

WE ARE NOT OKAY: EXPLORING
BLACK MASCULINITIES, RACE-RELATED STRESS,
AND HELP SEEKING ATTITUDES IN BLACK MEN

By

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I would like to dedicate this work to all the amazing, talented, and powerful Black men in my life. This work is for you. I see you and I value you! To my parents, I love you and thank you for grounding me and showing me the power of unconditional love... I would not have made it through this journey without you. Being your daughter is truly the greatest privilege and honor. To my family and friends, I am truly grateful for your consistent love throughout this journey. Lastly, to my internship cohort and the amazing clinicians at the UT Austin CMHC thank you for seeing me even during the moments where I couldn't see the end. I am truly blessed to be surrounded by individuals who value authenticity and transparency.

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Abstract: Griffith and Cornish (2018) suggest that Black men are often tasked with navigating society as beings that are both feared and adored. Black men in college are often tasked with navigating spaces that view their Black bodies as a threat. The purpose of the proposed study is to explore the relationships between Black masculinities, race-related stress, and attitudes towards seeking professional mental health services in Black men who are enrolled in college.

Additionally, based upon a review of the existing literature, this study is believed to be the first time Black masculinities has been defined as a construct in relationship with mental health help-seeking attitudes and race-related stressors. This study seeks to define Black masculinities as a construct that can predict mental health help seeking attitudes. It is hypothesized that Black masculinities and race-related stress will negatively predict mental health help seeking attitudes in Black and African American men in college. Multiple regression analysis will be used to look at the relationship between two predictor variables (Black masculinity and race-related stress) on one criterion variable (Help Seeking Attitudes). The results will inform university and college campuses, counseling centers, and communities on ways to assist mental professionals who may need to receive more training to learn how to effectively respond to race-related stressors within Black men. Furthermore, this study may inform college administration and college counseling centers on new ways to adequately assess the needs of Black men on campus. This information will be useful for creating events and organizations that highlight the mental health needs of Black men.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Much of what is known about the construct of Black masculinities stems from research on media representations and portrayals within music and film (Lindsey & Marcell, 2012). Often media representations portray Black men within a negative light. Black men are often stereotyped as thugs or criminals within the media. This is troubling considering the recent depictions of Black men within media within the past year.

Unfortunately, Black men have been demonized to the point that their humanity is no longer seen or acknowledged. Within the literature broad generalities are made about what masculinities look like for Black men (Griffith & Comish, 2018). Furthermore, the scarcity of Black masculinities literature may be due to the difficulties associated with defining the term. Black masculinities researchers have often emphasized general themes related to relationships, sexual orientation, and gender role conflict (Copeland, 2017; Wade & Rochlen, 2013). In addition, current masculinities researchers have only employed qualitative methods to further understand the experiences of Black men. Masculinities researchers have also generalized the construction of Black masculinity without taking into account the varied lived experiences and the impact of racism both on and off college campuses.

1 Throughout the document I will use the phrase “Black and African American men” interchangeably

While Black masculinity's themes are present within the research (Rogers et al. 2015) typically the research has focused on adults from community organizations and historically Black colleges and universities (HBCUs). Within these predominantly Black spaces masculinities researchers have examined the value of community and aspects related to solidarity. Furthermore, past studies have highlighted the experiences of Black people with broad generalizations and a lack of specificity. Similarly, research on masculinities has focused on the hyper-sexualization of Black men, furthering this deficit-level thinking as it relates to Black masculinities. Researchers have also examined masculinity in relationship with gender role conflict (Mincey et al., 2014). Specifically, researchers have addressed the gender role conflict of older Black men and the relationship with help-seeking behaviors (Griffith, 2012). Yet, the experiences of college aged Black men have not been explored thoroughly. Black masculinities research is a unique construct to define due to the focus on the intersectional complexities associated with the topic. Although, masculinities as a construct have been explored on college campuses, sample sizes have typically been predominately White (Vogel et al., 2011). Indeed, masculinities literature has often focused on the experiences of White men more than highlighting masculinities for Black men. Similarly, the literature on race-related stressors is limited and lacks the depth needed to make effective change within the Black community as a whole specifically within the lives of Black men. Furthermore, there is minimal research on the construct of Black masculinity and its relationship with mental health. Much of what is known about the mental help seeking attitudes of Black men at PWI's specifically have highlighted the impact of stigma and self-concealment (Masuda et al., 2012). Thus, this study will add to the literature that elucidates the needs of Black men. For the sake of this study African American and Black will be used interchangeably in order to broaden the scope of research. Within the literature, masculinity and manhood have been used

interchangeably (Dancey, 2011) and these terms will be used interchangeably within this paper. This study will look at African American and Black men who are enrolled in college. This study seeks to bridge the gap between the literature on Black masculinity and mental health help seeking attitudes.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Black Masculinities

The institution of slavery, racism, and racial profiling has directly impacted the way in which Black men are viewed within society (Smiley&Fakunle,2016). In the past, Black people, These pages are where you type in the title of your chapter and add the body (text, images, etc.) specifically Black males, were seen as the visual manifestation of “buffoonery”, “blissful ignorance”, and “juvenile angst” (Smiley& Fakunle,2016). Enslaved Black men were reminded of their inferiority all while being tasked with “soothing” White consciences (Smiley& Fakunle, 2016, pg.2). This imagery of Black men was used to denigrate the identity and experiences of Black men (Smiley & Fakunle, 2016). From this perspective, Black men have been seen as lesser than their White counterparts since the inception of the United States. Before the formation of the United States, Black men were perceived in a more positive light in their countries of origin (Brooms, 2016). Yet, as time has progressed, the perception of Black men has become more negative in nature. Rogers and colleagues (2015) assert that Black men were not respected or seen as citizens before the Civil Rights Movement in the 1960’s. After the Civil Rights Movement in the 1960’s Black men have still struggled to fit in with the traditional standards of manhood. the United States without exploring through an intersectional lens.

Although the research on masculinities has evolved throughout time (Wong & Wester, 2016), there is a dearth of research on Black masculinities. In the past, research on masculinity has focused on and operationalized masculinity as a construct that is defined within relational terms (Griffith et al., 2012). However, prominent researchers have broadened the definition to include masculinity as something that “individuals do, and not what an individual is” (Thomas, et al., 2015, pg. 261). Current research has only briefly explored Black masculinities as a construct within overarching society (Griffith & Cornish, 2018; Levant & Powell, 2017; Griffith, 2012). Researchers have often described Black masculinity as a “stagnant monolith” (Goodwill et al., 2018, pg. 2). Furthermore, the intricacies of Black masculinities and the potential mental health outcomes that result from cultural stigma have not been theoretically explored within current literature (Hammond et al., 2016). It is also important to note that much of what is known about masculinities is rooted in men’s studies that used predominately White samples. Furthermore, current masculinities research has often explored the experiences of older Black men. Yet, the experiences of Black college age men have not been explored.

Views of Masculinity

Berger and colleagues (2005) define masculinity as gender roles predisposed based off location and social upbringing, while Hunter and Davis (1992) defined manhood as ideas and ideals about what it means to be a man. Both of these definitions play an important role within the research on manhood. Although these two definitions are invaluable, research has been moving towards an inclusion of both definitions. Current researchers posit that manhood is intricately connected to one’s class, socioeconomic status, and perceived success within westernized society (Griffith et al., 2015). Within westernized society social class is often connected to this cultural identity.

However, as it relates to manhood this cultural identity is connected to what is deemed appropriate and acceptable for men. Masculine roles also differ by geographic

location. Men who live in urban geographic locations are more likely tasked with following the gender roles and rules associated with urban masculinity and vice versa in rural communities. This rigidity of gender roles negatively impacts the well-being and expression of masculinity within African American men (Wade & Rochlen, 2013). Griffith and Cornish (2018) examined perspectives of African American men as related to manhood. The researchers conducted 64 interviews with urban African American men aged 35–76 from the Southeastern United States. Results showed that manhood was a concept defined by attributes of honesty and respectability (Griffith & Cornish, 2018). This is in alignment with the current views of masculinities as a socially constructed practice rather than an individual practice.

Expression of Manhood

Hammond and colleagues (2016) suggest that societal pressures have influenced the way in which men express their masculinity. The social hierarchy of manhood and gender expression have been addressed within the literature from a very Eurocentric perspective. However, this Eurocentric lens of manhood has inhibited discussions on the intersectionality of manhood. Researchers often suggest that due to the intricacies of manhood it can be described as more precarious than womanhood (Levant & Powell, 2011). This is not to suggest that there is not a vast history associated with the development and expression of womanhood within society; however, manhood has historically been described from the lenses of the dominant culture. This notion of a dominant masculinity or hierarchy is consistent with past research that has focused primarily on White, middle class, and heterosexual samples (Griffith, 2012; Levant & Powell, 2011).

Griffith and colleagues (2012) state:

Within the westernized culture the dominant ideal of masculinity is defined by race (white), sexual orientation (heterosexual), socioeconomic status (middle class) and the possession of certain traits: assertiveness, dominance, control, physical strength, and emotional restraint (pg. 187). Thus, Black men have been excluded from the literature and their experiences have been trivialized. The dominant masculinity traits found within the literature essentially silence the voices of Black men.

Emotional Expression

Research by Wade & Rochlen (2013) supports the idea that African American boys are taught at a young age what is “manly” or masculine. Black men are reminded that it is a perceived “weakness” to show any emotions that do not emphasize strength (Wade & Rochlen, 2013). Black men are also socialized to view emotions as inherently feminine (Levant & Powell, 2017). The feminization of emotions and emotionality have an impact on the way that Black men navigate their manhood within society (Levant & Powell, 2017). Levant and Powell (2017) assert that boys and men within westernized society are hardwired to be less emotional than girls and women (pg. 24). This gender ideology illuminates the belief that men must adhere to behaviors that are culturally defined (Levant & Powell, 2017). African American men have also been taught to maintain a tough exterior to protect themselves. This is, however, dependent on a Black male’s level of assimilation to the westernized culture.

Current researchers suggest that Black masculinity is also strongly associated with a sense of pride in self (Hunter & Davis, 1992; Mincey et al., 2014). However, this sense of pride decreases when Black men are tasked with adhering to the heteronormative views of masculinity. These

heteronormative views of masculinity often include emotional suppression as a way to be seen as strong. These performances of masculinity also impact one's willingness to express emotions outside of anger. African American males have been taught to maintain a tough exterior to protect themselves. Any action that deviates from these rigid gender norms are deemed wrong. An example of actions that deviate from gender norms include male's expression of emotions. Much of what is taught about Black masculinity emphasizes toughness and aggressiveness. Males who adhere to masculine norms express one emotion (anger) which is inherent to toughness (Bruch, 2002). Researchers have found that masculine norms such as aggression and competitiveness are seen as the most effective to show your masculinity (Oliffe et al., 2010). Although in general males are less likely to share their views on emotions, this is even more relevant with African American males. The stigmatization of emotions within the construct of Black masculinity also impacts Black men's willingness to engage in mental health help seeking.

Mental Health Stigma

For years there has been a significant stigma associated with seeking out mental health services. For many in the Black community when the word counseling is discussed it is directly related with the phrases "just pray about it" and or "that's a White people thing" (Harris & Wong, 2018). Researchers suggest that within the Black community, there is extensive stigma associated with seeking mental health services (Wade & Rochlen, 2013). The term stigma refers to negative beliefs or attitudes based off of incomplete knowledge about a topic (Holden et al., 2012). Cadaret and Speight (2018) assert that within the United States 12.2% of African American women and 7.4% of African American men reported willingness to seek out professional help to address mental health concerns (pg.348). This statistic suggests that African American men are not seeking out services as readily as African American women. Lindsey and Marcell (2012) suggest that Black men do not readily seek out mental health professionals due to cultural mistrust and fear. It is also important to first understand the initial instinct for Black men to resist mental health help seeking behaviors.

Black men have been socialized to internalize their thoughts and feelings as a way to maintain their “manhood”. Researchers also note that Black college age men often experience undiagnosed suicidal ideation (Britt-Spells et al., 2018; Masuda et al., 2018). Unfortunately, the experiences of Black college students specifically the experiences of Black men are lacking within the literature. Barry and colleagues (2017) noted that Black college aged men are more susceptible to mental health concerns, higher level of alcohol use to cope with their mental health concerns and are more likely to have negative views of seeking out mental health professionals.

Masculinity and Help Seeking

Current researchers suggest that negative preconceived notions about mental health are more prevalent in males as compared to females (Tirpak & Schlosser, 2015). Researchers suggest that Black men worry that seeking out counseling will threaten what is left of their masculinity (Williams & Justice 2010; Carr & West, 2013). Past researchers suggest that Black men also have a fear of counselors’ lack of multicultural awareness and inadequate care after reaching out to a mental health professional (Cadaret& Speight,2018). Black men may also have fears related to being labeled as “less than a man” by a mental health professional (Lindsey& Marcell,2012). Due to inadequate care, Black men may go untreated and underserved (Cadaret& Speight,2018; Lindsey & Marcell, 2012). Current research suggests that Black men who choose to engage in mental health help seeking often leave prematurely due to dissatisfaction with services (Lindsey& Marcell, 2012). Although many African American men experience symptoms associated with mental health disorders, few follow through with seeking help due to internalized struggle and a lack of education on the severity of the issue (Powell et al., 2016).

College Age Black Men

Researchers have examined the mental health concerns of students on college campuses (Barry et al.,2017). The mental health of college students has been a growing

area of interest on college campuses (Barry et al., 2017; Watkins & Neighbors, 2007). Current researchers have sought to improve the wellness of college students (Barry et al., 2017). College counseling center utilization has increased for White college students at PWI's (Vidourek et al., 2014). However, college counseling centers have only seen a minimal increase in the number of African American students who have sought out college counseling resources (Masuda et al., 2012). Within this vein, it is important to note that socioeconomic status and access to resources is crucial when discussing college counseling utilization. For many Black men entering college it may be their first chance to receive mental health counseling. Furthermore, Black men entering college are more likely to be first generation college students. Past researchers have briefly examined the difficulties associated with counseling male college students (Genuchi et al., 2018). Reed (2014) stated that seeking out counseling goes against the masculine roles set in place by society.

Researchers also note that men's underutilization of counseling services may also stem from the "dialectical nature" of counseling. Counseling requires a client to be open and vulnerable about their emotions which inherently goes against masculine ideology. However, much of the literature fails to address ways to encourage counseling for African American men. Current researchers also report that African American college students view counseling as a "last resort" if they aren't able to "handle it" on their own (Williams & Justice, 2010, pg.165).

Race- Related Stress

History of Racism

Within the Black community, emphasis has been placed on social connectedness (Griffith, 2012). This social connectedness is also rooted in the historical framework of the Black community as a safe haven. Social connectedness can also serve as a powerful buffer for Black individuals who have experienced race-related stressors (Liao et al.,

2016). This need for social connectedness also stems from the desire to maintain some form of safety in the face of insurmountable experiences of systemic, cultural, and individual racism. Unfortunately, experiences of racism are rooted within Westernized society. Harrell (2000) asserts that racism is defined as “a system of dominance, power, and privilege based on racial group designations” (p. 43). Systemic or institutional racism often includes the policies and practices within an organization that inherently disenfranchise Black individuals. Within this same vein, individual racism involves an individual’s thoughts and attitudes that express prejudice or discriminatory thoughts about other groups (Franklin et al., 2006). Franklin and colleagues (2006) also assert that cultural racism can be just as detrimental to the Black community. Cultural racism involves the legitimization of a privileged group’s values and beliefs (Franklin et al., 2006). Previous researchers found that cultural racism was related to a lower quality of life for African Americans (Franklin- Jackson & Carter, 2007; Utsey et al., 2002). Although many believe in a post-racial society, researchers suggest that this is not the case (Coleman et al., 2012). Indeed, evidence suggests racism has transitioned into various platforms such as social media, sports, and music (Franklin-Jackson& Carter,2007; Carter & Reynolds, 2011). Racism is often a topic that is taboo and therefore there is an unwillingness to explore how racism and privilege impact communities of color. This fear of discussion would also suggest the possibility of a post-racial society is indeed false. Seldom is racism discussed within groups who do not share similar experiences (Franklin et al. 2006). Researchers assert that this avoidance encourages a further legitimization of White values (Whitaker & Snell, 2016; Wong et al., 2017), which in turn hurts the lived experiences of communities of color. Black communities are then left to process their collective trauma without guidance or support. Yet, for many, the topic of racism is left to be discussed within the Black community. For African Americans, racism has taken on many different forms throughout the years.

