SES) as well. Murry et. al. (2001) noted that this has been a highly debated issue in family research. The debate about the extent to which family structure in and of itself influences the development and adjustment of students from these environments (Murry et.al, 2001). These authors elucidate two schools of thought to frame this debate. The first school of thought posits that aspects of this family formation differ from those of never divorced, two-parent nuclear families and thus produce negative outcomes in students' educational development. This school focuses on the disadvantages from the absence of one parent and the poverty in which these single parent families often live. The second school of thought deals solely with economic status. These authors note that when considering a cultural context, economic status explains most sufficiently the differences between children from intact and non-intact households.

Researchers show that individuals with under-represented racial/ethnic status make up the majority of disrupted households, and those who study minority families contend that particular family structures, especially the nuclear family, may be less important to members of under-represented groups than to their represented counterparts (Murry et.al, 2001). Furthermore, many researchers neglect the diversity of the non-intact households in under-represented groups. Under-represented status families often operate

on kinship models that may include other adults who may not be blood relations or are conjugal groups, grandparents, or distant family members.

Poverty in the non-intact households. Researchers have shown that poverty is highly correlated with family structure (Carlson & Trapani, 2006; Evans et. al., 2005; Evans, 2004; Murry et.al, 2001; Shaw, 1982; VerPloeg, 2002; Whitehouse, 2006). Approximately 21.6 million students in the US come from non-intact households. Of these students, most of whom live below the U.S. poverty level, 65% are from single mother families, 45% are from single father families, and 61% are from households with neither parent present (Carlson & Trapani, 2006). Whitehouse (2006) stated that the poverty threshold was $19,157 of annual income for a family of four with two minors in 2005. In many cases, this annual income consisted of government assistantship, making the actual annual income much lower than $19,157. Whitehouse (2006) indicated that the concept of poverty can appear rather vague and that poverty has been defined as "extent to which an individual does without resources" (p.835), of which income is only one.

Carlson and Trapani (2006) postulate that the physical environment may be the most overwhelming influence on families from non-intact households. The literature notes that students living in this environment often live in perilous neighborhoods, have deficient social and emotional support, and are exposed to higher risks of health issues. Research elucidates the impoverished neighborhood as typically loud, crowded, with high levels of violence, and a low quality of housing (Evans et. al., 2005; Evans, 2004).Ver Ploeg (2000) affirms that, on average, students from non-intact homes have fewer resources available than their intact counterparts. In addition to these physical resources, adolescence living in poverty lack emotional, mental, spiritual, support systems,

relationships, and role models (Whitehouse, 2006). These adolescents also reported lower levels of perceived support when actual support was given (Evans et. al., 2005). The economic strains of this environment have deleterious outcomes for children, such as not pursuing lifelong educational goals.

   Psychological outcomes of the disrupted household. As a result of the numerous resources these families lack, the non-intact household is at high risk for psychological ailments. Students from these environments lack support systems, relationships, and role models (Whitehouse, 2006). Researchers found that these students have less access to social networks to serve for emotional needs. As adults, these students become caught between dependence and independence without reaching interdependence. This unhealthy shift causes these students to lose emotional resources, resulting in high levels of intrapersonal stress (Whitehouse, 2006, p.838).

The Student and Stress

   The negative effects of stress can be experienced both directly and indirectly. Students from non-intact households deal with many indirect stressors that often go unnoticed. Moreover, due to the many disruptions in their daily lives, these students may not view their situation as stressful (Murry et al., 2001; Ver Ploeg, 2002). Often, these adolescents mature too early, leaving their adaptive, coping skills with not enough time to develop and strengthen before they are exposed to higher levels of stress (Hess & Copeland, 2006). Students from non-intact households may not recognize that transitioning to college places them at risk for higher levels of stress.

   Unique and perceived stressors of college students. Stress is an inevitable aspect of every individual's life. On top of daily hassles, college students are particularly prone

to other stressors (Ross, Niebling, &Heckert, 1999). For many college students, stress can take various forms in their daily life, and many students come unprepared for the challenges of keeping the proper balance between responsibilities and maintaining a healthy lifestyle while in the face of pressure. Ross et. al.(1999) describe this dynamic relationship between the person and environment in stress perception and response, much like Lazarus and Folkman's model, which is especially magnified in the college student population. A common found theme in the literature is that college students are faced with a unique cluster of stressful experiences (Ross et al., 1999; Murff, 2005; Phinney& Haas, 2003). Students just entering college face many transitional changes. For many students, they must adjust from being away from home for the first time, maintain high academic standards, and adjust to a new social environment (Ross et. al., 2003).

Ross et. al. (2003) found that changes in eating habits, increased work load, and new responsibilities were among the top five sources of stress for college students. Phinney and Haas (2003) found the main sources of stress for college students are financial challenges, domestic responsibilities, and responsibilities related to holding a job while in school and maintaining an academic work load. In developing their College Chronic Life Stress Scale, Towbes and Cohen (1996) structured their survey of stress into six groups: academic performance, peer relations, family relations, romantic relationships, lifestyle, and physical appearance and health. Along with the six groups, these authors also clustered college stressors into four major developmental tasks: Achieving emotional independence from family, choosing and preparing for a career, preparing for relationship commitment and family life, and developing an ethical system. Towbes and Cohen (1996) stated these tasks require the student to develop new social

roles and modify old ones, resulting in role strain. Although these authors grouped and labeled these stressors in different categories, a common theme between them and other researchers is that college students struggle with juggling time with their newfound responsibilities (Negga, Applewhite, & Livingston, 2007; Phinney& Haas, 2003; Murff, 2005; Ross et. al., 2003). Freshmen and students from non-intact households have also experienced greater stress than upper classmen and students from intact households (Phinney & Haas, 2003; Ross et.al, 1999). Furthermore, students from non-intact households are typically faced with family pressures. Huan, Yeo, Ang, and Har (2008) demonstrated that family pressure strain on students from non-intact household impairs their studies. They found these students felt unprepared and that they could not attain standards that they perceived as satisfactory. This resulted in high levels of anxiety. Phinney and Haas (2003) indicated students from non-intact households may lack support on account of their families being less understanding and knowledgeable about the time constraints of an academic workload. Often, these students are still expected to maintain their responsibilities at home in addition to a full academic workload.

Although the behavioral outcomes of these students differ greatly, most researchers agree that these students experience higher levels of stress affecting emotional state and academic performance (Evans et.al, 2005; Murry et. al., 2001; VerPloeg, 2002; Whitehouse, 2006). Understanding the role of stressful events in adolescent transitions represents a significant step. However, these authors note that research on these stressors is slow, which could be due to the lack of a true definition of stress and the non-intact household.

