

UNDERSTANDING GENDERED-RACIAL IDENTITY AMONG BLACK WOMEN
USING AN INTERSECTIONAL APPROACH

A Dissertation
Presented to
The Faculty of the College of Education
University of Houston

In Partial Fulfillment
Of the Requirements for the Degree of
Doctor of Philosophy

by

Martinique K. Jones

August 2016

UNDERSTANDING GENDERED-RACIAL IDENTITY AMONG BLACK WOMEN
USING AN INTERSECTIONAL APPROACH

A Dissertation for the Degree
Doctor of Philosophy

by

Martique K. Jones

Approved by Dissertation Committee:

Dr. M. Nicole Coleman, Chairperson

Dr. Consuelo Arbona, Committee Member

Dr. Jonathan Schwartz, Committee Member

Dr. Catherine Horn, Committee Member

Dr. Robert McPherson, Dean
College of Education

August 2016

Acknowledgements

I thank God for the strength to persevere throughout the duration of this project. My faith in Him has sustained me over the course of many challenges. I am extremely grateful for my parents, Roy and Alva Jones, who have sat with me, talked with me, and supported me through the many trials of graduate school. My sister, Dr. Whitney Jones, is the best little sister one can ever ask for--your resilience, intellect, and openness inspires me to be a better person and professional each day.

I also would like to extend a special thank you to my best friend, prayer partner, and “sister,” Dr. Gabrielle Johnson, who continually encouraged me when I wanted to give up. Samuel Foster, thank you for providing me an outlet to be my authentic self and enjoy life’s wonders in the midst of stressful times. Elton and Cathy Foster thank you for your unrelenting support of my efforts to pursue my degree.

Members of my wonderful graduate school cohort, Kelly Lee (my closest confidant), Jenny Bannister, and Alison Shellman are awesome! I appreciate each you for your support in the form of frequent text messages, loving emoticons, and spontaneous phone calls. Akilah Reynolds and LaWanda Hill, you kept me stable in times of uncertainty and pushed me towards the finish line--thank you. Yu-Yun Liu, my internship friend, thank you being steadfast and holding me accountable to our weekly writing sessions. Thank you for also modeling how I can be patient and exercise self-compassion.

Additionally, I express sincere gratitude to my dissertation committee: Drs. M. Nicole Coleman, Catherine Horn, Johnathan Schwartz, and Consuelo Arbona. There are also several other notable professionals who have inspired my work. Dr. Thomandra Sam, thank you for be willing to support me by any means possible (even through sickness and health). I am forever grateful to Dr. Susan X Day for serving as a consistent, available, and open resource for me. I am also appreciative of Dr. Norma Olvera, who displayed to me what it looks like to be a strong, smart, and elegant woman of color in the academy.

UNDERSTANDING GENDERED-RACIAL IDENTITY AMONG BLACK WOMEN
USING AN INTERSECTIONAL APPROACH

An Abstract of a Dissertation
Presented to
The Faculty of the College of Education
University of Houston

In Partial Fulfillment
Of the Requirements for the Degree of
Doctor of Philosophy

by

Martinque K. Jones

August 2016

Jones, Martinque. "Understanding Gendered Racial Identity Among Black Women Using an Intersectional Approach." Unpublished Doctor of Philosophy Dissertation, University of Houston, August 2016.

Abstract

Gendered racial identity (GRI) has emerged as a construct used to describe Black women's distinct intersected identity as Black and woman (Thomas, Hacker, & Hoxha, 2011; Thomas, Hoxha, & Hacker, 2013). Despite the importance of Black women's GRI in shaping women's self-concept and perceptions of their experience (Settles, 2006; Thomas et al., 2011; Thomas et al., 2013), the identity literature has been unsuccessful in further describing GRI and refining the appropriate methods by which to examine this construct. The purpose of the current study is to describe and explore an empirically-supported taxonomy of GRI for Black women using an intersectional approach. In consideration of Black racial identity theory from an intersectional perspective, a new description of *Black women's gendered racial identity* (BWGRI) is proposed. BWGRI for the purposes of the current study is defined as how Black women conceptualize their intersected racial and gender identity. This construct is operationalized through the assessment of the significance of and qualitative meaning women attribute to their membership within Black and woman social identity groups. To explore BWGRI, 240 diverse Black women ($M_{\text{age}} = 35.83$ years; $SD = 11.88$; range = 19 – 79) completed the following measures: Multidimensional Inventory of Black Identity-Racial Centrality Scale (Sellers, Rowley, Chavous, Shelton, & Smith, 1997), Gender Centrality Scale (adapted from Sellers et al., 1997), and the Self-Defined Gender Racial Identity Questionnaire (self-authored). The study utilized a mixed-methods research design targeted at exploring the significance and qualitative meaning that Black women assign to

their intersectional identity. Cluster analysis was used to statistically examine variations in the significance of BWGRI, whereas, a modified grounded theory approach (Glaser & Strauss, 2009) was used to capture the varied meanings Black women may assign to their intersectional identity. A cluster analysis revealed the existence of four BWGRI clusters that were further refined by women's qualitative responses, thereby evidencing that Black women's conceptualization of Black womanhood is not homogeneous. The four clusters include: (a) consciously introspective (characterized by women who place importance on their intersected identity and are self-aware and reflective regarding how their social identities may shape their experiences of societal marginalization); (b) consciously engaged (characterized by women who place importance on their intersected identity and take actions towards eliminating experiences of societal marginalization); (c) pre-consciously conflicted (characterized by women who place relative importance on their intersected identity and are challenged with navigating the extent to which they pursue connections, particularly with other Black women); and (d) unconsciously disengaged (characterized by women who place little to no importance on their intersected identity and minimize or have limited awareness of their own marginalization). The manuscript will conclude with a discussion of the implications of BWGRI typology in terms of extending Black racial identity theory and in relation to the mental health of Black women.

Table of Contents

	Chapter	Page
I.	Introduction	1
	Intersectionality	2
	Statement of the Problem	4
	Purpose of the Study	4
	Research Questions and Hypotheses	5
	Significance of the Study	6
	Implications	6
II.	Literature Review	8
	Intersectionality	8
	Intersectionality and Psychology	9
	Black Racial Identity Theory	10
	Black Racial Identity Models	11
	Multidimensional Model of Racial Identity	13
	Identity Centrality	16
	Racial and Gender Centrality	17
	Applying Intersectionality to Identity Theory	18
	Black Women's Gendered Racial Identity	21
	Research Questions	28
	Study Purpose and Significance	29
III.	Methodology	30
	Cluster Analysis in Exploring Social Identities	30
	Qualitative Analysis of Social Identities	31
	Participants	31
	Instruments	33
	Screening Items	33
	Demographic Questionnaire	33
	Multidimensional Inventory of Black Identity-Racial Centrality	34
	Gender Centrality Scale	34
	Self-Defined Gender Racial Identity Questionnaire	34
	Procedures	36
	Analyses	37
IV.	Results	41
	Descriptive Statistics	41
	Primary Analyses	41
	Hierarchal Cluster Analysis	41
	Cluster One	43
	Cluster Two	44
	Cluster Three	44
	Cluster Four	45
	Initial Profiling of Clusters	46
	Qualitative Analysis of Blackness, Womanhood, and Black Womanhood	47
	Qualitative Analysis of Blackness and Womanhood Across the Sample	48

Blackness	49
Black/African Genealogy and Physical Features	49
Shared History	50
Characteristics of Blackness	51
Overcoming Barriers	52
Womanhood	52
Physical Features	53
Roles of Women	53
Shared History (Oppression)	54
Character Traits	55
Womanhood and Spirit	55
Contradictions of Womanhood	56
Intersectionality of Blackness and Womanhood	57
Black Womanhood	57
Physical Features	57
Shared History (Culture and Oppression)	58
Character Traits	59
Roles	60
Intersectionality	61
Pain and Power	61
Analysis of Black Womanhood by Cluster	62
Cluster One	62
Cluster Two	63
Cluster Three	64
Cluster Four.....	65
Cluster Naming and Meaning	66
Consciously Introspective	66
Consciously Engaged	67
Pre-consciously Conflicted	67
Unconsciously Disengaged	68
V. Discussion	
Identity Significance	70
Taxonomy of Black Women’s Gendered Racial Identity	70
Identity Meaning	71
Strengths and Limitations	77
Future Research	79
Implications	81
References	
Appendix A Permission/Consent to Participate in Research University of Houston	
Appendix B Screener Items	
Appendix C Demographic Questionnaire	
Appendix D Racial Centrality–Multidimensional Inventory of Black Identity–Centrality Scale (Sellers, Rowley, Chavous, Shelton, & Smith, 1997)	
Appendix E Gender Centrality – Gender Centrality Scale	
Appendix F Self-Defined Gendered Racial Identity Questionnaire (S-GRIQ)	
Appendix G Incentive Email Announcement	

List of Tables

Table	Page
1. Participant Demographics	92
2. Themes by Cluster Membership	94
3. Demographic Information for Cluster One	96
4. Demographic Information for Cluster Two	97
5. Demographic Information for Cluster Three	98
6. Demographic Information for Cluster Four	99

List of Figures

Figure	Page
1. Depiction of Racial Identity Dimensions	100
2. Dendrogram	101
3. Levels of Racial and Gender Identity Across Clusters	102
4. Black Women's Gender Racial Identity Based on Identity Consciousness and Engagement	103

Chapter I

Introduction

Racial and gender identity are noted popular topics within counseling psychology and women's studies (Boisner, 2003; Ponterotto & Mallinckrodt, 2007). Theories of identity helped researchers answer questions such as, "What does it mean to be Black?" and "What does it mean to be a woman?" Despite advances within these two bodies of literature, questions still remain regarding how racial, gender, and other social identities intersect with one another to influence one's sense of self and related experiences, thus leaving the question "What does it mean to be a Black woman?" unanswered.

Scholars need to revisit traditional areas of psychology and include the experiences of Black women, given their exclusion from mainstream psychological theories (Reid, 1993; Saris & Johnston-Robledo, 2000). Identity theory is one of many psychological domains in which Black women's experiences are omitted. Essentially, Black women are invisible within identity theories, which associate Blackness with masculinity and womanhood with Whiteness (Bowleg, 2008; Purdie-Vaughns & Eibach, 2008; Thomas, 2004). Therefore, little is known about Black women's unique construction of identity developed at the intersection of their racial and gender identities.

Gendered racial identity (GRI) emerged as a construct used to describe Black women's distinct intersected identity as Black and woman (Thomas, Hacker & Hoxha, 2011; Thomas, Hoxha, & Hacker, 2013). This construct is a byproduct of the combination of identity theory and intersectionality, a paradigm of thought that acknowledges how multiple social identities (e.g., age, social class, sexual orientation) interconnect to influence one's sense of self and related experiences of privilege and oppression (Cole, 2009; Crenshaw, 1989, 1991). Nash (2008)

identified Black women as the “prototypical intersectional subjects” (p. 8) because of their marginalized status as both Black and woman. For this reason, GRI has primarily been associated with research focused on samples of Black women (e.g., Oyserman, Bybee, & Terry, 2003; Thomas et al., 2011; Thomas et al., 2013; Thomas & King, 2007).

Among Black women, it has been established that GRI is more salient and important than racial and gender identities separately (Thomas et al., 2011). Additionally, this construct is associated with specific experiences of Black womanhood, including perceptions of oppression (e.g., discrimination) and privilege (e.g., affirmative action), feelings of marginalization (e.g., isolating from others), and a sense of self-determination and empowerment (Settles, 2006; Settles, Pratt-Hyatt, & Buchanan, 2008; Thomas et al., 2011). Despite the importance of Black women’s GRI in shaping self-concept and perceptions of their experiences, the identity literature has been unsuccessful in theoretically describing GRI and refining the appropriate methods by which to explore GRI using an intersectional approach--two areas which have received little to no attention in modern research.

Intersectionality

As previously mentioned, intersectionality acknowledges how multiple social identities shape one’s sense of self and influence experiences of privilege and oppression (Cole, 2009; Crenshaw, 1989, 1991). Historically, intersectionality emphasizes the intersection of race and gender, and thus provides the overarching framework by which to understand GRI. Intersectionality has roots within Black feminist thought (e.g., hooks, 1981), but the idea was coined by legal scholar Kimberlé Crenshaw. With Crenshaw at the forefront, intersectionality, which challenged the legal academy’s color-blindness and objectivity in the practice and policies of law, emerged in the late 1980s and early 1990s as a derivative of critical race studies

(Crenshaw, 1989, 1991; Nash, 2008). The work of Crenshaw and others has contributed to intersectionality becoming a common term within feminist research (Davis, 2008). Furthermore, intersectionality is identified as one of the most profound contributions of women's studies, and is recognized as a powerful analytical tool used to understand the experiences of multiple marginalized groups (McCall, 2005).

Despite its philosophical significance within legal and women's studies, an intersectionality approach has been minimally used within psychology research (Shields, 2008). Some of the major barriers psychologists face in incorporating intersectionality into research are theoretical and methodological in nature (Davis, 2008). The first problem with the incorporation of intersectionality into psychology research is that intersectionality is commonly misunderstood as a theory, rather than as an approach or perspective used to enhance preexisting theory. Intersectionality is not a standalone theory, but should be considered a broad framework that may be applied to the understanding of existing theories. Additionally, there is a lack of clarity regarding the use of intersectionality in understanding phenomenon at macro (i.e., systems of oppression and privilege) or micro (i.e., identity) levels of analysis. Furthermore, "there has been little discussion of *how* to study intersectionality, that is, of its methodology" (McCall, 2005; p. 1771).

Addressing some of the challenges encountered by psychologists in using an intersectional approach is a worthwhile goal. Moreover, there is a particular niche for psychologists in applying an intersectional framework to the understanding of identity. The current study explored how intersectionality may be applied to Black racial identity theory to inform an understanding of Black women's GRI. Within the context of this exploration, a mixed methods research design, aligned with an intersectional perspective, was used in efforts to

observe how social identities may overlap and shape one another to dictate distinct identity experiences among Black women.

Statement of the Problem

Rich narratives (Collins, 1999), riveting stories (Wilkins, 2012), and candid focus groups (Settles et al., 2008) have been the primary mechanisms used to explore Black women's intersecting identities and related experiences. However, previous research (e.g., Settles, 2006; Settles et al., 2008; Thomas et al., 2011) is considerably limited given its inability to infuse an intersectional framework into underlying theory and research methodology. Though the idea of intersectionality suggests differences based on various combinations of social identities, little research has considered the diversity of Black women in terms of their other social identities (e.g., socioeconomic status, sexual orientation, etc.); nor has research considered the ways in which women may conceptualize and experience Black womanhood differently. Some of the methodological problems within past intersectionality research include (a) sole use data from small focus groups (Settles et al., 2008; Thomas et al., 2011); (b) limited quantitative measures of GRI (e.g., single-item measures; Settles, 2006); and (c) the application of "an additive approach (Black + Lesbian + Woman), antithetical to the theoretical fidelity of intersectionality" (Bowleg, 2008, p. 314). As a result of such limitations, no literature theoretically describes Black women's GRI, fully measures the construct, and/or empirically explores variations in Black women's identity using an intersectional approach.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the current study is two-fold: (1) describe and examine the potential for an empirically-supported taxonomy of GRI among Black women and (2) explore variations in

Black women's conceptualization of GRI. This research aim was pursued by applying an intersectional approach to Black racial identity theory and using mixed methodology.

Research Questions and Hypotheses

The current study attends to some of the aforementioned challenges associated with the investigation of Black women's GRI by addressing several research questions. Considering that Black women have reported that both racial and gender identities are equally important (Settles, 2006), it is hypothesized that there will be a positive association between racial and gender centrality, defined as the significance of race and gender within a woman's self-concept. However, questions still remain regarding variations in the association between Black women's racial and gender centrality. As such, a taxonomy will be used to classify and describe the different associations between racial and gender centrality. The use of classifications (also known as clusters) allows the researcher to explore the wide-ranging ways in which Black women place importance on their racial and gender identities. Demographic information (e.g., age, sexual orientation, socioeconomic status) will be used to further describe clustered gendered-racial identity profiles. To supplement quantitative data, variations in Black women's GRI will also be explored qualitatively. This additional data will provide information regarding the qualitative meaning Black women assign to their GRI. The use of cluster analysis in examining racial and gender identity is highly exploratory; thus, no hypotheses regarding the number of gendered-racial identity clusters are presented. Additionally, no hypotheses regarding the specific themes which may be extracted from qualitative data are proposed. Rather, it is the aim of this investigation to explore and describe how racial centrality and gender centrality may naturally vary among Black women, while also observing how Black women may conceptualize and ascribe meaning to their intersectional identities.

Significance of the Study

There is a need within the academic literature to “develop, revise, expand, and test theories . . . as they occur within the multiple contexts of the lives of Black women” (Thomas, 2004, p. 297). The current study is the first of its kind to revisit and expand Black racial identity theory by using intersectionality to inform an understanding of Black women’s GRI. Further insight regarding Black women’s GRI is particularly important because this variable is an important component of Black women’s self-concept, yet remains a rather ambiguous construct and subsequently has not been operationalized. The current study takes preliminary steps in conceptualizing, describing, and measuring Black women’s GRI.

Implications

Understanding GRI is also significant in addressing the exclusion of Black women within the identity literature. Though the foundational research in this topic area is trailblazing, the inability of previous scholars to fully grasp how multiple social identities shape the social reality and experiences of Black women has in part contributed to the simplification of Black women’s experiences within the larger body of identity literature (Thomas, 2004). This oversight is partly due to the fact that Black women are studied as a homogeneous social group in contrast with Black men and Whites. Said differently, when Black women are included in psychological research the emphasis is on describing differences between them and their male counterparts or Whites (i.e., comparative research; Thomas, 2004), while little to no focus is placed on the distinctive Black woman experience. Further, the rich diversity among Black women based on their varying social identities has been unexplored. Even though Black women may share racial and gender identities, the ways these identities are conceptualized and experienced will be different for each woman. All that being said, Black women are a diverse social group that has

been largely ignored within the identity literature. The current study highlights the diversity of Black women through the exploration of two of the many social identities (i.e., racial identity and gender identity), which inform Black women's self-concept and perceptions of their experiences. Better understanding of women's self-concept has naturally implications for clinical work with Black women.

Chapter II

Literature Review

Gendered racial identity (GRI) is an emergent construct within psychological and cultural studies literatures used to describe Black women's intersected identity as both Black and woman (Thomas et al., 2011; Thomas et al., 2013). To date, there is no theoretically based description of GRI within the literature. To address this lack, the aim of the current study is to provide an in-depth discussion of how the idea of intersectionality may be combined with the foundational assumptions of Black racial identity to theoretically describe and capture variations of GRI among Black women. Specifically, this chapter provides an overview of intersectionality and Black racial identity theory. Then, the chapter explains how an intersectional framework may be applied to racial identity theory to inform an understanding of Black women's GRI. The chapter concludes with a review of the modern literature focused on Black women's GRI, a discussion of the theoretical and methodological gaps within this literature, and suggested means by which the current study will address such limitations within the literature.

Intersectionality

Intersectionality provides a framework for understanding the ways in which Black women's racial and gender identities may coalesce to create GRI. Intersectionality is broadly defined as an idea or perspective that acknowledges how the interaction of multiple social identities may influence an individual's self-concept and experiences (Cole, 2009; Crenshaw 1989, 1991). Over the past 30 years, the definition of intersectionality has expanded its focus from experiences of structural oppression to also include how individuals conceptualize their social identity status and perceive their individual experiences.

Though intersectionality is recognized as one of the most profound contributions of women's studies (McCall, 2005), psychology researchers have struggled to incorporate this idea into their research. This difficulty may be in part due to the misunderstanding of the assumptions undergirding the idea of intersectionality. Based on a review of the literature, three major assumptions inform an intersectional perspective. One of the most important assumptions is that intersectionality is not a theory, but rather an approach, framework, or perspective to be used in conjunction with psychological theory to explore and provide a more complex understanding of psychological phenomena (Crenshaw, 1991; Syed, 2010). Second, intersectionality can be considered a framework used to understand structural oppression *or* to explain how individuals conceptualize and experience their intersecting identities. The latter is a perspective most aligned with the use of intersectionality within psychological theory (Davis, 2008; Syed, 2010). Finally, intersectionality is assumed to be applicable to marginalized (e.g., Black, woman, homosexual) and non-marginalized (e.g., White, male, heterosexual) identities. Intersectionality is not to be used to identify which group is the most oppressed based on their multiple marginalized statuses, but rather may be used to gain a more nuanced understanding of a social group's experiences of oppression and privilege based on a variety of social statuses (Warner & Shields, 2013).