The role of racism has shifted from more overt expressions such as lynchings, beatings, and separation to more covert slights. Within westernized society there has also been a move from slavery to the mass incarceration of Black and Brown bodies. Thus, racism and its various forms have deleterious effects on the Black community both psychologically and physically. Similarly, race-related stress has been shown to impact the psychological well-being of Black individuals (Utsey & Ponterotto, 1996; Carter & Reynolds, 2011; Coleman et al., 2013; Powell et al., 2016; Onwuachi-Willig, 2017). Brooms and Perry (2016) suggest that racism today feels like a “cumulative miniassault” that involves a combination of microaggressions and extreme experiences of racism.

Race- Related Stress and Black Men

Utsey and Ponterotto (1995) describe race-related stress as the everyday experiences of racism and discrimination that African Americans encounter. Harrell (2000, p.44) suggests that race-related stress includes “race-related transactions between individuals or groups and their environment that emerge from the dynamics of racism, and that are perceived to tax or exceed existing individual and collective resources or threaten well-being.” Indeed, these everyday experiences of racism are cumulative and can lead to feelings of hopelessness. African Americans can expect to experience race-related stressors in all areas of their life all while being subjected to the constant exposure of White culture as both celebrated and embraced (Franklin- Jackson & Carter, 2007; Carter & Reynolds, 2011).

Researchers suggest that Black men experience higher levels of race-related stress in comparison to their White counterparts (Aymer, 2018; Powell et al., 2016). Race-related stress is also heightened if an individual does not have effective coping mechanisms to counteract the race-related experience (Coleman et al., 2012). Researchers suggest that race-related stress impacts Black men’s physical health and has been linked to

heart disease and hypertension (Coleman et al., 2012). The recent high-profile murders of young Black men and women have caused Black men to evaluate their own mortality and place within society. Indeed, the United States has an unfortunate history as it relates to protecting Black bodies. Furthermore, the trauma story dates back to the day that Black bodies were forced to travel on ships during the Middle Passage. However, these race-related stressors now include past traumas and the “modern day lynchings” of unarmed Black men and boys across the United States (Aymer, 2016).

Policing of Black Men. One such example of brutality was the murder of Emmet Till in 1955 (Aymer, 2016; Onwuachi-Willig, 2017), which is one of the most prominent examples of brutality in the era of Jim Crow. Although it is not the first example of brutality against Black male bodies it is an example of what happens when Black male bodies are seen as a threat. The killing of Emmett Till is also a piece of history that has shaped the conversations of the Black community. Aymer (2016) suggests that the killings of young Black men at the hands of police are eerily similar to the lynchings of Black men during the era of Jim Crow. These senseless murders of unarmed Black men are also an example of vicarious trauma or secondhand trauma (Aymer, 2016). In these situations, the Black community experiences secondhand trauma because they are forced to watch their dehumanization and murder online and through media (Aymer, 2016; Motley & Banks, 2018). Additionally, Black male bodies are memorialized as “just a hashtag” without true action or true policy change which furthers the depth of trauma. Thus, the murders of Black men are politicized and used as talking points.

Furthermore, the Black community carry with them the notion that their lives are seen as “trendy” and eventually forgotten.

Furthermore, the aftermath of these modern day lynchings are even more telling of how Westernized society views Black male bodies (Aymer, 2016; Hargons et al., 2017; Whitaker & Snell, 2016). The dehumanization of Black men and boys is also intensified

by the way in which they are portrayed posthumously. In comparison to their White counterparts' Black men are often labeled as criminals based off of their past history (Diversi, 2016). The verbiage used to describe Black men and boys is also telling of how society views Black men (Kumah-Abiwu, 2020). While White men and boys are seen as innocent until proven guilty, Black men and boys are swiftly blamed for their own murders (Smiley & Fakunle, 2016).

Smiley and Fakunle (2016; pg. 14) assert:

The city of Cleveland's response to a lawsuit filed by the family of Tamir Rice says the 12-year-old boy is to blame for his own death by police...The family's suit filed in December said Tamir 'suffered terror and fear' at the hands of Loehmann [police officer] before his shooting death — claims the city says Tamir and his family are at fault for. It states Tamir's death was “directly and proximately caused by their own acts (as previously cited in Hensley, 2015; pg. 14). This further illustrates that to live while Black can be both dangerous and exhausting for Black men and boys.

Black Survival. Researchers assert that Black men often “numb out” in the face of insurmountable trauma as a way of survival (Franklin et al., 2006). Yet, this survival mechanism is tantamount for Black men. The struggle for Black survival dates back to the beginning of the United States. Therefore, Black men have learned to survive through maladaptive coping mechanisms such as avoidance (Franklin et al., 2006; Hudson et al., 2015; Wade & Rochlen, 2013). These forms of coping are then exacerbated by race-related stressors. Researchers also suggest that African American men experience race-related stress so often that it has now become commonplace (Aymer, 2016). Franklin (1999) suggests that Black men specifically experience what is known as “invisibility syndrome,” which involves Black men’s desire to maintain personal identity while experiencing racism. Black men who continually experience encounters with prejudice

and racism may also struggle with their personal identity. Thus, Black men must balance maintaining their personal identity while fighting to be seen as human within society and on college campuses.

Race- Related Stress and College Age Black Men

Coleman and colleagues (2013) assert that race-related stress involves the psychological and emotional stress that emerge after racism. These race-related experiences are also engrained in educational institutions. Thus, the educational system is another example of a location in which the prevalence of racism and discrimination increases exponentially. African Americans continually experience racism and thus many also experience higher levels of race-related stress. Researchers suggest that African American men who attend Predominately White Institutions encounter racism and discrimination frequently while on campus (Parker et al., 2016). Past researchers found that Black students who attend a PWI experience an even greater level of psychological stress and perceived stress (Neville et al., 2004). Current researchers suggest that African American college students experience higher levels of race-related stress than other racial minorities (Coleman et al., 2013). However, minimal research has explored race-related stress with Black men specifically who attend Predominately White institutions. Researchers assert that much of what is known as it relates to race-related stress stems from literature that explores the overall experiences of Black college students. Yet, the experiences of college-aged Black men have not been explored on their own. Furthermore, the extant literature on race- related stress has been studied among African American adults; however, there is a dearth in literature as it relates the race-related experiences of Black men in college. The experiences of Black men who attend college have been given limited visibility within the overarching masculinities and higher education literature.

Racial Microaggressions. Sue and colleagues (2007) report that racial

microaggressions are “commonplace daily verbal, behavioral, or environmental indignities that target people of color” (pg.329). Black undergraduate students disproportionately experience more racial microaggressions in comparison to their colleagues of color (Griffith et al., 2019; Harwood et al., 2012). Researchers also suggest that Black students experience microinsults more often than their White counterparts (Sue et al., 2007). Sue and colleagues describe microinsults as one of three forms of microaggressions. Microinsults heard by Black students may include, “you are so articulate” and “where did you learn how to write so concisely” (Sue et al., 2007). Current researchers note that Black undergraduate students who attend Predominately White Institutions (PWI’s) experience environmental racial microaggressions during their matriculation (Mills, 2020). Sue and colleagues (2007) suggest that environmental microaggressions are observed on a systemic level and are also seen as macro-level microaggressions. Mills and colleagues (2020) note that environmental microaggressions are different from interpersonal microaggressions because they are more apparent on systemic levels. Furthermore, these environmental microaggressions further tax the psyche of Black college students. Still, Black students are asked to manage their literal exhaustion and the stressors associated with attending a place of higher learning.

Barriers to Campus Resource Access. Mwangi and colleagues (2018) noted that the US higher education system as a whole has a history of being unable to create safe spaces for BIPOC students specifically Black college students. Black college students have historically been marginalized and discriminated against while attending PWI’s (Dancey et al., 2018). Dancey and colleagues suggest that PWI’s and US higher education were erected by Black individuals. Researchers also note that Historically White universities are often built on the legacy of White supremacy and segregation (Thelamour et al., 2019). Thus, campus resources often lack the depth and monetary resources needed to ensure that Black students receive support. Black college students are more likely to

view campus racial climates and campus resources more negatively than their White peers (Mwangi et al., 2018). Black college students struggle to find adequate and culturally sensitive resources on PWI's (Griffith et al., 2019). Past researchers found that Black college students do not feel like they are represented on campus (Griffith et al., 2019). Although PWI's have become more diverse, Black and Indigenous people of color (BIPOC) still feel like there are a lack of resources on Predominately White campuses (Brezinski et al., 2018). Brooms (2017) suggests that PWI's are "comfortable and uncomfortable for Black college aged men (p. 91).

Similarly, Black men report that PWI's are diverse, but ultimately lack knowledge and understanding of Black culture (Brooms, 2017). Researchers note that Black men in college settings often feel unheard and underrepresented.

Study Purpose and Aims

The purpose of the study was to explore the effects of Black masculinity and race-related stress on attitudes towards seeking professional mental health services on college campuses within the United States. Additionally, based upon a review of the existing literature, this study is believed to be the first time Black masculinity has been defined as a construct in relationship with mental health help-seeking attitudes and race-related stressors. Furthermore, current mental health literature does not consider the race-related experiences of Black men who are enrolled in college.

The study assessed whether there is a predictive relationship between the predictor variables (eg. Race-Related Stress and Black Masculinity) and attitudes on seeking mental health service. Knowing how race-related stress impacts Black men may assist mental professionals who may need to receive more training to learn how to effectively respond to race-related stressors within Black men. Furthermore, this study may inform college administration and college counseling center on new ways to adequately assess the needs of Black men on campus. Unfortunately, there is a dearth of

research as it relates to the complexities associated with being a Black college age man in America (Wade & Rochlen, 2013). Additionally, this study adds to the growing research on the experiences of Black men.

The research questions for the study were:

1. What is the relationship between Black masculinity and race-related stress?
2. What is the relationship between Black Masculinity and attitudes about mental health help seeking?
3. What is the relationship between race-related stress and attitudes about mental health help seeking?
4. What is the relationship between Black masculinity and race- related stress in predicting attitudes about mental health help seeking in Black/African American men who attend college?
5. What attitudes do Black men have about mental health?

The independent variable (IV) of race-related stress will be measured by the Racism and Life Experiences Scale: Racial Hassles and the (IV) of Black masculinity will be measured by the Masculinity Inventory Scale. The dependent variable (DV) of mental health

help seeking attitudes will be measured by the Attitudes Toward Seeking Professional Psychological Help Scale.

The following direct paths were hypothesized:

1. Race-related stress and Black masculinity positively correlate, such that more frequent race-related stress events associate higher levels of Black masculinity.
2. Higher levels of Black masculinity are negatively correlated to

Black/African American men's attitudes about mental health help seeking, such that the more that Black/ African American men identify with Black masculinity, the greater likelihood that Black men will have negative attitudes about help seeking.

3. More frequent race-related stress events are negatively related to Black/ African American men's attitudes about mental health help seeking, such that the more experiences of race-related stress that Black men experience, the greater likelihood that they will have negative attitudes about help seeking.
4. Black men will have negative attitudes about mental health help seeking.
5. Black/ African American men with higher levels of Black masculinity, and more frequent race-related stress events will report more negative attitudes about mental health help seeking.

CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY

Participants

The participants of the study were Black/ African American men who were age 18 years and older, enrolled as graduate or undergraduate students in a college setting, and lived in the United States. Participants were recruited using a snowball sampling method that included (a) emailing diversity officers in higher education about the study, (b) emailing various listservs committed to Black/African American men including 100 Black Men of America, Greater Influence Inc., Male Initiative and (c) recruitment through disbursement of fliers on Facebook and Instagram. In order to estimate an adequate sample size to detect statistical significance, *a priori* power analysis was conducted using G*Power v. 3.10 (Faul et al.,2009). Power analyses were based on the primary statistical analysis, which were multiple linear regressions and indicated that, in order to achieve adequate statistical power (.80), with four predictors, an alpha level of .05, and an estimated medium effect size (.15), a total of 119 participants was needed for the study. 54

participants were excluded from this study for failing to answer portions of the Racism and Life Experiences scale. At the conclusion of recruitment 78 participants were retained for this study. Post Hoc analysis indicate that a lower power did not influence the results of this study.

Procedure

The study was submitted to the Oklahoma State University Institutional Review Board for the Protection of Human Subjects (IRB) for review and approval. Participants were directed to an online survey through an anonymous URL linked to the researcher's Qualtrics account, which was used to collect and store the data. Qualtrics is a secure survey software and the researcher's Qualtrics account was password-protected and secured. After clicking the URL link, participants were directed to the informed consent page that provided participants with a description of the study, the potential risks and benefits of participation, a statement that participation is voluntary, incentives (e.g., three \$100 Amazon gift cards), help-seeking and crisis/emergency resources, and contact information of the principal investigators and the Oklahoma State University IRB committee.

Measures

Demographic Information

Participants were given a demographic questionnaire on which they were asked to report their age, gender identity, sex at birth, race, ethnicity, year in school, partner status, occupational status, school status, religious/ spiritual affiliation, and sexual/ affectional orientation.

Masculinity Inventory Scale (MIS) for Black Men

The Masculinity Inventory Scale (MIS) for Black men was utilized to measure Black Masculinity. The Masculinity Inventory Scale (MIS) for Black Men (Mincey et al., 2014) is a 50-item self-report measure that can be endorsed on a Likert scale from 1

(strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). Sample items include: “As a Black man, you’re up against a lot from birth” and “a man handles his responsibilities”. The MIS scale has five subscales: Black Masculinity, Mainstream Society, Black Masculinity/Mainstream society, Primary group, and Primary/ Peer group. The mean of each subscale is calculated to determine which scales have the higher mean.

Higher scores are associated with a higher endorsement of that type of masculinity (eg. Mainstream society, Black masculinity, Primary group, Mainstream society/Black masculinity, and Primary/peer group). The Masculinity Inventory Scale (MIS) for Black men currently has minimal factor analysis. Although this scale does not have much psychometric information, it is one of three measures that serve as a culturally specific assessment that highlights the experiences of Black men (Bowleg et al, 2016). Cronbach’s Alpha during the initial construction and development of the MIS scale was 0.79 (Mincey et al., 2014). Internal consistency reliability estimates for the MIS within the current study were 0.76.

Attitudes Toward Seeking Professional Psychological Help Scale (ATSPPH-SF)

The Attitudes Toward Seeking Professional Psychological Help (ATSPPH-SF) questionnaire (Fischer & Turner, 1970; Fischer & Farina, 1995) was used to measure mental health help seeking attitudes. The ATSPPH-SF is a 10-item self-report measure that can be endorsed on a 4-point Likert scale ranging from 0 (*disagree*) to 3 (*agree*). The ATSPPH-SF was derived from 29 item ATSPPH (Fischer & Farina, 1995). Sample items include: “I would want to get psychological help if I were worried or upset for a long period of time” and “People should solve their own problems.” The ATSPPH-SF has been used to assess help seeking attitudes in Black men. Cadaret and colleagues (2018) utilized the ATSPPH-SF to explore help seeking behaviors and self-concealment among African American students. The scale was normed on predominately White college students and high school students. Scores on the ATSPPH-SF are summed together, with higher scores

indicating more positive attitudes toward seeking professional help. Straight items (S) were scored 3-2-1-0, and reversal items (R) 0-1-2-3, respectively, for the response alternatives agree, , partly agree, partly disagree and disagree. Internal consistency estimates from studies conducted by Fischer and Farina (1995) ranged from .79 to .82, and test-retest reliability was .82 across 5 days and .84 across two months. The internal consistency reliability estimates for the overall ATSPPH- SF scale for the current study sample was 0.778.

Racism and Life Experiences Scale: Racial Hassles

The Racism and Life Experiences scale (Harrell, 1997) was utilized to measure race-related stress. Scores on the RaLES-DLE assesses racism experiences, with higher scores on the RALES-DLE reflecting a higher level of race-related stress. The RaLES-DLE consists of 20 items and is a self-report measure. Participants are presented with a list of 20 discriminatory experiences and asked to indicate how often it occurred to them in the past 5 years. The RALES- DLE is endorsed on a 6-point Likert scale ranging from (1)the frequency of the experience due to race(0 = never, 1 = once, 2 = a few times, 3 = about once a month, 4 = a few times a month, 5 = once a week or more), and (2)and how much does it bother you(0=has never happened to me, 1=doesn't bother me at all, 2=bothers me a little, 3=bothers me somewhat, 4=bother me a lot, 5= bothers me extremely). An additive score will be utilized to sum the item ratings. Sample items included: "Having your ideas ignored" and "Not being taken seriously." The RaLes-DLE has concurrent validity and has been correlated positively with similar measures such as the Index of Race-Related Stress (Powell et al., 2016). The RaLES-DLE has an internal consistency reliability Cronbach's alpha ranging from .89-.94. This scale is normed off racially and ethnically diverse college and graduate students in the Los Angeles area. The internal consistency reliability estimates for the current study were 0.954.