Much of the research regarding academic completion and attendance in students from non-intact households suggests stress is a negative outcome (D'Imperio, Dubow, &Ippilito, 2000; Feven et. al., 2007; VerPloeg, 2000). Family disruptions and stress of familial obligations may hinder the student from the non-intact home in preparing for or staying in college (Baldwin et al., 2003; Phinney& Haas, 2003; VerPloeg, 2000). Feven et.al (2007) state there is a strong body of research demonstrating a strong relationship between cognitive abilities and stress. These researchers found that students displaying higher levels of stress also displayed lower levels of cognitive abilities. Contradicting this research, Ross et al. (1999) note that it is important to explore which sources of stress are detrimental and which sources are motivating and beneficial. Moderate amounts of stress help motivate us and at times increase an individual's performance (Ross et al., 1999). Thus, while it is true students from non-intact households may be prone to higher levels of stress; this stress may result in positive outcomes such as higher achievement and higher levels of resilience.

Resilience, Thriving, and Achievement Motivation

Thus far, researchers have devoted more attention to the shortcomings and negative outcomes of students from non-intact households and under-represented ethnic/racial backgrounds. The circumstances these students endure are often comparable to the "half-empty verses half-full" glass representation. Little is discussed about the full half that actually perseveres in the face of adversity (Murry et. al., 2001). Phinney and Haas (2003) and Carver (1998) suggest these students are not rare, and the experience of adversity may at times yield benefits to those who experience it. Students growing up in non-intact households may develop strengths that they may not have otherwise. These

students encompass the ability to rise above adversity with resources such as superior inner-strength, and a strong kin network built with relationships within the community (Phinney& Haas, 2001). With the lack of information about these students, the question of why some of these students benefit while others do not arises. Over the past three decades, there has been a moving body or research focusing on how some individuals thrive in the face of adversity while others succumb. Many researchers have tried to answer this question with the idea of resilience, while a few have employed the ideology of thriving, and, in the last decade, with the construct of achievement motivation (Baldwin et al., 2003; Carver, 1998; Hall, Spruill, & Webster, 2002; Joiner & Wingate, 2005; Smith, Dalen, Wiggins, Tooley, Christopher, & Bernard, 2008; Spencer, 2009; Steinhardt &Dolbier, 2008; Wodka &Barakat, 2006). Yet little research has combined all three constructs.

The most common definition of resilience is the ability to bounce back, resist illness, and adapt to stress, or thrive in the face of adversity (D'Imperio et.al, 2000; Smith et al., 2008; Spencer, 2009; Steinhardt &Dolbier, 2008). Carver (1998) suggests that the experience of resilience is the capacity to recover from a downturn to a former state of relative wellbeing, not thriving. Thriving refers to being better off than before the adverse event took place. Carver (1998) states that, in the event of adversity, there are four possible outcomes and that resilience and thriving are of two of these possibilities. In the first and second possible outcomes, the individual either succumbs or survives, but is diminished or impaired. The third outcome is that of resilience, which can have at least two positive outcomes, which both have overtones of the thriving construct. The first effect is that after the individual is exposed to the event numerous times, the down-turn

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happens to a slighter degree. The second effect is that after the adverse experience has happened so many times, recovery is quicker. In this outcome, the individual is hit just as hard as before, but recovers more quickly (Carver, 1998; D'Imperio et.al, 2000). The final possibility is thriving.

There is a clear distinction between resilience as returning back to the previous level of functioning, and thriving as moving to a superior level of functioning following a stressful event (Carver, 1998; Smith et. al., 2008).Adverse and stressful events have thus far been considered harmful to the individuals in these environments. Yet, the adverse experience may at times promote the surfacing of a quality or more subsequent functioning, leaving the individual better off than prior to the event. Individuals who thrive achieve skills and knowledge, confidence, and strengthened personal relationships (Carver, 1998). To get through the adverse events successfully, these individuals may have been forced to learn something new in order to cope. This newly acquired expertise may be an actual skill, improved knowledge, or shed to light available resources. In addition to the ability to endure something previously unendurable, individuals may gain a sense of mastery and confidence about performance in the face of future setbacks ("I have survived other events; I can survive this one as well").

There are many factors that may make or help an individual thrive or be resilient. Factors that may assist in resilience and thriving are coping styles, hardiness, self-esteem, and optimism (D'Imperio et al., 2000; Steinhardt &Dolbier, 2008; Wodka &Barakat, 2006). Most successful and resilient students from the under-represented ethnic/racial backgrounds and non-intact households express a sense of commitment to attaining a college education and a determination to stay focused (Phinney& Haas, 2003).

Researchers have coined this commitment and determination as achievement motivation (Conchas, 2002; Deci& Ryan, 2002; Dweck, 2002; Hall et al., 2002; Kiah, 1992). Achievement motivation refers to an individual's desire for accomplishment, mastery of skills, and high standards (Dweck, 2002). Putting the two terms motivation and achievement together, Dweck (2002) suggests that motivation is the key to outstanding achievement. For most students from non-intact households and the under-represented ethnic/racial backgrounds, being good enough is just fine, yet many of these students who thrive have conditioned themselves to think that only excellence and perfection are allowable. These students strive to be the top scholar in class, student body president, marathon champion, and so forth (Spencer, 2009). Suarez and Orozco (1995) suggest the key component for these students, is not the motivation level, but the standard of excellence. Here the irony of achievement motivation is that the harder you push the worse it gets (Decy& Ryan, 2002). Little research has focused on the detrimental effects this may have on college students from these backgrounds, and warrants attention. Furthermore, the question arises as to whether or not resilience is a mitigating factor when considering achievement motivation.

Stacked against the odds

Lower educational attainment of children from non-intact households is well documented in the literature (VerPloeg, 2000). Even more disturbing is the research indicating that students with under-represented racial/ethnic background make up the majority of America's non-intact households (Murry et. al., 2001). Baldwin et. al. (2003) suggests students with under-represented ethnic/racial backgrounds in general are more likely to be apprehensive regarding the academic rigors of college. This analysis asserts

these students encounter common experiences different from their non-underrepresented counterparts. Researchers suggest numerous hypotheses about why educational attainment and completion for these students is so low. VerPloeg (2000) hypothesizes this lower attainment is a result of the non-intact family living in poverty. On average, students from non-intact households have fewer resources such as income, and paying for school may not be an available option (Evans et. al., 2005; Kiah, 1992; VerPloeg, 2000). Furthermore, one of the clearest findings is that students living in poverty experience more stressful events, have greater psychological distress, and higher stress hormones. As a result these students are typically less available to learn (Hess & Copeland, 2006). Although academic success is an important goal, students from the under-represented ethnic/racial background and non-intact household are faced with other competing goals such as family obligations, holding a job, and academic workload (Phinney& Haas, 2003; VerPloeg, 2000). Students may do well in coping with family issues while maintaining a job, but this in turn may compromise their academic success. This compromise results in academic failure, which is one of the main stressors of college students (Huan et. al. 2008, Towbes& Cohen, 2006; VerPloeg, 2000). Researchers suggest that chronic student role strains are important correlates of psychological distress for students, and that minority stresses make a substantial additional contribution to this correlation (Smedley, Myers, & Harrell, 1993).

