

SELECTED PREDICTORS OF SATISFACTION WITH THEIR PROGRAMS FOR AFRICAN
AMERICAN COUNSELORS EDUCATION MASTER'S DEGREE STUDENTS

by

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A DISSERTATION

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ABSTRACT

Previous research has investigated the impact of demographic variables upon African American students in higher education (Pascarella et al., 2004; Patitu, 2000; Tinto, 1993). Few investigations have focused on African American graduate students particularly in Counselor Education. The purpose of this study was to identify predictors of the level of satisfaction of African American Master's degree students with their counselor education program. A total of 154 participants completed a demographic sheet and The Counselor Education Program Satisfaction Scale (CEPSS).

Stepwise regression analysis results indicated that participants who received financial aid were less satisfied with academic quality than those who did not receive financial aid. The results also indicated an inverse relationship between GPA and Scheduling. As GPA increased the level of satisfaction with Scheduling decreased. As GPA increased the level of satisfaction with Scheduling decreased. Finally, results suggested participants in campus-based or face-to-face courses were more satisfied with clinical skills development than participants in online or blended courses. Finding from this study may be helpful to student affairs professionals, faculty, policymakers, administrators, Counselor educators, and others who are charged with the responsibilities of recruiting and retaining African American students.

DEDICATION

All glory, honor, and praise belong to Jesus Christ, my Lord and Savior!

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS AND SYMBOLS

a	Cronbach's index of internal consistency
df	Degrees of freedom: number of values free to vary after certain restrictions has been placed on the data
F	Fisher's F ratio: A ratio of two variances
M	Mean: the sum of set of measurements divided by the number of measurements in the set
p	Probability associated with the occurrence under the null hypothesis of a value as extreme as or more extreme than the observed value
r	Pearson product-moment correlation
R^2	Multiple correlation squared; measure of strength of relationship
t	Computed value of t test
$<$	Less than
$=$	Equal to

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Since the era of slavery, African Americans have valued and pursued education as a vehicle to a better life. In the 21st century, a global economy and high rates of unemployment have added to the pressure on African Americans who seek to advance their careers through education. African Americans have seen the requirements for career fulfillment gradually expand over the decades. A high school degree or undergraduate degree is insufficient for some professions, such as counseling, which require a graduate degree (Gold, 2006). Increased professional preparation requirements have contributed to an increase in African Americans who are seeking master's degrees. According to data released by the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES, 2009), African Americans were awarded 28,403 master's degrees between 1996 and 1997. A decade later, that number increased by 45% to 62,574 (NCES, 2007). Several researchers have shown interest in factors that have an impact upon African American students' satisfaction and retention (Allen, 2007; Atkinson, 2008; Helmich, 1999; Tinto, 1993).

Implications and Significance of Proposed Study

A substantial body of research reveals that undergraduate and graduate student attrition is high and is a major concern for administrators of colleges and universities (Anekwe, 2007; Battaglini, 2003; Wince & Borden, 1995). African American student enrollment is increasing at colleges and universities. However, their graduation rate

is lower than that of their White counterparts. In 2004, the national six-year graduation rate for Caucasians was 56%, and it was 38% for African Americans (Bryant, 2004). Student attrition is expensive for both educational institutions and students (Kress, 2006). Most of the literature suggests that there is some relationship between attrition and satisfaction (Atkinson, 2008; Bailey, Bauman, & Lata, 1998; Castle, 1993; Cross, 1985). Students who are satisfied with their colleges or universities are less likely to leave school (Hsiao, 2002).

Reviews of the literature showed that few investigations have focused on minority students and, in particular, minority graduate students in counselor education programs. Metz (2004) stated, "In a review of the literature on student persistence, limited research exists that focuses on other ethnic groups, notably African Americans" (p. 12). While student satisfaction with their colleges or universities has been linked to student persistence, little research has examined the satisfaction of African American counselor education students with the programs in which they are enrolled. This study will contribute to the growing body of knowledge on African American students in counselor education programs.

The results from this study will provide important data for strategic planning and targeting areas for improvement in counselor education programs for African American students. In order to develop plans for managing attrition and retention, administrators need to understand how satisfied their students are with their educational experiences by identifying areas that are in need of improvement (Hall, 1999; Ishitani, 2003; Tinto, 1993). Student satisfaction is an essential part of any comprehensive institutional assessment plan for improving the relationship between African American students and

their counselor education programs, increasing African American student enrollment, decreasing the costs of attrition, and improving African American students' retention rates (Bean & Bogdan, 2001; Bryant, 2006). African American student satisfaction assessment is a significant indicator of how responsive an educational program is to their needs (Cuadra, 2008). African American student enrollment and retention increase when they are able to see tangible evidence their program cares about their experiences and responds with improvements in areas that are important to them (Bryant, 2004, 2006). To that end, the data from this study can be helpful to student affairs professionals, faculty, policy makers, administrators, counselor educators, and others who are charged with the responsibilities of recruiting and retaining African American students.

Purpose of the Proposed Study

The purpose of this study was to identify predictors of the level of satisfaction of African American master's degree students with their counselor education programs. Specifically, this study will focus on selected variables that may predict African American students' satisfaction. The selected variables were (a) receipt of financial aid, (b) being a first-generation student, (c) employment status while in graduate school, (d) part-time or full-time enrollment status, (e) attendance at a Historically Black College or University (HBCU), (f) relationship status, (g) gender, (h) age, (i) grade point average (GPA), (j) course type, and (k) hours of coursework.

Research Question

This study sought to answer the following question:

Will receipt of financial aid, being a first-generation college student, employment status while in graduate school, current attendance at an HBCU, student enrollment status as part time or full time, relationship status, gender, age, GPA, course type, and hours of coursework predict African American counselor education master's degree students' satisfaction with their graduate programs?

Null Hypothesis

The following null hypothesis was tested:

Receipt of financial aid, being a first-generation college student, employment status while in graduate school, current attendance at an HBCU, student enrollment status as part time or full time, relationship status, gender, age, GPA, course type, and hours of coursework will not separately or jointly predict African American counselor education master's degree students' satisfaction with their graduate programs.

Definition of Terms

For the purpose of this study, the following terms were defined:

Student Satisfaction. “a pleasurable emotional state resulting from a person's enactment of the role of being a student” (Bean & Bradley, 1986, p. 398). The Counselor Education Program Satisfaction Scale (CEPSS) measured student satisfaction.

Academic Quality. Refers to four items on the CEPSS that appear to measure student's satisfaction with the academic quality provided by their counselor education program.

Equity. Refers to three items on the CEPSS that appear to measure student's satisfaction with justice and respect provided by their counselor education programs.

Academic Support. Refers to five items on the CEPSS that appear to measure student's satisfaction with academic support provided by their counselor education programs.

Clinical Skills Development. Refers to two items on the CEPSS that appears to measure student's satisfaction with clinical development provided by their counselor education programs.

Scheduling. Refers to three items on the CEPSS that appears to measure student's satisfaction with scheduling and availability of courses provided by their counselor education programs.

CACREP. An acronym for the Council for the Accrediting of Counseling and Related Programs. CACREP is an accrediting body for master's level and doctoral programs in Counseling.

CACREP Master's Level Programs. Refers to counselor education master's level programs accredited by CACREP.

NON-CACREP Master's Level Programs. Refers to counselor education master's level programs that are not accredited by CACREP.

Counselor Education Program Satisfaction Scale (CEPSS). A survey developed by the researcher to assess student satisfaction. For the purpose of this study, satisfaction is rated according to responses to the statements on the CEPSS. Likert-style ratings are used for the 17 items on the CEPSS. Each item is measured on a 5-point scale ranging from 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 5 (*strongly agree*).

Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs). Colleges and universities comprised of undergraduate and graduate students, faculty, and staff primarily of African American descent (Jackson & Nunn, 2003).

Historically Black College (HBC). Refers to colleges that were founded primarily to educate Blacks (Cross, 1985).

Predominantly White Institutions (PWIs). Colleges and universities comprised of undergraduate and graduate students, faculty, and staff primarily of Euro- American descent (Jackson & Nunn, 2003).

Predominately White College (PWC). Refers to colleges with more than 50% White enrollment (Cross, 1985).

Limitation

The study only used African American students enrolled in counselor education programs in the states of Alabama, Georgia, and Mississippi during the summer semester 2011 and spring semester 2012. The results may not be generalizable to all students in counselor education programs in other states.

Assumptions

Assumptions for the present study were as follows:

1. Participants in the study would all be African Americans.
2. The responses of all participants would be truthful and accurate.

Organization of the Dissertation

The organization of this dissertation consists of five chapters. Chapter I includes the introduction, implications and significance of the proposed study. Chapter I also provides the purpose of the proposed study, the research question to be answered, the hypothesis to be tested, the definitions of terms, and the limitations and assumptions of the study. Chapter II is a comprehensive review of literature and empirical research related to selected predictors of satisfaction for African American counselor education students. Chapter III addresses the research methodology, including a description of the participants, survey instrument, and data analysis procedures. Chapter IV presents the results of the study. Chapter V provides discussion, implications, and recommendations.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

African Americans have faced challenges in pursuit of education. Prior to the Civil War, laws prohibited teaching slaves to read in the South. Some slave owners ignored these laws and taught their slaves to read (Franklin & Moss, 1994). In the early 1800s, there were approximately one million African Americans in the U. S.; 90% were slaves and 10% were free (Branson, 1987). In 1823, Alexander Lucius Twilight was the first African American to receive a college degree (Pulliam, 1991). Richard Humphrey, a Quaker in Philadelphia, founded the Institute for Colored Youth, which is now Cheney University. In 1837, Cheney University was the first institution of higher learning for African Americans in the United States (Jackson & Nunn, 2003). Between 1837 and 1860, there were few opportunities for higher education for African Americans. Before the Civil War, only two other universities offered postsecondary-level instruction for African American students. Those schools were Wilberforce University in Ohio and Lincoln University in Pennsylvania (Hill, 1984).

After the Civil War, education became a top priority for the newly freed African Americans. Although Black leaders disagreed about the type of education African Americans should receive, they all agreed that education was key to uplifting the Black race (Bullock, 1967). Between 1865 and 1890, approximately two hundred Black Colleges and Universities (BCUs) were founded in the south; these schools were religiously affiliated and private. These BCUs were established and sponsored by the Freeman's Bureau and religious organizations such as The American Missionary Association (AMA), Methodists, Baptists, and Presbyterians. The principles and goals

of these BCUs reflected their founders. The mission was to provide a Christian education and to develop leaders with a sense of social concern and responsibility (Franklin & Moss, 1994).

Among the most prestigious BCUs founded during this time were Fisk University in 1866 in Nashville, Tennessee; Talladega College in 1867 in Talladega, Alabama; Dillard University in 1869 in New Orleans, Louisiana; and Tougaloo College in 1869 in Tougaloo, Mississippi (Hill, 1984).