Data Analysis

Data was input by the researcher into the SPSS statistics software. Means, standard deviations, and ranges for all continuous variables were calculated. Frequencies and percentages were calculated for all categorical variables. Additionally, a correlation matrix was completed for all continuous variables.

To analyze the data, the researcher utilized a multiple regression to understand if a predictive relationship exists between Black masculinity and race-related stress and their attitudes about mental health help seeking. Multiple regression is a statistical analysis used to explain a relationship between multiple independent or predictor variables and one dependent or criterion variable (e.g., IV: Black masculinity, race -related stress and DV: attitudes about mental health help seeking). Model assumptions of constant variance and normality of error terms were assessed via residual plots and deemed to be met. The presence of multicollinearity was assessed by calculating the variance inflation factor (VIF). It is desired to have VIF values less than 5. The VIF for this model was 1.03, so there is no evidence of the presence of multicollinearity. The assumption of linearity was assessed by checking scatterplots of RLES and MIS plotted against ATSPPH -SF (available in the appendix) and there were no clear signs of nonlinearity. A Pearson correlation was conducted to explore the relationship between Black masculinity and race-related stress. With the use of a multiple regression analyses, the independent variables may influence the dependent variable, which may show a significant relationship between Black masculinity and race-related stress as it relates to attitudes about mental health help seeking.

CHAPTER IV

RESULTS

Description of Participants

Means, standard deviations, and score ranges for the main study variables were calculated. A total of 132 individuals completed the surveys for this study. Of the total number of participants, responses from 78 participants were retained and analyzed. Fifty-four of the 132 participants failed to respond to at least one question for a given scale, so only 78 of the participants could be included in the analysis. Participants in this study all identified as Black men ($n = 78$) and were currently attending institutions of higher learning across the United States ($n = 78$). Participants' ages ranged from 18 to 54 (66.39% were 18-24, 25.41% were 25-34, 4.92% were 35-44, 3.28% were 45-54). Participants were largely Christian ($n=82$, 69.49%), Heterosexual ($n=94$, 78.99%), and single ($n=91$, 77.12%). See Appendix B (Table 1) for the full demographics of this sample.

Responses to Scales

Data was input by the researcher into the SPSS statistics software. Means, standard deviations, and ranges for all continuous variables were calculated. Frequencies and percentages were calculated for all categorical variables. Additionally, a correlation matrix was completed

for all continuous variables. The Masculinity Inventory Scale (MIS) for Black men was utilized to measure Black Masculinity. Within the sample, the minimum and maximum scores were 1.3 and 4.5, respectively. Mean scores were calculated and ranged from 1 (strong disagreement with masculinity items) to 5 (strong agreement with masculinity items); the mean of the same was 3.3, with a standard deviation of 0.67. Overall, a mean of 3.3 indicates this sample did not report higher levels of Black masculinity. Internal consistency reliability estimate for the MIS within the current study was 0.76.

The Attitudes Towards Seeking Professional Psychological Help scale (ATSSPPH-SF) was utilized to measure help seeking attitudes. Straight items (S) were scored 3-2-1-0, and reversal items (R) 0-1-2-3. Sum scores were utilized and could range from 0 (indicating a negative attitude toward seeking professional help) to 30 (indicating a positive attitude toward seeking professional help). Within this sample, sum scores ranged from 0 to 30, with a mean of 16.9 and a standard deviation of 6.25. Overall, a mean of 16.9 indicates this sample of Black men are less likely to seek psychological help. The internal consistency reliability estimates for the overall ATSSPPH- SF scale for the current study sample was 0.778.

The Racism and Life Experiences Scale: Racial Hassles (RALES-DLE) was utilized to measure race related stress. An additive score of frequency and bothering was utilized to sum the item ratings. Utilizing additive scores across all 40 items were suggested by the author of this scale. Sum scores could range from 0 (indicating never experiencing racial experiences) to 100 (indicating having experienced all once a week or more). Sum scores could range from 0 (indicating the participant never experienced any hassles) to 10 (indicating the participant had experienced it and was extremely bothered). Scores from this sample ranged from 6.0 to 162, with a mean of 76.518 and a standard deviation of 35.18. Overall, a mean of 76.518 indicates this sample did not experience higher levels of race-related stress.

The internal consistency reliability estimates for the current study were 0.954.

Research questions 1, 2, and 3 and Correlational Findings

Assumptions for Pearson correlations, including level of measurement, absence of outliers, normality of variables, and linearity of the relationship, were assessed via visual inspection of histograms, boxplots, and scatterplots, as well as inspection of skewness and kurtosis values for each variable. The data met each assumption for every analysis. The correlational findings are summarized in Table 2.

Research Question 1

A Pearson correlation was conducted to explore the relationships between Black masculinity as measured by the MIS and race-related stress as measured by the RLES. Results from the Pearson correlation indicated no significant association between Black masculinity and race-related stress ($r = -0.17, p \geq .001$). Meaning more frequent experiences of race-related stress did not correlate with higher levels of Black masculinity. Therefore, the research hypothesis was not supported. Please refer to Table 2 for correlation matrix.

Research Question 2

A Pearson correlational was conducted to explore the relationships between Black masculinity as measured by the MIS and mental health help seeking as measured by the ATSPPH-SF. Results from the Pearson correlation indicate no significant association between Black masculinity and mental health help seeking ($r = 0.01, p \geq .001$). Therefore, the research hypothesis was not supported. Please refer to (Table 2 and Figure 2) for correlation matrix and scatterplot.

Research Question 3

A Pearson correlational was conducted to explore the relationships between race-related stress as measured by the RLES and mental health help seeking as measured by the ATSPPH-SF. Results from the Pearson correlation indicate no significant association between race-related stress and mental health help seeking ($r = -0.07, p \geq .001$). Therefore, the research hypothesis was not supported. Please refer to (Table 2 and Figure 1) for correlation matrix and scatterplot.

Research Question 4 and Multiple Regression Findings

Research Question 4

A multiple linear regression was run to determine whether there are any significant linear relationships between the Racism and Life Experiences Scale and Masculinity Inventory Scale scores and the Attitudes Towards Seeking Professional Psychological Help scale scores. Researcher assessed for assumptions and the assumptions were met. Model assumptions of constant variance and normality of error terms were assessed via residual plots and deemed to be met. The presence of multicollinearity was assessed by calculating the variance inflation factor (VIF). It is desired to have VIF values less than 5. The VIF for this model was 1.03, so there is no evidence of the presence of multicollinearity. The assumption of linearity was assessed by checking scatterplots of RLES and MIS plotted against ATSPPH -SF (available in the appendix) and there were no clear signs of nonlinearity. The response variable was ATSPPH -SF score and the independent variables were RLES score and MIS score. The overall F-test tests the hypothesis that at least one of the predictor variables is statistically significant. Based on a p- value of 0.56 ($F(2, 75) = 0.58$), there is not sufficient evidence to suggest there are any significant linear Relationships between RLES score or MIS score and ATSPPH -SF score. Black/ African American men did not have higher levels of Black masculinity, nor did more frequent race-related stress events influence more negative mental health help seeking attitude. A measure of model performance is R-squared, which is the proportion of the variance in the response variable

that is explained by the predictor variables. R-squared ranges from 0 to 1 and higher values are preferred. The R-squared for this model is 0.0152. This means RLES and MIS scores explain 1.52% of the variance in ATSPPH-SF scores, which is quite low. It also implies that 98.48% of the variance in ATSPPH-SF scores is explained by variables not included in the model. Looking at the scatterplots for RLES and MIS, there do not appear to be any clear trends between these variables and ATSPPH-SF scores, so it is unlikely that the sample size has anything to do with the lack of significant relationships. The regression model is summarized in Table 4.

Research Question 5

Descriptive statistics were used to analyze mental health attitudes in Black men. Research question five stated that Black men would have more negative attitudes about mental health help seeking. The total score on the ATSPPH-SF were less than 20 (M= 16.90, SD=6.29). The results on the ATSPPH- SF indicate that the overall attitude surrounding mental health was negative. Results from the ATSPPH- SF indicate that similar to previous studies (Cadaret & Speight, 2018) Black men seek out mental health services less and generally feel more negatively towards seeking psychological support. Tables for the descriptive statistics for mental health attitudes are provided in Appendix B (Table 3)

CHAPTER V

DISCUSSION

In this study, 78 African American/Black men enrolled in college were surveyed to better understand their mental health help-seeking behaviors, views of masculinity, and experiences of race-related stressors. Overall, the original hypotheses were not supported. Multiple regression analyses revealed no significant relationships between key study variables. Correlational analyses also revealed no significant relationships. These results are discussed further below.

Role of Religion

The researcher sought to understand reasons for lack of significance within the model. One hypothesis for lack of significance may be due to the role of religion and level of religiosity within the individuals who participated in this study. Within this study, a large portion of

participants identified as Christian. Although the researcher did not specifically explore the role of religion as a protective factor, past literature has highlighted the importance of religion (e.g., Avent & Wong, 2018; Dempsey & Gaither, 2016). Researchers have noted that religion and religious practices can alleviate stressors and decrease stress levels (Hays & Lincoln, 2017). This understanding of the role of religion may have influenced the results of this study. Black men who hold religion, specifically Christianity, as salient may seek out counseling services less than their White counterparts. Furthermore, religion may serve as a buffer for Black men who do experience race-related stress.

University Counseling Centers (UCCs) and Black Men

An additional reason as to why this model was not significant could be due to the makeup of university counseling centers. University counseling centers are often comprised of clinicians that may not encompass the diversity of the students enrolled (Association for University and College Counseling Center Directors [AUCCCD], 2021). Specifically, at PWIs the makeup of counselors tends to be predominately White (AUCCCD, 2021; Quimby & Agonafer, 2022). The makeup of counselors within a counseling center thus may influence which students seek out services. As previously noted, Black men are often less likely to seek out mental health services and often drop out of services more quickly than their White counterparts (Cadaret & Speight, 2018; Masuda et al., 2012). A level of cultural mistrust of mental health professionals and a lack of representation may influence Black men's decision to engage in mental health care. Although the researcher opened the study to all Black men in college after recruitment challenges, there still proved to be no significance within this model, which differs from the researcher's original hypothesis.

Masculinity Measure

In hopes of getting a clearer understanding of the Black masculinity construct, the researcher sought a measure that measures masculinity specific to Black men. However, the newness of this MIS scale may have also influenced the lack of significance within this model. Past researchers have conducted studies with Black men in college, yet they used measures that were normed for White men (Levant & Wong, 2017; Griffith, 2012). Past researchers who used more readily utilized measures to explore masculinity did find significance within their studies. The current researcher could hypothesize that the MIS measures lack of past literature and statistical findings could have influenced the results of this study. The MIS scale may have areas for improvement, which may increase the reliability and validity of the measure for future studies.

Recruitment Considerations

An additional consideration for this study, and its lack of significant results, is the overall recruitment process of this specific population. The researcher initially proposed to recruit Black men who were attending Predominately White Institutions. During recruitment, the researcher observed challenges related to recruiting Black men who attended Predominately White Institutions. Ultimately, these recruitment limitations impacted the original study proposal. Thus, the researcher decided to open the study to Black men who were currently enrolled in college. However, after opening the study to all Black men who were enrolled in college, the limitation persisted. Researchers note that the rate of Black men attending college has decreased during the past few years. The COVID-19 pandemic has only accelerated the decrease of college enrollment rates in Black men (McElderry, 2022). Black men have increasingly become the least represented population on college campus. Instead of attending college recent statistics suggest that Black men are forgoing college and are choosing to go directly into the workforce after high school.

The current enrollment rates of Black men may attribute to the low response rate within the current study.

Strengths and Limitations of this Study

This study sought to understand the relationship between race-related stress and Black masculinity on help seeking attitudes in Black men in college.

Within this study several strengths were identified. This study is one of few studies that have sought to explore the construct of Black masculinity. Masculinity within Black men has often been conflated with the experiences of White men within the literature (Aymer, 2016). When Black masculinity has been explored, the construct has been researched through a deficit framework (Brooms, 2017). This study is also one of few studies that sought to explore the experiences of Black men in college. As previously noted, Black men in college are often underrepresented within masculinities and psychology literature.

An additional limitation of the study was the previously noted considerations related to recruitment and sample size. A small sample size for the current study posed a significant limitation. Although the minimum was met to meet the power analysis, the research findings may hold less significance.

To accurately measure the construct of Black masculinity, the researcher utilized a measure that has been utilized less than other measures that explore the overall construct of Black masculinity. The MIS is one of the only measures that highlights the unique experiences of Black/African American men. Thus, results from this study should be interpreted with caution until the patterns found in this study are confirmed.

To date, researchers that explore Black men's lived experiences have typically used focus groups or qualitative methods. As a result, research tends to not look at the breadth and depth of

Black men's experiences. Researchers also suggest that Black men are often underrecruited for quantitative research studies (Griffith et al., 2022). Griffith and colleagues (2019) noted that conducting research that involves marginalized groups such as Black men can be more challenging due to cultural mistrust of researchers. Past researchers suggest that studies such as the Tuskegee experiment have negatively impacted the Black communities desire to participate in clinical research (Cadaret et al., 2018). This level of mistrust of research may have impacted the number of Black men who were willing to participate in this study. Although the research was conducted by an individual who holds similar racial identities as the participants being studied, mistrust of researchers and research studies may have still been present when recruiting for this study. Furthermore, significant number of participants were excluded from the final data analyses for this study. 54 of the 132 participants failed to answer at least one question for a given scale, so only 78 of the respondents could be included in the analysis. These participants failed to complete portions of the Racism and Life Experiences Scale: Racial Hassles, specifically the subsection focused on how much experiences bother you. Respondents who failed to answer at least one question for a given scale did not have a total score calculated, since it would not be reflective of the full measure. While each part measures different aspects of race-related stress based on frequency and bother the twenty statements may have felt redundant. The presentation of these measures in the online survey may have impacted participants ability to complete this study. If the survey was completed on a mobile device, it could be difficult to see the second column associated with this survey, thus resulting in participants' failure to complete.

Recommendations for Counseling Services and Advocacy Work

Results from this study have clinical implications for mental health professionals who work with Black men who attend colleges across the United States. Understanding the specific lived experiences of Black men in college may help to alleviate the cultural mistrust that Black men endorsed within this study. From a clinical perspective, understanding the impact of race

related stressors may aid in more culturally inclusive therapeutic interventions to better serve Black men who attend college counseling centers. Information containing data from this study may further illuminate how constant race related stressor impact the psychological well-being of Black men in college. Although significance from this study is not shown this study has illuminated a greater need for more research within the field of masculinities. Results from this study may aid clinicians and researchers and foster open forums and discussions to ensure that as professionals we are meeting the needs of Black men in college.

CHAPTER VI

CONCLUSION AND FUTURE CONSIDERATIONS

Understanding the lived experiences of African American/ Black men in college is important for a multitude of reasons. The intersections of race and gender as it relates to the lived experiences of Black/ African American men in college should be explored more thoroughly. The current study was largely exploratory considering the construct of Black masculinity and race-related stress have rarely been studied together with this specific population. Previous researchers have sought to explore the lived experiences of all men in college, but minimal research has sought to truly explore the construct of Black masculinity. It is evident that more concerted efforts are needed to address the unique disparities that impact Black men's desire to seek mental health services while in college. It is paramount to note that as researchers that we continue to shine a light on the unique racial challenges that Black men encounter daily. Since the Covid-19 pandemic Black men and their lived experiences were briefly spotlighted on a world stage. Yet, as society returns to a sense of normalcy it is crucial for researchers to continue to highlight the ways in which society both "fears and adored" Black men. Although racial stressors are not being spotlighted at the rates in which they were previously this does not negate the clear disparities and

stressors that Black men encounter while navigating their identity and college experiences. Additional suggestions for future research include having a larger sample size. The researcher experienced various challenges related to recruiting Black men for this specific study. Future researchers should explore additional recruitment tools to reach this specific population. With rates of retention for Black men in college decreasing future researchers should also explore new opportunities to connect on the macro level with Black men on college campuses and within the community, and within the community. Future recruitment tools could include recruiting participants in community-based settings and churches. It would be beneficial to gain more qualitative information in addition to quantitative data on Black men's lived experiences post the COVID- 19 pandemic and the racial injustices of 2020.