At institutions of higher education, the academic attainment of represented students tends to be significantly higher than that of students from the under-represented racial categories (Richardson, 2011). Researchers indicate that students from under-represented background often hold dual minority status in higher education. This means

that a majority of students from the under-represented racial/ethnic status also come from lower SES households (Richardson, 2011, Wie et. al, 2010). Roberts et. al, (2012) report these demographic backgrounds combined impacts the adolescent being prepared for the stressors that he/she is faced with in higher education. Likewise, students from these demographic backgrounds often enter college with below average GPA's. Robotham (2008) reports the average college student faces the common stressors of studying, time balance, transition to the university setting, stressors related to being in a different environment, and financial obligations. While acknowledging the same stressors, Museus (2009) further contends that students from these demographic backgrounds are faced with heightened stressors due to their minority status in the beginning of their college career. Wie et.al. (2010) found that students of the under-represented backgrounds experienced stresses associated with being a minority on a predominantly White campus. These authors found that minority stress in the form of perceived racism was related to low academic retention among African American and Latino/a students.

For the most part researchers have focused on the disparities of under-represented students and students from non-intact households, recently, researchers have focused on the personal inner strengths these students possess in college settings. Liem et. al. (2012) argues that a student's culture may, in fact, influence her/his levels of motivational achievement. These authors found that the meanings of academic motivation may actually be positively influenced for one to strive for success. Furthermore, Hartley (2011) postulates that academic persistence itself is a key in examining a student's resilience and motivational achievement.

While the literature exposes that coming from both demographical backgrounds of underrepresented racial status and the non-intact home may leave students from this background feeling unprepared for the atmosphere of higher education, the literature also exposes culture playing a strong influence in academic persistence (Hartley, 2011). Although coming from these demographic backgrounds provide additional stressors for these students, researchers emphasize these cultural influences may in turn provide a foundation for students to build on their inner strengths and personal resilience (Liem et.al, 2012). The conclusion of the matter, though often unprepared, students from these demographical backgrounds enter the higher educational setting with the same goal as their majority counterparts of attaining a college degree, and are steadily rising in accomplishing this goal.

CHAPTER III

METHODS

Participants

      Participants for this study were 161 students (97 females, 60.2%) from a public university in the northwestern area of the US. Participants identified themselves into four different age groups. Over half (57.4%) of students ranged from the ages of 18-20 (see Table 1). The representation of undergraduate class levels was relatively equal in this sample amongst class standing (see Table 2). Additionally, participants self-identified into other demographical categories consisting of family structure, socio-economic status (SES), and ethnicity. The representation of family structures was greatly imbalanced with 92 participants (56.8%) living the majority of their adolescent lives with both biological parents residing in the same household (see Table 3). Students from the non-intact homes were given the opportunity to explain their family structure. Over half of these students stated that their parents were divorced or separated (see table 3B).

The representation of SES was very much imbalanced as well with 117 (72.2%) participants stating that they came from a middle-class background (see Table 5). The representation of ethnicity was relatively equal with 77 (47.8%) underrepresented students and 84 (52.2%) Caucasian's. Of the 32 participants who identified as multiracial, 24 participants did not select the multiracial option on a demographic questionnaire. Rather, they marked every box in which applied to them (See Table 4). In addition to these variables, single parent households were coded as non-intact households. Non-intact was defined by students from homes in which both biological parents were not present. Students from the non-intact homes represent less than half of participants of this study (69, 42.9%). Race/ and ethnicity was recoded as under-represented. Out of the 161 participants in this study, 65 (40.4%) make up the under-represented racial background.

Measures

General information form. The General Information Form (GIF) was a measure created to collect demographic data on participants. Participants were asked to answer questions regarding the following: gender; age group; class standing; grade point average (GPA), approximate GPA last quarter, cumulative GPA, expected final GPA for the current semester, perceived family structure, perceived SES of household adolescents, and race/ethnicity. Participants were given the opportunity to explain class standing, perceived family structure, SES, and race/ethnicity.

In addition to demographic information, the GIF utilized two scales to measure coping and levels of stress in certain experiences from the Relaxation and Stress Reduction Workbook (Davis, Eshelman, McKay, 2008). The first questionnaire was a

fourteen-item adaption of the Coping Styles Questionnaire(Davis, Eshelman, &McKay, 2008) in which participants were asked to rate their responses from strongly agree, agree, disagree, and strongly disagree. Sample items are "I sleep more than I need to when stressed" (-), "I hate to fail at anything" (-), "I seek out friends and conversation for support" (+), and "I confront my sources of stress and work to change it" (+).

The second scale on the GIF was an adaption of the Schedule of Recent Experience (Davis, Eshelman,& McKay, 2008). This was a 31-item questionnaire in which participants rated their responses on a Likert-type scale from slight discomfort (1-3), to moderate discomfort (4-7), to extreme discomfort (8-10). Participants were asked to do this for past and expected experiences. No reliability or validity information was given for the scales adapted for the GIF. Although the adaption of the Coping Styles Questionnaire and the adaption of the Schedule of Recent Experience were given to participants, these results were not used in this data analysis. The questionnaires were given before research questions were developed, and do not align with the current research questions. Additionally, predicted next quarter GPA and current predicted quarter GPA were not used.

Student Stress Scale. The Student Stress Scale Test (SSS; Ross, Niebling, &Heckert, 1999) is a thirty-one item self-report scale in which participants indicated whether or not they experienced a specific life event in the past or expect to experience it in the future. The original scale consisted of the Student Stress Survey, which was created in 1985 by Insel and Roth (as cited in Ross, Niebling, &Heckert, 1999). The Student Stress Survey originally had 40 items that were divided into four categories of potential sources of stress combined with the Taylor Manifest Anxiety Scale (Insel& Roth, 1985).

The scale utilized in this study is an adaptation from Eastern Washington University's Counseling Center. Sample items are as follows: "Change in living conditions"; "Pregnancy"; "First Semester in College"; and "Outstanding personal achievement". No reliability or validity data could be found for the original scale. For the current sample, Cronbach's alpha reliability was .78.

Connor Davidson Resiliency Scale. The Connor-Davidson Resiliency Scale (CD-RISC; Connor & Davidson, 2003) is a 25-item self-report questionnaire in which participants are asked to mark the answer that best indicates how much they agree or disagree with statements on the questionnaire. Participants rated these experiences from not true at all (0), to rarely true (1), sometimes true (2), often true (3) and to true nearly all the time (4). Sample items are as follows: " I tend to bounce back after illness, injury, or other hardships"(+), "I give my best effort no matter what the outcome may be"(+), "I take pride in my achievements"(+), and "Having to cope with stress can make me stronger"(+). For the current sample, Cronbach's alpha reliability was .89.