Public institutions of higher learning were initially funded by the states, private organizations, and philanthropists (Anderson, 1988). The first Morrill Federal Land Grant was passed in 1862. This legislation provided up to 30,000 acres of federal public land to be set aside and sold by the states to fund and establish colleges and universities that would expand educational opportunities for their residents, primarily in the areas of agriculture and mechanical arts (Rudolph, 1990). However, this legislation did not address the educational needs of African Americans or BCUs in the division of funds. As a result, the funds received by southern states were used to expand institutions of higher learning that excluded African Americans (Atwood, 1962).

The second Morrill Act was passed in 1890 to provide continued funding of land-grant colleges (Hill, 1984). This act also stipulated that states must provide separate educational facilities for African Americans. Between 1890 and 1899, 17 southern and border states created public land-grant colleges for African Americans (Atwood, 1962). The students who attended public BCUs were former slaves who were not allowed to read and write. These public BCUs had to spend a large proportion of their time on remedial training (Franklin & Moss, 1994). Therefore, public BCUs did not initially offer four-year college programs. However, some of these BCUs would eventually establish their own segregated professional schools in fields such

as medicine, dentistry, and law. Between 1890 and 1899, public colleges and universities remained segregated by race (Hill, 2009).

In 1896, Homer Adolph Plessy challenged a Louisiana state statute regarding mandated separate accommodations for White and Black railroad passengers. Although this case was not about education, it would have a tremendous impact on the educational aspirations of African Americans (Adair, 1984). The U. S. Supreme Court ruled against Plessy, and this decision established *separate but equal* as the law of the land. African Americans would continue to attend unequal segregated institutions of learning for the next 58 years (Franklin & Moss, 1994).

Between 1920 and 1940, millions of African Americans migrated to the North seeking jobs and better living opportunities. However, the majority of African-Americans remained in the South and attended de jure segregated Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs) (Anderson, 1988). In 1935, The National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) Legal Defense Fund (LDF), under the leadership of Thurgood Marshall, began to challenge the Supreme Court's *separate but equal* statute with cases such as *Gaines v. Canada*, 305 U.S. 337 (1938) in which the Supreme Court ruled against attempts by the University of Missouri to build a separate law school for Blacks that was unequal to Whites (Adair, 1984). In 1950, the NAACP LDF challenged another separate but equal statute, *Sweatt v. Painter*, 339 U.S. 629 (1950), involving the law school at the University of Texas. This case involved an existing Historically Black College (HBC) at Texas Southern University which the University of Texas wanted to use as a separate facility for African American law students. However, the Supreme Court ruled that the law school at the HBC was not equal in quality to the law school at the University of Texas. This was the last major higher education decision by the Supreme Court before *Brown v. Board of Education* (Franklin & Moss, 1994).

In 1954, de jure segregation in education was overturned by the landmark Supreme Court decision of *Brown v. Board of Education*, 347 U.S. 483 (1954). The court ruled that separate educational facilities were inherently unequal and deprived African Americans of their equal protection under the law of the 14th amendment (Fultz & Brown, 2008). This decision should have opened the door for African Americans and increased their options to attend colleges and universities of their choice. However, White citizens and opponents of desegregation in the South continued to resist change, and integration of institutions of higher learning proceeded very slowly (Anderson, 1988).

In 1956, Martin Luther King Jr. led a successful boycott and ended discrimination in public transportation systems in Montgomery, Alabama. This victory gave birth to the Civil Rights Movement and encouraged African Americans to continue to seek equality in other areas, including higher education (Franklin & Moss, 1994). Autherine Lucy was the first African American to attend The University of Alabama in 1956. Eventually, she withdrew from the University. Vivian Malone became the first African American to graduate from the University of Alabama. In spite of this progress, institutions of higher education remained mostly segregated by race. African Americans continued to attend HBCUs, and very few attended Predominately White Institutions (PWIs) (Jackson & Nunn, 2003).

In 1964, the Civil Rights Act was passed. For many African Americans this legislation was the crowning achievement of the Civil Rights Movement because it was designed to speed up the process of desegregation, and it would allow African Americans to attend colleges and universities of their choice (Reed, 1978). The number of African Americans attending PWIs began to increase in the late 1960s. By 1978, the pattern of African American enrollments at HBCUs and PWIs was reversed. For the first time, more than 50% of all African Americans

attending institutions of higher learning were enrolled at PWIs (Astin, 1982). This enrollment pattern has been attributed to the passage of the Civil Rights Act and the passage of the Servicemen Adjustment Act of 1944, known as the G.I. Bill, which continues to resonate and to have an impact upon enrollment in higher education (Bullock, 1967).

The G.I. Bill assured that all veterans, including African Americans, would have an opportunity to obtain an education by providing grants for tuition at colleges and universities. The impact of the G.I. Bill on higher education began immediately. Within three years of its passage, veterans accounted for more than 50% of enrollment at colleges and universities in America (Christy & Williams, 1992). Moreover, the influx of these new students led to a reevaluation of admission policies by PWIs and forced them to open their doors to a more diverse student population. These new students were more diverse in socioeconomic background, age, and race (Pulliam, 1991). As a result, interest in research involving African Americans in higher education was generated by the need to understand the experiences of African Americans at PWIs. A number of studies on African Americans at PWIs have suggested that they are more isolated and less likely to persist than those who attend HBCUs (Allen, 1992; Astin, 1982; Bean & Bogdan, 2001; Fleming, 2001; Freeman, 2002; Ernest T. Pascarella, Pierson, Wolniak, & Terenzini, 2004; Tinto, 1987).

According to Tinto's (1975) theoretical model, entry characteristics of the student, such as background and individual attributes, influence educational goals and institutional commitment levels. The student entering the institution interacts with the academic system represented by grade performance and intellectual development. Simultaneously, the student interacts with the institutional social system represented by peer group interactions and faculty interactions. Tinto's model suggests that the student develops a level of academic and social

integration, revises his or her goals and institutional commitments, and makes a decision to persist or leave the institution. The absence of integration, in this model, is contributed to incongruence and isolation. Incongruence refers to students' perceptions that are at odds with the institution, and isolation refers to the absence of sufficient interactions with peers and faculty whereby integration may be achieved (Tinto, 1987). Incongruence, isolation, and academic difficulties tend to be more severe for African American students than they are for students generally.

Allen (1992) investigated differences between the experiences of 2,531 Black students who attended Historically Black Colleges (HBCs) ($n = 953$) and those who attended Predominately White Colleges (PWCs) ($n = 2,531$). Using data from *The National Study on Black College Students*, Allen conducted a multiple regression analysis to examine the relationship between three outcome variables (academic achievement, social involvement in campus life, occupation aspirations), and five sets of predictor variables. The first set of predictor variables were student education background factors (e.g., high school grade point average, time spent studying, class level); the second set consisted of student aspirations (e.g., how far the student planned to go in school, what the student considered to be a successful career); the third set included demographic characteristics (e.g., gender, socioeconomic status); the fourth set consisted of personal adjustment factors (e.g., relations with White students, relations with White faculty, the student's self-concept, the student's attitude concerning choice of institution); and the fifth set included environmental factors (e.g, campus racial majority, unity among Black students).

Allen's 1992 findings suggested that Black students who attended PWCs reported lower academic achievement than Black students who attended HBCs. Also Black students who

attended PWCs reported lower levels of social involvement than Black students who attended HBCs. There was a positive relationship between occupational aspirations and educational aspirations. The regression analysis model that best explained the specific effect of the predictor variables (student educational background, student aspirations, demographic characteristics, personal adjustment factors, and environmental factors) on the outcome variables accounted for 21% of the variance in academic achievement ($p < .01$), 18% of the variance in social involvement ($p < .01$), and 12% of the variance ($p < .01$), explaining occupational aspirations.

Johnson-Bailey, Valentine, Cervero, and Bowles (2008) examined the support experiences of 586 African American graduate students who graduated from a major southern research university from 1962 to 2003. The researchers conducted a comprehensive survey using a 72-item questionnaire with five sections. The first two sections measured the perceived support the students received from four groups: (a) African American professors, (b) White professors, (c) African American students, and (d) White students. The third section included race-related social problems. The fourth section consisted of six open-ended questions. The fifth section requested demographic information. Data were collected in three consecutive mailings at approximately three-week intervals.

In order to determine whether levels of support were affected across time, Johnson-Bailey et al. (2008) conducted a secondary analysis. Respondents were divided into three chronological groups: (a) Group 1, students who graduated before 1986, (b) Group 2, students who graduated after 1985 and before 1991, and (c) Group 3, students who graduated after 1995. Group 1 and Group 3 were dichotomized by assigning the values *Early* and *Late*, respectively. Group 2 was coded as a missing variable and dropped from the analysis to maximize the effect of time. The four sources of support were compared across time (pre-1986 versus post 1995).

The results revealed no significant differences. Therefore, an increase in the number of African American students across time did not significantly affect the support that Black students received.

In addition, Johnson-Bailey et al. (2008) compared the four sources of support by pairs. The results suggested that African American professors ($M = 5.21$, $SD = 0.78$) provided more support than White professors ($M = 4.15$, $SD = 1.13$) $t(380) = -17.44$, $p < .001$. African American students ($M = 5.27$, $SD = 0.74$) provided more support for African American students than their White peers ($M = 4.08$, $SD = 1.06$) $t(528) = -26.13$, $p < .001$.

Johnson-Bailey et al. (2008) used an inductive coding system to analyze the qualitative data. The qualitative findings suggested that the participants ranked African American students and African American professors as much more of an influence on the day-to-day graduate school experience than family and faith. The African American graduates' stories were summarized in three categories (a) isolation, (b) exclusion, and (c) survival. Based on the findings of this study, African American graduate students believed that their support experiences were significantly different from those of White graduate students, and that White graduate students experienced a more friendly campus and classroom environment.

African Americans are underrepresented at the graduate level and the problem of alienation is greater (Reed, 1978). For example, African American students must contend with racial stereotypes that persist in higher education. Durodoye (1999) provided information concerning her experiences with peers in her counselor education doctoral program: "During my doctoral program, I had comments directed at me by my peers that insinuated the only reason I was in the program was because I was black" (p. 2).

Furthermore, African American students are uncomfortable approaching faculty at PWIs. As a result, they receive less classroom support, less academic advising, and less career guidance (Schwitzer, Griffin, & Thomas, 1999). In addition, some faculty members' perception of their role does not include addressing diversity issues. This has contributed to dissatisfaction among minority students (Helm, Sedlacek, & Prieto, 1998). Heggins (2004) discovered that African American doctoral students reported that there was an "automatic assumption" by faculty that they would not perform well academically (p. 359). Patitu (2000) explained that it is essential for the faculty and administration to understand that unsupportive programs can have a negative impact on the psychological and emotional wellbeing of African American students. This may present as "frustration, isolation, discontentment, and even dropout for some individuals" (p. 91).