In addition, future researchers should focus on how the impact of additional identity factors (sexual orientation and religion) impact the construct of Black masculinity. The current researcher did not explicitly explore religion and westernized Christianity as a protective factor. Understanding more fully the experiences of Black men in college and identified ways to create more cultural trust of mental health professionals is paramount.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

EXTENDED LITERATURE REVIEW

Black Masculinities

The institution of slavery, racism, and racial profiling has directly impacted the way in which Black men are viewed within society (Smiley&Fakunle,2016). In the past, Black people, specifically Black males, were seen as the visual manifestation of “buffoonery”, “blissful ignorance”, and “juvenile angst” (Smiley& Fakunle,2016). Enslaved Black men were reminded of their inferiority all while being tasked with “soothing” White consciences (Smiley& Fakunle, 2016, pg.2). This imagery of Black men was used to denigrate the identity and experiences of Black men (Smiley & Fakunle, 2016). From this perspective, Black men have been seen as lesser than their White counterparts since the inception of the United States. Before the formation of the United States, Black men were perceived in a more positive light in their countries of origin (Brooms, 2016). Yet, as time has progressed, the perception of Black men has become more negative in nature. Rogers and colleagues (2015) assert that Black men were not respected or seen

as citizens before the Civil Rights Movement in the 1960's. After the Civil Rights Movement in the 1960's Black men have still struggled to fit in with the traditional standards of manhood. Yet, researchers have not placed an emphasis on what Black masculinities looks like within Westernized society.

Although the research on masculinities has evolved throughout time (Wong & Wester,2016), there is a dearth of research on Black masculinities. In the past, research on masculinity has focused on and operationalized masculinity as a construct that is defined within relational terms (Griffith et al., 2012). However, prominent researchers have broadened the definition to include masculinity as something that “individuals do, and not what an individual is” (Thomas, et al., 2015, pg. 261). Current research has only briefly explored Black masculinities as a construct within overarching society (Griffith & Cornish,2018; Levant & Powell,2017; Griffith,2012). Researchers have often described Black masculinity as a “stagnant monolith” (Goodwill et al., 2018, pg. 2). Furthermore, the intricacies of Black masculinities and the potential mental health outcomes that result from cultural stigma have not been theoretically explored within current literature (Hammond et al., 2016). It is also important to note that much of what is known about masculinities is rooted in men's studies that used predominately White samples.

View of Masculinity

Berger and colleagues (2005) define masculinity as gender roles predisposed based off location and social upbringing, while Hunter and Davis (1992) defined manhood as ideas and ideals about what it means to be a man. Both of these definitions play an important role within the research on manhood. Although these two definitions are invaluable, research has been moving towards an inclusion of both definitions. Current researchers posit that manhood is intricately connected to one's class, socioeconomic

status, and perceived success within westernized society (Griffith et al., 2015). Within westernized society social class is often connected to this cultural identity.

However, as it relates to manhood this cultural identity is connected to what is deemed appropriate and acceptable for men. Masculine roles also differ by geographic location. Men who live in urban geographic locations are more likely tasked with following the gender roles and rules associated with urban masculinity and vice versa in rural communities. This rigidity of gender roles negatively impacts the well-being and expression of masculinity within African American men (Wade & Rochlen, 2013). Griffith and Cornish (2018) examined perspectives of African American men as related to manhood. The researchers conducted 64 interviews with urban African American men aged 35–76 from the Southeastern United States. Results showed that manhood was a concept defined by attributes of honesty and respectability (Griffith & Cornish, 2018). This is in alignment with the current views of masculinities as a socially constructed practice rather than an individual practice.

Expression of Manhood

Hammond and colleagues (2016) suggest that societal pressures have influenced the way in which men express their masculinity. The social hierarchy of manhood and gender expression have been addressed within the literature from a very Eurocentric perspective. However, this Eurocentric lens of manhood has inhibited discussions on the intersectionality of manhood. Researchers often suggest that due to the intricacies of manhood it can be described as more precarious than womanhood (Levant & Powell, 2011). This is not to suggest that there is not a vast history associated with the development and expression of womanhood within society; however, manhood has historically been described from the lenses of the dominant culture. This notion of a dominant masculinity

or hierarchy is consistent with past research that has focused primarily on White, middle class, and heterosexual samples (Griffith, 2012; Levant & Powell, 2011).

Griffith and colleagues (2012) state:

Within the westernized culture the dominant ideal of masculinity is defined by race (white), sexual orientation (heterosexual), socioeconomic status (middle class) and the possession of certain traits: assertiveness, dominance, control, physical strength, and emotional restraint (pg. 187). Thus, Black men have been excluded from the literature and their experiences have been trivialized. The dominant masculinity traits found within the literature essentially silence the voices of Black men.

Masculinity Roles

African American men have historically defined manhood similarly to White men and such definitions have tended to include the roles of “breadwinner,” “provider,” “procreator,” and “protector” (Majors & Bilson, 1993, pg.1). However, researchers suggest that although Black men and their White counterparts define manhood similarly, Black men have not been given the same resources to succeed in performing traditional masculinity (Hunter & Davis, 1994; Majors & Bilson, 1992; Mincey, 2014; Griffith & Cornish, 2016). Schwing and colleagues (2013) suggested that African men have historically felt the pressure to assimilate to the dominant cultures way of expressing masculine gender expression. Past researchers assert that African American men endorse traditional masculine norms more than their White counterparts (Mincey et al., 2015). However, within this construction of Black

masculinity there are a variety of layers and nuances that differ from traditional masculinity (Mincey et al., 2014). Black men have historically faced challenges as it pertains to “fitting” the mold of what it takes to be a man (Griffith et al., 2015). Black masculinity is an intricate construct due to the systemic structures that have sought to emasculate Black men for generations (Broom & Perry, 2016). Throughout history the term manhood has been associated with a “quest” for success and the ability to align with stereotypical gender norms (Griffith & Cornish, 2018).

Griffith and Cornish (2018) assert:

One of the primary aspirations of adult males is to be respected and treated as men, which has been linked to economic success and included having the ability to fulfill heteronormative social and cultural ideas and expectations (pg.1).

However, this quest for manhood has been altered for men who do not identify with the dominant culture.

Within westernized society, Black masculinity is largely associated with terms such as “thug,” “aggressive,” and “predator” (Smiley & Fakunle, 2016). African American men are feared and adored within westernized culture (Griffith & Cornish, 2018; as previously cited by Hutchinson 1996). Hawley and Flint (2016) suggest that Black men are the “invisibly invisible” (pg. 208). They are not allowed the privileges of participation within White culture, yet they are visible enough to be seen as one that can “incite public fear” (Hawley & Flint, 2016, pg. 208). Black men are adored for their athletic prowess and ability to entertain and feared due to their stature. Yet, while trying to maintain this dichotomous relationship Black men may feel unheard and unseen. Black men are often tasked with ensuring they entertain the White gaze while maintaining their Black identity (Griffith & Cornish, 2018). The dichotomy of fear and admiration dates back to the inception of the United States. Within this vain, Black men are required to be consciously hyperaware while being self-reflective and driven towards self-improvement

(Griffith & Comish, 2018; Hammond & Mattis, 2005). Therefore, Black men often struggle to demonstrate their worth and intrinsic value within society. Du Bois (1903) coined the term “double consciousness” to help explain the lived experiences of Black individuals and this term still has bearings within the experiences of Black men and communities of color today. Du Bois (1903) described double consciousness as, “twoness, —an American, a Negro; two souls, two thoughts, two unreconciled strivings; two warring ideals in one dark body, whose dogged strength alone keeps it from being torn asunder” (pg. 3). This hyperawareness of one’s “twoness” speaks to the internal battle that has been interwoven into the fabric of the United States.

Intersectionality

Hammond and colleagues (2016) suggest that when implementing an intersectional approach, Black men have “few options for fulfilling societal expectations for men or expressing their masculinity in positive ways” (pg. 261). Construction of Black masculinities needs to be further explored in conjunction with how society views Black men. Thomas and colleagues (2015) suggest that, “hypermasculine identity adoption among African American males is shaped by a broader sociopolitical, economic, and historical forces (e.g., structural racism)”. These historical forces are crucial when addressing the construction of Black masculinity. Researchers suggest that research with college age Black men must address multiple levels of masculinity which include: “what it means to be a man, what it means to be a Black man, and who influenced male development exist” (Mincey et al., 2014; Mincey, 2014).

Accordingly, Franklin (1984) asserts that African American men must construct their own definition of masculinity when compared to their White counterparts. African American men are socialized differently than are White men. This in part may be due to the sociohistorical structure of the Black community. Black men have been socialized from a young age to protect their family, friends, and community (Way et al., 2014; Brooms & Perry, 2016). This socialization process stems from the desire to not be seen as an “other” within society (Brooms & Perry, 2016). However, Black men are still seen as an “other” due to their race all while holding

privilege due to their gender. Within the Black community Black men are also taught how to survive within westernized society. Similarly, Black masculinities research has briefly explored the over-policing of communities of color (Brooms & Perry, 2016).

Yet, the technique of survival may take away one's ability to express one's identity authentically. In some respects, Black men "live in a different social reality and actually have a different masculinity" (Wade & Rochlen, 2013, pg.2; Franklin, 1987). Although traditional masculinity and Black masculinity contain similar attributes, it is important to note that the construct of masculinity differs within Black men due to societal constructs and community views of what manhood entails. Researchers suggest that African American men are more likely to adhere to the heteronormative view of Black masculinity found in mainstream society (Mincey et al., 2015). Researchers also suggest that when compared to their White counterparts, African American men also adhere to these heteronormative traditional forms of masculinity more than their White male counterparts (Wade & Rochlen, 2013). This view of masculinity is only heightened when race is intersected with gender. However, researchers also suggest that Black men experience masculinity differently as a result of their multiple identities (e.g., age group, sexuality, spirituality, or socioeconomic status; Cooper, 2007; Pelzer, 2016). Current research has examined Black masculinity and the intersection of these identities on a college campus (Mincey et al., 2014). Harris and colleagues suggest that "the expression of Black masculinity on a college campus was associated with "engaging in sexist and constrained relationships with women," or the ability to pursue sexual relationships with many different women (as cited in Mincey et al., 2014, pg.388)

Reference Groups

Researchers have identified three reference groups in which Black men interact daily, which include a Black man's peer group, subcultural reference group, and a societal reference group (Franklin, 1987; Rochlen, 2013). Within these reference groups, hypermasculine behavior is deemed the norm (Franklin, 1987). Franklin (1987) also suggested that within these three

groups lessons are learned about how to “be a man” and how to survive within the dominant culture. Across cultures, but specifically within communities of color, boys and men are exposed to messages such as “man up”, “toughen up”, “act like a man”, or “boys don’t cry” (Addis, et al., 2017; Vogel et al., 2011). Although these messages are sought to teach resilience, in some respects it may increase barriers to healthy emotional expression and gender expression.

Emotional Expression

Research by Wade & Rochlen (2013) supports the idea that African American boys are taught at a young age what is “manly” or masculine. Black men are reminded that it is a perceived “weakness” to show any emotions that do not emphasize strength (Wade & Rochlen, 2013). Black men are also socialized to view emotions as inherently feminine (Levant & Powell, 2017). The feminization of emotions and emotionality have an impact on the way that Black men navigate their manhood within society (Levant & Powell, 2017). Levant and Powell (2017) assert that boys and men within westernized society are hardwired to be less emotional than girls and women (pg. 24). This gender ideology illuminates the belief that men must adhere to behaviors that are culturally defined (Levant & Powell, 2017). African American men have also been taught to maintain a tough exterior to protect themselves. This is, however, dependent on a Black male’s level of assimilation to the westernized culture.

Current researchers suggest that Black masculinity is also strongly associated with a sense of pride in self (Hunter & Davis, 1992; Mincey et al., 2014). However, this sense of pride decreases when Black men are tasked with adhering to the heteronormative views of masculinity. These heteronormative views of masculinity often include emotional suppression as a way to be seen as strong. These performances of masculinity also impact one’s willingness to express emotions outside of anger. African American males have been taught to maintain a tough exterior to protect themselves. Any action that deviates from these rigid gender norms are deemed wrong. An example of actions that deviate from gender norms include male’s expression of emotions. Much of what is taught about Black masculinity emphasizes toughness and aggressiveness. Males who

adhere to masculine norms express one emotion (anger) which is inherent to toughness (Bruch, 2002). Researchers have found that masculine norms such as aggression and competitiveness are seen as the most effective to show your masculinity (Oliffe et al., 2010). Although in general males are less likely to share their views on emotions, this is even more relevant with African

American males. The stigmatization of emotions within the construct of Black masculinity also impacts Black men's willingness to engage in mental health help seeking.

Deficit Model

Past research has also utilized a deficit model when illustrating the construction of Black masculinity (Hammond & Mattis, 2005; Hunter & Davis, 1992, Rogers et al., 2015). Specifically, researchers have focused on Black masculinity in conjunction with low socioeconomic status and inadequacies of Black men (Mincey et al., 2014). Black men have been described within the literature as “absentee fathers, “thugs”, and as “hypersexual” (Mincey et al., 2014). Kumah-Abiwu (2020) note that Black men have often been described as “ at risk” or “anti-intellectuals within mainstream media. Researchers suggest that Black men have been framed as someone that should be feared by White individuals. Furthermore, this deficit model also highlights the negative stereotypes associated with Black men. These stereotypes seek to distinguish what Black men must do to not be seen as a “Bad Black man”. More so the past research has sought to parse out what “Good Black masculinity” and ‘Bad Black masculinity” look like. Yet, in some respects this negates the varied experiences of Black men. Instead, an emphasis is placed on the negative attributes of Black men within society. Past research has also focused on the negative aspects of Black masculinity specifically as it relates to the role of Black men within the family unit (Majors & Billson, 1992). However, current masculinities researchers have sought to examine Black masculinity in conjunction with positive psychological perspectives (Kiselica et al., 2016).

Black men are also reminded daily how their speech, actions, and interactions will shape how people view them (Wade, 2006). The construction of Black masculinity can occur in

conjunction with outside pressures and sociopolitical pressures such as racism and discrimination. An example of this construction of Black masculinity is known as “cool pose” (Majors & Billson, 1992). “Cool pose” is a ritualized form of masculinity that may include posturing, scripts, impression management, physical posturing, and carefully crafted performances (Majors &

Billson, 1992). This form of masculinity employs a message of strength pride, and control (Majors & Billson, 1992, p. 4; Wade & Rochlen, 2013). “Cool pose” has also been described as a coping strategy that provides a sense of achievement in pursuit of Black masculinity (Majors & Billson, 1992).

Mental Health Stigma

For years there has been a significant stigma associated with seeking out mental health services. For many in the Black community when the word counseling is discussed it is directly related with the phrases “just pray about it” and or “that’s a White people thing” (Harris & Wong, 2018). Researchers suggest that within the Black community, there is extensive stigma associated with seeking mental health services (Wade & Rochlen, 2013). The term stigma refers to negative beliefs or attitudes based off of incomplete knowledge about a topic (Holden et al., 2012). Cadaret and Speight (2018) assert that within the United States 12.2% of African American women and 7.4% of African American men reported willingness to seek out professional help to address mental health concerns (pg.348). This statistic suggests that African American men are not seeking out services as readily as African American women. Lindsey and Marcell (2012) suggest that Black men do not readily seek out mental health professionals due to cultural mistrust and fear. It is also important to first understand the initial instinct for Black men to resist mental health help seeking behaviors. Black men have been socialized to internalize their thoughts and feelings as a way to maintain their “manhood”. Researchers also note that Black college age men often experience undiagnosed suicidal ideation (Britt-Spells et al., 2018; Masuda et al., 2018). Unfortunately, the experiences of

Black college students specifically the experiences of Black men are lacking within the literature. Barry and colleagues (2017) noted that Black college aged men are more susceptible to mental health concerns, higher level of alcohol use to cope with their mental health concerns and are more likely to have negative views of seeking out mental health professionals.

Masculinity and Help Seeking

Current researchers suggest that negative preconceived notions about mental health are more prevalent in males as compared to females (Tirpak & Schlosser, 2015). Researchers suggest that Black men worry that seeking out counseling will threaten what is left of their masculinity (Williams & Justice 2010; Carr & West, 2013). Past researchers suggest that Black men also have a fear of counselors' lack of multicultural awareness and inadequate care after reaching out to a mental health professional (Cadaret & Speight, 2018). Black men may also have fears related to being labeled as "less than a man" by a mental health professional (Lindsey & Marcell, 2012). Due to inadequate care, Black men may go untreated and underserved (Cadaret & Speight, 2018; Lindsey & Marcell, 2012). Current research suggests that Black men who choose to engage in mental health help seeking often leave prematurely due to dissatisfaction with services (Lindsey & Marcell, 2012). Although many African American men experience symptoms associated with mental health disorders, few follow through with seeking help due to internalized struggle and a lack of education on the severity of the issue (Powell et al., 2016).