Mehrabian's Need for Achievement Scale. The Mehrabian's Need for Achievement Scale (MACH), is a 38 item self-report scale consists of statements to which participants indicate the degree of their agreement or disagreement with each statement on a nine point likert type scale (Mehrabian, 2000). Sample items are "Adversity strengthens my resolve to achieve my goals" (+), "I work well under pressure" (+), "I lack persistence" (-), and "I have difficulty working in a new and unfamiliar situation" (-) (Mehrabian, 2000, p.160). Mehrabian (2000) reported an internal consistency/reliability coefficient of .91 for the 38-item version of the Achieving Tendency Scale. Cronbach's alpha for the improved MACH obtained by Mehrabian

(2000) was .88. Mehrabian (2000) indicated that high internal consistency was particularly noteworthy, considering the extensive efforts made to enhance generality of the scales by including many diverse characteristics associated with achieving tendency. Mehrabian (2000) reported that additional data yielded substantial support for the reliability and validity of the MACH (Mehrabian, 2000). While, for the current sample, Cronbach's alpha for the whole measure was.68, internal reliability for the Achieving Tendency Scale was .58, and .65 for the Disciplined Goal Orientation. Reasons for these low reliabilities will be discussed in the discussion section.

Procedure

Participants were primarily recruited from introductory psychology courses. Students were also recruited from introductory courses in a cultural studies program to ensure a greater representation of race, class, and gender. The instruments were administered in a fifty-minute class period during which participants completed all measures anonymously. Participants were given information about the study and were informed of their right to withdraw from the study without penalty at any given time. After giving their informed consent, participants filled out the survey packet in the following sequential order: the GIF, the SSS, the CD-RISC, and the MACH. They received course credit, extra credit, or research credits for their participation. The instruments were administered using a paper and pen format, with an average completion time of 30 to 45 minutes. Participants were given the option to receive scored results. Of the 161 participants, one participant requested results and further information on the study.

CHAPTER IV

RESULTS

Test of the Hypotheses

Independent sample t-tests were used to test hypotheses 1-3. Hypothesis 4 was

conducted as a two way analysis of variance. Hypothesis 5 was analyzed using a Pearson

product moment correlation.

Hypothesis 1. Hypothesis 1 had five sub-hypotheses designed to answer the question of

whether or not there would be a difference in levels of stress, resilience, achievement

motivation, and GPA based on self-reported family structure. Results for all five

hypotheses are displayed in Table 6. For hypothesis 1A (students from non-intact

households would score higher on a measure of stress than students from intact

households), there was no difference between groups in levels of stress. There were also

no significant differences between groups for hypothesis 1B (students from non-intact

households would score higher in levels of resilience than students from intact

households).

Hypothesis 1C stated that students from non-intact households would score higher in levels of achievement motivation than students from intact households as measured by achieving tendency and disciplined goal orientation. There were no differences between groups in achieving tendency. There were differences between groups in level of disciplined goal orientation, but the hypothesis was not supported as the differences were in the opposite direction than that predicted. Hypothesis 1D stated that students from non-intact households would report lower cumulative GPA's than students from intact households. There was a significant difference and the hypothesis was supported.

Hypothesis 2. Hypothesis 2 consisted of five sub-hypotheses designed to test whether there will be a difference in scores between stress, resilience, achievement motivation, and cumulative GPA based upon self-reported racial/ethnic backgrounds. See Table 7 for results. Hypothesis 1A (students from underrepresented racial backgrounds would score higher than the majority racial status in levels of stress) was not supported as there was no difference between groups. There were also no differences between groups on levels of resilience, which disconfirmed hypothesis 2B (students from underrepresented racial backgrounds would score higher in levels of resilience than the majority backgrounds). Hypothesis $2C_1$ (students of the underrepresented racial backgrounds would score higher than students from the majority backgrounds in levels of achieving tendency) was not supported. There were no differences between groups. Hypothesis $2C_2$ (students from underrepresented racial backgrounds would score higher than students from the majority racial backgrounds in levels of disciplined goal orientation) was also not supported. Although there was a significant difference between groups in levels of disciplined goal orientation, results were in the opposite direction of

what was hypothesized. Hypothesis 2D (students with the underrepresented racial backgrounds would report lower cumulative GPA's than students from the majority racial status) was supported. There was a significant difference between groups in the predicted direction.

*Hypothesis 3.*Hypothesis 3 consisted of 5 sub-hypotheses designed to test whether there will be a difference between scores in levels of stress, resilience, achievement motivation, and self-reported cumulative GPA based upon self-reported family social economic class. As indicated in Table 5, with the majority of students reporting middle class at 72%; this restriction of range in variance precluded analyses.

*Hypothesis 4*stated that students from underrepresented racial backgrounds would score higher in levels of stress than their majority racial background peers regardless of family structure. Although students from underrepresented racial backgrounds had higher stress levels than their peers from majority racial status backgrounds in both intact and non-intact families, the difference in stress levels was not significant (see Table 8). A two-way analysis of variance conducted to test this hypothesis found no significant interaction between family structure and racial background indicating there is no significant difference in the effect of family structure on reported levels of stress for students from underrepresented racial backgrounds and students from majority racial backgrounds. There were no significant main effects meaning that there was no difference in stress levels neither based on family structure nor on stress levels based on racial backgrounds (see Table 9).

*Hypothesis 5.*To test the fifth hypothesis, that there would be a positive relationship between achievement motivation and self-reported GPA's, a Pearson product

moment correlation was computed to assess the relationship between self-reported

cumulative GPA and Achieving Tendency and Discipline Goal Orientation. The

hypothesis was supported as indicated in Table 8.

CHAPTER V

CONCLUSION

Discussion

Hypothesis 1 consisted of five sub-hypotheses. The hypotheses that students from the non-intact home would score higher in levels of (1A) stress; (1B) resilience; and (1Ca) higher levels of achievement motivation by means of the Achieving Tendency Scale; were not supported. A possible explanation for this could be the restricted range in the sample of the college students. The majority of students came from an intact household. This college sample consisted of 56.9% of students from households with both biological parents in the home, 9.4% of students from households with one biological parent and an adult of no relation, and 3.8% of students from households with one biological parent and an adult family member making up 70.1% of this particular sample

Students from family structures with more than one adult in the household may have not considered their household a single parent home if both parents were still actively raising them throughout childhood (Carlson & Trapani, 2006). Researchers Carlson & Trapani (2006) further noted that students from different cultures may not consider their homes to be single-parent homes due to different cultural norms (e.g., being raised by grandparents or other relatives in the same household.

Further explanation could be based on the college transition from literature reviewed. Transitioning to the college atmosphere is taxing for all first year college students. Hartley (2011) found that although students from different backgrounds had different stressors, all students in their first semester scored high in levels of stress.