The literature review is divided into nine areas that synthesize the relevant literature on selected factors that may influence African American students' satisfaction with their educational programs and institutions. These factors include (a) receipt of financial aid, (b) being a first-generation college student, (c) employment status while in graduate school, (d) current attendance at an HBCU, (e) student enrollment status as part time or full time, (f) marital status, (g) gender, (h) age, and (i) GPA), (j) course type, and (k) hours of coursework.

Receipt of Financial Aid

A number of studies have shown that the soaring cost of tuition, the shrinking availability of financial aid, and a declining economy are major concerns of African American students, including graduate students (Bryant, 2004; Kress, 2006; Lett & Wright, 2003). For example, Grivies and Wemmerus (1988) conducted a study of graduate degree progress among 948 graduate students including African American students from 42 departments of a major Midwestern university. Of the original 948 students, 486 responded to the survey by mail. All

students were in their first year of enrollment. Researchers obtained data from student records, and subjects were categorized by age, gender, ethnicity, residency, and degree as of the fall of 1984. Students were also divided according to whether they were in masters or doctoral degree programs. The researchers reported that students who received student loans, loans from friends, or used their private earnings made less progress in their doctoral programs than students who received assistantships or fellowships.

Lett and Wright (2003) pointed out that financial aid is an important challenge for African American students in higher education. Bryant (2004) also reported that African American students have higher expectations of financial aid than White students. As a result, African American students' overall satisfaction with their universities is influenced by the availability of financial aid. Freeman (1997) noted that African American students choose to attend PWIs based on financial aid assistance and HBCUs for low tuition. Therefore, financial aid is a key factor in the choice of a college or university.

Being A First-Generation Student

An examination of the literature revealed that ethnic minority students who attend college tend to be first-generation students (Dennis, 2005; Mandy & Paulsen, 2005; Pascarella et al., 2004). The parents of these ethnic minority students did not attend college. Therefore, these students typically are less prepared for college (Pascarella et al., 2004). In addition, first-generation students' parents cannot explain what to expect from social relationships with faculty and students. As a result, first-generation students tend to have less interaction with faculty than students of college-educated parents (Longwell-Grice & Longwell-Grice, 2007).

Moreover, first-generation African American graduate students often lack a sense of belonging to the institutions that they attend. Reed (1978) explained:

At the graduate level the problem of alienation is perhaps greater. Given the small number of Black graduate students in most university departments, there is little opportunity to develop a student support system. Informal meetings outside of class with professors or other students, either socially or professionally, are infrequent. Thus, the opportunity to sharpen one's skills, to test ideas, and to cultivate a sense of belonging is severely restricted. The result of the lack of such interaction is often reflected in low academic performance, frequently below the ability levels of Black students, and by withdrawal from graduate study (p. 145).

According to Tinto (1993), the frequency and quality of student-faculty relationships is a key factor in student retention and satisfaction. However, Longwell-Grice and Longwell-Grice (2007) reported that first-generation African American students are less likely to interact with faculty than traditional students because these students tend to perceive faculty as gatekeepers, indifferent to their plight, who intentionally set roadblocks to test students. Therefore, first-generation African American students tend to believe they must be self-reliant, and these students perceive the burden of obtaining an education as their own responsibility.

Employment Status While in Graduate School

A number of studies have shown that the demographic characteristics of college students have changed over recent decades (Allen, 2007; Chandler, 1997; Hall, 1999). There has been a decrease in traditional students who are White, middle-class, young (ages 18-20 years), and who may work part time but are dependent on their parents. Conversely, there has been an increase in nontraditional students, who tend to be students of color, older (26 years of age and over), low income, and have to work full time or part time to pay for college (Longwell-Grice & Longwell-Grice, 2007; Tuttle, Mckinney, & Rago, 2005).

Sampson (2007) conducted a study to identify factors that are related to stress experienced by education graduate students and coping resources and strategies that they use to handle of their stress . Specifically, the aim of the study was to determine if there was a relationship between graduate students' stress level and (a) age, (b) gender, (c) relationship status, (d) parental status, (e) ethnicity, (f) working for financial support, (g) student status (full-time or part-time), (h) degree seeking, (i) teacher status, and (j) considering dropping out of the program. The sample consists of 122 graduate students enrolled in the College of Education of a large Midwest university. Of that total, 22 were male, 100 were female, 32 were African American, 75 were White, 52 were full-time students, 69 were part-time students, 96 were master's degree seeking, 11 were doctorate degree seeking, 14 were educational specialist degree seeking, 101 worked for financial support, and 21 did not work for financial support.

Sampson used the Stress Scale (DeLongis, Folkman, & Lazarus, 1988) to measure factors related to stress that graduate students experience while in graduate school. The scale consists of two close-ended questions that participants rate on a 5-point Likert-type scale, ranging from 1 (*rarely stressed*) to 5 (*often stressed*). The scale also contains 32 open-ended questions related to stress experienced at home, school, and work. Also participants rated items on a 5-point Likert-type scale ranging from 1 (*not related*) to 5 (*highly related*). The Coping Scale (Klick, 2005) was used to measure the coping resources and strategies that students used to manage their stress. The scale contains one close-ended question and three open-ended questions related to sources of support for managing stress. A questionnaire was used to collect demographic data.

Sampson conducted a factor analysis with varimax rotation to reduce the items of the stress scale to a smaller set of components. The results revealed three components related to *work stress*, *home stress*, and *school stress*. Next, a multiple regression analysis was used to

determine whether (a) age, (b) gender, (c) relationship status, (d) parental status, (e) ethnicity, (f) working for financial support, (g) student status (full-time or part-time), (h) degree seeking, (i) teacher status, and (j) considering dropping out of the program predict stress levels related to work, home, and/or school.

Using an alpha level of .10, the results suggested that ethnic background was a significant predictor of work stress ($\beta = -.175, p < .10$), home stress ($\beta = -.175, p < .10$), and school stress ($\beta = -.204, p < .10$). Some other demographic variables were also significant, including number of children student has ($\beta = -.175, p < .10$), student status (part-time or full-time) ($\beta = .183, p < .10$), and flexibility of work schedule ($\beta = -.166, p < .10$). These predictor variables accounted for 22 % of the variance in stress levels related to home, school, and/or work. Qualitative data on coping strategies revealed that 77% of students used family/friends and 64% used fellow students as a support or resource. These findings were consistent with St. John, Paulsen, and Carter (2005) who suggested students of color who have to work to pay for college are limited in opportunities to become more engaged as learners in their colleges and universities.

Several researchers have noted that working full time can negatively affect student satisfaction and persistence (Jenkins, 2000; Taylor & Olswang, 1997; Wicker, 2004). Hardy (2005) examined the student enrollment status of 523 students. Of that number, 137 respondents were employed between one and 40 hours per week, 58 were employed more than 40 hours a week, 42.3% reported that their work consumed most of their time, and 59.3% reported that family responsibilities took up most of their time. As a result of these combined demands on the students' time, 507 respondents reported that they spent less than 20 hours a week studying for their classes, and 475 reported that they spent less than 12 hours a week outside of class on campus. A similar finding was reported by Tuttle et al., (2005), who found that African

American students from low income backgrounds were more likely than White students to work 36 hours or more per week, which negatively impacted student involvement, learning, and persistence.

Other researchers have demonstrated that part-time work can have a positive effect on student persistence and satisfaction (Barfield, 2003; Dundes & Marx, 2007; Tuttle et al., 2005). Dundes and Marx (2007) concluded that there is an optimal amount of time students can work that is beneficial. These researchers reported that students who worked between 10 and 15 hours a week earned better grades than those who worked full time or those who did not work.

Student Enrollment Status

A substantial proportion of college and university enrollments consists of part-time students (O'Toole, Stratton, & Wetzel, 2003). Part-time students take fewer classes and participate in cocurricular activities less often than full-time students (Laird & Cruce, 2009). Nontraditional students such as African-Americans usually attend colleges and universities on a part-time basis due to family and work commitments (Kasworm, 2003). Therefore, interest has been generated in how enrollment status affects student-faculty interaction and the success of part-time students in higher education. Pascarella, Wolniak, Pierson, and Flowers (2004) conducted a longitudinal study to determine if there were significant differences among African-American, Hispanic, and White students in graduate degree plans after three years of college. In addition, Pascarella et al. (2004) examined the unique influence of academic and nonacademic experiences, such as full or part-time enrollment, on graduate degree plans after three years of college.

The sample consisted of 1,089 students who participated in the *National Study of Student Learning (NSSL)* between the fall of 1992 and the spring of 1995. Of that total, 161 one African

American, 133 were Hispanic, and 795 were White. Form 880A of the Collegiate Assessment of Academic Proficiency (CAAP) (American College Testing Program, 1989) was used to measure the general skills of the participants, such as reading, writing, and mathematics. The College Student Experience Questionnaire (CSEQ) (Pace, 1990) was used to measure a wide range of participants' academic, classroom, and out-of-class experiences during their first two years of college. The independent variables consisted of (a) precollege characteristics (e.g., sex, race, age, and other), (b) characteristics of the institution (e.g., HBCU or PWI), (c) college academic and nonacademic experiences (e.g., full-time or part-time enrollment, college grades, and other), and (d) external factors (e.g., work responsibilities). The dependent variable was a question on the NSSL termed *plans for a graduate degree* based on the participants response at the end of three years (spring of 1995).

A logistic regression revealed that respondents significantly lowered their plans to obtain a graduate degree after three years of college. Of the initial sample, 91% ($p < .01$) of respondents planned on earning a graduate degree, but by the spring of 1995 only 81% ($p < .01$) retained this goal. African American (92.7%, $p < .01$) and Hispanic students (91.9%, $p < .01$) were more likely than White students (84.6%, $p < .01$) to plan to obtain a graduate degree after three years of college. Full-time enrollment also had a positive effect on African American students' plans to obtain a graduate degree ($\beta = .435, p < .05$)

Gardner (2008) conducted a qualitative study of 40 doctoral students: 14 males and 26 females, 3 Asian American, 1 African American, and 36 White. The study was designed to examine the socialization process that doctoral students experience in their degree programs that facilitate or impede success and degree completion. Gardner interviewed participants for 60 to 90 minutes. The focus of the interviews was twofold: (a) participants were asked about

socialization experiences in their programs, and (b) their experience with each part of the degree program process.