Sociocultural Influences

Researchers suggest that African Americans are less likely to report mental and physical health concerns (Cadaret & Speight, 2018; Wade & Rochlen, 2013). However, African Americans are subjected to extreme amounts of stress throughout their life span (Hudson et al., 2016). African Americans are also more likely to experience worry and fear that they will be seen as weak for discussing their mental health concerns. Williams and

Justice (2010) explored African American men's attitudes towards seeking psychological help. Results from this study assert that African American undergraduate men have a negative view of counseling due to perceived stigma and fear of embarrassment (Williams & Justice, 2010). This study is consistent with past research that emphasizes fear and embarrassment as key factors that impact mental health help seeking behaviors (Thompson et al., 2004). Lindsey and Marcell (2012) suggest that Black men do not readily seek out mental health professionals due to cultural mistrust and fear. This assertion suggests there is still a lack of research as it pertains to Black men and barriers to seeking out mental health services. It is also important to first understand the initial instinct for Black men to resist mental health help seeking behaviors. Black men have been socialized to internalize their thoughts and feelings as a way to maintain their "manhood".

Watkins and Neighbors (2007) note:

We don't express it a lot because we feel like we are already on the bottom because we're Black and so showing everyone in the world that you may not be stable in your mind is just out of the question. You can't let them think that something is wrong with you because you already got so many things against you because you're a Black man" (p.278).

Watkins and colleagues (2010) highlighted race, gender, social class, and social context as factors that decrease African American men's help seeking behaviors. Results from this study suggest that Black men's intersecting identities and embedded stigma limit help seeking behaviors (Watkins et al., 2010). Previous researchers have also sought to examine race, gender, and social supports independently without examining the experiences of Black men from an intersectional lens (Cadaret & Speight, 2018). Researchers suggest that African American men have lower levels of utilization of mental health services when compared to White men due to multiple systemic and cultural factors (Ward & Collins, 2010). Current researchers suggest that

Black men are subjected to more psychological and psychosocial stressors, such as racism, discrimination, and prejudice, which increases their likelihood of poorer mental health (Watkins et al.,2010). Black individuals are also more likely to experience racial microaggressions and racism in comparison to their White counterparts (Pieterse et al., 2012). Researchers note that perceived racism is also positively associated with higher mental health concerns (Pieterse et al., 2012). In their 2017 study, Hollingsworth and colleagues explored the 6 dimensions of racial microaggressions and its association with suicidal ideation in 135 African American college students. Results from the study suggest that African American students who have experienced specific racial microaggressions and higher levels of feeling like a burden on others may have higher levels of suicidal ideation (Hollingsworth et al., 2017). Additionally, masculinities researchers suggest that African American men have higher levels of depressive symptomology which has been lined to experiences of discrimination (Britt-Spells et al., 2018). Researchers suggest that Black men are less likely to discuss these experiences due to a fear of being seen as “weak” (Watkins et al.,2010). Black men have been tasked with maintaining a “strong” persona all while experiencing stressors that can have adverse effects on their mental health (Wade& Rochlen, 2013). When this “strong” persona is not upheld, Black men fear that the westernized society will look down at their display of vulnerability and humanness (Williams& Justice, 2010). Similarly, the Black community have expressed a continual battle to be seen, heard, and legitimized as a crucial part of the success of the westernized society. Black communities have also been subjected to a level of invisibility and lack of inclusion, thus impacting their desire to seek out mental help from entities that have historically been oppressive towards those who hold marginalized identities. (Holden et al., 2012; Barry et al., 2016; Franklin, 1999). African American men choose not to seek out mental health professionals due to social, cultural, and economic factors (Lindsey & Marcell, 2012). The cultural distrust of mental health professionals

and help-seeking stems from a historical disenfranchisement. These historical disenfranchisements include issues related to sexism, microaggressions, poverty, and racism. African American men may also use “high effort coping” to combat the effects of negative stressors such as racism, discrimination, and over exposure to high psychosocial stressors

(Hudson et al. 2018). “John Henryism” is a high effort coping skill often utilized within the Black community (Hudson et al., 2016). “John Henryism refers to an African American’s belief that that they can meet the demands of their hard work with determination and hard work” (Mathews et al., 2013; as previously cited by James et al., 1983, p. 263; Hudson et al., 2016). Although John Henryism can be beneficial for African Americans in moderation there is minimal research on the impacts on this type of active coping for an extended time period.

Masculinity and Help Seeking

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Marcell, 2012). Although many African American men experience symptoms associated with mental health disorders, few follow through with seeking help due to internalized struggle and a lack of education on the severity of the issue (Powell et al., 2016).

Lindsey and Marcell (2012) examined Black men's willingness to engage in help seeking for emotional problems through a qualitative research study. Results from this study suggested that there are three major themes that impact Black men's mental help seeking behaviors: "tipping points," "taking care of it oneself," and "issues engaging potential sources of help" (pg.358). The theme of "Taking care of it oneself" parallels with what is known about the experiences of Black men. "Taking care of it oneself" has been described within the literature as handling ones perceived responsibilities as a Black man. Results from this study also suggest that "Taking care of it oneself" may include finding the solution on your own. Lindsey and Marcell (2012) assert that Black men may engage in introspective activities, hobbies, or drug use in lieu of mental health help seeking (Lindsey & Marcell, 2012). Researchers go as far to assert that "tipping points" worsen Black men's mental health symptoms. Lastly, researchers suggest that Black men experienced disjointed support systems which often impact willingness to share their problems and concerns (Lindsey & Marcell, 2012). Researchers found that Black men pick potential support sources based on trust/confidentiality and level of closeness within the relationship. Researchers also suggest that Black men choose when they utilize their support dependent on the specific problem (Lindsey & Marcell, 2012). Tipping points" were described by Black men as major negative life events or circumstances that impacted their willingness to engage in mental health help seeking behaviors. Participants reported that tipping points occurred after trying to "take care of it oneself" (Lindsey & Marcell, 2012). Researchers suggest that Black men's willingness to engage in help seeking behaviors increase if they feel as if they are unable to handle things on their own.

Cultural Context

Similarly, if Black men seek out mental health services, they are more likely to be misdiagnosed or receive poor care (Lindsey&Marcell,2012). Researchers suggest that the misdiagnosis of Black men stems back to the lack of research on diagnosis within communities of color (Mathews et al., 2013). For years Black men have been misdiagnosed with schizophrenia due to the lack of knowledge on the varied of experiences of Black men (Gara et al., 2019). Black men’s expression of emotion is often misdiagnosed in mental health and medical settings (Gara et al., 2019).

Historically, Black men who struggle with depression and anxiety are diagnosed in primary care settings; however, Black men who are not diagnosed in primary care settings may never receive treatment by a mental health professional (Hudson et al., 2018, p.128; Watkins & Neighbors, 2007; Mitchell et al., 2017). Researchers suggest that depression has not been researched with Black men to the degree that is has been measured within their White counterparts (Britt-Spells et al., 2018). Black men are also less likely to seek out services in primary care settings (Hudson et al., 2018). Though African American men experience symptoms associated with mental health disorders, few follow through with seeking help due to internalized struggle and a lack of education on the severity of the issue (Cadaret& Speight, 2018, p.351).

Consider this example from a young male who disclosed a mental health concern: “I made the mistake of telling my best friend. He said ‘you’re crazy? Oh my God, I can’t believe it. Get away from me. You’re dangerous” (Ward & Besson, 2013; as previously cited by Mathews et al., 2006, pg.261). Mitchell and colleagues (2017) conducted a cross-sectional study with 1,066 older African American men participants. Results from this study suggested that African American men identified more with terminology such as “downhearted” and “blue” to describe their mental health instead of mental health terminology. For Black men words such as “downhearted” of “blue” are forms of cultural jargon. Researchers assert that mental health

professionals must be attuned with this kind of cultural jargon used to describe mental health within the Black community (Mitchell et al., 2017). Without this basic understanding of cultural jargon mental health professionals may struggle to understand the lived experiences of the Black community.

Role of Community

Current researchers suggest that community resources fill in the gaps where the mental health profession lacks (Harris et al. 2018). Community resources such as barbershops and beauty salons have been identified as safe spaces for the Black community (Luque et al., 2013). Current research suggest that barbershops have become a space where Black men have identified they can exist without fear of inferiority (Roper & Barry, 2016). Researchers suggest that barbershops have been found to be a positive space to share one's thoughts and feelings (Roper & Barry, 2016). In some respects, the barbershop can be seen as a quasi-therapy group for Black men without the added stigma associated with typical therapy groups. Shabazz (2016) asserts that barbershops are not just for haircuts; they are also where Black identity is formed and molded. Black men and boys are taught lessons about their masculinity and mental health during these crucial conversations in the barbershop (Shabazz, 2016).

Role of Family. Researchers have asserted that African Americans are more likely to seek out help from family members than mental health professionals when experiencing mental health concerns (Thompson et al., 2004). The role of the Black family is crucial within the Black community (Wade & Rochlen, 2012). Black men are often seen as foundational for the Black family. Yet, statistically speaking, African American men are incarcerated at five times the rate of their White counterparts (Brown et al., 2010). In turn, this impacts the Black family unit as a whole. This consistent pressure on Black families to survive in settings that are disadvantageous impacts the overall mental health of the Black family and community at large. Researchers also assert that Black men who experience incarceration are more likely to be reincarcerated (Brown et al., 2010).

Thus, the Black family is further impacted due to the high rates of recidivism for Black men. It is also important to note that Black men who have been incarcerated are also more likely to come from lower class families. Indeed, lower social class and a lack of resources impact the mental health of the Black family. These experiences of trauma more specifically impact the mental health of Black men. Black men are more likely to experience significant mental health concerns after re-entering society. However, researchers suggest that Black men are also less likely to discuss these experiences of trauma after re-entering society (Motley & Banks, 2018).

Role of Religion. Pastors and spiritual leaders in the Black church are among the resources most utilized by Black men (Dempsey et al., 2016). The Black church has long been a foundation and salient piece of the African American community. This form of informal support through the church experience has proven to be an identifiable source of strength for the African American community (Dempsey et al., 2016). Not only has the Black church been a place of safety, often it is the most accessible community resource. Research suggests that African Americans tend to attend a predominantly African American church (Avent & Cashwell, 2015). African American men may also choose to seek help from informal sources such as clergy and pastors before reaching out to a mental health professional (Cadaret & Speight, 2018). Harris and Wong (2018) assert that African Americans learn messages about mental health help seeking from their pastors and church congregants. Within the Black church mental health has often been framed as “linked to Satan” or as “Satan trying to get you down” (Harris & Wong, 2018). Consider this example from a Black college student on the role of church, “you know, people come to church to get their mind right” (Harris & Wong, 2018; pg. 22). Similarly, researchers assert that religion and spirituality are protective factors against anxiety and depression (Harris & Wong, 2018). Religion and spirituality often serve as a positive buffer for the discomfort associated with mental health concerns. Yet, religion as a positive buffer often negates intentional discussions on mental health. Researchers also found that African American men who are religious use prayer as the most common coping

strategy (Nguyen et al., 2018). Although the role of the “Black Church” is not salient to all African American men, statistically the Black church is vital for a great part of African American men; researchers suggest that as much as 50% of African Americans identify as Christian (Harris & Wong, 2018). Thus, the Black church continues to serve as one of few safe spaces for Black men

College Age Black Men

Researchers have examined the mental health concerns of students on college campuses (Barry et al., 2017). The mental health of college students has been a growing area of interest on college campuses (Barry et al., 2017; Watkins & Neighbors, 2007). Current researchers have sought to improve the wellness of college students (Barry et al., 2017). College counseling center utilization has increased for White college students at PWI's (Vidourek et al., 2014). However, college counseling centers have only seen a minimal increase in the number of African American students who have sought out college counseling resources (Masuda et al., 2012). Within this vein, it is important to note that socioeconomic status and access to resources is crucial when discussing college counseling utilization. For many Black men entering college it may be their first chance to receive mental health counseling. Furthermore, Black men entering college are more likely to be first generation college students. Past researchers have briefly examined the difficulties associated with counseling male college students (Genuchi et al., 2018). Reed (2014) stated that seeking out counseling goes against the masculine roles set in place by society.

Researchers also note that men's underutilization of counseling services may also stem from the “dialectical nature” of counseling. Counseling requires a client to be open and vulnerable about their emotions which inherently goes against masculine ideology. However, much of the literature fails to address ways to encourage counseling for African American men. Current researchers also report that African American college students

view counseling as a “last resort” if they aren’t able to “handle it” on their own (Williams & Justice, 2010, pg.165).

Race- Related Stress

History of Racism

Within the Black community, emphasis has been placed on social connectedness (Griffith, 2012). This social connectedness is also rooted in the historical framework of the Black community as a safe haven. Social connectedness can also serve as a powerful buffer for Black individuals who have experienced race-related stressors (Liao et al., 2016). This need for social connectedness also stems from the desire to maintain some form of safety in the face of insurmountable experiences of systemic, cultural, and individual racism. Unfortunately, experiences of racism are rooted within Westernized society. Harrell (2000) asserts that racism is defined as “a system of dominance, power, and privilege based on racial group designations” (p. 43). Systemic or institutional racism often includes the policies and practices within an organization that inherently disenfranchise Black individuals. Within this same vein, individual racism involves an individual’s thoughts and attitudes that express prejudice or discriminatory thoughts about other groups (Franklin et al., 2006). Franklin and colleagues (2006) also assert that cultural racism can be just as detrimental to the Black community. Cultural racism involves the legitimization of a privileged group’s values and beliefs (Franklin et al., 2006). Previous researchers found that cultural racism was related to a lower quality of life for African Americans (Franklin- Jackson & Carter, 2007; Utsey et al., 2002). Although many believe in a post-racial society, researchers suggest that this is not the case (Coleman et al., 2012). Indeed, evidence suggests racism has transitioned into various platforms such as social media, sports, and music (Franklin-Jackson & Carter, 2007; Carter & Reynolds, 2011). Racism is often a topic that is taboo and therefore there is an unwillingness to explore how

racism and privilege impact communities of color. This fear of discussion would also suggest the possibility of a post-racial society is indeed false. Seldom is racism discussed within groups who do not share similar experiences (Franklin et al. 2006). Researchers assert that this

avoidance encourages a further legitimization of White values (Whitaker & Snell, 2016; Wong et al., 2017), which in turn hurts the lived experiences of communities of color. Black communities are then left to process their collective trauma without guidance or support. Yet, for many, the topic of racism is left to be discussed within the Black community. For African Americans, racism has taken on many different forms throughout the years.

The role of racism has shifted from more overt expressions such as lynchings, beatings, and separation to more covert slights. Within westernized society there has also been a move from slavery to the mass incarceration of Black and Brown bodies. Thus, racism and its various forms have deleterious effects on the Black community both psychologically and physically. Similarly, race-related stress has been shown to impact the psychological well-being of Black individuals (Utsey & Ponterotto, 1996; Carter & Reynolds, 2011; Coleman et al., 2013; Powell et al., 2016; Onwuachi-Willig, 2017). Brooms and Perry (2016) suggest that racism today feels like a “cumulative miniassault” that involves a combination of microaggressions and extreme experiences of racism.

Race- Related Stress and Black Men

Utsey and Ponterotto (1995) describe race-related stress as the everyday experiences of racism and discrimination that African Americans encounter. Harrell (2000, p.44) suggests that race-related stress includes “race-related transactions between individuals or groups and their environment that emerge from the dynamics of racism, and that are perceived to tax or exceed existing individual and collective resources or threaten

well-being.” Indeed, these everyday experiences of racism are cumulative and can lead to feelings of hopelessness. African Americans can expect to experience race-related stressors in all areas of their life all while being subjected to the constant exposure of White culture as both celebrated and embraced (Franklin- Jackson & Carter, 2007; Carter & Reynolds, 2011).