The findings for hypothesis 1 regarding students from non-intact households and achievement motivation by the means of the Disciplined Goal Orientation Scale presented a negative relationship. Thus, the hypothesis that students from the non-intact household would score higher in levels of achievement motivation by the means of the Disciplined Goal Orientation Scale was not confirmed. This interpretation must be read with caution in that the reliability in this particular college sample was low for the disciplined goal orientation. Furthermore, effect size was low ($\eta2 = .01$), meaning there was nota large difference for this particular college sample.

Phinney and Haas (2003) state that while academic success for students from these demographical backgrounds is often and important goal, academic success may be compromised of other external obligations. Researchers have argued that these obligations may consist of working for financial stability as familial expectations often supersede academic goals (Phinney& Haas, 2003). Finally, the finding that students from

non-intact households would report lower cumulative grade point averages than their intact counterparts was supported. The mean GPA for students coming from intact households was 3.23, whereas the mean GPA for students from non-intact households was 2.92. This could be explained through research findings in the literature that students coming from non-intact household often come un-prepared for the college environment. Furthermore, these students may have other familial obligations in which academic success may be compromised (Evans et. al, 2005).

The hypotheses that students from the under-represented racial/ethnic backgrounds would score higher in levels of (2A) stress; (2B) resilience; and (2Ca) higher levels of achievement motivation by means of the Achieving Tendency Scale; were not supported. There were no significant relationships found between these variables and underrepresented racial backgrounds. A possible explanation for this could be that in this particular sample as only 40.4% make up the under-represented racial background. Further explanation could be interpreted through the literature emphasizing students from the under-represented racial/ethnic background may have been conditioned to minimize stressful events (Robotham, 2008). Students from these backgrounds may not perceive their situations as stressful and may be desensitized to dealing with daily hassles. Comparable to hypothesis 1, a possible explanation is that the college environment is challenging for all students in higher education. In addition, the college experience may grant all students with opportunities to build resilience as well as higher levels of achievement motivation. Although students from different backgrounds experience different stressors, Hartley (2011) found in his research that all students in

their first semester scored high in levels of stress overall. First-semester stress may thereby disguise the effects other stressors.

The findings for hypothesis 2 regarding students from the underrepresented racial/ethnic background and achievement motivation by the means of the Disciplined Goal Orientation Scale presented a negative relationship. The hypothesis that students from underrepresented background would score higher in levels of achievement motivation by the means of the Disciplined Goal Orientation Scale was not confirmed. Comparable to hypotheses 1, this interpretation must be read with caution in that the reliability in this particular college sample was low for the disciplined goal orientation. Furthermore, the effect size was low ($\eta2$=.01), meaning there wasn't a large difference for this particular college sample. Low reliability for this measure could be accounted for bya misprint in the actual achievement motivation scales in which not all participants were able to fill out the entire measure. Students who received the misprinted copies only had the opportunity to complete the first half of the achieving tendency scales. Furthermore, in some cases, students who did have the misprinted copy did not complete the entire measure.

Further explanation for this finding could be a student's culture may influence his or her levels of motivational achievement. Whereas many researchers have focused on the disparities of under-represented students, Liem et al. (2012) argue a student's culture may in fact influence her/his levels of motivational achievement. These authors found the meanings of academic motivation may actually be positively influenced for one to strive for success in addition to breaking cultural norms.

The hypothesis that students with underrepresented racial/ethnic backgrounds would report lower cumulative GPA's was supported. The mean GPA for students coming from the non-underrepresented racial/ethnic backgrounds was 3.23, whereas the mean GPA for students from underrepresented racial/ethnic backgrounds was 2.92. Additionally, students with the non-underrepresented racial/ethnic backgrounds reported the same GPA as students from intact homes. A possible explanation for this could be that a preponderance of students from non-intact homes have under-represented racial/ethnic backgrounds (VerPloeg, 2002).

With regards to hypothesis 3, there was not enough variance to run an analysis based on social class. In this particular college sample, 72% of students reported belonging to the middle class. A possible explanation for this could be the measure in which was used to define social class. When putting together the General Information form, social class was labeled: below poverty, low, middle-class, and higher SES. No definitions were given as to what these class labels meant. This left the student to decide the class to which they felt they belonged. Rapoza (2012) stated that perception in this case may not be greater than the reality. There is a significant difference in actual middle class belonging and perception of middle class belonging. In a Pew research survey of 2,508 nationwide adults, over 50% stated they were from the middle class (Rapoza, 2012). However, when endorsement is based upon actual income earned, only 32% of these individuals were found to have actually belonged to the middle class.

The hypothesis that students of under-represented racial/ethnic background would have higher levels of stress regardless of family structure was not confirmed. Although the hypothesis was not supported, there was a significant difference in means, however

not significant in reaction. Furthermore, when computing the two way analysis of variance for students of the under-represented racial/ethnic background and family structure, the R Squared = .030, with an adjusted R Squared of .011. Thus, these findings could produce different results if using a larger population. These findings could be explained by the fact that college students face a unique type of stress (Murphy, 2005). Furthermore, Towbes and Cohen (1996) note that students entering higher education are faced with the developmental tasks of achieving independence from family, choosing career paths, preparing future relationships, and building ethical systems. Thus, students entering higher education may be more focused on stress of the college environment regardless of the home environment (Negga, Applewhite, & Livingston, 2007).

The hypothesis that there would be a positive relationship between family structure and reported levels of GPA was upheld. Results show that when students scored higher in levels of achieving tendency and disciplined goal orientation, they also reported higher cumulative GPA's. This finding could be best explained in that when an individual's level of commitment to excel is high, that levels of achievement will be high as well (Conchas, 2002). Furthermore, Mehrabian (2000) explains achieving tendency as one's ability to excel, and disciplined goal orientation as ones commitment to excel. Thus, students who score higher in levels of achievement motivation and disciplined goal orientation would also score higher in levels of academic endeavors.

Limitations

Significant limitations are found in the measures of the current study. A major limitation in this study regards the General Information Form (GIF) as well as the Achieving Tendency Scales (MACH & DGO). At the time of constructing the GIF, I did

not have the knowledge on how I should code certain variables such as social class, age, family structure, and race. I therefore did not provide a definition for social class categories. Consequently, participants were left to choose the class in which they perceived themselves to grow up in without an exact number representation.

Age data was collected as a categorical variable: 18-20, 21-25, 25-30, and 30+; thus, continuous age was not collected and true age could be known for each participant. Furthermore, participants, who were the age of 25, could put themselves into two age brackets, which may have affected the number of participants in the 21-25 brackets or the 25-30 brackets.

In regards to race/ethnicity, students had the opportunity to choose from Hispanic, African American, Caucasian, Asian/Pacific Islander, Native American or Alaskan Native, Middle Eastern, or Multi-racial. Although there was a multi-racial option, the GIF instructed students to "check all that apply," in which some participants marked more than one of the racial categories. Thus a majority of students were placed into the racial category of multi-racial.