Using inductive data analysis, Gardner found that five groups of doctoral students emerged who describe their experiences as ones that did not fit the mold of traditional graduate education. The groups include women, students of color, students with children, and part-time students. These students discussed barriers to success, feelings of being different, and a lack of satisfaction and integration in their programs. Part-time students perceived the socialization process as less satisfactory than their peers who were full-time students. For example, part-time students expressed regrets for not being able to spend more time with their peers and felt they were missing a large part of the overall graduate experience. These findings are consistent with Ellis (2001) who found that the doctoral socialization process is impacted by race and gender. Ellis reported that African American women were less satisfied with the doctoral socialization process than African American men, White men, and White women. In addition, Ellis reported that full-time students were more likely to stress the importance of their interaction with their peers than part-time students. Full-time students also spend more time with their peers than part-time students.

Other researchers have demonstrated that African American's persistence is positively related to the socialization process (Allen, 1992; Ancis, Sedlacek, & Mohr, 2000; Johnson-Bailey, Valentine, Cervero, & Bowles, 2009).

Furthermore, researchers have pointed out differences in enrollment status between the nontraditional students, who tends to be older, students of color, and part time, and the younger traditional student, who tends to be full time (O'Toole et al., 2003). Students enrolled part time are more likely to have lower levels of student-faculty interaction. On college campuses with a

greater proportion of part-time students, faculty and students tend to spend less time interacting outside of the classroom (Laird & Cruce, 2009). Kasworm (2003) stated that “this part time status means that adults are time-focused on adult life demands, with a more limited time commitment and priority to collegiate involvement beyond the classroom” (p. 8). Therefore, colleges and universities are challenged to implement more opportunities for engagement between students and faculty outside of the classroom, which would benefit both part-time and full-time students (Laird & Cruce, 2009). Previous research findings show high rates of retention of African American students are found at institutions with high rates of student-faculty interaction (Fleming, 2001). Conversely, institutions with low rates of student-faculty interaction have lower rates of retention (Tinto, 1993).

HBCU Status

HBCUs were established over 157 years ago with the purpose of providing a college education and developing African Americans for leadership (Anderson, 1988). As recently as 1965, most African American college students (60%) attended HBCUs (Brotherton, 2001). Two major events changed the number of students who attend HBCUs. The first was the G. I. Bill, which made it possible for thousands of African American veterans to attend college. The second event was the Civil Rights Act of 1965, which for the first time, allowed African Americans to attend PWIs. As a result, only 20% of African American college students attended HBCUs by 1980 (Wilson, 1994).

More attention is being devoted to characteristics of African American students who attend PWIs (Freeman & Thomas, 2002). Taylor and Olswang (1997) examined the match between African American students and a PWI by assessing individual and institutional characteristics against outcomes, such as GPA and level of commitment to the university.

African American students in this study were asked to cite student characteristics that were conducive to success. Individual characteristics (e.g., a strong sense of confidence, cultural pride, and determination) were cited by the majority (58.7%) of students. Second, good academic preparation and study skills were cited by 13.8% of the students. Finally, 9.8% of the students cited the ability to get along with people from different cultures.

Regarding institutional characteristics, the majority of the students (80.4%) reported that academic help was available when needed, and most students (66%) believed their advisors were helpful. Also, the faculty was rated by students on how approachable and helpful they were. African American faculty was rated higher (74.4%) than White faculty (61.4%). Although the majority of students (61.8%) reported that activities on campus reflected their interests, most (58.6%) did not participate in student organizations, and 56% did not feel that they were a part of campus life. The majority of the students (69.8%) were happy with their decision to attend this university. However, only 35% reported a sense of commitment to the institution (Taylor & Olswang, 1997).

Some researchers have argued that African American students who attend HBCUs benefit from the social and academic environment of HBCUS when compared to the isolation they experience at PWIs (Fleming, 2001). African American students at HBCUs tend to rate their experiences and satisfaction higher than African American students at PWIs (Jenkins, 2000). Clawson (1983) concluded that there was no significant difference in overall satisfaction of African American graduates when comparing HBCUs and PWIs. However, HBCU graduates were more satisfied with their social lives than PWI graduates.

Thomas (2004) compared the satisfaction and persistence of African American graduate students in colleges of education at HBCUs with those at a PWI. The Black Graduate Students

Persistence and Perception Survey (BGSPPS) was used to determine if a significant difference existed in students' perception by institution type (HBCU or PWI). The BGSPPS is a 54-item scale. Each item on the BGSPPS is measured on a 5-point scale ranging from 1 (*never*) to 5 (*always*). ANOVA revealed a significant difference in students' perceptions of academic and emotional support, $F(1,106) = 8.525, p < .004$. The mean score of students at PWIs was higher ($M = 3.2, SD = .432$) than those at HBCUs ($M = 2.9, SD = .468$). Students' perceptions of monetary support and support by administrators differed significantly, $F(1,106) = 5.888, p < .017$. The mean score of students at PWIs was higher ($M = 2.8, SD = .837$) than those at HBCUs ($M = 2.4, SD = .838$). Students' perceptions based on the presence of Blacks in the department and feelings of making the right choice of institution differed significantly $F(1,106) = 8.323, p < .005$. The mean score of students at HBCUs was higher ($M = 1.80, SD = .232$) than those at PWIs ($M = 1.6, SD = .437$). The results suggested that these three factors have an impact upon students' reasons for being satisfied, overall, and being willing to persist or complete a degree program from an HBCU or PWI. African American graduates in this study who attended HBCUs were more satisfied with the representation of African American faculty in their departments than African American students at PWIs. The results of this study were consistent with other studies indicating that African American graduate students need support and positive relationships with faculty and peers to persist in graduate school (Bryant, 2004; Ellis, 2001; Schwitzer et al., 1999).

Relationship Status

People are returning to graduate school for career change and advancement (Kasworm, 2003; Laird & Cruce, 2009; Reynolds, 2004). Students who are married are included in this

population. Several studies point out that graduate students' marriages are at a high risk of divorce (Brannock, Litten, & Smith, 2000; DeNeal, 2008; Gold, 2006).

Researchers have investigated the effects of graduate study on married students. Legako (2000) examined the impact of graduate school on marriage from the nonstudent spouse's perspective. The nonstudent spouse reported dissatisfaction in the marriage relationship due to the accumulation of stress of graduate school. Another study by Gold (2006) investigated marital satisfaction among graduate students. The results revealed that female respondents cited dissatisfaction in the areas of problem solving, sensitivity, and inability to discuss and resolve sensitive topics. The male respondents reported dissatisfaction in the area of finances, including a lack of confidence in how their partners handle finances and arguments about finances.

Kardatzke (2009) found that marital satisfaction of counseling graduate students was impacted by attachment anxiety, attachment avoidance, and dyadic coping. Kardatzke conducted an online survey of 191 married students from 23 randomly selected CACREP-accredited counseling programs to examine a combination of six predictor variables that may impact marital satisfaction. The predictor variables were perceived stress, attachment avoidance, attachment anxiety, dyadic coping, division of household task, and satisfaction with division of task. Participants in the survey were 6 African Americans, 6 Asians, 162 Whites, 8 Latino/as, 7 who specified themselves as others, and 2 who did not answer. One hundred and forty six participants were master's degree students, 43 were doctoral students, and two did not indicate their status. One hundred sixty seven were female, 22 were male, and two did not indicate their sex. The age of the participants ranged from 22 to 60 years.

The Perceived Stress Scale (PSS) (Cohen, Kamarck, & Mermelstein, 1983) was used to measure the extent to which life situations were perceived as stressful. The PSS is a 14-item

questionnaire. The participants rated each item on a five point Likert-type scale ranging from 0 (*never*) to 4 (*very often*). The Experiences and Close Relationship Questionnaire-Revised (ECR-R) (Fraley et al., 2000) was used to measure the attachment style of the participants. This instrument is a 36-item self-report questionnaire consisting of two 18-item subscales. Participants rate each item on a 7-point Likert-type scale ranging from 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 7 (*strongly agree*).

The Dyadic Coping Inventory (DCI) (Bodenmann, personal communication, August 11, 2008) was used to measure both the perceptions of each participant's dyadic coping strategies and those of their partner. The DCI is 37-item instrument. Participants rate each item on a 5-point Likert-type scale ranging from 0 (*never*) to (*very often*). The Relationship Assessment Scale (RAS) (Hendrick, 1988) was used to measure marital satisfaction. The RAS is a 7-item instrument designed to assess general satisfaction with a relationship. Participants rate each item on a 5-point Likert type scale ranging from a (*poorly*) to (*extremely well*). The Marital Index-Brief Form (MII) (Booth, Johnson & Edwards, 1983) was used to measure a couple's propensity to dissolve an existing marriage. The MII is a 5-item instrument, which includes items such as "Has the thought of getting a divorce or separation crossed your mind?" and "Have you or your partner seriously suggested the ideal of divorce?" The participants were asked to rate each item on a 4-point Likert type scale ranging from 1 (*never*) to 4 (*very often*). The division of household task scale (DHT) was used to measure how participants and their spouses manage household tasks. The DHT is a 6-item instrument, five of which access the division of labor in certain categories, and one that accesses the participant's satisfaction with the division of task. Participants rate each item on a 5-point Likert type scale ranging from 1 (*done most of the time by my partner*) to 5 (*done most of the time by me*). The last item on the DHT is used to measure

satisfaction with the division of task. Participants rated this item as 1 (*completely dissatisfied*) to 5 (*completely satisfied*). Finally, a demographic questionnaire was developed by the researcher and used to collect demographic data on participants.

A multiple regression analysis was conducted to examine the extent to which perceived stress, attachment avoidance, attachment anxiety, dyadic coping, division of household tasks, and satisfaction with division of tasks accounted for the variance in marital satisfaction. The results revealed that, when all six variables were entered into the regression equation, attachment avoidance $t(86) = -4.68, p < .01$, attachment anxiety $t(86) = -3.07, p < .01$, and dyadic coping $t(86) = 6.60, p < .01$ accounted for 67% of the variance in marital satisfaction, but perceived stress, division of household tasks, and satisfaction with division of task were not significant. Kardatzke stated “Awareness of these factors can help counselor educators better understand and support married students throughout their time in the program” (p. 159). The graduate school experience can be stressful for married African American students. DeNeal (2008) investigated the phenomenon of African American doctoral persistence and reported that African American women in the program benefited from emotional and moral support provided by their spouses as they pursued their degree.

Lewis (2005) examined the level of factors contributing to psychological distress in African American clients seeking services from a university counseling center in a PWI between the academic years 1996 and 2003. Specifically, demographic variables such as gender, student status, and marital status were investigated to determine if there were differences in terms of total distress scores for clinically distressed and distressed African American clients. Of the 547 African American participants in the sample, 71% were undergraduates, 23.6% were graduate students, 93% were single, 4.4% were married/partnered, .9% were divorced, and 1.8% were

widowed. A 45-item questionnaire was used to measure the client's subjective experiences across three major domains: symptom distress, interpersonal relationships, and social role. A 5-point Likert scale was used ranging from 0 (*never*) to 4 (*almost always*).