Intersectionality and Psychology

Unfortunately, little pre-existing literature serves as a guide to using an intersectional approach in psychology research (Shields, 2008). Cole (2009) states, "psychologists have been slow to incorporate this concept [intersectionality] because there are no established guidelines for empirically addressing research questions informed by an intersectional framework" (p. 170). This body of literature has been consistently criticized for its inability to dictate complementary research methods (McCall, 2005). As such, psychologists have completely ignored, disregarded,

and deferred the use of intersectionality in their research. Cole (2009) poses several suggestions which may assist psychologists as they incorporate an intersectional perspective, two of which are relevant to the current study: (1) explore the experiences of individuals who are members of multiple marginalized groups (e.g., ethnic minority women) and (2) participate in exploratory study as opposed to hypothesis testing to uncover not only group differences, but also group similarities. Therefore, in the current study, the investigation of GRI is highly exploratory, focused on examining identity similarities and differences among Black women--a multiple marginalized group.

Black women's experiences have been integral to intersectionality literature, serving "as a theoretical wedge, designed to demonstrate the shortcomings of conventional feminist and anti-racist work" (Nash, 2008, p. 89). Despite the inclusion of Black women in intersectional research and the great efforts of feminist scholarship, Black women's voices have largely been excluded from mainstream psychology theory and research. The limited scholarship specifically focused on Black women has honed in on "special issues" and "problems" rather than normative development and well-being, further marginalizing this population within the psychological discourse (Thomas, 2004). To that end, there is a need to incorporate intersectionality within psychology research, as well as to use this approach in the conceptualization of indicators of wellness, such as identity development among Black women.

Black Racial Identity Theory

Some of the earliest scholarly work on Black's racial identity included the well-known Clark "doll studies" (Clark & Clark, 1947; Marks, Settles, Cooke, Morgan, & Sellers, 2004). As a result of the Clark "doll studies," there was an assumption that Blacks experienced feelings of self-hatred and low self-esteem because of the way society viewed the Black racial group.

However, in the 1960s and 1970s, as a result of the increasing number of Black scholars and advanced knowledge and measurement of self-esteem, researchers began to challenge the assumption that Blacks experienced low self-esteem. Modern researchers re-conceptualized Black racial identity in terms of Blacks' resilience and strength in spite of oppression.

Accordingly, modern Black racial identity theory focuses on the development of a healthy Black identity marked by a positive sense of one's self and membership in the Black racial group.

Black racial identity models. Over the past 25 years, several models of Black racial identity have been proposed. These models can be broadly categorized into two major types--developmental and dimensional. Developmental models of racial identity suggest that the process by which one becomes Black is progressive, meaning one stage must precede the next. Aligned with traditional identity theory (e.g., Erikson, 1968; Marcia, 1980), developmental theories suggest that higher stages are perceived as more mature or optimal. Of the developmental racial identity models, Cross's (1971, 1991) Nigrescence model has received the most attention within the academic literature. Psychological Nigrescence describes the process by which an individual begins to understand their identity as a Black person over the course of several developmental stages, Pre-encounter to Internalization/Commitment.

In contrast to a developmental model, other researchers have adopted a dimensional understanding of racial identity. From a dimensional approach, racial identity is posited to consist of several different factors. The multidimensional model of racial identity (MMRI; Sellers, Smith, Shelton, Rowley, & Chavous, 1997) is the most studied dimensional model of racial identity. Within this model, racial identity is defined as "the significance and qualitative meaning that individuals attribute to their membership within the Black racial group within their

self-concepts” (Sellers et al., 1997, p. 23). The MMRI describes both the importance and meaning of race among individuals across contexts.

Which type of Black racial identity model is most theoretically sound and best available for empirical investigation is a matter of debate. Though the Nigrescence model (Cross, 1971, 1991) is widely used, this model is not without limitations. Inherent within a developmental model is the understanding that individuals similarly progress through sequential stages across the lifespan. These models do not recognize the differences in the development of racial identity. For example, these models do not acknowledge how every individual may not experience every developmental stage, nor do they account for how one may regress to an earlier stage of racial identity development. In contrast to other developmental identity models (e.g., Erikson, 1968; Marcia, 1980), racial identity is not a hierarchal process, and little research suggests racial identity develops gradually across the lifespan (Quintana, 2007). Furthermore, all Blacks do not experience all stages of identity development. For instance, the Nigrescence model postulates that in the Pre-encounter stage Blacks instinctively experience negative feelings about being Black. This assertion is problematic when discussing individuals who perhaps were raised in predominantly Black communities or Blacks across the African Diaspora. Blacks within predominately Black communities or in cultures beyond the United States may experience positive feelings regarding their Blackness, thus foregoing the Pre-encounter stage of development.

One of the major critiques of a dimensional conceptualization of racial identity is that this approach provides little insight as to what combination of dimensions constitutes optimal mental health. Though the MMRI does not delineate a definition of well-being, modern researchers have found this gap within the theory an area for research. As such, the ambiguity regarding the

association between dimensions of racial identity and optimal mental health may be considered a strength because it assumes that there is not one best Black racial identity; rather, there are variations in identity which coincide differently with aspects of psychological wellness. An additional strength of the MMRI is the fact that the model recognizes that racial identity is one of many social identities that may inform one's self-concept. Therefore, researchers may examine multiple social identities simultaneously. Taken together, a dimensional approach values diversity in the conceptualization of identity, while also attending to how several social identities may uniquely inform one's self-concept. In consideration of the many strengths of this approach, a dimensional conceptualization of racial identity was used for the current study.

Multidimensional model of racial identity. The Multidimensional Model of Racial Identity (MMRI; Sellers et al., 1997) defines racial identity as the significance and qualitative meaning one ascribes to his or her membership within the Black racial group. Four major assumptions serve as the foundation for the MMRI. First, the MMRI recognizes that racial identity includes stable and situational-dependent dimensions. Stable dimensions are those dimensions of identity that remain consistent across contexts, whereas situational dimensions of identity are context or situation dependent. Racial centrality, racial regard, and racial ideology are stable dimensions of racial identity, while racial salience is not. Situational and stable dimensions of racial identity interact in complex ways. The activation of a situational identity dimension (i.e., racial salience) allows for stable dimensions to influence individuals' behaviors during a specific event. For example, if a Black student has high racial centrality (stable dimension), he or she may be particularly attuned to the racial cues within the classroom environment. While the teacher is lecturing on Black history, the racial salience (situational dimension) of this student's race is enhanced. Racial ideology and regard dimensions (stable

dimensions) then dictate the ways in which this Black student interprets and believes he or she should respond within this situation. Though racial salience is important in predicting how individuals may respond in a particular event, the sole assessment of stable dimensions of identity provides information on Blacks' normative perceptions and behaviors across situations. The second assumption of the MMRI is that all individuals have multiple social identities; and, these identities are hierarchically ordered. This theoretical assumption implies that researchers can explore racial identity in conjunction with other social identities. Further, the meaning and importance that individuals place on other social identities may influence the meaning that individuals ascribe to being Black. For example, a woman's conceptualization of her womanhood is informed by the significance and meaning she ascribes to her Blackness. Third, the MMRI assumes that one's perception of their racial identity is the most valid indicator of one's overall identity. Said differently, a person's perception of their identity best represents the importance of that identity compared to behavioral indicators (e.g., speech patterns and preference for Black foods and music). The final assumption of the MMRI is that this model is most concerned with an individual's identity status, rather than their identity development. The MMRI allows researchers to observe the significance and meaning an individual assign to race at any point along the developmental trajectory. Knowledge about the nature of Black racial identity, no matter what developmental stage, can greatly be enhanced with the application of an intersectional framework (a perspective that also appreciates how individuals develop a sense of self in the context of other important social identities).

Racial identity is theorized to consist of four dimensions which assess the significance (i.e., racial salience and racial centrality) and qualitative meaning (i.e., racial regard and racial ideology) one assigns to their membership with the Black racial group. Racial salience is the

extent to which race is an important part of an individual's self-concept in a particular situation or moment in time. Similar to racial salience, racial centrality is how individuals normatively define themselves in terms of race across all contexts. Racial regard is one's positive or negative perception of Blacks and their understanding of others' judgment of Blacks. This dimension has two components--private and public. Private regard is the extent to which an individual feels positively or negatively about his or her race and other Blacks. Public regard is the extent to which an individual believes other people think positively or negatively about Blacks. The final dimension, racial ideology, captures an individual's thoughts and attitudes regarding how they think other Blacks should act. There are four types of ideology: nationalist (emphasizes the uniqueness of Black individuals), oppressed minority (focuses on the shared oppression among minority groups), assimilationist (highlights similarities between Blacks and American society), and humanist (acknowledges the commonalities among all humans).

The dimensions of racial identity are postulated to interact with one another to influence behavior (see Figure 1). Racial centrality and situational cues interact with one another to influence the racial salience of a specific event. Racial ideology and racial regard influence the subsequent appraisal and behavioral response to the event. Though racial salience is important in discerning how individuals would respond in a particular situation, centrality is more important in predicting how someone may normally respond across a variety of situations. Further, research suggests that one's attitudes about being Black are only predictive of outcomes for individuals in which race is an important part of their self-concept (i.e., those with high racial centrality) (Marks et al., 2004). Accordingly, it is important to understand the centrality of identity prior to making any conclusions about associated behaviors and outcomes. Therefore,

the current study uses racial centrality and gender centrality as indicators by which to describe GRI among Black women.

Identity Centrality

By specifically exploring identity centrality, researchers may examine how individuals manage their understanding of multiple and important intersecting identities. Identity centrality is generally defined as the extent to which a particular identity is important to one's self-concept (Sellers, Smith, Shelton, Rowley, & Chavous, 1998; Settles, 2004; Thoits, 1991). Reflecting on the centrality of a particular social identity is important in predicting how one may perceive and respond to threats to that identity. Thoits (1991) suggests that threats to those identities most central or important to an individual may lead to distress, more than threats posed to an unimportant identity. Additionally, more distress may be experienced when one holds multiple central identities because these identities may interfere with one another and may be equally threatened. That being said, the exploration of central identities has significant implications for understanding how an individual may realize and experience their social identities. A major strength of exploring identity centrality within an intersectional context is the fact that this framework acknowledges how Black women may have multiple central identities that are not necessarily hierarchal, but rather interact and inform one another. When exploring Black women's conceptualization of identity and perceptions of their experiences, it is important to attend to both racial and gender centrality because Black women's "unique experiences within the U.S. may lead them to be especially conscious of their racial and gender identities" (Settles, 2006, p. 589).

Racial and gender centrality. Racial centrality is defined as the extent to which one defines oneself in terms of their race (Sellers et al., 1998). Racial centrality has been examined as a predictor of the ways in which an individual may perceive or psychologically make sense of racial experiences. Racial centrality is positively associated with an increased frequency of perceived discrimination (e.g., Sellers, Caldwell, Schmeelk-Cone, & Zimmerman, 2003). At the same time, racial centrality has been evidenced to buffer the impact of racist experiences on Black individuals (e.g., Neblett, Shelton, & Sellers, 2004). When focusing on Black women's mental health, racial centrality has been found to moderate the association between private regard and depression, such that the association between positive views about Blacks and lower depression was strongest for those who had higher racial centrality (Settles, Navarrete, Pagano, Abdou, & Sidanius, 2010). Therefore, the utility of racial centrality for Black individuals' identity is multifaceted. Racial centrality affects the perceptions of everyday race-related incidents and the internalization of these experiences. Additionally, this construct may act as a significant factor influencing Blacks' mental health.

From an intersectional perspective, one understands that a Black woman's perception of her experience is not only dictated by her race, but also by other salient social identities, in particular gender. Similarly, to racial centrality, gender centrality may be defined as the extent to which one defines himself or herself in terms of gender (Ghara, 2012; Settles, 2006). To the author's knowledge, no research has examined the direct association between gender centrality and gender-based discrimination, sexism, or mental health. However, it is plausible to assume that if gender centrality functions similarly to racial centrality, higher gender centrality may be associated with increased levels of perceived gender-based oppression and may be a factor to consider in understanding women's mental health. Similarly to racial centrality, specific forms of

women's gender identity have been found to moderate the relationship between gender-based oppression and indicators of psychological distress (Moradi & Subich, 2002).

Understanding the associations between racial and gender centrality is the first step in theoretically describing and measuring Black women's GRI. As aforementioned, centrality of an identity or identity significance (Thoits, 1991) is predictive of how one assigns meaning to their social identity and informs one's perception of experiences related to that social identity. To that end, exploring the variations of racial and gender centrality among Black women is integral in conceptualizing GRI and understanding how Black women may describe and perceive experiences related to their intersectional identity.

Applying Intersectionality to Identity Theory

Cole (2008) identifies two levels of intersectional analysis, categorical and political. It is through categorical analysis that psychology has been able to gain a more complex understanding of race, gender, and additional social identities. At the categorical level of analysis attention is placed on "the ways that the experience of membership in a category varies qualitatively as a function of other group memberships one holds" (Cole, 2008, p. 44). The combination of categorical intersectionality with Black racial identity theory lends itself to hypotheses at the individual level because in both categorical intersectionality and Black racial identity theory the individual is the unit of analysis. In each, the emphasis is placed on how the individual derives the meaning of one social identity as a function of other social identities. A categorical epistemology and Black racial identity theory also allow for the quantification of social category membership, which in turn may be utilized to make predictions about individual behaviors. In contrast, the focus of political intersectionality is on how social identity groups, particularly those of multiple marginalized statuses (e.g., women of color), may be caught at the

crux of two political agendas. For example, the writings of Black feminist scholars (e.g., Collins, 1999; hooks, 1991) speak to how the voices of Black women were silenced in both anti-racist and feminist agendas. All that being said, categorical intersectionality is focused on micro-level phenomena, whereas political intersectionality focuses more on meso- and macro-level experiences. Because of its individual focus, categorical intersectionality is best suited for psychological research.

Within categorical intersectionality there is an aim to move from demographic categorizations of social identities to an exploration of the social construction of social categories (e.g., race versus racial identity). Though the use of demographic categories may serve useful in simple interaction statistical models, conceptual variables add more to the theoretical understanding of social identity by taking into account how society influences one's social category membership at an individual level. Stated differently, much more information about one's membership within the Black racial group can be gathered from variables such as racial identity compared to the demographic race category. Additionally, even more information can be gathered when multiple identities are considered.

Shields (2008) adds to the intersectionality and identity literature by providing a definition of intersectionality that specifically applies to social identity. She broadly describes intersectionality as an approach used to understand how "social identities . . . mutually constitute, reinforce, and naturalize one another" (Shields, 2008, p. 302). Social identities do more than "intersect" with one another. Specifically, social identity categories (e.g., gender, race) extract meaning in relation to one another (mutually constitute); social identities are maintained actively through a process in which one acts out their social identity as informed by the intersection of multiple social identity categories (reinforce); and social identity categories are observable

through the lens of another category (e.g., each race is thought to consist of two genders: male and female) (naturalize). Further, no single social identity can adequately describe how individuals respond to their environment and are responded to by other individuals (Shields, 2008).

Since no single identity can explain one's experience, the consideration of *all* social identities comes into question. An examination of all the social identities Black women may possess, besides from race and gender, are beyond the scope of the current study and is nearly impossible with current research methods (Warner, 2008). Therefore, researchers are forced to choose which identities to investigate and discern which identities are considered intersectional identities (Nash, 2008). A large majority of the pre-existing intersectionality literature has focused on multiple marginalized identities (e.g., Blackness, womanhood, homosexuality), as opposed to non-marginalized identities (e.g., Whiteness, maleness, and heterosexuality). This may be due in part to intersectionality's roots within anti-racist and feminist literature. In any case, intersectionality was originally proposed as a paradigm of thought that considers positions of oppression and privilege. To that end, the current study explored how Black women conceptualize their social identity on the basis of their marginalized status as both Black and woman (i.e., GRI), while also considering how other identities (e.g., age, sexual orientation, socioeconomic status) may influence this sense of identity.

In exploring identities related to experiences of oppression and privilege, a discussion of the previous methods used to explore intersecting identities is also warranted. Considering the limited range of quantitative methods within intersectionality research (McCall, 2005; e.g., regression models; Bowleg, 2008), Shields (2008) suggests using qualitative methods, which are best aligned with the tenets of intersectionality. However, the sole use of qualitative research

methods becomes problematic because these research studies rarely enter mainstream psychology journals (Kidd, 2002). Though the number of qualitative studies entering top-tier psychology journals is increasing, particularly in multicultural psychology research (Ponterotto, 2010), it is alarming that qualitative research composed only 1% of American Psychological Association publications during the 1990s (Kidd, 2002; data based on publications from journals such as *Cultural Diversity and Ethnic Minority Psychology*, *Journal of Counseling Psychology*, and *Journal of Educational Psychology*). In efforts to advance knowledge of intersectionality research and to increase the current study's academic reach and audience, quantitative methods (i.e., cluster analysis) coupled with more traditional qualitative intersectional research methods were used.

Black Women's Gendered Racial Identity

There is a developing body of recent literature that focuses on Black women's experiences with intersecting racial and gender identities. Settles (2006) examined Black women's understanding of the racial and gender identities and related experiences. All the women sampled (ages 18 – 47, $M = 23.62$) were enrolled in college (67.5% undergraduate; 32.5% graduate), including historically Black colleges and universities (HBCUs) and predominately White universities (PWUs). Within this study a mixed methods research design was employed. Eighty-nine Black women were administered surveys regarding the importance of Black, woman, and Black woman identities, identity interference (e.g., "I run into obstacles in women's organizations and activities because I am Black"; "I find that being a woman makes it harder for me to fit in with other Black people"), and psychological well-being. In addition, women were asked open-ended questions regarding the rewards and difficulties they experienced as a Black woman (i.e., "Are there any particular rewards or difficulties that you have

experienced as a Black woman, in general?”). Sixty-percent of the total sample ($n = 53$) responded to the open-ended questions. Researchers found that those women who rated being Black as important also rated being a woman and Black woman as important ($r = .46, p < .05$; $r = .60, p < .05$, respectively). In comparing mean ratings of identity importance, results suggested that Black women rated their combined Black-woman identity more important than Black and woman identities separately. Among women who rated their Black woman identity as important, women expressed that their Black identity marginally interfered with their woman identity. However, these same women found that their woman identity interfered much more with their Black identity. Interference with women’s Black identity was related to lowered psychological well-being, whereas interference with the woman identity was not.

Taken together, the results of the quantitative portion of the study suggest that Black women who view their Black identity as important also have a tendency to rate their woman identity as important. Settles (2006) provides two explanations for this pattern of results. First, she suggests that the awareness of one stigmatized identity may also transcend into one’s awareness about one’s other stigmatized identities. She also proposes that Black women may not be able to disentangle the racial and gender components of their Black woman identity; thus, Black women are responding to items solely based on the importance of their combined Black-woman identity. In consideration of the latter, it is not surprising that results suggested that the combined Black-woman identity is significantly more important, compared to Black and woman identities. Settles also suggests that the consequences associated with interference with Black women’s Black identity may be related to disrupted Black social supports with other Black individuals. Results may also be a function of the novel questions utilized within the interference scale.

In reviewing women's qualitative responses, Black women endorsed the following rewards and difficulties associated with their Black woman identity: rewards - personal self-esteem and opportunities based on their marginalized status as both woman and Black; difficulties - stereotyping and discrimination and isolation from others (Settles, 2006). Stereotyping and discrimination were the most commonly endorsed difficulties, which highlight the persistence of marginalization and devaluation Black women may experience. Also, a large majority of Black women endorsed difficulties in developing relationships with Whites and even other Black women because of their identity. Black women additionally associated their Black womanhood with personal strength and esteem, yet also reported that this strength can be a burden as women are expected to maintain a positive self-image at all times. Overall, the results of this study suggest that Black women view themselves more in terms of their GRI (referred to as "combined Black-woman identity") compared to racial and gender identity. This particular experience of identity is associated with perceived rewards and difficulties, suggesting that even when women identify with their intersectional identity there are varying perceptions of oppression and privilege.