On one occasion, during data collection, a misprint error was detected after administration of the measures. In a one credit hour class period with approximately 60 individuals, participants were given a misprinted form of the MACH. The MACH consisted of two scales, one ranging from 1to 22, and the other ranging from 1 to 18. Approximately 50 individuals did not receive questions 12-22 of the first scale of the MACH. Thus, data cannot be interpreted for these individuals of the first scale. Additionally, approximately 16 participants failed to complete or withdrew from the study in which only half of the measures were completed. Due to this error, reliability for

the MACH and DGO for this particular sample is low, and conclusions must be made with caution.

Another limitation was found in the Student Stress Scale's reliability information. Reliability information was provided for the current study, however no information could be found on the initial scale itself. Information on the original Stress Scale was found after the study was ran describing the original Stress Scale in Heckert et. al.'s (1999) description of the Student Stress Scale. The measure used in this study was obtained from the university counseling center, and was used without previously looking into the scale's reliability and validity information.

In addition to the measures given, there were limitations in the procedures of the study. The study was given in survey format in which participants filled out four different questionnaires. For some participants this may have seemed lengthy, resulting in no response error in which participants did not fully complete the study or pay close attention to the questions asked. Furthermore, data was collected with convenience sampling. Classes were chosen to reach certain individuals from various demographical backgrounds. Thus, this sample may not represent the university population. Initially, data was collected in introductory psychology courses. To obtain a more diverse sample, data was collected through various diversity clubs on campus such as the Black Student Union (B.S.U), Movimiento Estudiantil Chicano de Aztlan (M.E.CH.A), and the Native American Student Association (N.A.S.A). This could have affected the generalizability and external validity of the study. Furthermore, this particular study relied on self-report data in a survey format. Participants in this study may have answered the measures given based upon personal perception rather than a true depiction of their personal

environments. Additionally, participants may have misreported their true attitudes when feeling out the measures of stress, resilience, and achievement motivation.

Implications and Future Research

The findings for this current study support previous research that students from the under-represented background and non-intact home report lower cumulative GPA's than their represented and intact home counterparts. This finding may make counselors and educators aware of the possible extra support students from these backgrounds may need to be successful in higher education settings. This extra support may include programs that offer mentoring for first generation college students. Research demonstrates that when students find mentors with upper graduate students or faculty members, they report feeling more successful in their first year in the higher education setting (Campbell, 2010). In addition to mentoring, students from these backgrounds may benefit from programs such as TRIO where extra support is provided in the form of tutoring, professional development, and classes on studying techniques Campbell, 2010). Furthermore, students from these backgrounds may benefit on workshops that provide them with opportunities to network with other professionals in their fields.

Implications for future research to be considered include explorations of stress, resiliency, and achievement motivation in students at Historically Black Colleges and Universities and or colleges in an urban setting where the student population is more diverse. Qualitative investigations are warranted since student beliefs and perceptions of success are relevant to the present research topic. After administering resilience, stress, and achievement motivation measures, it may be beneficial to discuss these issues with participants in order to gain insights to their personal beliefs.

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Table 1
Age while participating in survey

Age Brackets	Frequency	Percent
18-20 years old	93	57.8%
21-25 years old	53	32.9%
25-30 years old	10	6.2%
30+ years old	5	3.1%
Total	**161**	**100%**

Table 2
Class standing

Class Standing	Frequency	Percent
Freshman	46	28.6%
Sophomore	37	22.4%
Junior	45	28.0%
Senior	27	16.8%
Other	7	4.2%
Total	**161**	**100%**

Table 3
Description of family structure during the majority of childhood

Family Structure	Frequency	Percent
Both Biological Parents-Residing in home	91	56.9%
Single Parent Home	37	23.1%
Two Parent Home with-One adult of no relation	15	9.4%
Single Parent Household-with other adult family members living in household	6	3.8%
Other (raised by others/foster care)	11	5.6%
Total	**160**	**100%**

Table 3B

Reason for single parent/non intact home during childhood

Explanation of single-parent home	Frequency	Percent
Never Married	11	17.7%
Divorced/Separated	36	58.1%
Other	8	6.9%
Total:	**55**	**71.9%**

*Note. *Not every person from a non-intact home answered the question in which they were given the option to explain*

Table 4

Racial and Ethnicities Represented

Race/Ethnicities	Frequency	Percent
Hispanic	15	9.3%
African American	17	10.6%
Caucasian	84	52.2%
Asian Pacific Islander	12	7.5%
Native American	2	1.2%
Multiracial	31	19.3%
Total	**161**	**100%**

Table 5
Socio-economic Status

SES Grouping	Frequency	Percent
Below Poverty Level	3	1.9%
Low	28	17.5%
Middle Class	116	72.5%
Higher SES	13	8.1%
No Answer	1	.6%
Total	**161**	**100%**

Table 6

Stress, Resilience, Achievement Motivation, and GPA scores based on family structure

Variable	N	M (SD)	t	p	C.I.	$\eta2$
Stress						
Intact	90	293.42 (197.96)	-1.86	.06	-1.2 to -3.67	.006
Non-intact	66	354.7 (205.58)				
Resilience						
Intact	91	71.64 (13.55)	.591	.56	-3.09 to 5.72	.006
Non-intact	69	70.32 (14.49)				
Achievement Motivation						
Intact	35	25.23 (19.18)	-.204	.839	-11.69 to 9.52	.01
Non-intact	29	26.31 (23.27)				
Disciplined Goal Orientation						
Intact	49	10.84 (18.32)	2.02	.05	.12 to 15.65	.01
Non-intact	38	2.95 (17.73)				
GPA						
Intact	88	3.23 (.56)	2.63	.01	.08 to .56	.006
Non-intact	65	2.92 (.85)				

Table 7

Stress, Resilience, Achievement Motivation, and GPA scores based on demographic background

Variable	N	M (SD)	t	p	C.I.	$\eta2$
Stress						
Underrepresented racial status	90	335.41 (238.45)	.39	.06	-36.84 to 93.41	.006
Majority	66	307.13 (174.45)				
Resilience						
Underrepresented racial status	91	71.68 (13.81))	.65	.56	-3.41 to 5.43	.006
Majority	69	70.67 (14.01)				
Achievement Motivation						
Underrepresented racial status	35	27.47 (22.01)	.67	.839	-9.04 to 14.03	.006
Majority	29	24.98 (20.72)				
Disciplined Goal Orientation						
Underrepresented racial status	49	1.09 (15.15)	.05	.05	-17.32 to 17.67	.01
Majority	38	9.66 (19.01)				
GPA						
Underrepresented racial status	88	2.96 (.79)	.04	.01	-.47 to .01	.006
Majority	65	3.2 (.64)				

Table 8

Level of stressed based upon family structure and racial/ethnic background

Source	Type III of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	p	Partial Eta Squared
Intact	74894.540	1	74894.540	1.842	.177	.012
Under-represented	51747.146	1	51747.146	1.272	.261	.008
Intact*Under-represented	39.672	1	39.672	.001	.975	.000
Total	156	156				