ANOVA were conducted to determine differences in psychological distress as a function of marital status. Results suggested that there was a significant difference in levels of psychological distress between single and married/partnered students $F(3,268) = 2.839, p < .038$. The mean score of single students was higher ($M = 41.55, SD = 15.47$) than married/partnered students ($M = 32.14, SD = 11.88$). Lewis stated, "one explanation for this finding could be that single students may experience more isolation and less social support, which may account for their higher scores" (p. 58). McLaughlin (2009) found that single mothers (40.8%) were more likely to be a member of an ethnic minority group than married mothers (24.1%). McLaughlin also reported that single mothers were more likely to be economically disadvantaged which made it difficult to stay school. Johnson-Bailey et., Al (2008) noted that African American graduate students are more likely to experience isolation and less social support in their programs, and this may be true particularly for single African American graduate students.

Gender

A number of studies have shown that there is a relationship between gender and stress among college students (Carter, 1997; Hicks & Miller, 2006; Michie, Glachan, & Bray, 2001). Miche et al. (2001) examined factors that influence academic self-concept, self-esteem, and academic stress. The findings revealed two main effects for gender. First, males were more confident that their peers were positive about their academic ability than females, $F(1,108) = 6.04, p < .01$. Second, females reported higher levels of academic stress than males, $F(1,108) = 6.59, p < .01$. Another study by Hicks (2006) investigated the gender differences of African

American students regarding college lifestyle, life stressors, and health status. Participants completed the Quality of Life Questionnaire (QOL) and a chi-square test was conducted on all data. The data were analyzed question by question to determine the number and percentage of responses for each choice by gender status. Based on the data, females indicated that they were more “slightly stressed” than males due to “trouble coping academically,” 36.7% and 14.6% respectively; “poor finances,” 27.7% and 10.4% respectively, and “family problems,” 27.0% and 8.2%, respectively (p. 26).

Other researchers have demonstrated that there are gender differences in the coping strategies of students and their satisfaction with graduate studies. A study conducted by Carter (1997) investigated coping strategies and levels of college satisfaction by race and gender. The results indicated that there were gender differences for problem-focused coping, with women using more problem-focused coping strategies than men, $F(1,118) = 5.22, p < .03$. The results suggested that women used more problem-focused strategies due to their greater use of only one problem-focused strategy, the social support way of coping. The only positive correlation between coping strategies and college satisfaction was found for Black males. Black males reported greater use of both problem-focused, $r(28) = .37, p < .05$ and emotion-focused strategies, $r(28) = .47, p < .001$. Black males in this study were also more satisfied with the college environment.

Ellis (1997) examined gender differences between Black women, White women, White men, and Black men enrolled in graduate school at a PWI. This study was conducted to determine how gender and race differences impacted the socialization process, student satisfaction with graduate study, and student commitment to complete their doctoral degree. A 4-point Likert-type scale was used ranging from 1 (*very dissatisfied*) to 4 (*very satisfied*).

Participants were also given the option to choose a number part way between two scales (e.g., 3.5) if such a rating would better reflect their satisfaction with doctoral study. Black females reported the lowest level of satisfaction with doctoral study with a rating of 3.0; White females reported a 3.2; White males a 3.3; and Black males had the highest rating of 3.73.

Age

Adult students are returning to college in large numbers. The percentage of students aged 23 years and over increased from 38% in 1986 to 47% in 1992 (Kasworm, 2003). Older students tend to be burdened with more demands than younger, traditional-aged students. Kasworm reported that 57% of older students were married and 53% were supporting dependents. The adult student has to find a balance between work, family, and school. As a result, adult students tend to be more concerned about their academic performance and are less likely to be involved in campus activities and social organizations outside of the classroom. Older students tend to lack confidence in their academic skills. Therefore, they take the advice of their professors or advisers more seriously. Consequently, older students are able to compensate for their lack of involvement in extracurricular learning that takes place on campus by relying on their instructors and class-related learning to help them understand their newly acquired knowledge (Donaldson, 1999).

Wazelle (2005) conducted a qualitative study to develop a profile of the successful graduate of a graduate degree program in a nontraditional, accelerated program of study. Respondents in Wazelle's study consisted of 101 graduate students enrolled at Webster University in Fort Smith, Arkansas. Of that total, graduate students age 25-45 accounted for 69% of the respondents, 41% of the respondents were age 36-45, and 29% were 46 years or older. The respondents were White (96%), African-American (2%), and Native American (2%).

Male graduates made up 69% of the respondents. Respondents completed survey questionnaires that requested demographic data, and they were asked to rate and comment on barriers to enrollment and successful program completion. Selected participants were interviewed and a focus group was conducted.

Descriptive statistics were used to describe the population of graduates. Data from the survey were transcribed and collated, both manually and by using computer software. In Wazelle's study, graduates reported that they experienced situational, dispositional, and institutional barriers. Respondents used a variety of strategies to overcome these barriers, such as support from family, time management, institutional resources, employer financial support, and student loans. A profile was developed that described a White male, 35-65 years old, married, with above-average income, who worked full time while attending graduate school, and who possessed a strong desire to succeed.

Linnartz (2005) examined the perceptions of graduate students about support services to determine which services are most important to adult learners at off-campus sites and to determine if service needs vary depending upon specific demographic variables. Data were collected from 355 students. Of that total, 318 were White/non-Hispanic, 17 were Black/non-Hispanic, 8 were Hispanic, and 12 identified as Asian/Pacific Islander, American Indian/Alaska Native, or Other categories. Most of the respondents were between the ages of 25 and 55 years. The Support Needs for off-Campus Student Survey was developed by the researcher to collect data on demographic variables and to assess the importance of support services. The instrument contains 400 items including open ended questions and 4-point Likert-type scales from 1 (*not very important*) to 4 (*very important*).

In order to determine specifically which services are most important to students, the means of each survey question in each of the major categories were calculated. The results suggest that academic advising was most important to respondents ($M = 2.73$, $SD = .51$), followed by admission services ($M = 2.67$, $SD = .45$), general educational support ($M = 2.62$, $SD = .58$), and Administrative services ($M = 2.58$, $SD = .53$). Personal support ($M = 1.94$, $SD = .51$) was less important. Additional t-test analyses indicated that female respondents place significantly ($p < .07$) (a significant rate of .10 was used) more importance on several administrative services than males, such as ease of registration for courses [female ($M = 3.57$) male ($M = 3.39$)], online course registration [female ($M = 3.29$) male ($M = 2.86$)], and having a knowledgeable personnel available for assistance [female ($M = 2.76$) male ($M = 2.99$)].

Using ANOVA, the means of each service category were analyzed by degree program (i.e., master's, education specialist, or doctoral). Results indicated that there was a significant difference ($p < .07$) between degree program and the importance that students gave the admission services $F(3,351) = 4.97$, $p < .002$ and administrative services $F(3,351) = 2.46$, $p < .06$. The mean differences (MD) and standard error (SE) were reported for the master's and education specialist degree programs ($MD = -.26142$, $SE = .09643$) $p < .03$, and the masters and doctoral programs ($MD = -.29624$, $SE = .11682$) $p < .05$. Students in the education specialist and doctoral programs needed less assistance from support services than the masters program. According to the researcher, these results may be contributed to the experience that postmaster's students have acquired for knowing how to navigate through the procedures of higher education, and they depend less on assistance from services than master's degree students.

Multivariate analysis of variance (MANOVA) was used for each item of support services to determine if the importance of support services vary significantly by gender, degree

program, program of study, driving time to institution and/ or class site, geographic region, age of student, race or ethnicity, employment status, or child care responsibilities. The results indicated that the importance of educational support varied significantly between students 25 to 35 and those 46 to 55 years of age. Linnartz did not provide a comparison of means for the two age groups, but he reported the *p* values of the educational support items. Specifically, the *p* values for educational support items were course information and resources online ($p < .03$), bookstore or ease of purchasing books ($p < .08$), Internet access and study areas ($p < .07$), and comfortable classrooms ($p < .06$). Adult learners often must make adjustments to their new learning environment (Kasworm, 2003). Linnartz explained, “Since classes usually meet on evenings and weekends, it is not surprising that they preferred a comfortable place to meet after working all week” (p. 66).

Adults returning to pursue higher education face challenges that differ from traditional students. The findings of Wazelle (2005) and Linnartz (2005) suggested that adult students’ persistence is influenced by social and academic challenges and available resources to meet their needs. There are similar implications in the findings of studies involving adult African American students. Recent studies revealed that adult African American students have benefited from support of family, financial aid, and academic systems, such as tutoring, mentoring, and advisement to persist to graduation (Denson, 2009; Shelton, 2008).

Adderly (2008) investigated the barriers and motivations that prohibit or affect the continuing educational development of nontraditional African American graduates. Adderly conducted a mixed method study of African American adult learners enrolled in graduate degree programs. There were 30 participants in the study. Of that total, 9 were male and 21 were female, and 7 were between the ages of 50-67 years. Participants were asked to complete a

questionnaire designed to measure the importance of barriers and motivations that impede African-American participation in a graduate degree program. The instrument contained 35 items which measure on a 4-point Likert type scale from 1 (*strongly agree*) to 4 (*strongly disagree*). Follow-up personal interviews were conducted with selected participants.

The study's findings suggested that the most important motivations for participants were “to gain knowledge for personal reasons” (93.3%), “to complete my education” (86.7%), “to facilitate a career change” (83.3%), “to set an example for my children” (79.3%), “to earn more income” (76.7%), and “to get a promotion on my job” (63.3%). The most important barriers for participants were “financial cost too great for me” (27.6%), “time constraints-I do not have the time” (27.6%), “I have family responsibilities that impede participation” (27.6%), “the courses that I need are not offered at convenient times” (17.9%), “I live too far from campus” (17.2%), “I lacked sufficient motivation to finish” (14.8%), and “I am a working parent and Live in remote area” (10.3%). After evaluating the most important barriers with demographic variables, Adderley reported a significant finding of the study was that all the participants between the ages of 57 and 67 were retirees, and they were in the group of those who cited financial cost was too great, family responsibilities impede participation, and signal that they may soon drop out of their respective programs.

GPA

Studies concerning academic success of African American graduate students and its relationship to mentoring have been examined (Ellis, 2001; Johnson-Bailey et al., 2008; Johnson-Bailey, Valentine, Cervero, & Bowles, 2009). Brittian, Sy, and Stokes (2009) investigated the effects of mentorship programs on African American students in several areas: academic success (GPA), student life, social support, acculturative stress, and well-being (mental

health). Brittan, et al. surveyed 183 African American students. Of that total, 28 were graduate students, 60 were seniors, 45 were juniors, 26 were sophomores, and 29 were freshmen. The sample consisted of 128 females and 55 males.