Unfortunately, little research has examined variations in the conceptualization and experience of Black womanhood. More research has focused on how Black women's sense of womanhood is distinct from women's of other races. This paradigm presents Black women as a monolithic group in comparison to Black men and Whites (Thomas, 2004) and disregards the diversity among Black women. Though comparing Black women with other groups is not optimal, information can be garnered from previous research that has made such parallels. Settles, Pratt-Hyatt, and Buchanan (2008) sought to understand how race may influence Black and White women's perceptions of womanhood. Despite the large body of research focusing on

Black and White women's experiences of sexism, researchers propose that sparse research focuses on women's thoughts and feelings about womanhood and how that may be associated with their perceptions of themselves and the world. Participants included 14 Black women and 17 White women all of whom were diverse in terms of their education, socioeconomic status, sexual orientation, and age. Six focus groups (three two-hour sessions for Black and White women) were conducted to explore women's negative and positive experiences associated with gender (e.g., "How has being a woman positively influenced your life?", "Are there things that you find special or valuable about being a woman, even if they make life harder?"). The following themes were extracted: (a) gender based mistreatment - experiences with sexism, gender-based discrimination, and harassment; (b) perceived gender-based advantages - benefits associated with their status as a woman; (c) social support - a sense of community with other women; (d) caretaking - a desire to become a mother and nurture a family; and (e) work-family decision-making - grappling with options to work or stay at home. Interestingly, inner strength emerged as a theme only for Black women. This theme included a discussion of emotional and personal strength associated with their status as both Black and female. Inner strength was further defined as "the courage to stand up for oneself, persevere, and refuse to be taken advantage of by others. . . those who are self-reliant, able to withstand the challenges placed before them, and unwilling to depend on others to take care of them" (Settles et al., 2008, p. 463). Black women primarily attributed the development of their inner strength to observing strong Black women and facing the challenges posed within a racist society. Simultaneously, Black women reported the burden of consistently portraying emotional strength. It is possible that Black women's awareness and adoption of inner strength is associated with their conceptualization of their GRI. Considering the results of Settles (2006), the incorporation of

inner strength into one's self-concept may be directly associated with the extent to which Black women find their GRI to be an important component of their self-concept. Also building on the results of Settles (2006), only one Black woman in the sample mentioned the positive and supportive components of friendship (Settles et al., 2008). Taken together, results suggest that there are some universal ideals regarding womanhood among Black and White women; however, Black women may adopt or identify with additional aspects characteristics of womanhood that are distinct from White women. Furthermore, study results illustrate that even among Black women there are variations among these characteristics which warrant further exploration.

Thomas, Hacker, and Hoxha (2011) sought to explore GRI in a sample of young Black women (ages 15 – 21). Within this study, GRI was loosely defined as Black women's intersected identity as Black and female. Using small focus groups, young Black women were asked, "What does it mean to be woman?", "What does it mean to be African American (or of your ethnicity)?", and "What does it mean to be an African American woman?". Follow-up questions assessed women's understanding of identity and how that understanding may have changed over time (e.g., "Have you thought about these ideas before? How have your ideas changed over time?"). Results revealed several themes among young Black women: gendered racial identity, awareness of racism, beauty standards, and self-determination. Of the themes, gendered racial identity and self-determination are most relevant to the current study. Researchers found that when asked separately about race and gender, young Black women's responses often reflected their intersected GRI. Young Black women's responses overwhelmingly indicated that women's GRI was more salient than racial and gender identities separately. Similarly, to previous studies (Settles, 2006; Settles et al., 2008), self-determination and inner strength emerged as themes. Young Black women acknowledged the awareness of Black women stereotypes, but also

expressed a desire to dispel such stereotypes. Black women's desire to break stereotypes was considered a means by which to cope with stereotyping. Though a distinct theme, it is clear that Black women's aspirations to dismantle stereotypic images of Black women are connected to inner strength--a theme that was also endorsed. In contrast to previous studies, inner strength was specifically associated with a sense a communal heritage and spirituality. It is of note that young Black women did not acknowledge the potential emotional burden associated with inner strength. As young Black women, inner strength can be a major asset that may propel them toward success. However, as women age, it may be the case that upholding this sense of strength becomes less adaptive as women become bombarded with adulthood's many challenges, thereby necessitating the reliance on supports and strengths beyond oneself.

In each of the reviewed studies, Black women overwhelmingly define themselves in terms of their GRI. Furthermore, GRI was found to be more significant than racial and gender identities separately. When asked about their GRI, Black women consistently associated their identity with feelings of inner strength and self-determination, yet also recognized how portraying a strong Black woman image may also manifest as an emotional burden. In comparing young women to more mature Black women, younger Black women tended to recognize the positive qualities associated with a sense of inner strength, while failing to acknowledge the emotional burden that may be associated with this characteristic. Though a less endorsed theme, Black women also expressed interpersonal difficulties, such as feeling isolated from others and Black women peers and lack of acknowledgment of positive aspects of friendship.

The current body of literature on Black women's GRI provides several conclusions about Black women's conceptualizations of Black womanhood and related experiences, yet also leaves

several questions unanswered. Previous studies do little to describe GRI, aside from defining the construct as the “intersection of racial and gender identity” (e.g., Thomas et al., 2011, p. 531). The narrow understanding of GRI is in part due to limitations in the previous literature including, (1) overreliance on small focus group data (Settles et al., 2008; Thomas et al., 2011) (2) single-item measures of GRI (Settles, 2006), (3) and little focus on how identities are not additive, but rather inform and extract meaning from one another.

The theoretical and methodological concerns within the previous research are extremely problematic considering that Black women’s GRI appears to be an integral variable that informs Black women’s self-concept and perception of their experience. Given the limitations in the pre-existing literature a theoretically-based definition and operationalization of a Black woman gendered racial identity (BWGRI) is needed. Drawing from Black racial identity theory and intersectional framework, the current study proposes a definition of Black women’s gendered racial identity (BWGRI) as the significance and qualitative meaning attributed to membership within Black and woman social identity groups. Differences in the significance and meaning one ascribes to one’s BWGRI may dictate varied conceptualizations of one’s identity and perceptions of privilege and oppression. This working definition of BWGRI will be used to inform the specific research questions and methodology of the current study.

While describing GRI is important, there is a need to explore how researchers may measure GRI among Black women. To fully capture and describe a BWGRI, the current study employed a mixed methods research design. To identify and statistically explore variations in the significance of BWGRI, statistical analyses that aid in classifying or profiling variations were used. Similar analyses have been used in exploring variations of racial identity profiles among Black adults (Banks & Kohn-Wood, 2007). Cluster analysis was used to investigate the

variations and structure of BWGRI. This statistical technique aims to simplify and describe the underlying structure of complex data and explore or test the structure of a particular variable or construct (Roskos-Ewoldsen & Roskos-Ewoldsen, 2008). The primary goal of cluster analysis is to identify and classify objects across categories. To qualitatively explore the meaning Black women assign to their BWGRI, Black women were asked open-ended questions regarding their racial, gender, and BWGRI. In previous research (Thomas et al., 2011), similar open-ended questions were used as a focus group script to extract information about Black women's identity. Because of the exploratory nature of the study, no a priori classifications or themes are proposed.

To the author's knowledge, only one study (Settles, 2006) has used a mixed methods research design; and, no research has utilized cluster analysis to explore intersectional racial and gender identities among Black women. By using cluster analysis, the current study will add to the pre-existing literature on BWGRI by measuring the significance of gender and racial identity, while also exploring variations in identity importance among a diverse sample of Black women. Furthermore, qualitative data will highlight the qualitative meaning that Black women attribute to their intersected identity. Based on the theoretical assumptions of Black racial identity theory (Sellers et al., 1998), an assessment of the significance and qualitative meaning one assigns to an identity are both important factors to consider. Accordingly, quantitative and qualitative assessments of BWGRI will allow for the exploration of both the significance and meaning that Black women assign to their intersected identity.

Research Questions

1. Can a taxonomy be identified to classify and describe Black women's gendered racial identity?

- a. Are there significant differences between identified clusters based on demographic characteristics (e.g., socioeconomic status, sexual orientation)?
2. Do Black women's qualitative description of their gendered racial identity vary based on cluster membership?

Study Purpose and Significance

The purpose of the current study is to further the knowledge regarding Black women's intersected racial and gender identities. Specific aims include theoretically describing, measuring and exploring variations in BWGRI. Thomas (2004) states, "work in the psychology of Black women must focus on knowledge development . . . knowledge development activities should focus on efforts to develop, revise, expand, and test theories" (p. 9). Therefore, the proposed study is significant as it incorporates the voices of Black women into traditional psychological theory--theories in which the voices of Black women were historically excluded. Using intersectionality as a framework within the context of the study also aids in movement toward "develop[ing] intersectionality-based psychological theory" (Warner & Shields, 2008; p. 805).

Chapter III

Methodology

The idea of intersectional identities poses many methodological challenges for researchers (Bowleg, 2008). As intersectionality has gained popularity beyond feminist scholarship, there has been increasing academic discussion regarding the best practices for empirically investigating intersectionality. In consideration of the previous chapters which outline the methodological concerns within intersectionality literature, the researcher has selected the following methods and analyses to explore BWGRI.

Cluster Analysis in Exploring Social Identities

Cluster analysis is a classification technique for discovering similar groups within intricate data sets (Borgen & Barnett, 1987). Said differently, cluster analysis explores underlying relationships within seemingly homogenous data or groups. In conducting this form of analysis the researcher does not hypothesize a priori the groupings that may be extracted; rather, the researcher is interested in revealing natural assemblages within the data set.

Cluster analysis can be used for several purposes including exploration, simplification, and confirmation. The most common use of cluster analysis is exploration and the development of a taxonomy, defined as an empirically based classification of objects. In areas of new research, such as the investigation of intersecting social identities, cluster analysis may be considered the first step in exploring and identifying the subgroups within broader social identity categories (Borgen & Barnett, 1987). Within the current study, cluster analysis was used to make a taxonomy based on women's levels of racial and gender centrality. Using empirically-derived clusters, profiles were then developed, described, and interpreted based on women's qualitative descriptions of their intersectional identity and previous research related to this construct.

Qualitative Analysis of Social Identities

In addition to traditional forms of qualitative analysis, a variety of qualitative data analysis techniques have been used to investigate intersectional identities. The large majority of intersectionality research focused on Black women (e.g., Settles, 2006; Thomas et al., 2011) has used various modifications of a grounded theory approach (Glaser & Strauss, 2009) coupled with traditional qualitative analysis techniques (e.g., constant comparative analysis), thus the current study will employ similar methods. More specifically, a modified grounded theory approach will be utilized, meaning that instead of theorizing themes a priori themes will be determined through the examination of the data.

Participants

A total of 267 Black women were sampled for the current study. Of this sample, twenty-seven women (10.1%) were excluded. Two women were excluded because they did not provide “true” responses to one or more of the three *true* or *false* screening items required to confirm they were 1) an adult, 2) Black/African American, and 3) a woman. Seven other women were excluded because they failed to respond correctly to validity check items throughout the survey. Finally, an additional 18 women were excluded for failing to answer fewer than 70% of the survey items. The final sample included 240 Black women ($M_{\text{age}} = 35.83$ years; $SD = 11.88$).

The sample was recruited using snowball sampling throughout the United States. Considering there is no specific rule for determining the appropriate sample size for cluster analysis, the sample size was determined based on the standards set by Green (1991) and increased to ensure variability among the sample. A larger sample size was sought in efforts to allow the researcher to make certain an adequate representation of women across additional social categories (e.g., age, socioeconomic status, and sexual orientation). In striving for a not

only large, but also diverse, sample, the researcher recruited participants using web-based advertisements distributed through the university listservs, social networking sites (e.g., Facebook, Twitter), and electronic mail. Participants were also recruited via in-person solicitation and snowball sampling at the local university and senior centers. In efforts to stratify the sample, particularly in terms of socioeconomic status, the survey instrument was administered in both web-based and paper-and-pencil formats. A majority of the sample completed the web-based version of the survey (96%), while 4% of the sample completed paper-and-pencil surveys. Women used a variety of devices to access the web-based survey, including mobile devices (54.7%), desktop computers (44.2%), and tablets (1.1%). The age of the sample ranged from 19 to 79 (18 – 24 = 10.9%; 25 – 44 = 70.7%; 45 – 64 = 16.7%; 65+ = 1.7%). The age range of those who completed the paper-and-pencil survey was from 54 – 79 ($M_{\text{age}} = 64.2$ years), with most of these women being recruited from a local senior center.

The current sample includes a large number of Christians (80.8%) as well as women affiliated with other religious/spiritual traditions (Buddhism = .4%; Agnostic = .8%; spiritual = 15%; other = 2.9%). A majority of women (90.8%) in the sample were heterosexual, but women also identified as lesbian (4.2%), bisexual (3.3%), and other unlisted orientations (1.7%; e.g., pansexual and “practicing heterosexual”). In terms of relationship status, a majority of the women sampled reported they were single (55.8%), whereas 38.3% reported they were married/committed partnership, 4.6% divorced, and 1.3 % widowed or separated. Approximately 60% reported they did not have children. When asked to report their 2014 total family annual income, women’s responses varied widely. About a quarter of participants reported an annual household income over \$100,000.00. Other women reported income brackets ranging from less than \$10,000 (4.6%), between \$10,000 and \$49,999 (34.7%), and between \$50,000 and \$99,999

(36.6%). This range of incomes is also reflected in varied levels of educational attainment for this sample. Noteworthy is the fact that most participants were not students (62.9%), thus employed in a wide range of fields. The educational attainment of women is as follows:

graduate/professional degree (55%), college degree (31.3%), some college (10.4%), technical/associates degree (1.7%), high school diploma (1.3%), and some high school (.4%).

Considering how one's environmental context may predispose one to more or less experiences of prejudice and discrimination that may influence their understanding of identity, women were also asked to describe the racial composition of the community in which they were raised.

Women were asked to describe their communities using one of three responses, *mostly Black*, *mostly other racial group*, and *racially diverse*. Over half (51.2%) of the participants indicated they were raised in a "*mostly Black*" community. Thirty-three percent described the community in which they were raised as diverse, while 15.4% reported living in a community that was primarily another race (primarily White = 94%; Hispanic = 3%; Asian = 3%). Demographics outlining the diversity of the study sample are displayed in Table 1.

Instruments

Screening items. All potential participants were presented with three *true or false* screener questions (Appendix B): "I am at least 18 years of age," "I identify as female," and "I racially identify as Black/African American." Therefore, to be eligible for the study participants needed to provide "*true*" responses to all screener items.

Demographic questionnaire (Appendix C). Demographic information included women's age, country of origin (e.g., Africa, Caribbean, and United States), educational level, marital status, socioeconomic status, sexual orientation, and religious/spiritual affiliation. Women were asked to describe their community (i.e., rural, urban, or suburban) and the racial

composition of the community in which they were raised. Additionally, women were asked to identify whether or not they are employed and/or a student, as well as note their field of work or study. Demographic data were used in the description and interpretation of BWGRI profiles.

Multidimensional Inventory of Black Identity-Racial Centrality (Appendix D). The Multidimensional Inventory of Black Identity (Sellers, Rowley, Chavous, Shelton, & Smith, 1997) is a 56-item scale which measures three stable dimensions of racial identity as described by the multidimensional model of racial identity (MMRI) (Sellers, Smith, Shelton, Rowley, Chavous, 1998): Racial Centrality, Racial Regard (i.e., private and public), and Racial Ideology (Sellers, Rowley, Chavous, & Smith, 1997). For the purposes of this study, eight items from the Racial Centrality subscale (i.e., MIBI-RC) were used. Each item is rated on a 7-point scale (1 = *Strongly Disagree*; 7 = *Strongly Agree*). Scores are calculated as the mean of the item responses within each subscale. Higher scores on the Racial Centrality subscale indicate race as a more important component of self-concept. Sample items from the Racial Centrality subscale include, “Overall, being Black has very little to do with how I feel about myself” (reverse coded) and “Being Black is an important reflection of who I am.” Past research has reported Cronbach’s alpha of .77 for this subscale among a sample of Black women (Settles, Navarrete, Pagano, Abdou, & Sidanius, 2010). For the current sample, a strong Cronbach’s alpha of .83 was obtained. The construct validity of the MIBI has been confirmed through correlations with pre-existing racial identity scales (Cokley & Helm, 2001).

Gender Centrality Scale (Appendix E). The Gender Centrality Scale (GCS) is an eight-item scale developed by the researcher based on an adaptation of the MIBI racial centrality subscale (Sellers et al., 1997) for the purposes of measuring gender centrality. To adapt the scale, the word *Black* was replaced by the word *woman/women* in each item. For instance, “In general,

being *Black* is an important part of my self-image” was changed to “In general, being *a woman* is an important part of my self-image.” Items (e.g., “I have a strong sense of attachment to other women”) are rated on a 7-point scale. Similarly to the MIBI, scores are calculated as the mean of item responses. Higher scores on the Gender Centrality Scale indicate gender is a more substantial factor within one’s self-concept. Though there has been no formal psychometric testing (e.g., factor analysis) on the gender adaptation of the MIBI centrality scale, past research has reported Cronbach’s alpha ranges from .70 – .79 in samples of ethnically diverse women and Black women (Ghara, 2012; Shelton & Sellers, 2000; Settles, 2004). Moreover, other adaptations of the MIBI centrality scale (e.g., changing the word *Black* to *scientist*) have also shown to be reliable (e.g., Settles, 2004). For the current sample, an adequate Cronbach’s alpha of .75 was obtained.

Self-Defined Gendered Racial Identity Questionnaire (Appendix F). The Self-Defined Gendered Racial Identity Questionnaire (S-GRIQ) was created for this study. It consists of three open-ended questions intended to capture Black women’s candid perceptions about their identities as Black (racial), woman (gender), and Black woman (GRI). Items for this questionnaire were extracted from a focus group script developed in a previous study aimed at exploring the salience of GRI among Black women (Thomas et al., 2011). The three questions include, “In your opinion, what does it mean to be Black (or of your Black ethnic group)?”, “In your opinion, what does it mean to be a woman?”, and “In your opinion, what does it mean to be a Black woman (or woman of your Black ethnic group)?” Online open-ended questions present a potential for non-response, (Denscombe, 2009); however, the overall response rate (i.e., meaning women responded to at least one of the three questions) for S-GRIQ was 94%, which is relatively high. When reviewing the response rate for each individual item within this measure,

it was noted that fewer women (90%; 25 missing responses) responded to item 3, “In your opinion, what does it mean to be a Black woman (or woman of your Black ethnic group)?” This response pattern may be due in part to participant fatigue, considering these items were posed at the end of the survey.

Procedures

Black women were recruited for the study through web-based advertisements distributed through university listservs, social networking sites (e.g., Facebook, Twitter), and electronic mail. Women were also recruited through in-person solicitation and snowball sampling at the university and senior centers within the Houston area. Multiple means of sampling were employed in efforts to obtain a diverse sample of Black women in terms of socioeconomic status, age, sexual orientation, and other demographic characteristics. All women were told that they have an opportunity to take part in a study focused on Black women’s racial and gender identity and experiences and attitudes associated with Black womanhood. All women were provided with a web-based or one-page printed advertisement briefly outlining the study’s title, purpose, incentive, and necessary contact personnel. At the end of the web advertisement, women were provided with the link to the web-based survey. The print advertisement not only included the link to the web-based version of the survey, but also informed women of the potential for completing the survey in paper-and-pencil format.

Women who elected to complete the survey were presented with an electronic or printed informed consent form (Appendix A) which outlined the study’s title, purpose, and procedure, as well as the women’s right to withdraw from the study at any time, confidentiality, and potential risks and benefits. Women were also given the option to participate in a raffle for one of two \$25 Target © gift cards as compensation for their participation. All women who wanted to be

considered for the raffle were asked to provide an email address or phone number. Using the *RANDBWTEEN* function on Microsoft Excel ©, two women were selected to receive a gift card based on their participant number (i.e., BW010 and BW188). Using the contact information provided, each participant was emailed (as suggested by the participants' preferred method of contact) and provided information regarding how they may receive their gift card (Appendix G). Each gift card was distributed.

All women were notified of the researcher's intention to report the data given, maintaining anonymity and grouped with others' data, as part of a PhD dissertation and related journal publications. At the end of the consent form, women were presented with the contact information for the primary researcher, faculty advisor, and IRB in the case that questions or concerns arise. Women who agreed to participate in the study by checking a box on the online or printed informed consent letter were allowed to proceed and complete the survey questions. The quantitative section of the survey was counterbalanced to avoid order effects which may influence responding. The survey took approximately 30 minutes to complete. All surveys were assigned an arbitrary code for the purposes of data analysis. Throughout the study, women's contact information was kept in an encrypted database separate from survey responses to ensure women's anonymity.