Researchers suggest that Black men experience higher levels of race-related stress in comparison to their White counterparts (Aymer, 2018; Powell et al., 2016). Race-related stress is also heightened if an individual does not have effective coping mechanisms to counteract the race-related experience (Coleman et al., 2012). Researchers suggest that race-related stress impacts Black men’s physical health and has been linked to heart disease and hypertension (Coleman et al., 2012). The recent high-profile murders of young Black men and women have caused Black men to evaluate their own mortality and place within society. Indeed, the United States has an unfortunate history as it relates to protecting Black bodies. Furthermore, the trauma story dates back to the day that Black bodies were forced to travel on ships during the Middle Passage. However, these race-related stressors now include past traumas and the “modern day lynchings” of unarmed Black men and boys across the United States (Aymer, 2016).

Policing of Black Men. One such example of brutality was the murder of Emmet Till in 1955 (Aymer, 2016; Onwuachi-Willig, 2017), which is one of the most prominent examples of brutality in the era of Jim Crow. Although it is not the first example of brutality against Black male bodies it is an example of what happens when Black male bodies are seen as a threat. The killing of Emmett Till is also a piece of history that has shaped the conversations of the Black community. Aymer (2016) suggests that the killings of young Black men at the hands of police are eerily similar to the lynchings of Black men during the era of Jim Crow. These senseless murders of unarmed Black men are also an example of vicarious trauma or secondhand trauma (Aymer, 2016). In these situations, the

Black community experiences secondhand trauma because they are forced to watch their dehumanization and murder online and through media (Aymer, 2016; Motley & Banks, 2018). Additionally, Black male bodies are memorialized as “just a hashtag” without true action or true policy change which furthers the depth of trauma. Thus, the murders of Black men are politicized and used as talking points. Furthermore, the Black community carry with them the notion that their lives are seen as “trendy” and eventually forgotten. The killing of Michael Brown, Philando Castile, Trayvon Martin, Eric Garner, Tamir Rice, Freddie Gray, Ahmaud Arbery, George Floyd, and countless other unarmed Black men are now a part of the DNA of trauma within the Black community (Hargons et al., 2017). Indeed, the Black community will hold the phrase “I can’t breathe” as a part of their trauma history. The phrase “I can’t breathe” is what one utters before they can no longer say anything else. Unfortunately, the phrase “I can’t breathe” has now been uttered by so many unarmed Black men and boys who have been murdered at the hands of White individuals (Aymer, 2016).

Furthermore, the aftermath of these modern day lynchings are even more telling of how Westernized society views Black male bodies (Aymer, 2016;; Hargons et al., 2017; Whitaker & Snell, 2016). The dehumanization of Black men and boys is also intensified by the way in which they are portrayed posthumously. In comparison to their White counterparts’ Black men are often labeled as criminals based off of their past history (Diversi, 2016). *The verbiage used to describe Black men and boys is also telling of how society views Black men (Kumah-Abiwu, 2020). While White men and boys are seen as innocent until proven guilty, Black men and boys are swiftly blamed for their own murders (Smiley & Fakunle, 2016).*

Smiley and Fakunle (2016) assert:

The city of Cleveland's response to a lawsuit filed by the family of Tamir Rice

says the 12-year-old boy is to blame for his own death by police...The family's suit filed in December said Tamir 'suffered terror and fear' at the hands of Loehmann [police officer] before his shooting death — claims the city says Tamir and his family are at fault for. It states Tamir's death was “directly and proximately caused by their own acts (as previously cited in Hensley, 2015; pg. 14). This further illustrates that to live while Black can be both dangerous and exhausting for Black men and boys.

The past histories of Black men are also thoroughly judged following their deaths to assess for past criminal acts. Consider the media coverage after the murders of George Floyd, Trayvon Martin, Eric Garner, Ahmaud Arbery, and Tamir Rice. Instead of seeing their humanity, media coverage demonized and dehumanized each of them posthumously. Smiley and Fakunle (2016) note that after the death of Michael Brown news outlets highlighted his height, weight, and lifestyle as a way to justify his murder. After the murder of George Floyd news outlets highlighted his arrest records and his past drug use (Zhou & Amaria, 2020). Often Black men who are murdered by law enforcement are portrayed as “thugs” or as “criminals” within the media as a way to justify their deaths (Smiley & Fakunle, 2016). Moreover, mainstream media may pose the statements: “he shouldn't have resisted arrest”, and “the officers were fearful for their safety” (Diversi, 2016). Indeed, White supremacy is at the core of Westernized society and it permeates in the way in which society handles conversations on police brutality and racism. Within Westernized society fear and the demonization of Black people is taught and reinforced (Mekawi et al., 2016). Mekawi and colleagues (2016) assert that White fear impacts how police officers patrol Black and Brown bodies. White fear is one of the deadliest weapons

and often can be the difference between the life or death of Black men (Smiley & Fakunle, 2016). Researchers also suggest that White individuals use White fear as a way

to maintain White superiority within society (Hamad, 2020; Mekawi et al., 2016). Researchers note that White individuals especially White women have employed “White tears” and White fear against BIPOC specifically Black men (Hamad, 2020). Westernized society is also entrenched in examples where Black men are seen as aggressive while White women are considered “damsels” (Hamad, 2020). Hamad (2020) noted that “when White people are afraid BIPOC individuals are the ones who get hurt”. When Amy Cooper called the police on Christian Cooper an African American man birding in New York City she intentionally decided to leverage her White superiority and White tears (Hamad, 2020). This is but one example where a Black body was seen as fungible. As Amy Cooper exclaimed, “I’m going to tell them there’s an African American man threatening my life” Christian Cooper’s life was immediately at risk.

Black men are not allowed to go jogging, to go birding in Central Park, or to walk within their community with skittles and iced tea without worrying that they may not make it home safely (Hamad, 2020; Mekawi et al., 2016; Smiley & Fakunle, 2016). To be Black in America especially as a Black man also means that it is not safe to wait at a Starbucks for friends, to walk into a Walmart, or attend pool parties with friends (Shullman, 2020). Unfortunately, the racial profiling and over policing of Black men is emphasized even more clearly during a global pandemic. Researchers suggest that Black men fear that wearing a mask during a global pandemic may make them more susceptible to racial profiling (Cineas, 2020). Indeed, Black men are not offered the same opportunities to live unapologetically and as free human beings.

Furthermore, White Supremacy and White fear tactics are often used to silence Black men and women (Mekawi et al., 2016). Similarly, White supremacy is exacerbated when the Black community decides to speak out against the killings of unarmed Black men. Often, when the Black community speak peacefully society does not listen (Brooms

& Perry, 2016). The collective voice of the Black community is often further silenced by the very leaders who were appointed to serve and effect social change. Within the Black community, protests have often been utilized as a way to effect social change (Hargons et al., 2017). Yet, these peaceful protests are often met with police derailment and more police brutality. White protestors are often allowed the civil right to protest, but Black protestors are not allowed the same opportunities (Aymer, 2016). While White protestors at a Michigan Capitol building were allowed to protest with their assault rifles, Black protestors in Minneapolis were met with teargas and arrests (Zhou & Amaria, 2020). Thus, racism is also engrained within the way in which civil engagement and discord occur. Black men who engage in civil engagement, protests, and open community forums are often met with tactics of White supremacy which are also interwoven into the policing of Black bodies (Mills, 2020).

Black Survival. Researchers assert that Black men often “numb out” in the face of insurmountable trauma as a way of survival (Franklin et al., 2006). Yet, this survival mechanism is tantamount for Black men. The struggle for Black survival dates back to the beginning of the United States. Therefore, Black men have learned to survive through maladaptive coping mechanisms such as avoidance (Franklin et al., 2006; Hudson et al., 2015; Wade & Rochlen, 2013). These forms of coping are then exacerbated by race-related stressors. Researchers also suggest that African American men experience race-related stress so often that it has now become commonplace (Aymer, 2016). Franklin (1999) suggests that Black men specifically experience what is known as “invisibility syndrome,” which involves Black men’s’ desire to maintain personal identity while experiencing racism. Black men who continually experience encounters with prejudice

and racism may also struggle with their personal identity. Thus, Black men must balance maintaining their personal identity while fighting to be seen as human within

society and on college campuses. Researchers assert that Black identity development is tantamount for Black survival at PWI's (Morales, 2020).

Stereotype Threat

Steele and Aronson (1995) first described stereotype threat as African Americans being at risk of confirming a negative stereotype about one's social group. Researchers assert that young Black men are stereotyped and profiled at higher rates than their White counterparts (Hester & Gray, 2018; Kumah-Abiwu, 2020). Hester and Gray (2018) found that tall Black men are profiled at an even higher rate by police and are more likely to be perceived as "more aggressive" and "more threatening." For Black men this is just one example of how their bodies are seen as a threat to authority. On a daily basis, Black men are required to grapple with the fear of conforming to the negative preconceived stereotypes about Black men (Coleman et al., 2013). Hence, Black men fear that they will confirm negative stereotypes perpetuated by White supremacy.

Similarly, Black men are tasked with maintaining "appropriate emotions" in the face of continual race-related stressors (Berry & Holloway, 2017). Black men are tasked with remaining "cool" and "professional" in all areas of their life (Hall & Fields, 2013). Researchers suggest that the continual microaggressions experienced by Black men can also affect their ability to emotionally regulate (Franklin et al., 2007). As mentioned in previous sections Black men are tasked with being able to emotionally regulate in high stress situations more than their White counterparts (Coleman et al., 2013; Hall&Fields,2015). Black men are not given the opportunity to "make mistakes" or to purely be a human being (Brooms&Perry,2016). However, if Black men are unable to emotionally regulate, not only are they impacted psychologically, it can also be the

difference between life and death within Westernized society. Black men fear that they maybe or one of their Black counterparts will be the next Black body to be seen as

extinguishable (Goodwill et al., 2018).

Majors and Billson (1993) state:

Historically, racism and discrimination have inflicted a variety of harsh injustices on African American in the “United States, especially on males. Being male and Black meant being psychologically castrated-rendered impotent in the economic, political, and social arenas that Whites have historically dominated (pg.1).

Thus, Black men are not permitted the same opportunities as White men. This intersection of race and gender further highlights the troubling double standard placed on Black men. This quote from Majors and Billson (1993) also emphasizes the disadvantages and threats associated with holding various intersecting identities. Thus, racism and discrimination directly impact not only the way Black men are viewed, but it also impacts how they view themselves. Indeed, for Black men it can be easy to become desensitized when your Blackness and your manhood are not valued within society. While race-related stress directly impacts Black men within society minimal research has explored the impact that these experiences have on college aged Black men.

Race-Related Stress and College Aged Black Men

Coleman and colleagues (2013) assert that race-related stress involves the psychological and emotional stress that emerge after racism. These race-related experiences are also engrained in educational institutions. Thus, the educational system is another example of a location in which the prevalence of racism and discrimination increases exponentially. African Americans continually experience racism and thus many also experience higher levels of race-related stress.

Researchers suggest that African American men who attend Predominately White Institutions encounter racism and discrimination frequently while on campus (Parker et al., 2016). Past researchers found that Black students who attend a PWI experience an even greater level of psychological stress and perceived stress (Neville et al., 2004).

Current researchers suggest that African American college students experience higher levels of race-related stress than other racial minorities (Coleman et al., 2013). However, minimal research has explored race-related stress with Black men specifically who are enrolled in college. Researchers assert that much of what is known as it relates to race-related stress stems from literature that explores the overall experiences of Black college students. Yet, the experiences of college-aged Black men have not been explored on their own. Furthermore, the extant literature on race-related stress has been studied among African American adults; however, there is a dearth in literature as it relates the race-related experiences of Black men in college. The experiences of Black men in college have been given limited visibility within the overarching masculinities and higher education literature.

Educational Barriers for Black Students. Before exploring what is known about race-related stress, it is important to note the educational barriers for Black students. Due to systemic racism, African American students are at a disadvantage educationally (Berry & Holloway, 2017; Brezinski et al., 2018; Brooms, 2017). Researchers suggest that African American students may also experience significant challenges before entering higher education (Brezinski et al., 2018). Von Robertson and Chaney (2017) assert that African American men's collegiate success is impacted by financial stressors. Black men who attend PWI's are more likely to work more outside of campus to alleviate financial stressors (Von Robertson & Chaney, 2017). Similarly, Black undergraduate students are more likely to have lower socioeconomic backgrounds in comparison to their White counterparts. Yet, before entering into higher education Black students must matriculate through K-12 education. Unfortunately, Black students are more likely to attend K-12 programs that have significantly less resources (Griffith et al., 2019). Researchers also suggest that Black boys and men are not afforded the same educational

opportunities as their White counterparts when entering K-12 education systems (Brezinski et al., 2018). For many Black boys are less likely to attend schools with college readiness programs. Thus, Black high school students are often primed to attend Predominately White Institutions as a way to escape systemic disenfranchisement and as a way to build a brighter future for themselves and their families (Griffith et al., 2019). Similarly, Black undergraduates are more likely to graduate with degrees from Predominately White institutions (Griffith et al., 2019, Snyder & Dillow, 2012). For many Black students who enter into higher education, their lives are often wrought with systemic disenfranchisement (Brezinski et al., 2018; Harper et al., 2011). This level of disenfranchisement is then paired with the everyday stressors associated with attending an institution of higher learning. Black students who graduate from PWI's often leave with both a degree and race-related stressors (Griffith et al., 2019).

Black students also experience more challenges socially and educationally when compared with their White counterparts (Von Robertson & Chaney, 2017). Researchers assert that Black college students experience feelings of isolation while attending PWI's. In an examination of the relationship between survival and academia, Harris (2018) found that Black men often fear isolation from their Black peers. This feeling of isolation increases for Black men due to the social makeup of classrooms at PWI's (Thelamour et al., 2019). Within higher education, Black men also fear that they will be "othered" within the classroom (Harris, 2018; Thelamour et al., 2019). Researchers suggest that Black men have both a "fear of academic success and a fear of academic failure" (Harris, 2018, p. 83). Furthermore, researchers suggest that Black men may fear academic success because it may be seen as "less manly" (Harris, 2018; Harper et al., 2011). Current masculinities researchers suggest that Black men and boys seek to reject "acting white" which is often tied to academic success in higher education (Harris, 2018). However, many Black men

have adopted Black respectability as a way to maintain social mobility within White spaces (Morales, 2020). Thus, Black men once again must grapple with both their Black identity and their identity as a Black man within Westernized society.

Berry and Holloway (2017) note that Black men are viewed as “failures” before they open their mouth to speak in educational settings. Past researchers assert that the intellectual competence of Black men is often called into question in educational settings (Harper et al., 2011; Thelamour et al., 2019). Current researchers suggest, “for a Black man to exist within higher education as a thinking being is oxymoronic in the White psyche” (Dancey et al., 2018; p. 184). Furthermore, Black men who are intellectual are rejected in White classrooms (Dancey et al., 2018). Researchers suggest that Black men are often passed over by their White peers for group projects, which further leads to feelings of isolation (Harper et al., 2011). Indeed, the road to college for many Black men is often rife with race-related stressors and trauma experiences (Berry & Holloway, 2017). Subsequently, Black women outnumber Black men in college classrooms (Von Robertson & Chaney, 2017). Statistically, Black men are less likely to gain a college degree when compared to Black women (Parker et al., 2016). Research suggests that Black men are more likely to leave a 4-year institution without a Bachelor’s degree than their female counterparts (Harris, 2018). Researchers have also recently explored college success rates of Black men at PWI’s and identified that only 11 percent of Black males’ complete college with a Bachelor’s degree (Harris, 2018; National Education Association, 2011).

Thus, Black men who enter into spaces of higher learning are often seen as outliers amongst their peers. Furthermore, current research suggests that Black men may feel like they are not accurately represented within the classroom (Griffith et al., 2019; Mills, 2020). Harper (2009) asserted that Black male undergraduates who attend PWIs are

constantly threatened by the fear of reinforcing negative stereotypes. Unfortunately, within university settings, much of what is known about Black men may be limited to negative stereotypes. Von Robertson and Chaney (2017) noted that Black men experience dehumanization and stigmatization in the classroom. Furthermore, researchers suggest that this level of stigmatization has a negative psychological impact on Black men (Griffith et al., 2019; Harper et al., 2011; Mills, 2020).

Racial Microaggressions. Sue and colleagues (2007) report that racial microaggressions are “commonplace daily verbal, behavioral, or environmental indignities that target people of color” (pg.329). Black undergraduate students disproportionately experience more racial microaggressions in comparison to their colleagues of color (Griffith et al., 2019; Harwood et al., 2012). Researchers also suggest that Black students experience microinsults more often than their White counterparts (Sue et al., 2007). Sue and colleagues describe microinsults as one of three forms of microaggressions. Microinsults heard by Black students may include, “you are so articulate” and “where did you learn how to write so concisely” (Sue et al., 2007). These microinsults in classroom settings further the cultural bias in Predominately White classrooms. Morales (2020) noted that Black students throughout the country have reported hearing racial microaggressions such as “Why is Black history important”, “Aren’t you from the ghetto” (pg.1). Current researchers note that Black undergraduate students who attend Predominately White Institutions (PWI’s) experience environmental racial microaggressions during their matriculation (Mills, 2020).