Note. R Squared=.030 (Adjusted R Squared=.011)

Table 9

Descriptive statistics for level of stress based upon family structure and racial/ethnic background

Family Structure	Racial/Ethnic Background	Mean	Std. Deviation	N
Two parent home	Majority	280.43	163.11	61
	Under-represented	320.76	257.70	29
	Total	293.42	197.96	90
Non- two parent home	Majority	328.73	145.25	22
	Under-represented	366.89	230.41	44
	Total	354.17	205.58	66
Total	Majority	293.23	159.16	83
	Under-represented	348.56	240.93	73
	Total	319.12	202.81	156

Table 10

Relationships between accumulative GPA, achieving tendency, and disciplined goal orientation

	Accumulative GPA	Achieving Tendency	Disciplined Goal Orientation
Accumulative GPA	-		
Achieving Tendency	.281*	-	
Disciplined Goal Orientation	.295*	.354**	-

Note. *Correlation is significant at the .05 level (2-tailed). **Correlation is significant at the .01 level (2-tailed).

APPENDICES

General Information Form (2009)

1. Gender: Please Check One

    o Female

    o Male

2. Age Group: Please Check One

    o 18-20

    o 21-25

    o 25-30

    o 30+

3. Class Standing

- o Freshman

- o Sophomore

- o Junior

- o Senior

- o Other: Please specify_____

4. Grade Point Average: Please Specify for each

   - o Cumulative: _____

   - o Approximate GPA last quarter only:_____

   - o Expected GPA for this quarter only:_____

5. Perceived family structure during the majority of childhood:

   - o Both biological parents residing in home

   - o Single parent home

   - o Two parent home, with one adult of no relation (i.e., parents remarried, or parent has significant other living in household)

   - o Single parent household, with other adult family members living in the household (i.e., family members or family friends)

   - o Other (i.e., raised by other members of the family, and or foster care). Please specify:_____

6. If the majority of your childhood was in a single parent home, please specify:

   - o Parent was never married

   - o Parents divorced/separated

   - o One parent is deceased

o Other, please specify:_____

7. Perceived socio-economic status during adolescence:

    o Lower than the poverty level

    o Low

    o Middle class

    o Higher SES

    o If there are any explanations or concerns, please

      specify:_____

8. Ethnicity: Please check one

    o Hispanic origin, if so please specify:_____

    o Please check all other that apply

        o African American

        o Caucasian

        o Asian/ Pacific Islander

        o Native American or Alaskan Native

        o Middle Eastern

        o Multiracial/Other. Please specify:_____

Please check one for each item:

Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	
				I sleep more than I need to when stressed
				I ignore my own needs and just work harder and

				faster
				When taking out a loan, I constantly worry
				I hate to fail at anything
				It upsets me a lot when I make mistakes
				I avoid things I cannot do well
				I confront the source of stress and work to change it
				It is very important for me to do well in everything that I do
				I ignore my problems and hope that they will go away
				When stressed, I must take time away from responsibilities
				I seek out friends and conversations for support
				Making mistakes upsets me
				My personal achievement is strongly important, that stress does not affect me in pursuing my goals
				I do not feel stressed as long as I have control over my environment

Please rate the degree to which you feel these experiences:

Slight Discomfort	Moderate Discomfort	Extreme Discomfort
[1] [2] [3]	[4] [5] [6] [7]	[8] [9] [10]
Symptom (disregard those that you do not experience)	**Degree of discomfort (1-10) in the past**	**Degree of discomfort (1-10) in the present**
Anxiety in specific situations:		
Tests		
Deadlines		
Competing priorities		
Interviews		
Public speaking		
Financial problems		
Work		
School		
Other		
Anxiety in personal relationships:		
Spouse/significant other		
Parents		
Children		
Other:		
Worry		
Depression		
Anger		

Irritability		
Resentment		
Phobias		
Fears		
Muscular tension		
High blood pressure		
Headaches		
Neck pain		
Backaches		
Indigestion		
Muscle spasms		
Insomnia		
Sleeping difficulties		
Work stress		
Attention difficulties		
Other		

Student Stress Scale (Ross, Niebling, & Eckhart, 1999)

Student Stress Scale Test

Check those events that you have experienced in the past six months or are more likely to

experience in the next six months

Life Event	**Past**	**Future**
Death of a close family member	____	____
Death of a close friend	____	____
Divorce	____	____
Jail term	____	____
Personal injury/illness	____	____
Marriage	____	____
Fired from job	____	____
Change in health of family member	____	____
Pregnancy	____	____
Sex difficulties	____	____
Serious argument with close friend	____	____
Change in financial status	____	____
Change of major	____	____
Trouble with parent's	____	____
New boyfriend or girlfriend	____	____
Increased workload at school	____	____
Outstanding personal achievement	____	____

First semester in college   ____   ____

Change in living conditions   ____   ____

Serious argument with instructor   ____   ____

Lower grades than expected   ____   ____

Change in sleeping habits   ____   ____

Change in social activities   ____   ____

Change in eating habits   ____   ____

Chronic car trouble   ____   ____

Change in number of family gatherings   ____   ____

To many missed classes   ____   ____

Change in schools   ____   ____

Dropped more than one class   ____   ____

Minor traffic violations   ____   ____

Stress that is prolonged, severe, and/or occurs to often in a short period of time is highly correlated to a decline in physical health

Taken from life plan, by Donald M. Vicery, M.D

Connor Davidson Resilience Scale (2003)

For each item, please mark an "x" in the box below that best indicates how much you agree with the following statements as they apply to you over the last month. If a particular situation has not occurred recently, answer according to how you think you would have felt

	Not true at all	Rarely True	Someti mes True	Often True	True nearly all the time
1. I am able to adapt when changes occur	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]
2. I have at least one close and secure relationship that helps me when I am stressed	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]
3. When there are no clear solutions to my problems, sometimes fat or God can help	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]
4. I can deal with what comes my way	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]

5. Past successes give me confidence in dealing with new challenges and difficulty

[ ] [ ] [ ] [ ] [ ]

6. I try to see the humorous side of thinks when I am faced with problems

[ ] [ ] [ ] [ ] [ ]

7. Having to cope with stress can make me stronger

[ ] [ ] [ ] [ ] [ ]

8. I tend to bounce back after illness, injury, or other hardships

[ ] [ ] [ ] [ ] [ ]

9. Good or bad, I believe that most thinks happen for a reason

[ ] [ ] [ ] [ ] [ ]

10. I give my best effort no matter what the outcome may be

[ ] [ ] [ ] [ ] [ ]

11. I believe I can achieve my goals, even if there are obstacles

[ ] [ ] [ ] [ ] [ ]

12. Even when thinks look hopeless I don't give up

[ ] [ ] [ ] [ ] [ ]