Analyses

The Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) Version 23 was used for analyses. Means and standard deviations for study variables were derived, and bivariate correlations among these variables were examined using the Pearson-product-moment coefficient (r). Then, a hierarchical cluster analysis was performed. After the clusters were extracted, they were profiled.

Profiling involved describing the clusters based on how they may differ on various characteristics.

Data extracted from the S-GRIQ was analyzed using qualitative techniques employed by the primary researcher. Prior to analysis, textual data were reviewed for the purposes of removing any personal identifiers and edited for clarity. Then, data were imported into an Excel file and categorized based on question and cluster membership (as determined by the statistical cluster analysis). After the data was transferred and categorized, the primary researcher analyzed the data using a modified grounded theory approach (Corbin & Strauss, 2014; Glaser & Strauss, 1967), meaning themes were not developed a priori, but rather themes were extracted directly from the data itself. The following techniques were employed within this qualitative data analysis framework: coding, memo writing, and the constant comparative method. After general themes were extracted from the responses to each question, themes were examined within the context of each BWGRI statistical cluster and compared among the clusters, thereby allowing the researcher to use qualitative data to inform the description of each cluster. For example, cluster profiles may suggest that Profile A not only consists of older and less educated women of lower socioeconomic status, but also these women tend to describe their gendered racial identity more so in terms of “self-determination” and “resiliency.”

All analytic procedures were aligned with the criteria for trustworthiness, including credibility, reliability, transferability, and confirmability (Lincoln & Guba, 1985; Morrow, 2005). To ensure credibility, not only were codes that aligned with major themes analyzed, but also outliers. The transferability of the current study is demonstrated by its potential to reap results and findings comparable to other samples and theories (e.g., racial identity theory). Confirmability is the extent by which the research methodology and conclusions have been

described in detail. For the current study, the research methodology has been described fully; and, quotations from the research participants have been included to further elucidate the source of the study conclusions.

Chapter IV

Results

Descriptive Statistics

Means, standard deviations, and correlation coefficients for the Multidimensional Inventory of Black Identity-Racial Centrality subscale (MIBI-RC) and Gender Centrality Scale (GCS) were explored prior to conducting additional analyses. Participants, on average, reported relatively high levels of racial ($M = 5.75$; $SD = 1.20$; range 1 - 7) and gender centrality ($M = 5.00$; $SD = 1.06$; range 1 - 7). As suspected, results demonstrate that racial and gender centrality are significantly and positively correlated. Stated differently, those who endorsed higher racial centrality, indicating race as an important component of one's self-concept, also found gender to be a central part of their identity conceptualization ($r = .49$, $p < .001$).

Primary Analyses

Primary analyses consisted of hierarchical cluster analysis and a modified grounded theory approach, which included constant comparative analysis. A hierarchical cluster analysis was used to explore women's responses to the MIBI-RC and the GCS, whereas qualitative techniques were used to examine women's responses to the S-GRIQ. Results of each of these analytic procedures are included below.

Hierarchical cluster analysis. Before conducting the hierarchical cluster analysis, the researcher considered the following: (a) outliers, (b) methods to measure object similarity, and (c) the standardization of data (Hair & Black, 2000). The data was screened for outliers to avoid the potential for the distortion of the data structure and subsequent problems with clustering. The squared Euclidean distance was the distance measure used for the study because this distancing index is most commonly used and has been used in previous social identity research (e.g., Banks

& Kohn-Wood, 2007). All variables of interest (i.e., racial centrality and gender centrality) were standardized by converting all scores to z -scores with a mean of zero and a standard deviation of one. Standardization allowed for the manipulation among variables scaled along the same metric.

To conduct a cluster analysis, the representativeness of the sample and multicollinearity was also taken into account. In striving for a sample that was representative of the larger population of Black women, the researcher aimed to collect data from Black women who are diverse across sociocultural characteristics. Variables (i.e., racial centrality and gender centrality) were also tested for multicollinearity through examination of their bivariate correlations. Previous research (Settles, 2006) has shown that though racial and gender centrality are correlated, they are not correlated to the point at which multicollinearity is a problem. In the current study, racial and gender centrality were indeed correlated ($r = .49, p < .001$), but not to the point at which multicollinearity would be a concern (i.e., $r = .7$ or above; Meyers, Gamst, & Guarino, 2013). Accordingly, racial and gender centrality were analyzed as separate and distinct variables. Considering all the statistical assumptions were met, a cluster analysis was performed.

A hierarchical cluster analysis was conducted to identify patterns of endorsement related to women's racial and gender centrality. A cluster analysis involves three steps: (1) measuring proximity, (2) selecting a choice of clustering method, and (3) evaluating and generalizing the clusters (Borgen & Barnett, 1987). Within this analysis, squared Euclidean distance was used as a proximity index, while Ward's method (Lorr, 1983) was used as the cluster algorithm. To determine the appropriate number of clusters, the researcher utilized the *stopping rule* (Hair & Black, 2000). The *stopping rule* involves examining the similarity distances among cases to extract the most interpretable solution--that is, the set of distinct groupings (clusters) that display short distances among cases within them and display larger distances from the next distinct

grouping in a two-dimensional space. The visually guided process requires reviewing a dendrogram and observing the distances between links that represent the cases as belonging to branches of the same tree (which is the entire set of cases). The optimal solution is that which is observed before a large drop in the distance value. In the current study, the researcher reviewed the resulting dendrogram (See Figure 2), as well as the clustering coefficients to explore large jumps between data points. Moreover, the cluster solution was cross-validated by randomly splitting the sample into two groups and re-running the analysis to ensure the same results. As result, a four-cluster solution was identified.

Cluster one. Cluster one included 87 women ranging in age from 20 – 79 years old ($M_{age} = 38.10$). On a scale of 1 to 7 (with 7 being the strongest endorsement of racial or gender centrality), the mean scores of women in this cluster were 5.05 ($SD = .91$) for racial centrality and 4.16 ($SD = .51$) for the gender centrality scale. Within this cluster a fairly equal number of women reported their relationship status as either single (48.3%) or married/committed partnership (42.5%). Though many of the women in this cluster were partnered, half of the women within the subset reported having no children. Women ranged across socioeconomic groups (as indicated by women's reported household income and education level). Approximately a quarter of the women reported making over \$100,000.00 annually. Also, a substantial number (14.9%) of women reported earnings between \$20,000.00 and \$29,000.00; and, the third and fourth most endorsed income brackets were \$60,000.00 – \$69,000.00 and \$50,000.00 – \$59,000.00. There was wide variability in education among women in this cluster with 50.6% of women reporting they earned a graduate/professional degree, 32.2% a college degree, 11.5% some college, 3.4% technical/associates degree, and 2.3% a high school diploma. Twenty-nine percent of women reported they were currently students. In terms of contextual

factors, women reported being raised in majority Black (52.9%) or racially diverse (29.2%) communities. Women indicated working in a variety of different fields, with approximately a quarter (24.1%) endorsing an affiliation with the social sciences.

Cluster two. Eighty-nine women ($M_{\text{age}} = 33.73$; Range = 21– 64 years) were grouped into cluster two. Average scores of women in this cluster were 6.42 ($SD = .44$) for racial centrality and 6.01 for gender centrality ($SD = .60$). An overwhelming majority of the women in this cluster reported being single (58.3%) and without children (69.7%). The annual income of women varied, with most women reporting incomes of over \$100,000.00 (21.3%), \$50,000.00 – \$59,000.00 (10.1%), and \$30,000.00 – \$39,000.00 (10.1%). In terms of educational attainment, women reporting earning a graduate/professional degree (64.0%), college degree (27.0%), some college (7.9%), and technical certificate/associates degree (1.1%). In consideration of their degree attainment, most (56.2%) of women in this cluster reported not being enrolled as a student. When asked to describe the cultural context in which they were raised, 49.4% reported being raised in a Black community, whereas others indicated being raised in racially diverse (32.6%) or a community being comprised primarily of another race (18.0%). Occupationally, women reported affiliations with several fields, including social sciences (46.1%) and education (20.2%).

Cluster three. Cluster three consisted of 47 women ($M_{\text{age}} = 33.95$; Range 19 – 60). On average, women reported their racial centrality as 4.86 ($SD = .64$) and gender centrality as 5.47 ($SD = .57$). Sixty-six of women identified as being single, while a large majority of others (29.8%) reported being married or in a committed partnership. Over half (57.4%) of the women in the cluster indicated they did not have children. In order of endorsement (highest to lowest) women's household income ranged from \$100,000.00 (21.3%), between \$80,000– \$89,000

(17.0%), \$20,000 – 29, 000 (14.9%), and \$30,000 – \$39,000 (12.8%). Women in this cluster were also highly educated; and, there was little variation in education among this cluster (i.e., graduate/professional degree – 48.9%; college degree – 38.3; some college – 12.8%). No one reported having less than some college education. Forty percent of women in this cluster indicated they were currently a student. All the women reported being raised in a predominately Black (55.3%) or diverse (36.2%) community. About a quarter (23.4%) of women reported working in the social sciences field and 17.0% in education.

Cluster four. The final cluster, cluster four, included 17 women ($M_{\text{age}} = 40.35$; Range = 22 – 65). The average racial and gender centrality scores for women were 2.85 ($SD = .74$) and 3.57 ($SD = .59$). All the women in this cluster reported being single (47.1%) or partnered (52.9%), with no one identifying as divorced or widowed. Also, most women reported having no children (64.7%). In terms of annual income, a majority of women reported earning over \$100,000.00 (35.3%) and 23.5% reported earning between \$30,000.00 and \$39,000.00. Three-quarters of the women reported having at least some college experience (i.e., professional/graduate degree – 47.1%; college degree – 29%; some college – 11.8%). One woman indicated her highest level of education completed was high school, while another noted she had not completed high school. Seventy percent of the women reported they were not currently enrolled as a student. Women in this cluster also reported they were raised in communities that were predominately Black (41.2%) or racially diverse (47.1%). No one in this cluster reported an occupation within the social sciences. Women indicated occupations in “other” fields (52.9%), health (17.6%), business (17.6%), administrative (5.9%), and education (5.9%). “Other” fields included customer service, public policy/global affairs, law, and food services.

Initial profiling of clusters. After the clusters were identified, they were profiled. Profiling is particularly important considering one of the major assumptions of both intersectionality (Crenshaw, 1989, 1991) and Black racial identity theory (Sellers et al., 1998) is that social identities extract significance and meaning from one another. While cluster analysis helps discern differences among Black women who share similar social identities (i.e., race and gender), additional analysis allows for the acknowledgment of the many differences among Black women in terms of their other social identities and roles.

Each cluster was initially profiled using the additional demographic data (i.e., age, sexual orientation, socioeconomic status/education, and field of work/study) provided by the women. These particular demographic variables were used in profiling because they are social identity domains that have been explored in similar studies of Black women's identity (e.g., Bowleg, 2008; Slay & Smith, 2011). Profiling included observing statistical differences between clusters based on demographic variables using ANOVA (for the continuous independent variable - age) and cross tabulation of frequencies (for categorical independent variables - sexual orientation, socioeconomic status, educational background, and field of work/study). The categorical dependent variable was gendered-racial identity clusters, whereas participant demographics were the independent variables in analysis.

To observe statistical differences between clusters in terms of age, a one-way between subjects ANOVA was performed. The categorical independent variable was gendered-racial identity clusters and age was the dependent variable in this analysis. Results revealed that there was a statistically significant effect of cluster membership on age ($F(3, 236) = 3.30, p < .05, \eta_p^2 = 0.04$) with a small effect size. A post-hoc Tukey test demonstrated that the differences between Clusters 1 ($M_{\text{age}} = 38.10; SD = 13.85$) and 2 ($M_{\text{age}} = 33.73; SD = 9.45$) were close to significant (p

= .06); no such variations existed between the other clusters. Potential differences in sexual orientation, socioeconomic status (i.e., level of education obtained), and religion/spirituality based on cluster membership were explored using cross tabulation of frequencies and the Pearson chi-square statistic (i.e., dependent variable - gendered racial identity clusters; independent variable -demographic characteristics). Though there were relative differences in educational attainment between clusters, these differences were not significant. No other significant differences were identified.

Qualitative Analysis of Blackness, Womanhood, and Black Womanhood

The qualitative data collected from the Self-Defined Gendered Racial Identity Questionnaire (S-GRIQ) was used to explore the meaning Black women assign to their GRI. This questionnaire included three questions asking women to describe the meaning associated with their Blackness (racial identity), womanhood (gender identity), and Black womanhood (gendered racial identity). Prior to analysis, participants' responses to each of the three questions were grouped, meaning all the responses to question one were grouped together, then the same for questions two and three. Within each question grouping, responses were also labeled by cluster membership. Qualitative analysis was done by question. Said differently, themes from question one were gathered; and, in a similar fashion themes were extracted from questions two and three. For question three regarding gendered racial identity, additional interpretations were developed based on the variation of themes represented in each cluster grouping. Responses were analyzed using a modified grounded theory approach, which included coding, memo writing, and the constant comparative method (Corbin & Strauss, 2014; Glaser & Strauss, 1967).

As ascribed by Strauss and Corbin (1990), the coding process consists of three coding stages: open, axial, and selective. Open coding involves reading through the data several times

and starting to label pieces of data solely on participants' responses. Axial coding involves considering the potential relationships between open codes. Finally, selective coding involves creating core codes that captures all the data. In the current study, the researcher, a young Black woman enrolled in a doctoral program in Counseling Psychology, read through the participants' responses and began to label them based solely on what was presented in the responses. In the second stage of coding, axial coding, the researcher started to consider the relationships between codes. Finally, the research decided on themes used to capture all the pieces of data; and, at this point coding saturation (Charmaz, 2006) was reached.

Memo writing was conducted throughout the coding process. Memos are notes that include the researcher's thoughts and reflections as the researcher is interacting with the data. Memo writing facilitated the researcher's ability to fully engage in comparing and grouping data into sound codes/themes (i.e., constant comparative method). The constant comparative method (Glaser & Strauss, 1967) included breaking data into smaller manageable components and then comparing the data for similarities and differences. Then, conceptually similar pieces of data were grouped together. This process of comparing and grouping data continued until the researcher was able to develop conceptually sound categories/themes. These themes were once again reviewed and distilled, resulting in a set of core themes. This analysis process was completed three times--one time for each of the questions included in the S-GRIQ.

Qualitative Analysis of Blackness and Womanhood Across the Sample

In addition to women's responses regarding their GRI, it is also important to take note of themes that emerged in Black women's discussion of Blackness and womanhood--domains of identity that may inherently inform women's perception of Black womanhood. Therefore, the researcher first analyzed women's responses to the first two questions of the SGRI-Q: (1) In your

opinion, what does it mean to be Black (or of your Black ethnic group)?" and (2) "In your opinion, what does it mean to be a woman?" To no surprise, there were standard themes that characterized Black women's conceptualization of Blackness and womanhood across the sample. The next sections will present the common themes that emerged when women were asked to describe their understanding of Blackness and womanhood.

Blackness. The following themes were present in women's descriptions of Blackness: (a) origins from Africa--origins that dictate specific physical features; (b) a shared history characterized by a rich culture and unduly injustice and oppression; (c) character traits such as, personal strength and pride; (d) and a willingness and commitment to overcoming oppression. For Black women, their experiences of Blackness are multifaceted and informed by the interconnectedness of the aforementioned themes.

Black/African genealogy and physical features. In its simplest form, the meaning of Blackness is derived from women's genealogical ties to Africa. For example, one woman stated, "Being Black means your genealogy includes African origins passed on from a birth mother/father, maternal/paternal grandparents, or other ancestors" (BW011, age 33). Another noted, being Black means, "both my parents are Black" (BW162, age 22). Though a response reflecting Black women's genealogical ties to the continent of Africa and/or Black parents was commonplace, many more women further explained how this genealogy dictated their physical appearance (e.g., hair texture and skin color).

A 24 year old woman most clearly articulated this connection: "I am of African descent and I have certain physical features that are associated and connected with that of Black people, such as skin color" (BW104). The literature evidences how challenging it is for many Black women to navigate an affirming understanding of their bodily self (e.g., Bryant, 2013; Watson,

Livingston, Cliette, & Eaton, 2015). A 58 year old mother of three described how she coped with the challenge of self-love (emphasis added): “Being Black is a beautiful thing. I am comfortable with who I am and love myself, *regardless* of my hair, skin tone, and body shape” (BW253).

Other women’s responses also reflect an appreciation of Black physical features. For example, BW175 (age 38) stated, “Being Black means God kissed my skin with the sun more than others.”

On the other hand, the responses of those who described their racialized experience solely in terms of physical features tended to have negative connotation. BW216 (age 24) stated:

I view “Black” as a socially constructed term and believe that being Black means I have brown skin tone and textured hair. I do not see Black as an ethnic group so I do not associate Black with any other traits besides phenotypical.

Shared history. On the surface level, one may simply associate one’s African origins with physical features, such as skin color; a more in depth examination may lead one to consider how one’s affiliation with the African Diaspora is connected to a longstanding history within and beyond America--a history that is marked by my many triumphs and traumas. Therefore, two subthemes emerged as Black women described their shared history: shared culture and shared oppression. In terms of a shared culture, BW023 (age 33) noted: “In my opinion, being Black means identifying with and relating to the Black experience in America. It means sharing common triumphs and struggles, a culture of our own that is rooted in a history unlike any other.” Some of the historical triumphs that Black women mentioned included: “Black lives matter movement, civil rights movement. . .” (BW178, age 36). Black historic accomplishments were also reflected in the response of a 42 year old woman who mentioned, “Being Black means that I come from a strong lineage of people birthed to kings and queens, capable of anything despite obstacles” (BW125).

A history of oppression (e.g., stereotyping, discrimination, and judgement) was the overwhelming narrative presented when Black women spoke of their Blackness. BW048 (age 25) describes her Blackness as membership to a “. . . group of historical trauma and oppression. A group that has strong resilience and growth.” Others use the word “misunderstood” to describe the experience of Blackness, meaning that Blacks are understood solely in terms of stereotypes (BW100, age 21). Because Black women felt misunderstood, some noted how they “will never get a fair chance” (BW174, age 31). To that end, Black women feel the need “to work twice as hard to gain half as many opportunities afforded to Whites” (BW154, age 37). Noteworthy is the fact that oppression is not a phenomena of the past, but one that plagues Black women presently:

There is so much history in Black culture. To be Black means you are strong as you have had to endure and persevere through difficult times whether it is in the past or present.

Our ancestors had to struggle for simple freedoms, and in the 21st Century, we are still struggling for equality. Being Black means you have to work harder just to be seen as valuable as your peers. (BW035, age 25).

Characteristics of Blackness. When describing Blackness, many women used a string of adjectives to describe their experiences. Of the many personality characteristics and adjectives Black women used to describe their Blackness, some of the most commonly noted were *strong*, *resilient*, *proud*, and *authentic*. Many women attributed the development of such characteristics to their shared history: “[being Black] means to be a part of a collective culture of people who are both uniquely oppressed, yet uniquely proud and resilient” (BW027, age 31). Another woman described how, she “belong(s) to the past and the future of a people who embody love, resilience, faith. . .” and how she carries the “spirit of collective pain of generations past” (BW053, age 50).

Overcoming barriers. Many attributed Black individuals' ability to overcome barriers to the previously mentioned characteristics. Said differently, beyond identifying a shared history or characteristic, women recognized how pairing these ideas with societal action is key. For example:

Being Black gives me a great sense of pride when I look at where our people have come from. . . We are a people of great intelligence, skill, courage, braveness, and stamina. . . We must return to our sense of pride and self-reliance. We must once again work together to build our communities, invest in business and services, and educate our youth, fight strategically to battle the injustices in America, and empower and encourage our people (BW164, age 54).

In my opinion, being Black requires strength, self-awareness, and pride, in order to overcome and remain resilient and counteract the many systematic obstacles and cultural marginalization, both of which are residual effects of the underlying racist/White-dominant, American culture. Although since slavery, and after the progressive Civil Rights Movement, there have been major strides towards equality of the races in this country, being Black is still a very unique phenomenology (BW007, age 26).