Sue and colleagues (2007) suggest that environmental microaggressions are observed on a systemic level and are also seen as macro-level microaggressions. Mills and colleagues (2020) note that environmental microaggressions are different from interpersonal microaggressions because they are more apparent on systemic levels. Furthermore, these

environmental microaggressions further tax the psyche of Black college students. Additionally, researchers assert that Black college students who experience continuous racial microaggressions may experience racial battle fatigue (Morales, 2020). Racial battle fatigue can be described as a literal exhaustion experienced by BIPOC students after encountering racial microaggressions at PWI's (Morales, 2020). Still, Black students are asked to manage their literal exhaustion and the stressors associated with attending a place of higher learning.

Black college students also note that they feel as if they are perceived to be the voice of their entire race while on Predominately White campuses and in classrooms (Solórzano et al., 2000). Consider this excerpt from an African American male student: "A lot of times if they're having a discussion on whatever topic, you feel like you're going to get called on, just because they want a Black perspective and you're the only [person] that can speak on it" (Solórzano et al., 2000, p.62). Researchers assert that Black college students also report experiencing feelings of burden and frustration while on PWI's (Harris, 2018). In their 2011 study, Harper and colleagues conducted focus group interviews with 52 Black male resident assistants who attend PWI's. Results from this study assert that Black college men experience feelings of "onlyness" and a fear of heightened scrutiny by their White colleagues and supervisors. Researchers suggest that Black male students at PWI's experience more racial microaggressions in comparison to their peers who attend Historically Black Colleges and Universities (Harper et al., 2011). Black students often report feeling the burden to educate their White counterparts after experiencing a racial microaggression (Morales, 2020; Sue et al., 2007). Past researchers have also highlighted how psychologically damaging it can be for Black students to carry the burden of educating offenders (Morales, 2020). Black undergraduate and graduate students also shoulder the burden of coping and maintaining composure in the face of discomfort. Furthermore, Black undergraduate students are often lauded for their

resilience in the face of adversity (Mills, 2020; Morales, 2020). Current researchers have sought to highlight empowerment as a way to counteract racial microaggressions (Mills, 2020; Morales, 2020). In her 2020 study, Morales explored how Black students respond to racial microaggressions. Results from her study suggest that positive counternarratives such as “beasting” help to challenge racial microaggressions in a way in which focus is placed on Black student empowerment and not the offender. Morales (2020) noted that “beasting” can be empowering and serve as a powerful form of resistance. Unfortunately, Black students at PWI’s are still tasked with maintaining a good academic standing, solidifying their identity, all while trying to remain safe in spaces designed for higher learning (Mwangi et al., 2018).

Black students also report that they worry that they will be assumed to be criminals while on campus (Goodwill et al., 2018; Mills et al., 2020; Solórzano et al., 2000). Black college students often are not provided the comfort of being authentically themselves while attending PWI’s (Smith et al., 2007). While White college students are allowed the opportunity to engage in college activities without fear of criminalization, Black students are not afforded that same privilege. Black men on college campuses also report feeling hypervigilant while on PWI’s (Goodwill et al., 2018). Black students also report experiences of over policing by campus police while attending school functions (Mills et al., 2020). Past researchers suggest that Black college aged men perceive their campus as more hostile towards Black men (Harper et al., 2011; as previously cited in Smith et al., 2007). The racial climate of Predominately White college campuses often leaves Black men feeling fungible and as a commodity made for consumption (Bimper, 2015; Dancey et. al; 2018). Thus, Black men are tasked with surviving collegiate environments that praise and uplift Whiteness and demonize Blackness if it is not profitable.

Anti-Blackness theorists also note that the media has placed a substantial emphasis on Black men's athletic achievement over academic achievement (Dancey et al., 2018). Furthermore, Black men at PWI's are often praised for how they can help intercollegiate sports. Black men who attend PWI's often navigate collegiate spaces as students, athletes, and as a people of color (Bimper, 2015). Correspondingly, Westernized society has a fascination with taming and controlling Black male bodies. It is clear that Black male bodies are often used for profit and entertainment (Dancey et al., 2018; Ferber, 2007). Without an athletic prowess, Black men often report feeling further ostracized on campus and within the classroom (Dancey et al., 2018).

Barriers to Campus Resource Access. Mwangi and colleagues (2018) noted that the US higher education system as a whole has a history of being unable to create safe spaces for BIPOC students specifically Black college students. Black college students have historically been marginalized and discriminated against while attending PWI's (Dancey et al., 2018). Dancey and colleagues suggest that PWI's and US higher education were erected by Black individuals.

Researchers also note that PWI's are built on the legacy of White supremacy and segregation (Thelamour et al., 2019). Thus, campus resources often lack the depth and monetary resources needed to ensure that Black students receive support. Black college students are more likely to view campus racial climates and campus resources more negatively than their White peers (Mwangi et al., 2018). Black college students struggle to

find adequate and culturally sensitive resources on PWI's (Griffith et al., 2019). Past researchers found that Black college students do not feel like they are represented on campus (Griffith et al., 2019). Although PWI's have become more diverse, Black and Indigenous people of color (BIPOC) still feel like there are a lack of resources on Predominately White campuses (Brezinski et al., 2018). Brooms (2017) suggests that

PWI's are "comfortable and uncomfortable for Black college aged men (pg.91). Similarly, Black men report that PWI's are diverse, but ultimately lack knowledge and understanding of Black culture (Brooms, 2017).

Often, college campuses are a microcosm of what occurs within Westernized society (Thelamour et al., 2019). Unfortunately, Black college students often view racial conflict and discord as common occurrences on campus (Parker et al., 2016; Sinanan, 2012; Thelamour et al., 2019). Researchers assert that Black voices are often silenced and ignored at PWI's (Brooms, 2017). Brooms (2017) suggests that PWI's are inadvertently segregating for Black college students. These sentiments of desensitization further parallel the experiences of Black adults within the overarching Western society. Current researchers suggest that Black undergraduate men struggle with accessing campus resources (Mwangi et al., 2018). Black men who attend PWI's are also more likely to reach out to off campus supports more readily than their White counterparts (Goodwill et al., 2018; Mwangi et al., 2018; Parker et al., 2016; Smith et al., 2007; Thelamour et al., 2019). Researchers suggest that the lack of Black role models and Black supportive systems at PWI's have deleterious effects on feelings of belongingness (Harper et al., 2018). Therefore, Black support systems often stem from relationships built within the Black and Multicultural Centers at PWI's (Dancey et al., 2018; Foote, 2005).

In their 2016 study, Parker and colleagues conducted a qualitative study with 21 Black undergraduate male students where they assessed for belongingness and safety on PWI's. Results from this study suggest that PWI's lack the diversity required to create an inclusive environment (Parker et. al., 2016). Therefore, PWI's rely heavily on Black cultural centers to reach the needs of Black students (Hypolite,2020). In their 2020 study, Hypolite (2020; pg. 52) found that Black cultural centers, "serve as institutional conduits for campus services, as cultural coordinators for Black organizations, and as collaborators with additional cultural identity centers". Black cultural centers have historically sought to

create a safe for Black students and serve as a way to preserve Black culture and identity (Harris& Patton, 2017). Unfortunately, Black cultural centers at PWI's are typically not funded and staffed effectively to reach the needs of Black students (Hypolite, 2020). Thus, Black students especially Black men are tasked with finding resources independently

APPENDIX B

TABLES AND FIGURES

Table 1

Demographics of the Study Sample (N=78)

Age	Frequency	Percent
	n	%
18-24	81	66.39
25-34	31	25.41
35-44	6	4.92
45-54	4	3.92
Race	n	%
Black or African American, non-Hispanic	102	93.58
Biracial(my parents are from two different racial groups)	7	6.42
Did not answer	23	
Ethnicity	n	%
Black or African American, non-Hispanic or Latino	110	96.49

Table 1(continued)

Black or African American, Hispanic or Latino	4	3.51
Native American, American Indian, or Alaskan Native and Black Latino	1	33.33
Did not answer	123	
Year in School (credit hours completed)	n	%
First year(0-30)	39	32.50
Sophomore (30-59)	16	13.33
Junior(60-89)	10	8.33
Senior(90 or more)	18	15.00
Graduate Student	30	25.00
Other	7	5.83
Did not answer	12	
Enrollment Status	N	%
Enrolled full time	85	72.65
Enrolled Part time	21	17.95
Not currently enrolled	11	9.40
Did not answer	15	
Sexual/Affectional orientation	N	%
Heterosexual or Straight	94	78.99
Table 1 (continued)		
Bisexual	5	4.20
Fluid	1	0.84
Bisexual/other	1	0.84
Asexual		
Gay	9	7.56
Questioning(unsure or don't know)	3	2.52
Prefer not to answer	2	1.68
Heterosexual or straight/I	2	1.68
Did not answer	13	

Partner status	n	%
Single	91	77.12
Separated	4	3.39
Married	5	4.24
In a relationship, cohabitating	4	3.39
In a relationship, not cohabitating	13	11.02
Divorced	1	0.85
Did not answer	14	
Occupational status	n	%
Employed Full-time	45	38.79
Employed Part-time	41	35.34
Unemployed	30	25.8
Religious Affiliation	n	%
Table 1(continued)		
Christian	82	69.49
Hindu	1	0.85
Agnostic	1	0.85
Atheist	6	5.08
Non-affiliated	14	11.86
Prefer not to respond	6	5.08
Did not answer	14	0.85

Table 2

Descriptive Statistics for Survey Scores (N=78)

<i>Variable</i>	<i>Mean</i>	<i>Std Dev</i>	<i>Minimum</i>	<i>Maximum</i>
<i>ATSPPH_SF</i>	16.90816	6.25916	0	30.00000
<i>MIS</i>	3.36514	0.67787	1.30000	4.50000
<i>RALES-DLE</i>	76.51899	35.18299	6.00000	162.00000

Table 3

Correlation Matrix of Main Study Variables (N = 78)

<i>Pearson Prob</i>	<i>></i>	<i> r </i>	<i>Correlation under</i>	<i>H0:</i>	<i>Coefficients Rho=0</i>
<i>Number of Observations</i>			<i>ATSPPH_SF</i>	<i>MIS</i>	<i>RALES-DLE</i>
<i>ATSPPH_SF</i>			1.00000	0.01158 0.9109	-0.07586 0.5064

Table 4

Multiple Regression Findings (N = 78)

<i>Variable</i>	<i>DF</i>	<i>Parameter Estimate</i>	<i>Standard Error</i>	<i>t Value</i>	<i>p-value</i>
<i>Intercept</i>	1	21.10817	4.64615	4.54	<.0001
<i>MIS</i>	1	-0.82364	1.17576	-0.70	0.4858
<i>RALES-DLE</i>	1	-0.01963	0.02124	-0.92	0.3583

Figure 1

Scatterplot of RALES-DLE scores and ATSPPH-SF scores

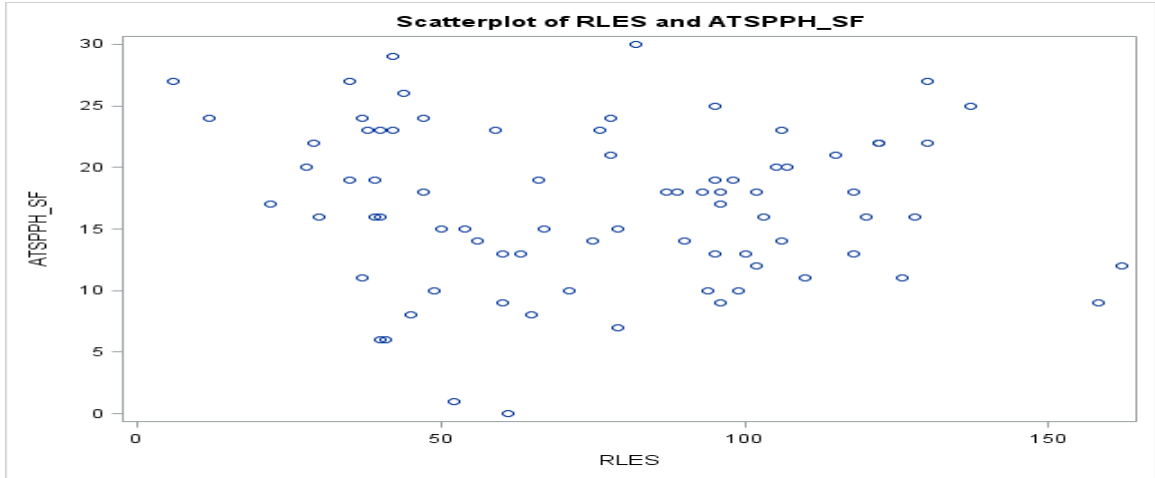
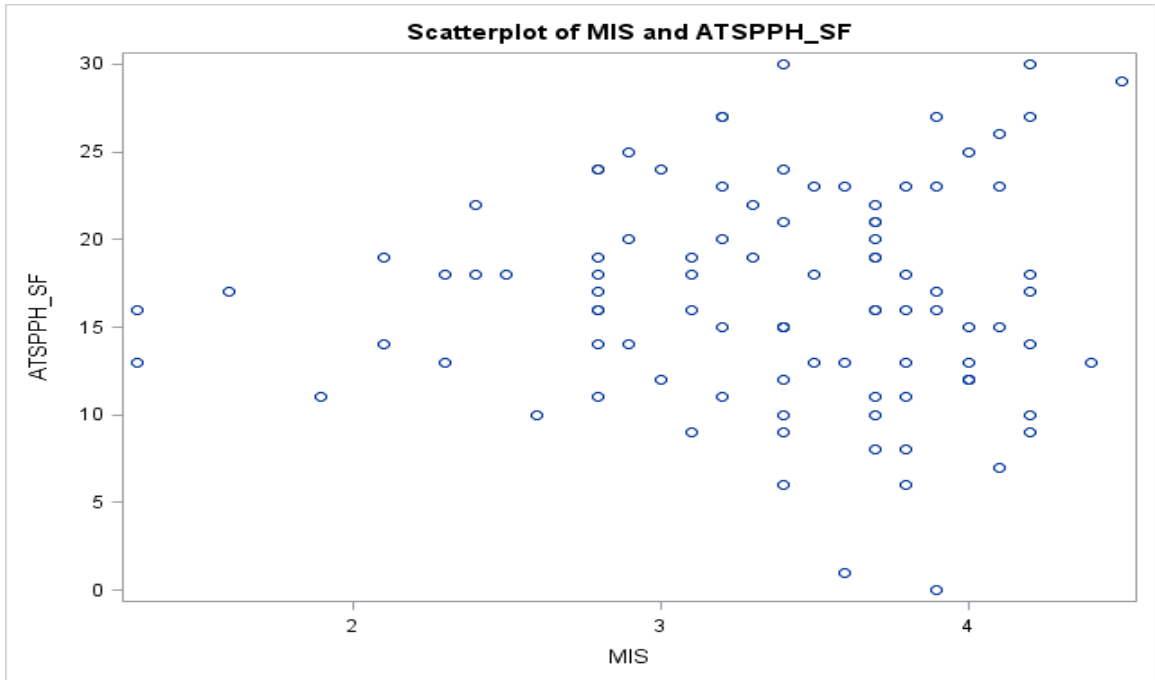


Figure 2

Scatterplot of MIS scores and ATSPPH-SF scores



APPENDIX C

INSTRUMENTS

DEMOGRAPHIC QUESTIONNAIRE

Screening Questions:

Do you identify as Black?

Do you identify as a man?