The construct of academic success was measured as self-reported grade point average (GPA), positions of leadership, and participation in clubs and organizations. Participants were asked also to respond to questions such as “How many clubs/organizations do you participate in at the University?” “Are you an active member?” and “how many positions of leadership do you hold in clubs/organizations at the University?” Mentorship Program Experiences is an instrument that was created to measure African American students’ experiences with mentorship programs on campus. The instrument contains open ended-questions, such as “Do you participate in any formal or informal mentorship programs provided on campus?” “Do you actively participate?” “What has been your experience with mentorship programs?” and “if you are not in a mentorship program, why not?” Participants were asked to provide in-depth information regarding deterrents to participation in a mentorship program.

However the results revealed, mentorship students had significantly lower GPAs ($M = 2.97$) than non-mentorship students ($M = 3.40$) (standard deviations were not reported), $t(179) = -2.16, p < .05$. Campus involvement through active club participation was higher for students and mentorship programs ($M = 1.59$) than those who were not in a program ($M = .55$), $t(152) = -5.03, p < .01$. Qualitative data suggested that those African American students did not participate in mentorship programs, because they believe that these programs were only for those who are having academic difficulty, and they thought that they could be successful without academic assistance.

Other researchers have demonstrated that college input and environmental variables were significantly associated with student satisfaction and GPA. House (2006) used the input-environmental-outcome assessment model (I-E-O) to examine students' satisfaction with their general education courses and to examine GPA. The sample included 398 entering college students who were first administered the Cooperative Institutional Research Program (CIRP) to assess initial characteristics, such as values and attitudes, high school experiences, goals and aspirations, and educational and career plans. Two years later, these same students were given the College Student Survey (CSS), which is designed to assess some of the same dimensions as the CIRP, as well as academic and social experiences during college.

Data from the CIRP and CSS were combined in order to examine the effects of students' initial characteristics on their subsequent experiences in college. The mutual effect of student input characteristics was controlled using the Causal Analytical Modeling via a Blocked Regression Analysis (CAMBRA) to evaluate the overall I-E-O model for each outcome measure to obtain less biased estimates on outcomes. The results indicated that students who have more positive perceptions of their general education courses reported that the faculty were available to discuss coursework outside of class more frequently, they were more satisfied with class size and more frequently worked on group projects. In addition, students who had greater satisfaction with their general education spent fewer hours per week commuting and had more frequent opportunities to work on research projects. However, students who spent more hours working and fewer hours per week studying reported lower levels of satisfaction with their general education courses. The complete set of input and environmental variables was significant $F(32,269) = 4.11, p < .001$ and explained 32.9% of the variance in student satisfaction with their general education courses

Results from the CAMBRA multiple regression analysis of GPAs revealed that students who reported higher initial self-ratings of their overall academic abilities and drive to achieve spent more hours per week studying during their senior year of high school earned higher college GPAs. However, students who reported higher initial self-confidence in their intellectual abilities earned lower college GPAs. Regarding the environmental variables, students who enrolled more frequently in honors or advanced courses earned higher college GPAs. On the other hand, students who reported that they had failed one or more courses during college, spent more hours commuting and working for pay earned lower college GPAs. The complete set of input and environmental variables was significant $F(32,268) = 10.30, p < .001$ and explained 55.2% of the variance in college GPAs.

There is also documentation of race/ethnicity, student satisfaction, and academic achievement as measured by GPA. Fischer (2007) explored the subject of racial and ethnic differences in adjusting to college and college outcomes. The results indicated that Whites and Asians had the highest average GPAs at 3.38 and 3.30, respectively. Hispanic students' average GPA was 3.08, and Black students had the lowest average at 2.95. Formal academic ties with professors were positively related to GPA for all ethnic groups. Black and Hispanic students in this study were more likely to be first-generation college students and to come from a low socioeconomic status social background.

Walpole (2008) investigated how socioeconomic status affected college experience and outcomes for African American students in 4-year colleges and universities. Walpole used data from the national CIRP study sponsored by the Higher Education Research Institute (HERI) at the University of California Los Angeles (UCLA). The study used students who completed the 1985 freshman survey, the 1989 follow-up survey, and the 1994 follow-up survey, for a total of

12,400 students from over 200 colleges and universities. The study findings suggested that low SES students had less contact with faculty, spent less time studying, reported less involvement in clubs and groups, and worked more to achieve lower grades than high SES students.

Eighty percent of all students in the study reported overall grades of “B” or less, and 20% reported grades of “B+” or above. Seventy four percent of high SES students reported GPAs of “B” or lower, while 82% of low SES students did so. Likewise, only 17% of low SES students reported GPAs of B+ or higher, compared to 25% of high SES students. A logistic regression analysis was used for the dichotomous dependent variables (1) = did not attend graduate school and (2) = attended graduate school. Not surprisingly, GPAs were a significant predictor. The higher an African American student’s GPA, the more likely he or she was to attend graduate school.

These results were similar to the findings of Hershberger and D’Augeiti (1992), who examined the relationship of academic performance and social support among African American and White students at a PWI. The researchers obtained survey data from 165 (81 White and 84 African American) undergraduates who entered Penn State University in 1983. The researchers hypothesized that pre-college academic performance, first-year college GPA, and general adjustment variables would affect graduation rates. A path analysis was conducted to construct a model for the relationships among the variables in the study. Results indicated that there were mixed differences between African American and White students’ perceptions of social support and well being, but these differences did not relate to graduation. However, a revised model revealed that precollege academic performance and CGPA were more useful in predicting graduation. Students who performed well academically in high school and college were more

likely to graduate. Hershberger and D'Augeiti, stated "Because more African American students entered this university with lower pre-college academic scores, fewer graduated" (p. 197).

Course Type

Distant learning is not new. In the past, it has been used to facilitate teaching and learning and it has evolved with communication technologies from the printing press to computers (Moore & Lockee, 1998). Today, the use of online courses has continued to rapidly expand in higher education. The growth of online instruction in education has been driven by budget cuts, performance-based budgeting, and the need for flexible instruction delivery (Harris, 1998). Online courses have become a viable alternative for nontraditional students who cannot or choose not to attend campus-based classes. Nontraditional students, many of whom are African American, have children, jobs, and family responsibilities (Benson, 2003; Carter, 2001). Therefore, more attention is being devoted by researchers to the impact of various types of information delivery systems (i.e., face-to-face, online, and blended courses) on students' academic and social adjustment (Beckett, Amaro-Jiménez, & Beckett, 2010; Rovai & Gallien, 2005).

Meyer (2006) investigated how graduate students value their face-to-face and online discussions to assess whether the settings of the discussions (face-to-face or online) made a difference. Participants consisted of 10 graduate students; three students were younger (in their 20s), seven were older (30s and 40s); 3 were master's students and 7 were doctoral students, 3 were White, and 7 were African American. Students participated in face-to-face and online discussions on five controversial topics: (a) diversity, (b) academic freedom, (c) political tolerance, (d) affirmative action, and (e) gender. After completion of each of the discussions, students were assessed on their level of comfort, honesty, concern for others' feelings, similarity

of feelings to others, and willingness to disagree. A questionnaire was developed to measure students' post-discussion assessments and comparisons. Participants were asked questions such as how comfortable did you feel? and how honest were you? The instrument measured responses on a 5-point Likert-type scale from 1 (*very*) to 5 (*not at all*). Lower numbers indicate a stronger response to the question.

Meyer used a descriptive analysis of the data based on student responses to the questionnaire. The results suggested that there were differences in how students valued face-to-face and online discussions. Students were more uncomfortable in face-to-face discussion on political tolerance, affirmative action, and gender; they were more worried about others' feelings in face-to-face discussions on diversity and political tolerance; they were more likely to feel the same as others in online discussions of political tolerance, affirmative action, and gender; and they were more willing to disagree with others in online settings for the discussions on diversity and academic freedom. The majority of the students, who were older and African American, seemed to prefer the face-to-face discussions.

Regarding differences in age and race, older students appeared to be more comfortable, less worried about hurting others' feelings, and more willing to disagree during face-to-face conversations on controversial topics than younger students. African American students seemed to be more confident and less concerned about hurting others' feelings, and more likely to disagree than White students. White students were in the minority, and they appeared to be more comfortable discussing controversial topics online.

Collins, Onwuegbuzie, and Jiao (2008) conducted a study of 92 African American graduate students to examine the extent to which African American graduate students' reading abilities predicted their attitudes towards computers and the educational use of the Internet.

Participants' reading ability (i.e., reading comprehension and reading vocabulary) was measured by the Nelson-Denny Reading Tests-Form G (NDRT) (Brown, Fishco, & Hanna, 1993).

Participants' attitudes towards computers were measured by the Computer Attitude Scale (CAS) (Loyd & Gressard, 1984). The CAS contains 40 items that measure constructs on four scales: (a) anxiety or fear of computers, (b) liking or enjoying working with computers, (c) confidence in ability to use computers, and (d) computer usefulness. Participants' attitudes towards the educational use of the Internet were measured by the Attitudes Towards Educational Use of the Internet (ATEUI) scale (Duggan, Hess, Morgan, Kim, & Wilson, 2001). The ATEUI contains 18 items using a 5-point Likert-type scale from 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 5 (*strongly agree*). Higher scores on this instrument indicate a more positive attitude towards the Internet.

A Canonical Correlational Analysis was used to determine the relationship between reading ability scores and computer attitude scores. The results revealed that reading comprehension and reading vocabulary explained 98.9% and 80.9% of the variance respectively. Regarding the computer attitude dimension, computer confidence, computer liking, and attitudes towards the educational use of the Internet accounted for 37.2%, 19.40%, and 79.2% of the variance respectively. The results suggested that African American graduate students with the lowest level of reading ability tended to report the least computer confidence, the least positive attitudes regarding computer liking, and the least positive attitudes towards the educational use of the Internet. The findings also suggested that African American graduate students' reading ability may have a negative impact on acquisition of computer and Internet skills and achievement in graduate courses requiring computer-based skills.

Rovai and Gallien (2005) investigated how learning and sense of community differed between African American and White students enrolled in an online graduate course.

Participants in this study were 97 graduate students enrolled in an online graduate education program. Of that total, 86 were female and 11 were male. There were 50 African Americans and 47 Whites. The participants were from two course sections. The first section was taught entirely online and consisted of a mix of African American and White students in which African American students were in the minority (39%). The second section consisted of only African American students and was taught using a blend of online and face-to-face learning.