Womanhood. Many of the themes present in women's description of Blackness did not differ when women discussed their experiences of womanhood. Similarly to women's description of Blackness, the following themes emerged when women discussed their womanhood: physical features, shared history (i.e., oppression), and character traits. Novel themes included the roles of women, womanhood and spirit, the contradictions of womanhood, and intersectionality. In contrast to women's narratives regarding Blackness, the themes related

to womanhood were less connected and dependent on one another. This in part may be due to the many contradictions inherently associated with womanhood, a line of thinking that will further be elucidated in the discussion.

Physical features. At the most simplistic level, women defined womanhood as an individual who possess XX chromosomes and female genitalia, as described by BW219 (age 40), “To be a woman is to be born a female, (carrying and expressing the genetic code for a girl/female child) and to go through puberty to maturity.” Some women went on to describe how though these physiological features are traditionally the hallmark of womanhood, there are many variations. For example, “To me being a woman means someone who identifies as female. This person could have been born biologically female and identify with that gender role or could have been born biologically born male, but is transgender and therefore her gender identification is female” (BW046, age 25). Though the physicality of womanhood was a strong theme within the data, this theme was more strongly connected with other themes, such that many women associated their physical being to the ability to bear and nurture children. BW024 (age 34) states, “To be biologically built to do certain things like carry children. . .” Similarly, BW080 (age 48) describes, “Being a woman means being XX; it means being female. It means being a member of the gender that historically has been tasked with nurturing others.”

Roles of women. For women, there are roles in which they are physically predisposed (i.e., bearing children) and there are some roles that are resultant from “social conditioning that is assigned to females [women] in a particular society” (BW105, age 54). Women are socialized to take on a variety of roles (Eccles, Jacobs, & Harold, 1990) and may often be perceived as a “multi-tasker” (BW206, age 64). Black women participants described their roles as a nurturer of Black children and supporters of Black men. Moreover, Black women “hold the family together”

(BW031, age 28), are “the spine of the family” (BW239, age 26), and “the backbone of life” (BW200, age 32). The use of the word *backbone* ($n = 6$) and other metaphors were used to describe how Black women perceive themselves to be at the core of their families.

Shared history (oppression). Black women are the unshakable foundation for their families, while at the same time devalued. BW072 (age 27) describes this conundrum:

As a woman, I am underappreciated. Though I have the capacity to carry a child and bring life into this world, our value is still trivialized. All the feminine qualities that I possess are undervalued and viewed as undesirable, despite the fact that a world of pure masculine qualities would likely lead to a vicious or eviscerated mankind. I will not be valued as much as a man, no matter how hard I try, for what I bring to the table.

For most, the oppressive forces that attempt to cause Black women’s demise are sexism and racism.

BW007 (age 26) describes her experiences with sexism:

Being a woman comes with the marginalization of sexism or gender bias, which has been intensified with the exponential popularity of social media. Being a woman in America comes with being bombarded with thousands of images a day; brainwashing us with body expectations, ‘beauty’ expectations, all of which require a perfection that is only attainable through Photoshop and picture editing, but are still the “norm” and “goal.”

Being a woman also requires strength and hard work to overcome gender discrimination and stereotypes in school, the work place, etc. . . .

The combination of the two (i.e., racism and sexism) is inseparable for many of the women it affects: “gendered racism or racialized sexism contextualizes my experience but doesn’t define what it means to be a woman” (BW028, age 33). As indicated by BW028 and

many other women, though oppression is a significant factor in that influences their lives, women expressed a desire not allow such experiences to impact their well-being and pursuit of success. The response of BW081 (age 45) best illuminates this empowering stance:

There are many obstacles we face as women, but I don't let the fact that I am a woman deter me from anything that I set my mind to do. Being a woman does not give me the sense of entitlement, it just lets me know that I have to fight harder to show or prove to myself that everything is not “man based.”

Character traits. It is no surprise that women who understand themselves as the “backbones” of their families and advocates to “fight harder” for their rights also associated their womanhood with characteristics, such as *strong* ($n = 45$) and *nurturing* ($n = 20$). Other endorsed characteristics included *loving* ($n = 9$), *sensitive* ($n = 8$), and *powerful* ($n = 4$).

Womanhood and spirit. A distinct theme that emerged when describing womanhood was the association between womanhood and God. Many women attributed their creation to God. BW251 (age 60) states, “I was created by the Heavenly Father to be a compliment to a man. . . being (woman) is a privilege”, such that “God created us with a special purpose in mind and I truly embrace it” (BW003, age 58). The understanding that woman was created by God permeates as women describe their purpose and sense of self. Women indicated feeling that “[He] has a plan and purpose for me in life. He created and wonderfully made me” (BW260, age 67) and women are “made special in God's eye” (BW208, age 42). One woman (BW194, age 56) even described her womanhood using a Christian Bible scripture from Proverbs 31:

“Who can find a virtuous woman? for her price is far above rubies. The heart of her husband doth safely trust in her, so that he shall have no need of spoil. She will do him good and not evil all the days of her life. She seeketh wool, and flax, and worketh

willingly with her hands. She is like the merchants' ships; she bringeth her food from afar. She riseth also while it is yet night, and giveth meat to her household, and a portion to her maidens. She considereth a field, and buyeth it: with the fruit of her hands she planteth a vineyard. She girdeth her loins with strength, and strengtheneth her arms. She perceiveth that her merchandise is good: her candle goeth not out by night. She layeth her hands to the spindle, and her hands hold the distaff. She stretcheth out her hand to the poor; yea, she reacheth forth her hands to the needy. She is not afraid of the snow for her household: for all her household are clothed with scarlet. She maketh herself coverings of tapestry; her clothing is silk and purple. Her husband is known in the gates, when he sitteth among the elders of the land. She maketh fine linen, and selleth it; and delivereth girdles unto the merchant. Strength and honour are her clothing; and she shall rejoice in time to come. She openeth her mouth with wisdom; and in her tongue is the law of kindness. She looketh well to the ways of her household, and eateth not the bread of idleness. Her children arise up, and call her blessed; her husband also, and he praiseth her. Many daughters have done virtuously, but thou excellest them all. Favour is deceitful, and beauty is vain: but a woman that feareth the Lord, she shall be praised. Give her of the fruit of her hands; and let her own works praise her in the gates.”

Contradictions of womanhood. An additional novel theme was the contradiction of womanhood. Said differently, many women noted how double standards are applied to their experience--how they are expected to act in one way, yet are perceived in another. BW059 (age 23) describes this best:

I feel like being woman consists of many opposite traits. For example, women have to be caring but not too overbearing; gentle but also make sure people aren't walking over us;

loving but not smothering; and the list of opposites can go on. Being a woman means you are there to nurture, you are automatically a support for people. Women are expected to help, to listen, to provide. It's like we can't be assertive and be gentle; there has to be more of the "softer" trait (BW059, age 23).

BW221 (age 39) adds to this by stating, being woman as “a series of contradictions. Being smart is seen as being aggressive. Being direct is seen as being rude.”

Intersectionality of Blackness and womanhood. The contradictions of womanhood may be fueled by women's inability to disentangle their Blackness and womanhood. Though a less endorsed response, women did acknowledge how separating Blackness from womanhood was a challenge. BW218 (age 28) states, “I cannot talk about being a woman separately from my Blackness. Because I identify as a Black women and not just as a woman.” Another woman goes on to describe the difficulties associated with discerning these two enmeshed parts of oneself: “Being a woman means a lot of different things. It is hard for me to say what being a woman is without thinking of what it means to be Black woman” (BW228, age 28).

Black womanhood. Finally, women's responses to “In your opinion, what does it mean to be a Black woman (or woman of your Black ethnic group)?” were analyzed. At this point of analysis, the researcher reviewed all of the responses to this question and generated relevant themes. Many of the aforementioned themes (i.e., physical features, shared history, character traits, roles, and intersectionality) were reflected in women's responses regarding their understanding of Black womanhood. However, one additional theme emerged, “pain and power” (BW027, age 31).

Physical features. Few women ($n = 18$) described Black womanhood as it related to their physical features. Generally speaking, women who described their Black womanhood in this way

referenced being of African descent and having female genitalia. Some women built upon their responses regarding Blackness and womanhood. For example, BW036 (age 34) described her Blackness as being of African descent, womanhood as being born with female genitalia, and Black womanhood as being of “African descent and having female organs.” Like BW036, many women ($n = 10$) who described their Black womanhood in terms of phenotype or physical features, responded in a similar fashion when asked about their Blackness or womanhood. One woman appeared to experience some confusion about her gendered racialized identity, yet was able to articulate her conceptualization of self based on her features: “I do not know, I am a woman who happens to be brown” (BW197, age 56).

Shared history (culture and oppression). It is apparent that the history of Black women is distinct from that of Black men and women of other races. BW079 (age 30) spoke to this reality as she described Black womanhood as “being able to identify with the struggles and successes that Black women have dealt with in the past.” While some women focused on the shared history of oppression, others focused on commonalities in culture: “For me it means we are of a strong group of women. I love being Black and coming from a culture of such strong women” (BW208, age 42). Black women reflected on their shared history and culture with much reverence. They described Black womanhood as being a member of a group of women who “have been historically strong” (BW238, age 41) and have a “strong heritage of community, creativity and resiliency” (BW225, age 42). Others added to this interpretation by sharing how this history informs their worldview. For instance, BW127 (age 26) stated:

I believe that to be Black and woman is a special. Black women have birthed and built nations, and to know that gives me purpose. It shapes how I view my real and perceived position in this world--it's a source of inspiration and pride.

BW081 (age 45) also expressed a sense of empowerment associated with the historical experiences of Black women:

Black women over the years have had to endure so much, but in 2015, I am thankful for the women before me that fought the many battles to insure that one day, I would be able to do achieve any goals I set for myself and not have to become dependent on anyone else.

Character traits. The characteristics women used to describe Black womanhood do not differ drastically from those used to describe Blackness and womanhood. Among the women who described themselves solely in terms of characteristics, the words *strong* ($n = 23$), *powerful* ($n = 8$), and *resilient* ($n = 6$) were used multiple times and often together (e.g., BW064 (age 25) – being a Black woman means being “a person of resilience and faith”). Others described themselves similarly, but introduced additional adjectives. For instance, BW002 (age 26) describes Black womanhood as being, “hardworking, oppressed, authentic, caregiver, and a trailblazer.” Of note is the fact that multiple women combined some of the most common adjectives used to describe Blackness (e.g., strong, resilient, pride/proud) and womanhood (e.g., nurturing, loving, and sensitive) in their responses regarding Black womanhood. For example, BW041 (age 32) states, “It means the combination of the two above statements. I am a powerful, resilient, loving, creative, beautiful, strong, nurturing presence in the world.” For one Black woman (BW109, age 26) adopting characteristics both aligned with Blackness and womanhood facilitated her fluidity in many spaces:

Being a Black woman means that I know I have the strength and the will to do things on my own. . . The Black women I am surrounded by have instilled in me a diligence and a sense of perseverance that cannot be matched. Being a Black woman means that I can be

as hard as a man, emotionally, but I can be soft when the situation calls for it. I think that being Black and being a woman gives me an advantage others can't say they have. . .

Though many used affirming adjectives to conceptualize their experience, some also acknowledged how Black women are powerful, while at the same time “Burdened. Silenced. Misrepresented. Essentialized” (BW057, age 32).

Roles. As women discussed the roles associated with Black womanhood, the word *support* was commonly referenced. Black women described how their role was to support the Black community, in particular Black men and children. For example:

Black women are the backbone of the community and though we are always told to be strong for our families and to support Black men, we are strong for ourselves just as much as we are for others in the community (BW215, age 25).

Being a Black woman means accepting the responsibility of procreation of Black life, being a support to the Black men in our lives and remaining strong, yet visible in presence (BW187, age 32).

Because Black women are the “center of the Black community” (BW083, age 64) they are tasked with raising the “children and future leaders of the Black community.” Aligned with Black women’s integral role with the Black community, BW164 (age 54) described her understanding of Black womanhood as follows:

As a Black woman, I feel that we have been empowered, endowed, and equipped to be some of the strongest people on Earth. We have the know how, the vision, the foresight and the innate ability to get things done. We just have to remember who we are and teach the next generation of young women following in our footsteps... As Black women, we

must instruct, guide and if need be disciple our youth and live in accordance before them.

In order to sustain our rightful place, we must continue to make strides and positively influence every arena of society.

Intersectionality. Enmeshed within many of the women's aforementioned responses was an intersectional experience, characterized by women's understanding of themselves as racial and gender beings. Distinct from these responses, women also explicitly referenced their intersectional experience (e.g., BW063, age 45 - "It's an intersection of race + gender. It's not an either or. It's a both and"). Most aligned with the literature regarding intersectionality, BW167 (age 32) explains how her identities coalesce are influenced by contextual variables:

To be a Black woman means to be aware of the ways in which my identities as a woman and Black American intersect to influence my life experiences. This intersection, and the life experience that accompanies it, is also large shaped by my relationships with men within and outside the Black community.

Pain and power. When women described their Black womanhood, they were able to associate this identity with many burdens, while also acknowledging the advantages (e.g., pride, strength) that may come with being a Black woman. For example, BW165 (age 24) states, "Being a Black woman adds challenges to your life. Being a woman is powerful but being a Black woman is extremely powerful. . ." BW213 (age 24) goes on to further describe this broad dichotomous experience: "To be a Black woman brings with it both a sense of pride and a lot of baggage. Black women are strong, leaders, intelligent... but we can also be cast into the shadows to society, disregarded, instantaneously judged, etc." While these women described this sentiment on a societal level, others describe how this contrast manifests on an individual level. For instance, BW216 (age 24):

This is what I've been told that being a Black woman is and what I have tried to exhibit in myself - A Black woman is proud of who she is and where she comes from. She is strong and is not defined by a man or the stereotypes of society. She perseveres. She “doesn't let 'em see her sweat,” yet is aware of her emotions. She is not limited by society's narrow view of her and is empowered by other Black women who are successful and following their dreams.

Analysis of Black womanhood by cluster. Because it was hypothesized there would be qualitative differences in the ways in which Black women described Black womanhood based on their cluster membership, the researcher then explored the extent to which each theme was represented within each cluster. With an understanding of the themes characterizing Black women's conceptualization of Black womanhood, the researcher sought to explore how themes varied by cluster. More specifically, the researcher observed the extent to which each theme was represented in each cluster. This involved the researcher counting the number of responses that aligned with each theme within each cluster grouping (see Table 2).

Cluster one. Cluster one consisted of 87 women. Among these women, the three most commonly endorsed themes included: (1) shared history (25.3%), (2) character traits (17.2%), and (3) pain and power (16.1%). Responses aligned with the theme of shared history included a recognition of Black's or Black women's history, often coupled with an understanding of the oppressive forces impacting their group (e.g., BW238; age 41 - “It means that I am part of a group of women that have been historically strong. It also means that I am often subjected to systematic racism”). Relatedly, there was also a sense of mutuality; meaning women were able to articulate how their experiences may be similar to that of other oppressed groups. For instance, BW095 (age 27) stated, being a Black woman “. . . gives me particular things in common with

others who share similar experiences with me.” Traits such as, *powerful*, *strong*, and *resilient* were also used to describe Black womanhood. Such personality traits directly tie into Black women’s conceptualization of the both the contrived privilege and explicitly oppressed position they hold within society (i.e., pain and power). BW198 (age 29) describes, “Being a Black woman is being a part of the most degraded class of people in America. However Black women are beautiful, powerful, and resilient. Being a Black woman is an honor, even though it is difficult and lonely.”

Cluster two. Of the 89 women within cluster two, the following were most common: (1) shared history (25.9%), (2) pain and power (21.3%), and (3) roles of Black women/women (15.7%). Within this cluster there was less focus on oppression, but rather a larger emphasis on African genealogy and history. For example, BW047 (age 23) described a Black woman as, “a woman of African descent, united by the unique struggle of belonging to both the gender identity ‘woman’ and the race identity ‘Black’ . . .” While the history of Black women is rich and a source of pride, women also recognize how this oppressive history dictates many of the roles they have within society. Thus, women in this cluster often tied their understanding of history to feelings of pain and power, while at the same time connecting this history to their perceived roles within society. BW085 (age 25) mentioned that being a Black woman, “. . . means understanding how you are viewed by society but also understanding all the strengths you have from such a position.” BW146 (age 27) more explicitly describes this association:

Being a Black woman means to be the most hated, envied and despised mother of humanity. It means a rough and tough journey through society. It means mommy and daddy at times. It means teacher, provider, protector, and nurturer all at once. It means prepare yourself for the hell that will surly come. Yet it means strength. It means love

loyalty and legacy. It means uniqueness. It means getting the short end of the stick unless you fight for your worth.

Several women described their Black womanhood solely in terms of the roles they serve in society, many of which included nurturing the next generation and working against inequality. BW083 (age 64) noted, “It is important to be a strong Black woman. We are the center of the Black community, we raise our children and future leaders of the Black community.” The development of future generations appeared to be a significant component of Black women’s “revolutionary” (BW224, age 41) role in the Black community.

Cluster three. The three most endorsed themes within cluster three ($n = 47$) consisted of (1) personality traits (29.8%), (2) shared history (23.4%), and (3) themes otherwise not associated with a major theme (12.7%). Women within this cluster described their personality as *strong, powerful*, and even *independent*. For example, BW099 (age 24) described herself as, “. . . a woman of strength and endurance, intelligence and wisdom, understanding, integrity, and love.” For BW204 (age 21) women who display such characteristics are “superheroes.” Instead of relating to a shared oppressive history, women within the cluster more so identified with a shared cultural background. For instance, BW208 (age 42) noted, “I love being Black and coming from a culture of such strong women.” Also, BW024 (age 34) mentioned being “. . . united with a group of women who identify as the same. . . I am part of the culture of Black women. I see other Black women as sisters whom I should support and from whom I get support.” In contrast to other clusters, there were women ($n = 6$) within this cluster whose responses did not align with core themes. In some ways, these women’s responses were in part contrasting with that of others. For example, two women described disdain and disconnection towards Black people/women: BW137 (age 37) “It doesn’t change my meaning of being a

woman because I'm Black” and BW148 (age 45) “I do not like to associate Black with women. I am a woman.” While another woman mentioned how though she experiences oppression, she does not combat it: Black womanhood... “should mean that I feel like I must prove myself to others but I disagree. I am a Black woman. It is a fact not an emotion for me” BW128 (age 35). Two women described how their Black womanhood lends them to a distinct perspective and bright future: Being a Black woman means... “That I have a unique point of view when it comes to world issues and diversity” BW067 (age 32); “It means that I am beautifully made and I have an amazing future ahead of me!” BW158 (age 24). Finally, one woman simply described Black womanhood as a combination of her responses to questions about her Blackness and womanhood, separately.

Cluster four. Within cluster four, which consisted of only 17 women, themes including a shared history (41.2%) and physical features (17.6%) were most common. Also, distinct from the other clusters, this cluster also included a significant nonresponse rate (17.6%). Women in this cluster also acknowledged the strife Black women must endure as a collective (e.g., “We are playing with the cards that we are dealt” BW074; age 33). BW081 (age 45) described:

Black women over the years have had to endure so much, but in 2015, I am thankful for the women before me that fought the many battles to ensure that one day, I would be able to achieve any goals I set for myself and not have to become dependent on anyone else. This response also reflected the challenges Black women must face, while also expressing a commitment to one’s personal goals in spite of obstacles--a response that in many ways was the minority. Interesting, is the fact that women in this cluster described their womanhood in terms of their physical features. This was not a prominent theme within other clusters. BW157 (age 22) describes being a Black woman as, “a woman whose skin is dark and of African origin,” while

BW116 (age 53) states, “I have parents and ancestors identified as members of the Black race.” The focus on physical features may be indicative of the limited salience or awareness of other nuances of identity for this group of Black women.

Cluster naming and meaning. Cluster analysis procedures concluded with the labeling and interpretation of each cluster. For the current study, clusters were labeled and interpreted not only based on women’s demographics and identity centrality scores, but also on qualitative data extracted from question three of the S-GRIQ (i.e., “In your opinion, what does it mean to be a Black woman (or woman of your Black ethnic group)?”). Themes extracted from the qualitative data were used to inform the researcher’s understanding of the statistical clusters.

Clusters were named and profiled based on the importance/awareness of women’s intersected identity and their level/type of engagement with that identity (see Figure 3). Said differently, Black women’s racial and gender centrality (i.e., identity importance/awareness) coupled with women’s qualitative descriptions of their conceptualization or relationship with their intersected identity (as assessed by the themes emergent within women’s qualitative responses) were used to define clusters. The four clusters include: consciously introspective, consciously engaged, pre-consciously conflicted, and unconsciously disengaged. The demographics of each cluster are presented in Tables 3 – 6.