Age:

18-24

25-34

35-44

45-54

55-64

65-74

75 years and older

Fill in the Blank Race:

African American or Black

Biracial (my biological parents are from two different racial groups)

Ethnicity:

First Year (0-30 hours)

Sophomore (30-59 hours)

Junior(60-89 hours)

Senior(90 or more hours)

Graduate Student

Other

Enrollment Status

Enrolled full-time

Enrolled part-time

Not currently enrolled

Relationship Status:

Single

Separated Married

In a relationship, Not cohabitating

In a relationship, Cohabitating

Divorced

Widowed Other:

Occupational Status:

Employed full time (40+hours a week)

Employed part time (less than 40 hours a week)

Unemployed

Religious/ Spiritual Affiliation:

Christian

Buddhist

Muslim

Wiccan/Pagan

Agnostic

Atheist

Jewish

Hindu

Other:

Non-affiliated

Prefer not to respond

Sexual/Affectional Orientation(click all that apply):

Heterosexual or Straight

Gay

Bisexual

Fluid

Queer

Asexual

Pansexual

Questioning (unsure/don't know)

Other:

I prefer not to answer

Attitudes Towards Seeking Professional Psychological Help

Below are a number of statements concerning psychology and mental health issues. Read each statement carefully and indicate whether you agree, partly agree, partly disagree, or disagree. Please express your frank opinion in rating the statements. Remember, there are no-wrong answers, and the only right ones are whatever you honestly feel or believe. It is important that you answer every item

1. If I believed I was having a mental breakdown, my first inclination would be to get professional attention.	Disagree	Partly Disagree	Partly Agree	Agree
2. The idea of talking about problems with a psychologist strikes me as a poor way to get rid of emotional conflicts.	Disagree	Partly Disagree	Partly Agree	Agree
3. If I were experiencing a serious emotional crisis at this point in my life, I would be confident that I could find relief in psychotherapy.	Disagree	Partly Disagree	Partly Agree	Agree
4. There is something admirable in the attitude of a person who is willing to cope with his or her conflicts and fears about resorting to professional help.	Disagree	Partly Disagree	Partly Agree	Agree
5. I would want to get psychological help if I were worried or upset for a long period of time.	Disagree	Partly Disagree	Partly Agree	Agree
6. I might want to have psychotherapy in the future time.	Disagree	Partly Disagree	Partly Agree	Agree
7. A person with an emotional problem is not likely to solve it alone; he or she is likely to solve it with professional help.	Disagree	Partly Disagree	Partly Agree	Agree
8. Considering the time and expense involved in psychotherapy, it would have doubtful value for a person like me.	Disagree	Partly Disagree	Partly Agree	Agree
9. A person should work out his or her own problems; getting psychotherapy would be a last resort.	Disagree	Partly Disagree	Partly Agree	Agree
10. Personal and emotional troubles; like many things, tend to work out by themselves.	Disagree	Partly Disagree	Partly Agree	Agree

Masculinity Inventory Scale (MIS) for Black Men

Please read each statement below and indicate if you agree or disagree with that statement, where 5 is strongly agree and 1 is strongly disagree.

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
There are certain things a man must go through in order to become a man	1	2	3	4	5
A man takes care of business and does what needs to be done	1	2	3	4	5
A man handles his responsibilities	1	2	3	4	5
A man provides for his family, children, or other family members	1	2	3	4	5
A man thinks about how he can influence younger people	1	2	3	4	5
A man mentors other people	1	2	3	4	5
A man supports himself completely	1	2	3	4	5
A man makes sacrifices for his family	1	2	3	4	5
A man does things he may not want to do to get the job done	1	2	3	4	5
A man makes things happen for his family	1	2	3	4	5
A man takes care of his kids	1	2	3	4	5
Challenges encourage me to go above and beyond	1	2	3	4	5
It's hard to show that I'm not like other Black men	1	2	3	4	5
I have to prove stereotypes against Black men wrong	1	2	3	4	5
As a Black man, you're up against a lot from birth	1	2	3	4	5
It's hard overcoming how we're viewed as Black men	1	2	3	4	5
I have to deal with a lot of negative stereotypes	1	2	3	4	5
Life is easier for White men than Black men	1	2	3	4	5
The road to success is easier for White men than Black men	1	2	3	4	5
White men are introduced to more things than Black men	1	2	3	4	5
Life situations forced me to become a man before I was ready	1	2	3	4	5
White men have more opportunities than Black men	1	2	3	4	5
I am the only person responsible for me	1	2	3	4	5
My mother showed me how to work hard for anything you want	1	2	3	4	5

My mother gave me the confidence and strength to keep moving	1	2	3	4	5
My aunt(s) showed me how to work hard for anything you want	1	2	3	4	5
My grandmother showed me how to work hard for anything you want	1	2	3	4	5
My brother(s) showed me about how to be a man	1	2	3	4	5
My sister(s) informed me about how to be a man	1	2	3	4	5
My grandfather showed me about how to be a man	1	2	3	4	5
My mom informed me about how to be a man	1	2	3	4	5
My female cousin(s) informed me about how to be a man	1	2	3	4	5
My male cousin(s) showed me about how to be a man	1	2	3	4	5
A man takes care of everything without depending on other people	1	2	3	4	5
A man takes care of everything	1	2	3	4	5
A man is able to control his emotions	1	2	3	4	5
A man does not cry	1	2	3	4	5
I have to prove to myself and everybody else that my life has purpose	1	2	3	4	5
I have to prove myself in academic situations	1	2	3	4	5
I have to prove myself in social situations	1	2	3	4	5
I have a lot to live up to	1	2	3	4	5
White and Black men have the same opportunities	1	2	3	4	5
White and Black men are equal in today's society	1	2	3	4	5
I taught myself how to become a man	1	2	3	4	5
I wasn't prepared to be a man, but I was basically on my own	1	2	3	4	5
My father has instilled in me the characteristics of a man	1	2	3	4	5
When I carry myself like my father or better I'll be a man	1	2	3	4	5
I admire the way that my father carries himself	1	2	3	4	5
Having friends back me up is powerful	1	2	3	4	5
It's easier for me to go through my day when I have someone I can talk to	1	2	3	4	5

Racism and Life Experiences

The statements below include experiences that some people have as they go about their daily lives. Thinking about the past 5 years, please first indicate generally how often you have had each experience because of your race, ethnicity, or racism. Use the scale in the first column and write the appropriate number on the first blank line. Next, use the scale in the second column to indicate how much it bothers you when the experience happens. Write the appropriate number on the blank line.

How Often because of race?	How much does it bother you?
How much does it bother you? 0-has never happened to me	0-never
1-doesn't bother me at all 2- bothers me a little	1-less than once a year 2- a few times a year
3- bothers me somewhat 4- bothers me a lot 5-bothers me extremely	3- about once a month 4-a few times a month 5-once a week or more

1. Being ignored, overlooked, or not given service (in a restaurant, store, etc.)
2. Being treated rudely or disrespectfully
3. Being accused of something or treated suspiciously
4. Others reacting to you as if they were afraid or intimidated
5. Being observed or followed while in public space
6. Being treated as if you were "stupid", being "talked down to"
7. Your ideas or opinions being minimized, ignored or devalued
8. Overhearing or being told an offensive joke or comment
9. Being insulted, called a name, or harassed
10. Others expecting your work to be inferior
11. Not being taken seriously
12. Being left out of conversations or activities
13. Being treated in an "overly" friendly or superficial way
14. Being avoided, others moving away from you physically
15. Being mistaken for someone who serves others(janitor, bellboy, maid)
16. Being stared at by strangers
17. Being laughed at, made fun of, or taunted.
18. Being mistaken for someone else of your same race(who may not look like you at all)
19. Being asked to speak for or represent your entire racial/ethnic group (e.g., "What do people think?")
20. Being considered fascinating or exotic by others

APPENDIX D

Consent Forms and Recruitment Documents

Informed Consent

Project Title: We Are Not Okay: Exploring Black Masculinities, Race-Related Stress, and Help Seeking Attitudes in Black Men

Investigator(s): Renissa Arnold, M.S.; Sarah Johnson, Ph.D., Oklahoma State University
Purpose: This study is in partial fulfillment for a Ph.D. in counseling

psychology. The purpose of this study is to assess mental health help seeking attitudes in Black men. This information will provide university counseling centers with information that can help them design and implement effective mental health services for Black men.

Procedures: Starting the web-based survey implies your consent to participate in this study. If you decide to participate, you will first indicate your age and then be directed to the survey. Only individuals who are age 18 or over can participate. All questions will be answered online. To participate in this study, you must **(1) identify as a College Age Black man**

Any information gained from this study will be confidential and your privacy will be protected.

You will be asked to complete a demographics questionnaire followed by three self-report instruments. One self-report instrument will ask you questions about barriers towards seeking mental health counseling, one self-report will ask you questions about masculinity, and one self-report will ask you questions about race related experiences. The amount of time to complete the survey will be between 30 minutes. When you complete the survey, you will be asked to submit your answers.

Risks of Participation: The risks associated with this study are minimal. You may experience some emotional discomfort when answering a few questions related to race-related experiences and help-seeking. Your participation in this study is voluntary. If you are experiencing mental health distress, suicidal ideation, and/or thoughts of suicide, and taking this survey will put you in harm's way for any reason, I strongly suggest you do not take this survey. These risks are not greater than those ordinarily encountered in daily life. Moreover, you may simply not answer any

survey items that you perceive as threatening and/or discomforting; you may also stop at any time. **At the end of the survey you will be given the opportunity to be directed to additional resources.**

Benefits: The information gained from this study will expand the current knowledge available regarding this particular group of students. At the end of the survey you will have the opportunity to be redirected to a separate web page allowing you to enter your email in a drawing for the chance to win one of three \$100 Amazon gift cards. Your contact/email will not be associated to the information you provided in the survey.

Confidentiality: This survey will be completed online and no name or contact information is necessary to participate. There will be no way for researchers to create a link between the individual participating in the study and any identifying information as none is needed to participate. Once data has been collected all information will be stored on a password protected computer and USB drive that will remain in a locked filing cabinet with access available only to the researchers involved in the study. Any written results will discuss group findings and will not release any information that could possibly identify you as an individual. The data will be kept for at least five years after the end of study on a password protected computer and USB. Only researchers and individuals responsible for research oversight will have access to the records. It is possible that the consent process and data collection will be observed or monitored by research oversight staff responsible for safeguarding the rights and wellbeing of people who participate in research.

Contacts: You are welcome to inquire more about the study or request any additional information by contacting the researcher, Renissa Arnold, doctoral candidate at Oklahoma State University, email: Renissa.arnold@okstate.edu. You may also contact my dissertation advisor, Dr. Sarah Johnson at 918-594-8585 and Email: sarah.johnson16@okstate.edu. If you have questions about your rights as a research volunteer, you may contact irb@okstate.edu, 218 Scott Hall, Stillwater, OK 74078, 405-744-3377

Participant Rights: Your participation in this research is voluntary. You can discontinue the survey at any time without any negative consequences or penalty. You may also skip questions that you do not wish to answer. It is recommended that you print a copy of this consent page for your records before you begin the study by clicking below.

Consent: I have read and fully understand the consent form. I understand that my participation is voluntary. By choosing yes below, I am indicating that I freely and voluntarily and agree to participate in this study and I also acknowledge that I am at least 18 years of age

Email Recruitment Script

Dear ,

My name is Renissa R. Arnold and I am a Counseling Psychology doctoral student at Oklahoma State University. I am writing to invite you to participate in a study exploring mental health help seeking attitudes in Black men. Through your participation in the demographic questionnaire and web-based survey, you are contributing to research that will further psychology's understanding of Black/African American men's lived experiences and help inform culturally appropriate treatment interventions for this population. My doctoral advisor, Dr. Sarah Johnson in the School of Community Health, Counseling and Counseling Psychology, is supervising this project. This research has been approved by Oklahoma State University's Institutional Review Board (IRB).

To participate in this study, individuals must meet the following criteria:
Self-identify as a College Age
Black/African American man
Be 18-years of age or older

Below is a link to the demographic questionnaire and web-based survey. Your responses will be kept completely confidential. The time needed to complete the entire survey is approximately 30 minutes. The survey includes questions about different aspects of Black masculinity and mental health. Upon completion of the survey, you will have the chance to enter a raffle to win one of three virtual \$100 Amazon gift cards by providing your email address. Those who wish to participate in the raffle will be asked to provide their email separately from the survey. Directions will be provided at completion. Your responses will not be linked to your email address in any way.

If you are interested in participating you can access the survey by clicking this link:
https://okstateches.az1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_0Gr3TRtnI28YYXc

If you have any questions or concerns, please feel free to email me at or Dr. Sarah Johnson at sarahjohnson16@okstate.edu

Thank you in advance for your participation. Furthermore, if you may know of anyone who fits the study criteria, please share the survey link! Your time and participation are greatly appreciated!

Warmest regards, Renissa R.
Arnold, M.S. Counseling

DEBRIEFING SCRIPT

Debriefing Script Thank you for participating in this study!

The purpose of this study was to investigate mental health help seeking attitudes in Black men. Particularly, I investigated the relationship between Black masculinity and race-related stress in predicting attitudes about mental health help seeking in College Age Black/African American men. Race-related stress refers to as the everyday experiences of racism and discrimination that African Americans encounter. The benefits to participating in this study may aid mental health professionals in better serving Black and African American men. Furthermore, knowing how race-related stress impacts Black men may assist mental professionals who may need to receive more training to learn how to effectively respond to race-related stressors within Black men. Sometimes because of participating in studies, participants become more aware of their experiences and may benefit from talking with a trained counseling professional. If you may be interested in seeking counseling services following participation in this study, you may contact the 'Help Finding a Therapist' hotline at ().

For emergency support, please contact. Researcher: Renissa R. Arnold, M.S.

School of Community Health, Counseling and Counseling Psychology Oklahoma State University

Email: Renissa.arnold@okstate.edu

Advisor: Sarah Johnson, PhD, Clinical Associate Professor

School of Community Health, Counseling and Counseling Psychology Oklahoma State University

700 N. GREENWOOD AVE. MAIN HALL 2415

TULSA, OK 74133

Phone: [918-594-8585](tel:918-594-8585)

sarah.johnson16@okstate.edu

If you have questions about your rights as a research volunteer, you may contact the
Oklahoma State University Institutional Review Board (IRB).

IRB Office

Oklahoma State University 218 Scott Hall

Stillwater, OK 74078,

405-744-3377 or irb@okstate.edu

APPENDIX E

IRB APPROVAL PAGE



Oklahoma State University Institutional Review Board

Date: 04/15/2022

Application Number: IRB-22-183

Proposal Title: We Are Not Okay: Exploring Black Masculinities, Race-Related stress, and help seeking attitudes in Black men

Principal Investigator: Renissa Arnold

Co-Investigator(s):

Faculty Adviser: Sarah Johnson

Project Coordinator:

Research Assistant(s):

Processed as: Exempt

Exempt Category:

Status Recommended by Reviewer(s): Approved

The IRB application referenced above has been approved. It is the judgment of the reviewers that the rights and welfare of individuals who may be asked to participate in this study will be respected, and that the research will be conducted in a manner consistent with the IRB requirements as outlined in 45CFR46.

This study meets criteria in the Revised Common Rule, as well as, one or more of the circumstances for which continuing review is not required. As Principal Investigator of this research, you will be required to submit a status report to the IRB triennially.

The final versions of any recruitment, consent and assent documents bearing the IRB approval stamp are available for download from IRBManager. These are the versions that must be used during the study.

As Principal Investigator, it is your responsibility to do the following:

1. Conduct this study exactly as it has been approved. Any modifications to the research protocol must be approved by the IRB. Protocol modifications requiring approval may include changes to the title, PI, adviser, other research personnel, funding status or sponsor, subject population composition or size, recruitment, inclusion/exclusion criteria, research site, research procedures and consent/assent process or forms.
2. Submit a request for continuation if the study extends beyond the approval period. This continuation must receive IRB review and approval before the research can continue.
3. Report any unanticipated and/or adverse events to the IRB Office promptly.
4. Notify the IRB office when your research project is complete or when you are no longer affiliated with Oklahoma State University.

Please note that approved protocols are subject to monitoring by the IRB and that the IRB office has the authority to inspect research records associated with this protocol at any time. If you have questions about the IRB procedures or need any assistance from the Board, please contact the IRB Office at 405-744-3377 or irb@okstate.edu.

VITA

Renissa Renee Arnold

Candidate for the Degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

Dissertation: WE ARE NOT OKAY: EXPLORING BLACK MASCULINITIES,
RACE-RELATED STRESS, AND HELP SEEKING ATTITUDES IN BLACK
MEN

Major Field: Counseling Psychology

Biographical:

Education:

Completed the requirements for the Doctor of Philosophy in Counseling Psychology at Oklahoma State University, Stillwater, Oklahoma in May, 2023.

Completed the requirements for the Master of Science in Educational Psychology at Oklahoma State University, Stillwater, Oklahoma in 2018.

Completed the requirements for the Bachelor of Science in Psychology at Oakwood University, Huntsville, Alabama in 2017.

Experience:

UT Austin Counseling and Mental Health Center (Doctoral Intern), Austin, TX, August 2021- July 2022

Baylor University Counseling Center, Waco, Texas August 2022- Present

Professional Memberships:

American Psychological Association