Four outcomes were measured by the study: (a) total points earned, (b) Perceived Learning, (c) Social community, and (d) learning community.

Total points earned in the sampled course were used to operationalize student learning. The maximum possible course points were 100. The grading scheme was as follows: A, 97 to 100 points; A-, 93 to 96 points; B+, 89 to 92 points; B, 85 to 88 points; B-, 81 to 84 points; C+, 77 to 80 points; C-, 73 to 76 points; and F, below 73 points. Additionally, students self-report of grades operationalized learning.

The Perceived Learning Questionnaire (PLQ) (Richmond, Gorham, & McCroskey, 1987) was used to measure students' perceptions of how much they learned in the course on a scale from 0 to 9, 0 (*meaning you learned nothing*) to 9 (*meaning you learned more than in any other course you had*).

The Classroom Community Scale (CCS) (Rovai, 2002) which contains two subscales of social community and learning community. The CCS consists of 20 self-reported items, such as "I feel isolated in this course" and "I feel that this course is like a family." Participants rated each item on a five point Likert type scale from 1 (*strongly agree*) to 5 (*strongly disagree*). The total possible scores for each of the two subscales of social community and learning community can range from 0 to 40, with higher scores reflecting strong feelings of community.

Rovai and Gallien used a one-way multivariate analysis of variance (MANOVA) to conduct two analyses. In the first analysis, two groups were compared: the mixed race section and the African American only section. In the second analysis, three groups were compared: (a) the mixed African American group, which consisted of African American participants from the mixed-race section of the course; (b) the mixed White group, which consisted of the White participants from the same mixed-race section, and (c) the African American only group, which consisted of all participants from the African American only section of the course.

The results of the first analysis indicated that there were no significant differences between the two groups (mixed race section and African American only section) for total course points and for perceived learning. However, the African American only group scored significantly higher than the mixed-race group for social community, $F(1, 95) = 10.64$, $MSE = 43.32$, $p < .002$, $\eta^2 = .10$, and for learning community, $F(1, 95) = 4.50$, $MSE = 30.86$, $p < .04$, $\eta^2 = .05$.

In the second analysis the results of the three groups compared (the mixed African American group, the mixed White group, and the African American only group) suggested that the means for the African American only group and the mixed White group were equivalent on all four dependent variables. However, post hoc pairwise comparisons using Sidak's t -test, a conservative test that adjust the observed significance level when multiple comparisons are made, revealed several significant pairwise differences. The mixed African American group means ($M = 84.05$, $SD = 8.18$) were significantly lower ($p < .001$) than the mixed White group means ($M = 89.99$, $SD = 4.60$) for total course points, $p < .001$. The mixed African-American group means ($M = 6.20$, $SD = 1.42$) were significantly lower ($p < .001$) than the mixed white group means ($M = 7.47$, $SD = 1.12$) for perceived learning. The mix African-American group

means ($M = 25.10$, $SD = 7.47$) were significantly lower ($p < .006$) than the mix white group means ($M = 29.79$, $SD = 6.20$) for social community. The mix African-American group means ($M = 27.50$, $SD = 5.58$) were significantly lower ($p < .001$) than the mix White group means ($M = 33.4$, $SD = 4.44$) for learning community. Finally, the mixed African-American group means ($M = 25.10$, $SD = 7.48$) were significantly lower ($p < .001$) than the African American only group means ($M = 33.35$, $SD = 4.11$) for social community. Also, the mixed African-American group means ($M = 27.50$, $SD = 5.58$) were significantly lower ($p < .001$) than the African-American only group means ($M = 34.10$, $SD = 4.96$) for learning community. The results suggest that African American students' academic and social achievement is more likely to be enhanced by courses that offer more opportunities to interact face-to-face with peers of the same ethnicity and faculty than those that are taught in a fully online section. These findings are similar to what might be found at a HBCU, Flemings (2001) reported that faculty-student interaction, personal management, and social adjustment are enhanced by the supportive environment of HBCUs. These results are in contrast with the isolation experienced by African American students at PWIs.

Hours of Coursework

In 1910, college admissions officers, under pressure from the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching, developed the student credit hour (SCH) as a standard measure of student learning. One SCH was equal to one hour per week in the classroom for one semester. Advancements in technology have presented a challenge to this type of measurement, because time in the classroom is not relevant for courses taught online (Wellman, 2005). However, the SCH has persisted and it has become the standard of measurement and accountability in higher education for student enrollment status, faculty work status, degree requirement, and cost per

unit (funding divided by credit-hour production) (Blumenstyk, 2010). Research investigating the SCH has revealed that the number of credit hours taken is related to demographic variables and student persistence (Bierstaker, Howe, & Seol, 2005; Jones, 2001).

Smith-Keller (2005) conducted an *ex post factor* study to examine how student participation in a one-credit career course (Class Cohort, $n = 349$) affected selected student outcomes, compared to students who did not take the career course (Non-class Cohort, $n = 759$). One of the student outcomes was the number of credit hours of students who had taken the career course. The data for this study were retrieved from transcripts from a Midwestern doctoral-intensive university involving students who completed a career development course between 1994 and 1998, and from a comparison group of students enrolled during the same time period who did not participate in the course.

Results of the *t*-test analysis suggested that there was a statistically significant difference in total credit hours taken to graduate by those students who had taken the career course ($M = 140.88$, $SD = 25.70$) compared to those who had not ($M = 162.51$, $SD = 56.24$) $t(1107) = 4.90$, $p < .001$. The study's findings suggest that participants in the career course persisted to graduate at a significantly higher rate and took fewer credit hours than nonparticipants.

Jones (2001) examined the relationship between the mean number of credit hours taken by a student cohort and their persistence at a Midwestern, doctoral-intensive university. This cohort was tracked for three years, from fall 1998 through spring 2001. There were 1511 students in this study. Of that total, 801 were female, and 750 were male. Regarding ethnicity, 24 were Asian, 8 were black/non-Hispanic, 3 were Hispanic, 1498 were White/non-Hispanic, and 18 did not respond. Jones used an *ex post factor* design based on data from transcripts. Data for this study were gathered from official academic records and students were categorized by

age, ethnicity, gender, high school class rank, high school grade point average, composite ACT score, amount and type of financial aid, credits enrolled at admission date, and semester and cumulative grade point averages.

Correlational and descriptive analyses indicated that students enrolled in more credit hours ($M = 15.61$) were more likely to persist than students with less ($M = 14.48$), $r(1,549) = .283, p < .05$. There was a significant relationship between ethnicity and mean credit hours, $r(1549) = .091, p < .05$. White/non-Hispanic students enrolled in significantly more credit hours ($M = 15.17$) than black non-Hispanic ($M = 14.78$), Asian ($M = 14.11$), and Hispanic ($M = 10.58$) students.

Given the findings from Smith-Keller (2005) and Jones (2001), the number of credit hours taken appears to be related to persistence. The findings also indicate that the number of credit hours taken is also related to ethnicity. African American students enrolled in fewer credit hours than White students and they were less likely to persist. These findings are consistent with previous studies on student commitment and engagement (Kuh, 2005; Tinto, 1993) and those that have reported African American persistence rates are lower than those of White graduates (The Education Trust, 2004; Townes, 2007; Walpole, 2008).

Summary

In reviewing the literature currently available on satisfaction of students with their educational programs and institutions, it is apparent that there is a lack of research that focuses on African American students' satisfaction with their graduate programs. In addition, demographic variables and research methods were wide ranging, with many combinations that affect the outcomes of research. However, two common themes may be noted: (a) satisfaction

was positively related to academic and social integration, and (b) African American students at PWIs tend to be less satisfied than White students.

Each of the research reports are important and contribute to a growing body of knowledge on the recruitment and retention of students in higher education. Central to these investigations is the importance of identifying predictors of satisfaction. As noted previously, satisfied students experience greater academic success and they are more committed to their institution. No previous research specifically addressing predictors of satisfaction for African American counselor education students with their programs was found. Considering the increasing enrollment of this population in counselor education programs, this area warrants investigation.

CHAPTER III

METHOD

The purpose of this study was to identify predictors of the level of satisfaction of African American master's degree students with their counselor education programs. This chapter is organized to present the methodology and procedures followed during this study, a description of the survey instrument and population sampled, and an explanation of the data analysis. The following research question and hypothesis guided the study:

Research Question. Will receipt of financial aid, being a first-generation college student, employment status while in graduate school, current attendance at an HBCU, student enrollment status as part time or full time, relationship status, gender, age, GPA, course type, and hours of coursework predict African American counselor education master's degree students' satisfaction with their graduate programs?

Hypothesis. Receipt of financial aid, being a first-generation college student, employment status while in graduate school, current attendance at an HBCU, student enrollment status as part time or full time, relationship status, gender, age, GPA, course type, and hours of coursework will not separately or jointly predict African American counselor education master's degree students' satisfaction with their graduate programs.

Participants

The population for this study was African American students enrolled in Council for the Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs (CACREP) and non-CACREP master's level programs in Alabama, Georgia, and Mississippi. In Alabama, the coordinators of the following counselor education programs were contacted and agreed to participate in the study: The University of North Alabama, Alabama A & M University, the University of Montevallo, Alabama State University, The University of Alabama, Auburn University, Troy University, and the University of South Alabama. Two additional Universities in Alabama were contacted but did not respond. The coordinators of the following counselor education programs in Georgia were contacted and agreed to participate: Fort Valley State University, and Augusta state University. Participating programs in Mississippi were Delta State University and Jackson State University.

Instrumentation

The researcher developed the Counselor Education Program Satisfaction Scale (CEPSS) (See Appendix A). The process of developing the CEPSS began with a review of existing general college satisfaction scales (Garrard, 2006; Thomas, 2004; Wicker, 2004; Young, 1994) and other relevant literature (Johnson, Bradley, Knight, & Bradshaw, 2007; Park, 2009; Strayhorn & Terrell, 2007). Based upon these resources, the researcher developed an initial pool of 36 items to measure student satisfaction with counselor education programs. To further examine the content validity of the items, counselor educators from three universities in Alabama reviewed the items and provided feedback about each item. The counselor educators were asked to assess the items regarding the extent to which they represented counselor education student satisfaction. Only items that were considered by all three reviewers to measure counselor

education student satisfaction were included in the final instrument. Furthermore, the counselor educators were asked to identify questions that were unclear or redundant. After review, 12 items were removed, resulting in a 24-item scale.

After Institutional Review Board (IRB) approval, a pilot study was conducted to explore the psychometric properties of the instrument. The pilot study was completed using 87 master's students enrolled in the counselor education programs at the University of Alabama at Birmingham and Mississippi State University-Meridian. Data were collected by visits to classes in which students were asked to complete the scale. The data were analyzed using item-to-total correlations, which is an indicator of construct validity (see Table 1). All items were highly correlated ($r > .30$) with the instrument total except for item 2 ("the financial aid available is sufficient"). Item 2 was removed from the instrument, and an estimate of reliability was conducted, resulting in a Cronbach's alpha reliability coefficient of .93.