Consciously introspective (cluster 1). Women within this cluster endorsed high levels of racial and gender centrality, thereby denoting the importance of an intersected identity within their self-concept. Women’s identity importance was also reflected in the qualitative responses which valued a shared history, pain and power, and Black women character traits. As one who is keenly aware of herself as a gendered and racialized being, *consciously introspective* (introspective meaning the woman practices societal self-awareness) women likely places much

thought into how their marginalized status may influence their experiences and understanding of self. They understand the communal heritage shared with other Black individuals and are well aware of both the trauma and privilege associated with that history. With this awareness comes an appreciation of Black women's strength, resiliency, and power. Thus, with respect to issues of social advocacy, women identifying with this ideology may be less active on a societal level, but more engaged in personally-directed efforts to work against oppression (e.g., working twice as hard at being successful in their own discipline/domain).

Consciously engaged (cluster 2). Higher levels of racial and gender centrality are what distinguish this cluster from cluster one. High levels of centrality evidence that women in this group place relatively more importance on their intersected identity in comparison to other clusters. The importance and awareness of women's intersected identity is complimented by women's qualitative responses that focused on a shared history, pain and power, as well as roles of Black women. *Consciously engaged* women are not only aware of the intersected identity, but actively work against societal marginalization. In contrast to those who are *consciously introspective*, *consciously engaged* women work on a societal/communal (not solely individual) level towards societal change. Aligned with an awareness of one's identity comes an appreciation of one's cultural history and related trials and triumphs. *Consciously engaged* women recognize how their history dictates the roles they have in society, one of which includes working against oppression.

Pre-consciously conflicted (cluster 3). Women within this cluster endorsed relatively high levels of racial and gender centrality, yet, with the importance of gender being more than race. Qualitative responses displayed women's understanding of their shared history and personality traits. At the same time, women's responses reflected unconventional themes, one of

which related to connection (including the lack there of). Because women in this cluster are marginally aware of their intersected identity, particularly that of which is related to gender, these women, for the most part value interconnectedness with other Black women and foster connections accordingly. Women within this cluster understand how a shared history leads to inherent connections with other Black women. Though women within this cluster also value independence, gender-bound characteristics, such as loving and nurturing, coupled with an emphasis on one's gendered-self lead women to be more conscientious of their relational connections. Women who indicate a desire to disconnect from Black women may also value interconnectedness, but may have experienced a relational rupture thereby negatively influencing their perception of relationships with other Black women. In comparison to clusters one, two, and four, *pre-consciously conflicted* women (with the exception of those who have experienced relational ruptures) may be more likely to actively unite with other Black women in solidarity in opposition to marginalization.

Unconsciously disengaged (cluster 4). This cluster is characterized by the lowest levels of racial and gender centrality, meaning these women place little to no importance on their intersected identity. Women's qualitative responses reflected an understanding of Black/Black women's history, yet also reflected little depth in terms of connecting this history to Black women's roles or personality. Women's responses primarily associated Black womanhood with physical features. *Unconsciously disengaged* women are not only marginally aware of their intersected identity, but may minimize the shared experiences of marginalization with other Black women. With a lack of awareness, *unconsciously disengaged* women see little value in working against oppression.

Chapter V

Discussion

One of the most well-known Black womanists and social activists, Audre Lorde, once said, “If I didn't define myself for myself, I would be crunched into other people's fantasies for me and eaten alive.” Although the literature on various aspects of identity and intersectionality has been theoretically embraced by the field of psychology and multicultural scholars, there remains a void when discussing the specific experiences of Black women. Black women have not been afforded the opportunity to define themselves within the academic literature for a multitude of reasons (e.g., limited numbers of Black women scholars committed to refining theories to include Black women, comparative research studies that only compare Black women to the “status quo” while neglecting their unique experiences, little value placed on the scholarship focused on Black women who are not destitute or at-risk, etc.). To that end, the current study sought to illuminate Black women’s perspectives of Black womanhood using their *own* voices. Using an intersectionality paradigm as a basis, the current study both quantitatively and qualitatively explored the significance and meaning that Black women attributed to the identity created at the intersection of race and gender. Specifically, the study questioned the utility of a taxonomy in classifying and describing Black women’s gendered racial identity. Additionally, the extent to which women’s qualitative descriptions of the gendered racial identity varied by cluster membership was investigated.

The construct of Black women’s gendered racial identity (BWGRI) was developed for the current study. This construct captures how Black women conceptualize their intersected racial and gender identity as indicated by the significance and qualitative meaning women attribute to their membership within both social identity groups. In consideration of the data and

Black racial identity theory, evidence for four profiles (empirically described as clusters) of BWGRI emerged based on the importance and meaning women placed on this particular identity intersection. The clusters include: *consciously introspective*, *consciously engaged*, *pre-consciously conflicted*, and *unconsciously disengaged*. These clusters are defined based on the importance and awareness of women's intersected identity (operationalized by women's levels of racial and gender centrality; see Figure 3) and their level and type of engagement with that identity (as assessed by themes emergent within their qualitative responses) (see Figure 4).

Identity Significance

In terms of women's quantitative assessment of their racial and gender identities, results suggested that overall women found their intersected identities to be an important component of their self-concept. This finding is aligned with previous research among Black women that suggests women tend to rate their racial and gender identities as equally important (Settles, 2006). Relatively, women in cluster 2 (consciously engaged) reported the highest levels of racial and gender centrality, followed by cluster 1 (consciously introspective). Though similarly endorsed for both race and gender, women in cluster 4 (unconsciously disengaged) indicated the lowest levels of identity centrality. Uniquely, gender centrality was only highest (relative to racial centrality) for women in cluster three (pre-consciously conflicted) women. Variations among clusters in terms of racial and gender centrality are also displayed in Figure 3.

Taxonomy of Black Women's Gendered Racial Identity

Four BWGRI clusters were determined based on women's levels of gendered-racial consciousness (as indicated by scores on the racial and gender centrality scales) and the responses women used to describe Black womanhood. To discern the meaning of each BWGRI cluster, the extent to which each theme was endorsed within a particular cluster was also

assessed. The resulting clusters include: (a) consciously introspective, (b) consciously engaged, (c) pre-consciously conflicted, and (d) unconsciously disengaged. Women who are categorized as *consciously introspective* place importance on their intersected identity and are thoughtful in considering how their social identities may shape their experiences of societal marginalization. *Consciously engaged* individuals also find their intersected identity to be an important part of their self-concept and also take actions towards eliminating experiences of societal oppression. Women categorized as *pre-consciously conflicted* place relative importance on their intersected identity and value and advocate for developing connections with other Black women. At the same time, some women within this group may have experienced relational ruptures, thereby explaining their feelings of apprehension towards connecting with other Black women. Women who place little to no importance on their intersected identity and may minimize the shared experiences of marginalization are categorized as *unconsciously disengaged*.

The presentation of four BWGRI clusters is groundbreaking in the sense that it couples the existing literature on Black women's intersected identity with empirical data gathered from Black women. This finding is substantial considering that this typology appears to apply above and beyond differences in other demographic categories (as identified by insignificant variations detected by ANOVA and chi-square analyses). This is a major advancement beyond the original conceptualization of racial ideology that was simply defined and delineated based on "our [the researchers] reading of the research literature and exposure to African American culture" (Sellers et al., 1998, p. 27).

Identity Meaning

In terms of the women's qualitative responses, themes evidenced within Black women's descriptions of Blackness and womanhood did not starkly differ from how women described

their Black womanhood, thereby evidencing that these two salient identities are enmeshed in many ways for Black women. This pattern of findings is aligned with the work of (Thomas, Hacker, & Hoxha, 2011), who also found overlap between Black women's descriptions of their racial, gender, and gendered racial identity.

Broadly speaking, Black women's qualitative descriptions of Blackness and womanhood did not differ from the previous literature exploring Black women's understanding of their racialized and gendered self. When Black women were asked, "What does it mean to be Black (or of your ethnic group)?" responses reflected the following themes: physical features, character traits, shared history, and a desire to overcome oppression. These themes align closely with those themes (i.e., racial pride, heritage, and stereotypes [as they relate to one's physical appearance]) found in a similar study (Thomas et al., 2011) that asked young Black women to describe what it meant to be Black. Thomas and colleagues also noted how a desire to dispel stereotypes was a theme throughout the study; a theme that is very similar to how women in the current study described their efforts to overcome oppression.

The themes that emerged when women were asked to describe womanhood were similar to those used to describe Blackness (including physical features, character traits, shared history) but also included four distinct themes: (a) roles of women, (b) womanhood and spirit, (c) the contradictions of womanhood, and (d) intersectionality. Themes used to capture womanhood mirror those of Settles and colleagues (2008) who found that Black women not only described their experiences with gender- and racially-based oppression, but also with traditional gender roles (i.e., caretaking). Women's spiritual connection, contradicted sense of self, and intersectionality were themes distinct from the literature focused on Black women's understanding of their gender and racial identity.

For those women who identified a connection between womanhood and spirituality, a large majority referenced Christian-based scripture and ideas, many of which may be related to Black women's involvement in particular religious activities, such as prayer, Bible reading, and attending church. Blacks are considered one of the most churched demographics in the United States (Pew Research Center, 2015a). Moreover, Black women, in comparison to men, are those who often fill the pews of America's Black churches (Pew Research Center, 2015b). At a contextual level, Black women's gender is made salient in the church, an environment where the presence of Black men is remiss. Moreover, inherent within women's affiliation with the church comes an understanding of oneself as a spiritual being. This line of thinking may be particularly applicable to those who spiritually identify as Christian (80.8% of the sample) and engage in the aforementioned religious practices. Interestingly, those women who mentioned spirituality were relatively older (aged between 42 and 67 years). Aligned with previous literature focused on Black older adults (e.g., Hamilton, Sandelowski, Moore, Agarwal, & Koenig, 2013), it may be the case that these women utilize spirituality as a means to coping, particularly with culturally-based stressors.

Also, related to women's understanding of their gender are gendered-based stereotypes, which may be in stark contrast to Black women's understanding of their race. Stereotypes may lead women to feelings of confusion and conflict regarding who they are and what they should aspire to be. Traditional gender role stereotypes such as, women should be submissive, caring, nurturing (Bem, 1974), often come in conflict with Black women's understanding of race and/or experiences of oppression (Duggard, 1998). Stereotypes may lead women to feeling conflicted regarding who they are and what they should aspire to be. For instance, it may be difficult for one to reconcile her Blackness (characterized as *strong*) with her womanhood (described as

submissive). In one context she may feel the need to be strong (e.g., in a room of all White colleagues), whereas in another setting (e.g., with her husband and children) she feels the need to be sensitive and submissive. Holding on to both aspects of self can feel contradicting to some and navigating these aspects of self can be difficult. The process of managing multiple facets of oneself is what Jones and Shorter-Gooden (2003) label as *shifting*. While some women seemed to grapple with the contradictions of womanhood, particularly as it clashes with their racialized self, many women noted how they were unable to disentangle their understanding of race from gender. Though the idea of intersectionality is represented in the previous literature (Thomas et al., 2011), such that women (unconsciously) spoke of their gendered racial identity in contrast to their experiences of solely race and gender, none of the previous research suggests that women explicitly spoke of their intersectional experiences as they did in the current study. In the current sample, women's ability to articulate the idea of intersectionality and the challenge of disentangling race and gender may be explained by women's maturity ($M_{\text{age}} = 35.83$ years; Range = 19–79) educational level (over 80% of the sample earned at least a college degree) and their immersion within the social sciences (30% worked in the social sciences fields).

When Black women were asked to describe the meaning of Black womanhood they endorsed the following themes: (a) intersectionality (intertwined experiences associated with one's Blackness and womanhood); (b) pain and power (the historically burdened, yet empowered sense associated with Black womanhood); (c) physical features (phenotypical characteristics, such as hair texture and skin tone); (d) personality traits (characterological adjectives women used to describe Black womanhood); (e) roles (the roles and tasks typically assigned/embraced by Black women); and (f) shared history (the communal history, culture, and oppression shared by Black women). For the most part the aforementioned themes did not differ from the themes

that emerged in previous research exploring Black women's gendered racial identity. Across age groups (15 – 47), Black women consistently acknowledged how their experiences are intertwined, thereby leaving them particularly prone to discrimination, oppression, and stereotyping on the basis of their race and gender (Settles, 2006; Thomas et al., 2011). In this way women's responses in the current sample align with that of previous research.

However, there are three ways in which responses from women in the current sample differ or enhance the findings of previous research on Black women's gendered racial identity. First, young Black women (ages 15 – 22) emphasized how the contrast between one's Afrocentric features and Eurocentric standards of beauty may cause internal turmoil (Thomas et al., 2011). Moreover, women mentioned how such standards influence not only their own, but also Black men's perceptions of attractiveness and relationship ideals. Though Black women in the current sample acknowledged their Afrocentric features, few admitted difficulties with how their features influence their or other's perceptions of attractiveness. This in part may be due to the fact that the women sampled were older, suggesting that they may be more content and stable in terms of body image (Tiggerman, 2004). The fact that over a third of the sample was partnered or had been in a committed relationship also may indicate that these women are less concerned with attracting romantic partners.

In many ways, women in the current sample discussed a sense of connection and/or desire for connection with other Black women, while feelings of isolation or disconnection were only referenced by one woman. A similar response pattern was found in Settle's 2006 study. Within that study women noted feelings of connection with Black women, while a few women noted how they experienced isolation from others as a result of their intersectional identities and felt both disconnected from their gendered or racial groups in a variety of settings.

Strength and self-determination are themes which resonate throughout the literature on Black women, in particular that which is focused on Black women's gendered racial identity (Settles, 2006; Thomas et al., 2011). In previous studies (Settles, 2006; Thomas et al., 2011; Thomas et al., 2013), Black women highlighted how they view themselves as independent and strong; and, they take on the task of maintaining that image in oppositions to negative Black women stereotypes. Black women in the current study also acknowledged their strength; but, beyond this personality trait, women expounded further explaining how they feel empowered in spite of their marginalized experience--a response type that was categorized as *pain and power*. Named after a direct quotation from a woman participant, this theme captures how women are aware and carry the weight, but also the strength associated with Black womanhood. In contrast to the previous literature referencing the Strong Black Woman/Superwoman Schema (a term used to describe women who work to display unwavering strength and make themselves available to nurture others, while also resisting asking for help; Beauboeuf-Lafontant, 2009; Woods-Giscombe, 2010) and a sense of inner strength (Thomas et al., 2011), the theme of *pain and power* captures how women are capable of adopting a balanced awareness of the struggles and strength associated with their marginalized status. Said differently, women who responded in this fashion understand their strength, but also attend to the pain associated with their oppressed status. Though beyond the scope of the current study, it would seem that Black women who are able adopt this more balanced perspective about their experience may be better equipped to cope with their experiences, rather than suppressing them or focusing their efforts on the care of others. The simple awareness of experiences of oppression has been evidenced to be more adaptive than the suppression or denial of such experiences (e.g., West, Donovan, Roemer,

2010). If acknowledgment of one's *pain and power* is adaptive, one may begin to make hypotheses regarding what BWGRI clusters may best facilitate women's well-being.

The qualitative data also facilitates a broader discussion of the potential clinical implications of the resulting clusters. For instance, *pain and power* was a theme endorsed across all four BWGRI ideologies at varying degrees: (a) consciously introspective (16.1%), (b) consciously engaged (21.3%), (c) pre-consciously conflicted (6.4%), and (d) unconsciously disengaged (5.9%). Women who endorsed this theme acknowledge the burdens, yet the strengths associated with their intersected identity. Based on the representation of this theme across clusters one may hypothesize that those who are *consciously engaged* represent the most optimal level of well-being because they acknowledge their experiences, yet recognize their strengths--strengths that may serve as adaptive coping mechanisms against oppression. In consideration of the various literature on racial identity and well-being (e.g., Jones, Cross, & DeFour, 2007) individuals who are both aware/conscious of their social identity and understand they may play an active role in social justice experience the least mental health concerns. To that end, Black women who are consciously engaged or consciously introspective may experience less distress in response to their marginalized identity because they possess a strong awareness of the oppression they may face.

Strengths and Limitations

The current study has several strengths that further highlight its contribution to the literature. First, the study included a large sample of Black women. Relative to previous research studies that utilized small focus groups (Settles et al., 2008; Thomas et al., 2011), the inclusion of over 200 Black women adds to the potential generalizability of the results. Second, the use of a mixed-methods design is a major strength of the study. The current study is the second (to the

author's knowledge) to assess gendered racial identity using both psychometrically sound quantitative measures and qualitative items. Previous research has solely relied on qualitative data (e.g., Thomas et al., 2011) or included single-items measures of gendered racial identity (Settles, 2006). The use of both types of instrumentation allow for the assessment of the significance and meaning women attribute to their identity--an research objective aligned with the assumptions of Black racial identity theory. Finally, the use of cluster analysis is a strength of the study. In contrast to previous research that used an "additive approach" (Bowleg, 2008, p. 314) as indicated by the use of statistical regression models, the current study used an analysis that allowed for the researcher to observe the natural assemblages among the data. Also, the study questions asked did not require Black women to rank their identities. Taken together, the research methodology makes for a more robust understanding of BWGRI.

While the current study provides further insight regarding how Black women conceptualize their identity at the intersection of race and gender, there are some limitations. The limited variability among this sample in terms of social class (i.e., 24.2% endorsed a family income of \$100,000.00; 80% reported earning a college or graduate/professional degree) and sexual orientation (90.8% identified as heterosexual) is a limitation. The study could have also benefitted from additional variability in terms of age. Though all age range groups (18 – 24 = 10.9%; 25 – 44 = 70.7%; 45 – 64 = 16.7%; 65+ = 1.7%) were represented, there representation was not equivalent to that of 2010 census data (18 – 24 = 9.9%; 25 – 44 = 26.6%; 45 – 64 = 26.4%; 65+ = 13.0%) (U.S. Census Bureau, 2010). The lack of variability among the sample may lead one to question the generalizability of results to the larger population of Black women. Moreover, little variation in these demographic domains limits the researcher's ability to explore how other facets of identity may inform women's gendered racial identity. In particular, unequal numbers of

demographic characteristics across clusters prevented the researcher from making statistically sound interpretations regarding cluster differences. A second limitation was the inability to follow up with participants regarding their qualitative responses because of the online survey administration design. In traditional qualitative studies, the researcher may pose a standard protocol of questions and prompts for follow up to aid in clarifying participants' responses. Due to the nature of the online survey, the researcher was unable to garner further clarity regarding the exact meaning of each participant's response. To that end, the coding and interpretations provided by the researcher may be limited in comparison to those studies that allowed for more clarification of participant responses. A third consideration, was the timing of survey administration that may pose a threat to the internal validity of responses. Surveys were administered between the months of March 2015 and May 2015 in the wake of widely publicized racial turmoil in the U.S., particularly targeted at Black men. In this case, Black women's responses regarding their gendered racial identity may be contextually influenced by the simultaneously occurring national events. At the same time, this contextual factor may be considered a strength as the current study's investigation of gendered racial identity is timely in the sense that it perhaps more accurately captures how Black women in modern society may view their intersected identity.

Future Research

The current study is a preliminary investigation of gendered racial identity among Black women, thus several areas for exploration remain. To that end, first concerted efforts should be placed on the development of a measure, which captures BWGRI, similar to the Multidimensional Inventory of Black Identity-Racial Ideology scale (Sellers, Rowley, Chavous, Shelton, & Smith, 1997). The qualitative data gathered from the current study would inform the creation of study items, thereby increasing the potential validity of the measure.

With a theoretically-informed and statistically sound measure one may begin to explore how variations in BWGRI are associated with mental health outcomes, such as anxiety, depression, and responses to trauma. Considering that previous literature has evidenced a relationship between the endorsement of Black racialized gendered stereotypes such as, the Superwoman/Strong Black Woman, and mental health outcomes (depression, Beauboeuf-Lafontant, 2007; eating disorders, anger, and sexual victimization; West, 1995; stress embodiment; Woods-Giscombé, 2010), it may be the case that BWGRI may also be correlated with indices of well-being. Moreover, it would be worthwhile to explore if BWGRI may serve as a protective factor, moderating the relationship between the internalization of Black women gender role stereotypes and mental health consequences.