13. During times of stress/crisis, I know where to turn to for help

[ ] [ ] [ ] [ ] [ ]

14. Under pressure, I stay focused and think clearly

[ ] [ ] [ ] [ ] [ ]

15. I prefer to take the lead in solving

[ ] [ ] [ ] [ ] [ ]

problems rather than letting others

make all the decisions

16. I am not easily discouraged by   [ ]   [ ]   [ ]   [ ]   [ ]

    failure

17. I think of myself as a strong   [ ]   [ ]   [ ]   [ ]   [ ]

    person when dealing with life's

    challenges and difficulties

18. I can make unpopular or difficult [ ]   [ ]   [ ]   [ ]   [ ]

    decisions that affect other people if

    it is necessary

19. I am able to handle unpleasant or [ ]   [ ]   [ ]   [ ]   [ ]

    painful feelings like sadness, fear,

    and anger

20. In dealing with life's problems,   [ ]   [ ]   [ ]   [ ]   [ ]

    sometimes you have to act on a

    hunch without knowing why

21. I have a strong sense of purpose in [ ]   [ ]   [ ]   [ ]   [ ]

    life

22. I feel in control of my life   [ ]   [ ]   [ ]   [ ]   [ ]

23. I like challenges   [ ]   [ ]   [ ]   [ ]   [ ]

24. I work to attain my goals no matter [ ]   [ ]   [ ]   [ ]   [ ]

what road blocks I encounter along

the way

25. I take pride in my achievements   [ ]   [ ]   [ ]   [ ]   [ ]

Achieving Tendency Scale and Disciplined Goal Orientation Scale (Mehrabian, 2000)

Appendix 1: The Achieving Tendency Scale and Disciplined Goal Orientation Scale

Please use the following scale to indicate the degree of your agreement or disagreement with each of the statements below. Record your numerical answer to each statement in which the space provided preceding the statement. Try to describe yourself accurately and in terms of how you are generally (that is, the average of the way you are in most situation—not the way you are in specific situations or the way you would hope to be).

+4 = very strong agreement

+3 = strong agreement

+2 = moderate agreement

+1 = slight agreement

  0 = neither agreement nor disagreement

-1 = slight disagreement

-2 = moderate disagreement

-3 = strong disagreement

-4 = every strong disagreement

1. I don't usually tackle problems that others have found to be difficult

2. I have difficulty working in a new and unfamiliar situation

3. When I do a job, I set high standards for myself regardless of what others do

4. The idea of struggling my way to the top does not appeal to me

5. I work well under pressure

6. Repeated failure does not deter me from trying to accomplish the thing I set out to accomplish

7. I feel relief rather than satisfaction when I have finally completed a difficult task

8. I am optimistic about my work career

9. Adversity strengthens my resolve to achieve my goals

10. I prefer my work to be filled with challenging tasks

11. Worry and fear have often prevented me from undertaking worthwhile and rewarding projects

12. I take pride in my work

13. I only work because I have to

14. I am organized in my work habits

15. I make sacrifices to achieve distant goals

16. I try to anticipate and avoid situations where there is a moderate chance of failure

17. I am ambitious

18. Failure is extremely demoralizing and discouraging for me

19. I am hesitant about making important decisions at work

20. I only work as hard as I have to

21. I lack persistence

22. I really enjoy a job that involves overcoming obstacles

1. For me, impulsive decisions are the spice of life

2. I try to avoid impulsive decisions

3. I have suffered frequently because of my own impulsive acts

4. I take my time to make important decisions

5. I like to live life spontaneously

6. I can be very patient while I work to reach my distant objectives

7. My impatience has cost me losses of important opportunities and benefits

8. I am patient in my approach to major projects

9. I am not a patient person

10. I put things off until deadlines for me to do them

11. Generally, I take care of things right away, instead of putting them off to another time

12. I am disorganized in my work habits

13. I usually get things done on time so I won't feel a great deal of last minute pressure to meet schedules

14. I am a procrastinator

15. I enjoy what I can in the present instead of planning for larger future gains

16. I often give up immediate rewards for larger future rewards

17. I enjoy the best part of anything first, instead of saving it for last

I live of the present and not for a better future

Eastern Washington University

at Cheney and Spokane

MEMORANDUM

To: N. Juliana Dewitt, Department of Psychology, 151 MAR

From: Sarah Keller, Chair, Institutional Review Board for Human Subjects Research

Date: March 5, 2010

Subject: Review of HS-3451 *Stress and Resiliency in Minority College Students from Disrupted Homes: Examining the Role of Achievement Motivation*

Thank you for your response to my memo of February 18, you have addressed almost all of our concerns. Human subjects protocol HS-3451 *Stress and Resiliency in Minority College Students from Disrupted Homes: Examining the Role of Achievement Motivation* has been determined to be exempt from further review according to federal regulations for the Protection of Human Subjects under CFR Title 45, Part 46.101(b)(1-6). Research qualifying for an exemption is valid for a period of one year to March 5, 2011. A signed, approved copy of your application is enclosed.

Please note:

1. If they choose to withdraw from the study and you tell them this is without penalty then they must get partial credit for participation. If you don't plan to allow partial credit then you can't say they can withdraw without penalty because loss of partial credit would penalized them. If there is no partial credit you can just tell them that they can withdraw at any time and seek extra credit in other ways. You should discuss this with Dr. Ruby.

If subsequent to initial approval the questionnaires require minor changes, the Office of Grant and Research Development should be notified of those changes. Any major departures from the original forms must be approved by the appropriate IRB review process before the protocol may be altered. A Change of Protocol application must be submitted to the IRB for any substantial change in protocol. The Director, Grant and Research Development, or the Chair of the IRB will determine whether or not the research must then be resubmitted for approval.

If you have additional questions please contact me at 359-7039; fax 509-359-2474; email skeller@ewu.edu. It would be helpful if you would refer to HS-3451 if there were further correspondence as we file everything under this number. Thank you.

cc: R.Galm
      S.Ruby
      P.Watkins
      Graduate Office

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VITA

Nicole Juliana Dewitt

Candidate for the Degree of

Master of Science

Thesis: STRESS, RESILIENCE, AND ACHIEVMENT MOTIVATION IN COLLEGE ST UDENTS: THE FULL HALF OF THE GLASS

Major Field: Counseling (Community Option)

Biographical:

Education:

Completed the requirements for the Master of Science in Counseling (Community Option) at Oklahoma State University, Stillwater, Oklahoma in May,2013.

Completed the requirements for the Bachelor of Science in your Psychology at Eastern Washington University, Cheney, Washington in 2010.

Work Experience:

Counseling Intern
Otoe Missouria Tribe Behavioral Health Services   06/2012-05/2012
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Counseling Intern
OU Pediatrics Hospital   06/2012-08/2012
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Counseling Intern
Deer Creek Public Schools   08/2012-10/2012
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