Future research may also explore how invisible identities (e.g., sexual orientation) may also intersect with Black women's race and gender. Considering that race and gender are the most visible and recognized social identities of Black women in the U.S., they were used in the current study. However, the investigation of Black women's other salient social identities is also worthwhile. Since *womanhood and spirituality* emerged as a theme, the examination of Black women's spiritual identity as it relates to race and gender is particularly warranted.

Finally, researchers need to continually examine the best methods by which to explore intersectional phenomena. This study employed a mixed-methods design, but there were many nuances of this design that could be improved for future study. Instead of utilizing a web-based or print survey, the study could be replicated with multiple focus groups of Black women. During these focus groups, women would be administered a quantitative survey, but also be asked to verbally articulate their understanding of their identities as Black, women, and Black women. A focus group methodology would allow the research to garner further clarification regarding

women's responses. Though beyond the scope of the current study, these are all worthy avenues of future study.

Implications

The implications of the current study are multifaceted, including primarily theoretical but also potentially clinical implications. First and foremost, implications of the current study include extending Black racial identity theory to more explicitly include the narratives of Black women. As a result, Black women's experiences are not just illuminated, but highlighted in a way that dispels assumptions regarding the homogeneity of this cultural group. Also, a focus on the more adaptive conceptualizations of Black women's understanding of self is in stark contrast to the broad body of research honing in on Black women's identity that may be shaped by Black women gender role stereotypes. This strengths-based/positive stance, allows for academicians *and* clinicians to focus less on problems of self-concept, but more on fostering well-being and healthy sense of self among Black women.

The meaning that Black women attribute to their gendered racial identity is significant in informing clinical practice with this population. The presented typology of BWGRI will only aid in the conceptualization of Black women presenting to counseling, similarly to how racial identity theories may be used in case conceptualization. In the case that BWGRI are evidenced to be associated with mental health outcomes, the implications of the current study are prolific such that clinicians may be better knowledgeable about how to foster a healthy sense of self among Black women. In particular, clinicians' ability to challenge Black women's unwavering identification with ideals of *strength* and *resiliency* to the point at which they may more readily access both the *pain and power* associated with their experience will prove to be only beneficial to Black women's mental health.

References

- Banks, K. H., & Kohn-Wood, L. P. (2007). The influence of racial identity profiles on the relationship between racial discrimination and depressive symptoms. *Journal of Black Psychology*, 33, 331–354. doi: 10.1177/0095798407302540
- Beauboeuf-Lafontant, T. (2005). Keeping up appearances, getting fed up: The embodiment of strength among African American women. *Meridians: Feminism, Race, Transnationalism*, 5, 104–123. doi: 10.1353/mer.2005.0003
- Bem, S. L. (1974). The measurement of psychological androgyny. *Journal of Clinical and Consulting Psychology*, 45, 196–205. doi: 10.1037/0022-006X.45.2.196
- Boisnier, A. D. (2003). Race and women's identity development: Distinguishing between feminism and womanism among Black and White women. *Sex Roles*, 49, 211–216. doi: 10.1023/A:1024696022407
- Borgen, F. H., & Barnett, D. C. (1987). Applying cluster analysis in counseling psychology research. *Journal of Counseling Psychology*, 34, 456–468. doi: 10.1037/0022-0167.34.4.456
- Bowleg, L. (2008). When Black + lesbian + woman \neq Black lesbian woman: The methodological challenges of qualitative and quantitative intersectionality research. *Sex Roles*, 59, 312–325. doi:10.1007/s11199-008-9400-z
- Bryant, S. L. (2013). The beauty ideal: The effects of European standards of beauty on Black women. *Columbia Social Work Review*, 4, 80–91. doi: 10.7916/D8DF6PQ6

- Charmaz, K. (2006). *Constructing grounded theory: A practical guide through qualitative research*. London, England: Sage.
- Clark, K. B., & Clark, M. P. (1947). Racial identification and preference in Negro children. In T. M. Newcomb & E. L. Hartley (Eds.), *Readings in social psychology* (pp. 169–178). New York, NY: Holt, Rinehart, and Winston.
- Cokley, K. O., & Helm, K. (2001). Testing the construct validity of scores on the Multidimensional Inventory of Black Identity. *Measurement and Evaluation in Counseling and Development*, 34(2), 80.
- Cole, E. R. (2009). Intersectionality and research in psychology. *American Psychologist*, 64, 170–180. doi:10.1037/a0014564
- Cole, E. R. (2008). Coalitions as a model for intersectionality: From practice to theory. *Sex Roles*, 59, 443–453. doi: 10.1007/s11199-008-9419-1
- Collins, P. H. (1999). *Black feminist thought: Knowledge, consciousness, and the politics of empowerment*. New York, NY: Routledge.
- Corbin, J., & Strauss, A. (2014). *Basics of qualitative research: Techniques and procedures for developing grounded theory*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Crenshaw, K. (1991). Mapping the margins: Intersectionality, identity politics, and violence against women of color. *Stanford Law Review*, 43, 1241–1299.

- Crenshaw, K. (1989). Demarginalizing the intersection of race and sex: A Black feminist critique of antidiscrimination doctrine, feminist theory and antiracist politics. *University of Chicago Legal Forum*, 1989, 139–167.
- Cross, W. E. (1971). The Negro-to-Black conversion experience. *Black World*, 20, 13–27.
- Cross, W. E. (1991). *Shades of Black: Diversity in African-American identity*. Philadelphia, PA: Temple University Press.
- Davis, K. (2008). Intersectionality as buzzword: A sociology of science perspective on what makes a feminist theory successful. *Feminist Theory*, 9, 67–85. doi: 10.1177/1464700108086364
- Denscombe, M. (2009). Item non-response rates: A comparison of online and paper questionnaires. *International Journal of Social Research Methodology*, 12, 281–291. doi: 10.1080/13645570802054706
- Dugger, K. (1988). Social location and gender-role attitudes: A comparison of Black and White women. *Gender & Society*, 2(4), 425–448. doi: 10.1177/089124388002004002
- Eccles, J. S., Jacobs, J. E., & Harold, R. D. (1990). Gender role stereotypes, expectancy effects, and parents' socialization of gender differences. *Journal of Social Issues*, 46(2), 183–201.
- Erikson, E. (1968). *Identity: Youth and crisis*. New York, NY: Norton.
- Ghara, A. (2012). *Black woman identity centrality and interference: An examination of political efficacy and policy attitudes* (Master's thesis). Retrieved from <http://etd.lsu.edu/docs/available/etd-11162012-115803/>

Glaser, B., & Strauss, A. (2009). *The discovery of grounded theory: Strategies for qualitative research*. Piscataway, NJ: Transaction Publishers.

Glaser, B., & Strauss, A. (1967). *The discovery of grounded theory*. Chicago, IL: Aldine.

Hair, J. F., & Black, W. C. (2000). Cluster analysis. In L. G. Grimm & P. R. Yarnold (Eds.) *Reading and understanding more multivariate statistics* (pp. 147–201). Washington DC: American Psychological Association.

Hamilton, J. B., Sandelowski, M., Moore, A. D., Agarwal, M., & Koenig, H. G. (2013). “You need a song to bring you through”: The use of religious songs to manage stressful life events. *The Gerontologist*, 53(1), 26–38. doi: 10.1093/geront/gns064

hooks, b. (1981). *Ain’t I a woman: Black women and feminism*. Boston, MA: South End Press.

Jones, H. L., Cross, W. E., & DeFour, D. C. (2007). Race-related stress, racial identity attitudes, and mental health among Black women. *Journal of Black Psychology*, 33, 208–231. doi: 10.1177/0095798407299517

Jones, C., & Shorter-Gooden, K. (2003). *Shifting: The double lives of African American women in America*. New York, NY: Harper Collins Publishers.

Kidd, S. A. (2002). The role of qualitative research in psychological journals. *Psychological Methods*, 7, 126–138. doi: 10.1037/1082-989X.7.1.126

Lincoln, Y. S., & Guba, E. G. (1985). *Naturalistic inquiry*. Beverly Hills, CA: Sage.

Lorr, M. (1983). *Cluster analysis for social sciences*. New York, NY: Jossey-Bass.

- Marcia, J. E. (1980). Identity in adolescence. In J. Adelson (Ed.), *Handbook of adolescent psychology* (pp. 109–137). New York, NY: Wiley.
- Marks, B., Settles, I. H., Cooke, D. Y., Morgan, L., & Sellers, R. M. (2004). African American racial identity: A review of contemporary models and measures. In R. L. Jones (Ed.), *Black psychology* (pp. 383–404). Hampton, VA: Cobb & Henry.
- McCall, L. (2005). The complexity of intersectionality. *Signs*, 30, 1771–1800. doi: 10.1086/426800
- Meyers, L. S., Gamst, G. C., & Guarino, A. J. (2013). *Performing data analysis using IBM SPSS*. New York City, NY: John Wiley & Sons.
- Moradi, B., & Subich, L. M. (2002). A concomitant examination of the relations of perceived racist and sexist events to psychological distress for African American women. *The Counseling Psychologist*, 31, 451–469. doi: 10.1177/0011000003031004007
- Morrow, S. L. (2005). Quality and trustworthiness in qualitative research in counseling psychology. *Journal of Counseling Psychology*, 52, 250–260. doi: 10.1037/0022-0167.52.2.250
- Nash, J. C. (2008). Re-thinking intersectionality. *Feminist Review*, 89, 1–15. doi: 10.1057/fr.2008.4
- Nebett Jr, E. W., Shelton, J. N., & Sellers, R. M. (2004). The role of racial identity in managing daily racial hassles. In G. Philogène (Ed.), *Racial identity in context: The legacy of Kenneth B. Clark* (pp. 77–90). Washington DC: American Psychological Association.

- Oyseman, D., Bybee, D., & Terry, K. (2003). Gendered racial identity and involvement with school. *Self and Identity*, 2, 307–324. doi: 10.1080/714050250
- Pew Research Center. (2015a). *Gender composition by religious attendance*. Retrieved from <http://www.pewforum.org/religious-landscape-study/attendance-at-religious-services/>
- Pew Research Center. (2015b). *Racial and ethnic composition by religious attendance*. Retrieved from <http://www.pewforum.org/religious-landscape-study/attendance-at-religious-services/>
- Ponterotto, J. G. (2010). Qualitative research in multicultural psychology: Philosophical underpinnings, popular approaches, and ethical considerations. *Cultural Diversity and Ethnic Minority Psychology*, 16, 581–589. doi: 10.1037/a0012051
- Ponterotto, J. G., & Mallinckrodt, B. (2007). Introduction to the special section on racial and ethnic identity in counseling psychology: Conceptual and methodological challenges and proposed solutions. *Journal of Counseling Psychology*, 54, 219–223. doi: 10.1037/0022-0167.54.3.219
- Purdie-Vaughns, V. & Eibach, R. P. (2008). Intersectional invisibility: The distinctive advantages and disadvantages of multiple subordinate-group identities. *Sex Roles*, 59, 377–391. doi:10.1007/s11199-008-9424-4
- Quintana, S. M. (2007). Racial and ethnic identity: Developmental perspectives and research. *Journal of Counseling Psychology*, 54, 259–270. doi: 10.1037/0022-0167.54.3.259

- Reid, P. T. (1993). Poor women in psychological research. *Psychology of Women Quarterly*, 17, 133–150. doi: 10.1111/j.1471-6402.1993.tb00440.x
- Roskos-Ewoldsen, D. R. & Roskos-Ewoldsen, B. (2008). Scaling and cluster analysis. In A. F. Hayes, M. D. Slater, & L. B., Snyder (Eds.), *The sage sourcebook of advanced data analysis methods for communication research* (pp. 275–310). New York, NY: Sage.
- Saris, R. N., & Johnston-Robledo, I. (2000). Poor women are still shut out of mainstream psychology. *Psychology of Women Quarterly*, 24, 233–235. doi: 10.1111/j.1471-6402.2000.tb00204.x
- Sellers, R. M., Caldwell, C. H., Schmeelk-Cone, K. H., & Zimmerman, M. A. (2003). Racial identity, racial discrimination, perceived stress, and psychological distress among African American young adults. *Journal of Health and Social Behavior*, 44, 302–317. doi: 10.1207/s15327957pspr0201_2
- Sellers, R. M., Rowley, S. A., Chavous, T. M., Shelton, J. N., & Smith, M. A. (1997). Multidimensional inventory of Black identity: A preliminary investigation of reliability and construct validity. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 73, 805–815. doi: 10.1037/0022-3514.73.4.805
- Sellers, R. M., Smith, M. A., Shelton, J. N., Rowley, S. A., & Chavous, T. M. (1998). Multidimensional model of racial identity: A reconceptualization of African American racial identity. *Personality and Social Psychology Review*, 2, 18–39. doi: 10.1207/s15327957pspr0201_2

- Settles, I. H. (2004). When multiple identities interfere: The role of identity centrality. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin*, 30, 487–500.
doi:10.1177/0146167203261885
- Settles, I. H. (2006). Use of an intersectional approach to understand Black women's racial and gender identities. *Sex Roles*, 54, 589–601. doi:1007/s1199-006-9029-8
- Settles, I. H., Navarrete, C. D., Pagano, S. J., Abdou, C. M., & Sidanius, J. (2010). Racial identity and depression among African American women. *Cultural Diversity and Ethnic Minority Psychology*, 16, 248–255. doi:10.1037/a0016442
- Settles, I., Pratt-Hyatt, J. S., & Buchanan, N. T. (2008). Through the lens of race: Black and White women's perceptions of womanhood. *Psychology of Women Quarterly*, 32, 454–468. doi: 10.1111/j.1471-6402.2008.00458.x
- Shelton, J. N., & Sellers, R. M. (2000). Situational stability and variability in African American racial identity. *Journal of Black Psychology*, 26(1), 27-50.
- Shields, S. A. (2008). Gender: An intersectionality perspective. *Sex Roles*, 59, 301–311.
doi:10.1007/s11199-008-9501-8
- Slay, H. S., & Smith, D. A. (2011). Professional identity construction: Using narrative to understand the negotiation of professional and stigmatized cultural identities. *Human Relations*, 64, 85–107. doi: 10.1177/0018726710384290
- Strauss, A. L., & Corbin, J. M. (1990). *Basics of qualitative research*. Newbury Park, CA: Sage.

Syed, M. (2010). Disciplinarity and methodology in intersectionality theory and research.

American Psychologist, 65, 61–62. doi: 10.1037/a0017495

Thoits, P. A. (1991). On merging identity theory and stress research. *Social Psychology*

Quarterly, 54, 101–112.

Thomas, V. G. (2004). The psychology of Black women: Studying women's lives in context.

Journal of Black Psychology, 30, 286–306. doi: 10.1177/0095798404266044

Thomas, A. J., Hacker, J. D., & Hoxha, D. (2011). Gendered racial identity of young Black

women. *Sex Roles*, 64, 530–542. doi: 10.1007/s11199-011-9939-y

Thomas, A. J., Hoxha, D., & Hacker, J. D. (2013). Contextual influences on gendered racial

identity development of African American young women. *Journal of Black Psychology*, 39,

88–101. doi: 10.1177/0095798412454679

Thomas, A. J., & King, C. T. (2007). Gendered racial socialization of African American mothers

and daughters. *The Family Journal*, 15, 137–142. doi: 10.1177/1066480706297853

Tiggemann, M. (2004). Body image across the adult life span: Stability and change. *Body image*,

1(1), 29–41. doi: 10.1016/S1740-1445(03)00002-0

U. S. Census Bureau (2010). *Age and sex composition in the United States: 2010 census brief*.

Retrieved from <http://www.census.gov/population/age/>

Warner, L. R., & Shields, S. A. (2013). The intersections of sexuality, gender, and race: Identity

research at the crossroads. *Sex Roles*, 68, 803–810. doi: 10.1007/s11199-013-0281-4

- Watson, K. L., Livingston, J. N., Cliette, G., & Eaton, S. (2015). Internalization of the thin ideal, media images and body image dissatisfaction in African American college women: Implications for Black female sexuality. *Journal of Black Sexuality and Relationships, 1*, 23–43. doi: 10.1353/bsr.2015.0014
- West, C. M. (1995). Mammy, Sapphire, and Jezebel: Historical images of Black women and their implications for psychotherapy. *Psychotherapy: Theory, Research, Practice, Training, 32*, 458–466. doi: 10.1037/0033-3204.32.3.458
- West, L. M., Donovan, R. A., & Roemer, L. (2010). Coping with racism: What works and doesn't work for Black Women?. *Journal of Black Psychology, 36*, 331–349. doi: 10.1177/0095798409353755
- Wilkins, A. C. (2012). Becoming Black women: Intimate stories and intersectional identities. *Social Psychology Quarterly, 75*, 173–196. doi: 10.1177/0190272512440106
- Woods-Giscombé, C. (2010). Superwomen schema: African American women's views on stress, strength, and health. *Qualitative Health Research, 20*, 666–683. doi: 10.1177/1049732310361892

Table 1.

Participant Demographics.

Total	<i>N</i>	%
Place of Birth		
United States	226	94.2
Africa	6	2.5
Caribbean	5	2.1
Other	3	1.2
Sexual Orientation		
Heterosexual	218	90.8
Lesbian	10	4.2
Bisexual	8	3.3
Other	4	1.7
Religion/Spirituality		
Christianity	194	80.8
Buddhism	1	0.4
Agnostic	2	0.8
Spiritual	36	15.0
Other	7	2.9
Highest Level of		
Education Earned		
Graduate/Professional Degree	132	55.0

College Degree	75	31.3
Some College	25	10.4
Technical /Associates Degree	4	1.7
High School Diploma	3	1.3
Some High School	1	.4

Table 2.

Themes by Cluster Membership.

	<i>N</i>	%
Cluster One (<i>n</i> = 87)		
Intersectionality	1	1.1
Pain and Power	14	16.1
Physical Features	7	8.1
Character Traits	15	17.2
Roles	10	11.5
Shared History	22	25.3
Other	9	10.3
Non-response	9	10.3
Cluster Two (<i>n</i> = 89)		
Intersectionality	7	7.9
Pain and Power	19	21.3
Physical Features	4	4.5
Character Traits	12	13.5
Roles	14	15.7
Shared History	23	25.9
Other	4	4.5
Non-response	6	6.7
Cluster Three (<i>n</i> = 47)		
Intersectionality	1	2.1

Pain and Power	3	6.4
Physical Features	4	8.5
Character Traits	14	29.8
Roles	2	4.3
Shared History	11	23.4
Other	6	12.7
Non-response	6	12.7

Cluster Four (*n* = 17)

Intersectionality	0	0.0
Pain and Power	1	5.9
Physical Features	3	17.6
Character Traits	1	5.9
Roles	0	0.0
Shared History	7	41.2
Other	2	11.8
Non-response	3	17.6

Table 3.

Demographic Information for Cluster One.

Consciously Introspective (Cluster 1) $n = 87$	
<i>“Being a Black woman means I’m in the minority of the minority. It means academically and professionally, I am not always the top choice. I have to work harder and show people who I am to be taken seriously.” – BW153, age 26</i>	
Top Three Qualitative Themes	
	%
Shared history	25.3
Character traits	17.2
Pain and power	16.1
Variables of Interest	
	$M (SD)$
Racial Centrality	5.05 (.91)
Gender Centrality	4.16 (.51)
Demographics	
	$M(SD)$
Age	38.10 (13.84)
	$N (%)$
Sexual Orientation	
Heterosexual	82 (94.3)
Lesbian	2 (2.3)
Bisexual	1 (1.1)
Other	1 (1.1)
Spirituality	
Christian	71 (81.6)
Spiritual	15 (17.2)
Other	1 (1.1)
Education	
Graduate/professional degree	44 (50.6)
College degree	28 (32.2)
Some college	10 (11.5)
Technical certificate/associates degree	3 (3.4)
High school diploma	2 (2.3)

Note. Scores of racial centrality and gender centrality range from 1 to 7 with higher scores indicating race or gender as a more important component of self-concept.

Table 4.

Demographic Information for Cluster Two.

Consciously Engaged (Cluster 2) $n = 89$	
<i>“Black women are strong. We have to fight oppression as women and being Black. Through all the fighting, we have continued to succeed as Black women. Black women are leaders and most have a sense of family, spirituality, etc.” – BW030, age 31</i>	
Top Three Qualitative Themes	
	%
Shared history	25.9
Pain and power	21.3
Roles	15.7
Variables of Interest	
	$M (SD)$
Racial Centrality	6.42 (.44)
Gender Centrality	6.01 (.60)
Demographics	
	$M(SD)$
Age	33.73 (9.45)
	$N (%)$
Sexual Orientation	
Heterosexual	78 (87.6)
Lesbian	5 (5.6)
Bisexual	5 (5.6)
Other	1 (1.1)
Spirituality	
Christian	65 (73.0)
Spiritual	17 (19.1)
Agnostic	1 (1.1)
Buddhist	1 (1.1)
Other	5 (5.6)
Education	
Graduate/professional degree	57 (64.0)
College degree	24 (27.0)
Some college	7 (7.9)
Technical certificate/associates degree	1 (1.1)

Note. Scores of racial centrality and gender centrality range from 1 to 7 with higher scores indicating race or gender as a more important component of self-concept.

Table 5.

Demographic Information for Cluster Three.

Pre-consciously Conflicted (Cluster 3) $n = 47$	
<i>“Black women are the backbone of the community and though we are always told to be strong for our families and to support Black men, we are strong for ourselves just as much as we are for others in the community.” – BW215, age 25</i>	
Top Three Qualitative Themes	
	%
Character traits	29.8
Shared history	23.4
Other	17.0
Variables of Interest	
	$M (SD)$
Racial Centrality	4.86 (.64)
Gender Centrality	5.47 (.57)
Demographics	
	$M(SD)$
Age	33.95 (10.32)
	$N (%)$
Sexual Orientation	
Heterosexual	42 (89.4)
Lesbian	2 (4.3)
Bisexual	2 (4.3)
Other	1 (2.1)
Spirituality	
Christian	42 (89.4)
Spiritual	3 (6.4)
Agnostic	1 (2.1)
Other	1 (2.1)
Education	
Graduate/professional degree	23 (48.9)
College degree	18 (38.3)
Some college	6 (12.8)

Note. Scores of racial centrality and gender centrality range from 1 to 7 with higher scores indicating race or gender as a more important component of self-concept.

Table 6.

Demographic Information for Cluster Four.

Unconsciously Disengaged (Cluster 4) $n = 17$	
<i>"It means that I am beautiful yet not fully appreciated. I must ignore it and move forward."</i>	
– BW174, age 31	
Top Three Qualitative Themes	
	%
Shared history	41.2
Physical features	17.6
Non-reponse	17.6
Variables of Interest	
	$M (SD)$
Racial Centrality	2.85(.73)
Gender Centrality	3.57 (.59)
Demographics	
	$M (SD)$
Age	40.35 (13.98)
	$N (%)$
Sexual Orientation	
Heterosexual	16 (94.1)
Lesbian	1 (5.9)
Spirituality	
Christian	19 (94.1)
Spiritual	1 (5.9)
Education	
Graduate/professional degree	8 (47.1)
College degree	5 (29.4)
Some college	2 (11.8)
Some high school	1 (5.9)

Note. Scores of racial centrality and gender centrality range from 1 to 7 with higher scores indicating race or gender as a more important component of self-concept.

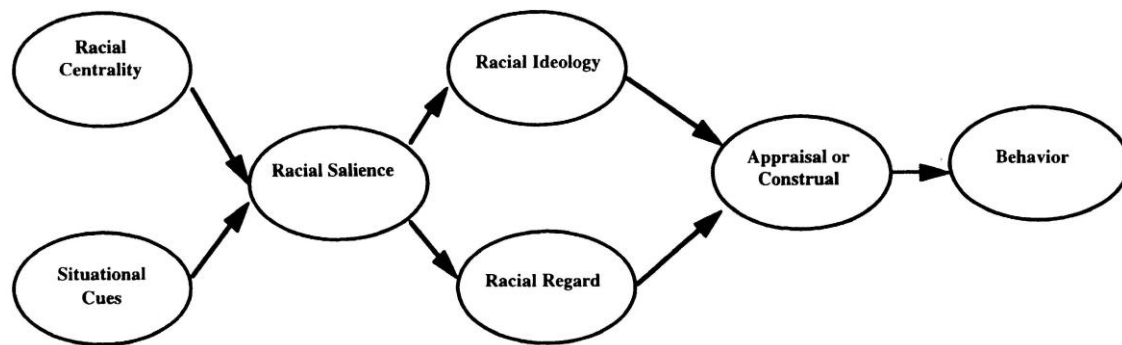


Figure 1. This illustration depicts how racial identity dimensions influences behaviors at the level of the event. Illustration extracted from Sellers, R. M., Smith, M. A., Shelton, J. N., Rowley, S. A., & Chavous, T. M. (1998). Multidimensional model of racial identity: A reconceptualization of African American racial identity. *Personality and Social Psychology Review*, 2, 18–39. doi: 10.1207/s15327957pspr0201_2.

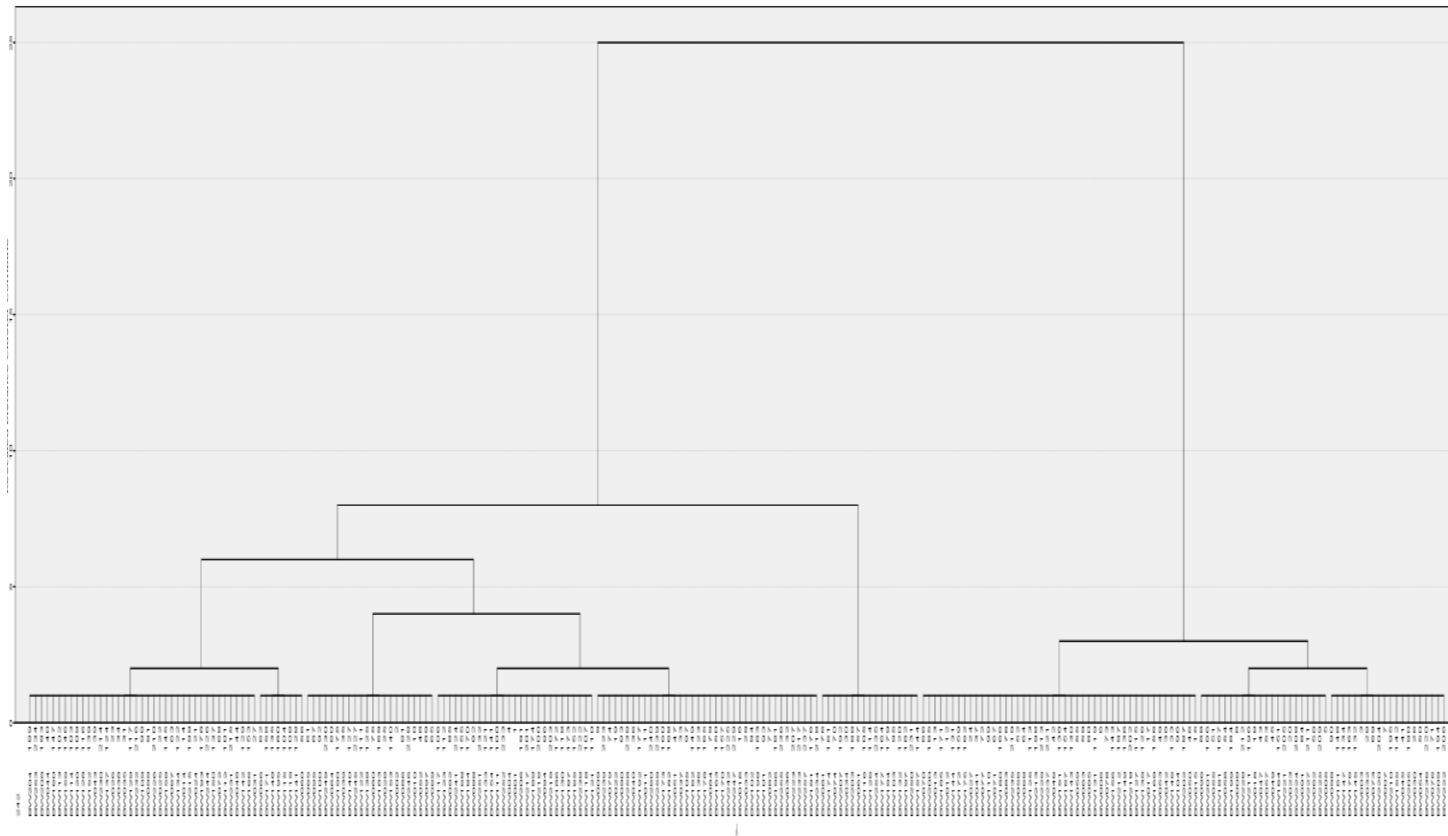


Figure 2. The figure is the dendrogram resultant from a hierarchal clusters analysis exploring Black women's racial and gender centrality, including four distinct clusters.

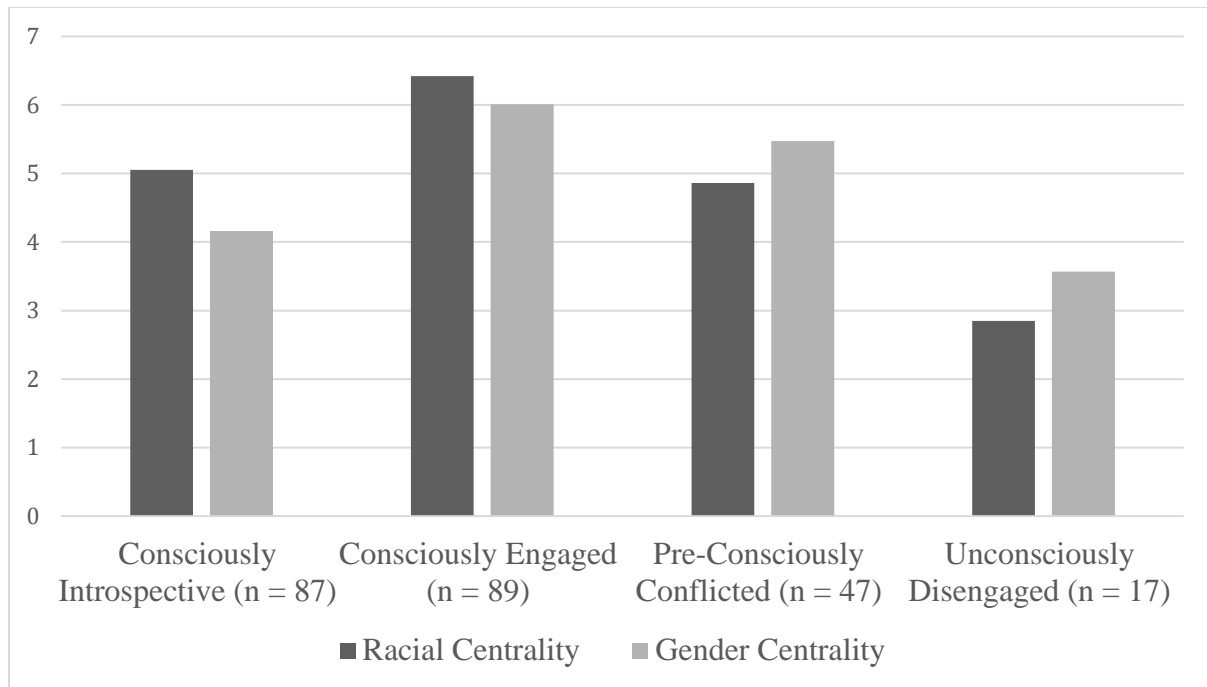


Figure 3. Levels of racial and gender centrality across Black women's gendered racial ideologies. Levels of racial centrality and gender centrality range from 1 to 7 with higher numbers indicating race or gender as a more important component of self-concept for women in that cluster.

Consciousness (e.g., Centrality)	Identity Engagement		
		Y	N
	Y	Consciously Engaged	Consciously Introspective
	N	Pre-consciously Conflicted	Unconsciously Disengaged

Figure 4. This illustration depicts each Black woman's gendered racial ideology based on racial-gender consciousness and racial-gender identity engagement.

Appendix A

**Permission/Consent to Participate in Research
University of Houston****Project Title and Purpose:** Racial and Gender Identity among Black Women

You are being invited to participate in a research study conducted by Martinque K. Jones from the Department of Educational Psychology at the University of Houston. The research project is conducted under the supervision of Dr. M. Nicole Coleman. To be eligible to participate, you must be at least 18 years old and identify as Black/African American and female.

Non-Participation

Your participation is entirely voluntary. You may refuse to take part, withdraw at any time, and/or refuse to answer any questions without consequence. *If you are not at least 18 years old and identify as Black/African American and female you will not be permitted to participate in the study.*

Procedures

You will be one of approximately 200 Black women asked to complete a survey that focuses on Black women's racial and gender identity and experiences associated with Black womanhood. Examples of questions you may be asked include "Being Black is an important reflection of who I am" and "I have a strong sense of belonging to other women." This survey will take approximately 30 minutes of your time.

Confidentiality

Your participation in this research study is confidential, and every effort will be made to maintain the confidentiality of your participation in this project. You will not be asked to and you should not provide your name or any other identifying information at any point during the survey administration. Confidentiality will be maintained within the legal limits.

Risk/Discomfort

There is minimal risk involved in participating in this study; however, some of the questions could be considered sensitive because they deal with issues related to your identity and experiences. If for any reason you feel discomfort or stress because of these questions, please contact the primary investigator and she may provide you with mental health resources and/or referrals.

Benefits

Participants who complete the research study will be eligible to participate in a raffle for one of two \$25 Target gift cards as a thank you for participation.

In addition, the results of this research study may contribute to the greater understanding of Black women's intersected identity as both Black and female.

Publication Statement

The results of this research study may be published in professional and/or scientific journals. It may also be used for educational purposes or professional presentations. However, no individual participant will be identified.

Questions

If you have any questions concerning this research study, you may contact Martinque Jones (mkjones2@uh.edu) or Dr. M. Nicole Coleman (mncoleman@uh.edu) at the University of Houston.

Any questions regarding your rights as a research subject may be addressed to the University of Houston Committee for the Protection of Human Subjects (713-743-9204). All research projects that are carried out by investigators at the University of Houston are governed by requirements of the University and the Federal Government.

Participation Agreement

I attest that I have read and fully understand this research study and agree to participate. I recognize I have the right to withdraw at any time without any consequences and/or loss of benefits.

(Please check one box): ☐ Agree ☐ Disagree

Raffle Participation

I would like to participate in the raffle for one of two \$25 Target gift cards. I understand to obtain my gift card I will need to provide my email address.

(Please check one box): ☐ Agree ☐ Disagree

Please provide your email address or phone number: _____

If you agree to participate, please proceed to the survey.

Appendix B

Screeners Items

1. I am at least 18 years of age.
 - a. True
 - b. False
2. I identify as female.
 - a. True
 - b. False
3. I racially identify as Black/African American.
 - a. True
 - b. False

Appendix C

Demographic Information

1. Country of Origin:
 - a. United States
 - b. Africa
 - c. Caribbean
 - d. Other (Specify:_____)
2. How old are you? _____
3. Which category best describes your sexual orientation:
 - a. Heterosexual
 - b. Homosexual
 - c. Bisexual
 - d. Other (Specify:_____)
4. What is your relationship status?
 - a. Single
 - b. Married/committed partnership
 - c. Widowed/separated/divorced
5. What is the highest level of education you have completed?
 - a. Some high school
 - b. High school diploma
 - c. Some college
 - d. Technical certificate/associates degree
 - e. College degree
 - f. Graduate/professional degree (e.g., MA, PhD, DDS)
6. What is the highest level of education earned in your immediate family?
 - a. Some high school
 - b. High school diploma
 - c. Some college
 - d. Technical certificate/associates degree
 - e. College degree
 - f. Graduate/professional degree (e.g., MA, PhD, DDS)
7. Which of the following income brackets best captures your total family income for the year 2014? (Note: If you are a college student, please reflect on the income of the household in which you were raised.)
 - a. More than \$150,000
 - b. \$149,000-\$100,000
 - c. \$99,000-\$60,000
 - d. \$59,000-\$30,000

- e. \$29,000-\$23,000
 - f. Less than \$23,000
8. Which category best describes your religious/spiritual affiliation?
- a. Christianity
 - b. Judaism
 - c. Buddhism
 - d. Hinduism
 - e. Islam
 - f. Agnostic
 - g. Atheist
 - h. Spiritual
 - i. Other (Specify:_____)
9. Please indicate to what extent your religious/spiritual affiliation emphasizes strict gender roles on a scale of 1 (not strict) to 10 (very strict).
- | Not Strict | | | | Somewhat
Strict | | | | Very Strict | |
|------------|---|---|---|--------------------|---|---|---|-------------|----|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 |
10. How would you describe the community in which you were raised during childhood?
- a. Urban
 - b. Suburban
 - c. Rural
11. How would you describe the community where you currently live?
- a. Urban
 - b. Suburban
 - c. Rural
12. Validity Check: I am a woman who is 18 years of age or older.
- a. Yes
 - b. No
13. Which category best describes your occupational status?
- a. Employed full-time
 - b. Employed part-time
 - c. Wife/mother/homemaker
 - d. Unemployed
14. Are you currently a student?
- a. Yes
 - b. No

For those who are full or part-time employed:

15. Which of the following *best* describes your occupational field?
- a. Administrative/Clerical (e.g., office assistant, receptionist)
 - b. Agriculture (e.g., farmer)
 - c. Architecture
 - d. Business
 - e. Domestic (e.g., caretaker, homemaker, housekeeping)
 - f. Education
 - g. Engineering
 - h. Fine Arts
 - i. Health Professions
 - j. Mathematics
 - k. Military
 - l. Social Science (e.g., psychology, social work)
 - m. Science (e.g., chemistry, physics, biology)
 - n. Skilled Trades/Tradesman (e.g., carpenter, plumber, construction worker)
 - o. Technology/Computer Science
 - p. Other (Specify: _____)

For those who are college students:

16. What is your class standing?
- a. Freshman
 - b. Sophomore
 - c. Junior
 - d. Senior
 - e. Graduate Student
17. Which of the following *best* describes your college major/field of study?
- a. Agriculture
 - b. Architecture
 - c. Business
 - d. Education
 - e. Engineering
 - f. Fine Arts
 - g. Health Professions
 - h. Mathematics
 - i. Social Science (e.g., psychology, social work)
 - j. Science (e.g., chemistry, physics, biology)
 - k. Technology/Computer Science
 - l. Other (Specify: _____)

Appendix D

Racial Centrality–Multidimensional Inventory of Black Identity–Centrality Scale (Sellers, Rowley, Chavous, Shelton, & Smith, 1997)

Instructions: Please indicate how much you disagree or agree with the following statements using a scale of 1 (*strong disagree*) to 7 (*strongly agree*).

	Strongly Disagree		Neutral			Strongly Agree	
1. Overall, being Black has very little to do with how I feel about myself.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
2. In general, being Black is an important part of my self-image.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
3. My destiny is tied to the destiny of other Black people.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
4. Being Black is unimportant to my sense of what kind of person I am.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
5. I have a strong sense of belonging to Black people.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
6. I have a strong attachment to other Black people.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
7. Being Black is an important reflection of who I am.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8. Being Black is not a major factor in my social relationships.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

Appendix E

Gender Centrality–Gender Centrality Scale

Instructions: Please indicate how much you disagree or agree with the following statements using a scale of 1 (*strong disagree*) to 7 (*strongly agree*).

	Strongly Disagree		Neutral			Strongly Agree	
1. Overall, being a woman has very little to do with how I feel about myself.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
2. In general, being a woman is an important part of my self-image.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
3. My destiny is tied to the destiny of other women.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
4. Being a woman is unimportant to my sense of what kind of person I am.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
5. I have a strong sense of belonging to women.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
6. I have a strong attachment to other women.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
7. Being a woman is an important reflection of who I am.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8. Being a woman is not a major factor in my social relationships.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

Appendix F

Self-Defined Gendered Racial Identity Questionnaire (S-GRIQ)

Answer the following questions using one to two sentences.

1. In your opinion, what does it mean to be Black (or of your Black ethnic group)?
2. In your opinion, what does it mean to be a woman?
3. In your opinion, what does it mean to be a Black woman (or woman of your Black ethnic group)?

Appendix G

Incentive Email Announcement

Hello [insert participant name],

Thank you for your participation in the research study entitled, “Racial and Gender Identity among Black Women.”

Congratulations!

Your name was entered in a raffle and selected to win one of two \$25 Target gift cards.

You will receive a subsequent email from Target © that will include your \$25 gift card. If you do not receive your email within the next 48 hours, please check you spam email.

Once again, thank you for your participation.

Martinque K. Jones, M.Ed.