Table 1

Item to Total Correlations from Pilot Study

Item	<i>r</i>
1. I feel welcomed	.564
2. The financial aid available is sufficient	.136
3. The faculty provide quality instruction	.633
4. The courses offered are relevant to my career goals	.611
5. The faculty are available during office hours	.642
6. The faculty provide timely feedback on my academic progress	.642
7. I receive academic support from the faculty	.734
8. I have opportunities to practice individual counseling skills	.538
9. I have opportunities to practice group counseling skills	.461
10. My opinions are respected by the faculty	.680
11. My opinions are respected by my peers	.596
12. I have adequate access to technology	.560
13. I have adequate access to technology assistance	.581
14. I am encouraged to participate in professional counselor organizations	.698
15. I have a variety of electives from which to choose	.543
16. The faculty are timely in their response to my requests for assistance	.623
17. I have a clear understanding of what is needed for me to complete requirements for my major	.574
18. I have access to a mentor	.555
19. I am pleased with the accreditation of the program	.626
20. I am learning the knowledge and skills to become a professional counselor	.695
21. The course schedule allows flexibility to complete degree requirements	.483
22. Course offerings within my field of study are available each semester	.482
23. The grading system is fair	.645
24. Adequate field placements are available to me	.684

An exploratory factor analysis was conducted also on the CEPSS to identify underlying factors and generate further evidence of construct validity. The Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin measure of sampling adequacy was .87, above the recommended value of .6. The Bartlett's test of sphericity was $\chi^2 (277, N = 87) = 1210.68 p < .01$.

Factor analysis suggested that the CEPSS is a multi-dimensional measure of counselor education student satisfaction with their programs. Six factors with Eigen values greater than one were derived by a principle components analysis. The first factor explained 15% of the variance, the second factor explained 13% of the variance, the third factor explained 12% of the variance, the fourth factor explained an additional 12% of the variance, the fifth factor explained 10% of the variance, and the sixth factor explained 9% of the variance associated with responses on the instrument. The total variance explained by the six factors was 71%. The factor structure was examined using the varimax rotation procedure. The rotated component matrix with factor loadings by item can be found in Table 2. Items with factor loadings $> .40$ are in boldface.

Table 2

Rotated Component Matrix

Item	1	2	3	4	5	6
I am learning the knowledge and skills to become a professional counselor	.794	.135	.213	.170	.323	.088
The courses offered are relevant to my career goals	.775	.171	.029	.174	.072	.336
The faculty provide quality instruction	.683	.334	.228	.087	.035	.147
I am pleased with the accreditation of the program	.639	.133	.442	.195	.201	-.122
I receive academic support from the faculty	.521	.504	.193	.313	.048	.205
The faculty provide timely feedback on my academic progress	.466	.365	.093	.439	-.005	.216
My opinions are respected by my peers	.214	.770	-.006	.103	.259	.226
My opinions are respected by the faculty	.187	.674	.254	.189	.336	.102
The grading system is fair	.261	.594	.279	.041	.243	.234
The faculty are timely in response to my requests for assistance	.196	.522	.240	.498	.122	-.073
I have a clear understanding of what is needed for me to complete requirements for my major	.265	.146	.758	.138	-.090	.225
I have access to a mentor	.077	.075	.595	.328	.287	.140
I feel welcomed	.312	.494	.568	.019	-.085	.067
Adequate field experiences are available to me	.091	.190	.567	.342	.393	.233
I am encouraged to participate in professional counselor organizations	.477	.204	.486	.136	.287	.192
The faculty are available during office hours	.244	.391	.429	.048	.184	.424
The course schedule allows flexibility to complete degree requirements	.191	-.069	.203	.782	.113	.065
I have a variety of electives from which to choose	.350	.079	.011	.723	.107	.172
Course offerings within my field of study are available each semester	-.049	.353	.197	.712	-.065	.082
I have opportunities to practice group counseling skills	.126	.178	.082	.007	.880	.157
I have opportunities to practice individual counseling skills	.183	.238	.089	.111	.870	.088
I have adequate access to technology assistance	.138	.070	.290	.250	.115	.828
I have adequate access to technology	.217	.280	.118	.048	.173	.785

Item reduction to enhance the instrument began with an examination of the factor loadings of each item. Examination of Factor One revealed three items loading solely on that factor with factor loadings $>.40$. Three additional items were complex (i.e., they loaded on more than one factor at $>.40$). The item “I am pleased with the accreditation of the program” was most closely associated with Factor One and appeared to align with this factor. This item was retained. Two items (“I receive academic support from the faculty” and “The faculty provides timely feedback on my academic progress”) had similar loadings on more than one factor. These items were not retained.

Examination of Factor Two indicated that three items loaded solely on that factor with factor loadings $>.40$. A fourth item (“The faculty are timely in their response to my requests for assistance”) had similar loadings on both Factor Two and Factor Four. This item was not retained.

Three items loaded solely on the Factor Three with factor loadings $>.40$. The item, “I feel welcomed,” had similar loadings on Factor Two and Factor Three. The item, “I am encouraged to participate in professional counselor organizations” had similar loadings on Factor One and Factor Three. The item, “The faculty are available during office hours,” had similar loadings on Factor Three and Factor Six. These three items were not retained.

Three items loaded solely on the Factor Four with factor loadings $>.40$. Two items loaded on Factor Five with factor loadings $>.40$. Finally, two items loaded solely on Factor Six with factor loadings $>.40$. From the initial factor analysis, seventeen items were retained.

Following the removal of items after the initial factor analysis, a second factor analysis was conducted. Five factors with Eigen values greater than one were derived by a principle components analysis. The first factor explained 17% of the variance, the second, third, and

fourth factors each explained an additional 14% of the variance. The fifth factor explained 13% of the variance. The total variance explained by the five factors was 72%. The factor structure was examined using the varimax rotation procedure. The rotated component matrix with factor loadings by item can be found in Table 3. Items with factor loadings $> .40$ are in boldface.

Examination of Factor One revealed four items loading solely on that factor with factor loadings $> .40$. An additional item, “I have a clear understanding of what is needed for me to complete requirements for my major,” was complex. This item had a factor loading of .418 for Factor One and a loading of .682 for Factor Three. Given the strong relationship of this item to Factor Three, it was retained in Factor Three. The four items for Factor One appear to measure student satisfaction with the academic program, and Factor One was named Academic Quality.

Three items loaded solely on Factor Two with factor loadings $> .40$. An additional item, “I have adequate access to technology,” was complex. This item had a factor loading of .541 for Factor Two and a loading of .604 for Factor Three. Examination of the item indicated that it seemed to fit logically with Factor Three. The three items in Factor Two appear to measure student satisfaction with justice and respect, and Factor Two was named Equity.

Interpretation of Factor Three was more complex. Two items loaded solely on Factor Three with factor loadings $> .40$. As indicated earlier, the item “I have a clear understanding of what is needed for me to complete requirements for my major” loaded on Factor One and Factor Three, with the strongest loading being on Factor Three. This item was retained in Factor Three. Also, as indicated earlier, the item “I have adequate access to technology” loaded on Factor Two and Factor Three, with the strongest loading being on Factor Three. This item appeared to fit most logically with Factor Three and was retained in Factor Three. The item, “Adequate field placements are available to me,” had a factor loading of .538 for Factor Three and a loading of

.487 for Factor Four. Because the arrangements of field placement are a component of academic support, this item was retained in Factor Three. The five items comprising Factor Three seem to measure academic support, and Factor Three was named “Academic Support.”

Two items loaded solely on Factor Four with factor loadings $<.40$. As indicated earlier, the item “Adequate field placements are available to me” was complex, but retained in Factor Three. The two items of Factor Four appear to measure student satisfaction with clinical skills development, and Factor Four was named Clinical Skills Development. Three items loaded solely on Factor Five with factor loadings $>.40$. These items appear to measure student satisfaction with scheduling and availability of courses, and Factor Five was named Scheduling. Seventeen items were retained in the final instrument. These items and their associated factors can be found in Table 4. A copy of the final instrument can be found in attachment 1.

Table 3

Rotated Component Matrix

Item	1	2	3	4	5
I am learning the knowledge and skills to become a professional counselor	.796	.183	.133	.315	.175
The courses offered are relevant to my career goals	.739	.332	.217	.033	.091
The faculty provide quality instruction	.737	.012	.158	.256	.253
I am pleased with the accreditation of the program	.729	.357	.202	.010	.135
My opinions are respected by my peers	.219	.836	.074	.223	.151
The grading system is fair	.313	.627	.267	.244	.119
My opinions are respected by the faculty	.248	.610	.136	.368	.289
I have adequate access to technology assistance	.099	.316	.778	.078	.166
I have a clear understanding of what is needed for me to complete requirements for my major	.418	.019	.682	-.017	.173
I have adequate access to technology	.158	.541	.604	.107	-.040
I have access to a mentor	.189	-.006	.545	.360	.344
Adequate field placements are available to me	.169	.082	.538	.487	.360
I have opportunities to practice individual counseling skills	.168	.249	.053	.879	.094
I have opportunities to practice group counseling skills	.133	.243	.138	.858	-.047
The course schedule allows flexibility to complete degree requirements	.203	-.041	.157	.105	.802
Course offerings within my field are available each semester	-.008	.317	.206	-.048	.757
I have a variety of electives from which to choose	.308	.159	.081	.074	.708

Table 4

Final CEPSS Items and Associated Factors

Factor One (Academic Quality)

I am learning the knowledge and skills to become a professional counselor
The faculty provide quality instruction
I am pleased with the accreditation of the program
The courses offered are relevant to my career goals

Factor Two (Equity)

My opinions are respected by my peers
The grading system is fair
My opinions are respected by the faculty

Factor Three (Academic Support)

I have adequate access to technology assistance
I have a clear understanding of what is needed for me to complete requirements for my major
I have adequate access to technology
I have access to a mentor
Adequate field placements are available to me

Factor Four (Clinical Skills Development)

I have opportunities to practice group counseling skills
I have opportunities to practice individual counseling skills

Factor Five (Scheduling)

The course schedule allows flexibility to complete degree requirements
Course offerings within my field of study are available each semester
I have a variety of electives from which to choose

Total scores on the final 17-item CEPSS may range from 17-85, with higher scores representing greater student satisfaction. The Cronbach's Alpha reliability coefficient for the

final instrument is .91. Reliability coefficients for each of the factors are as follows: Factor One (.86), Factor Two (.83), Factor Three (.80), Factor Four (.90), and Factor Five (.76).

Procedures

Initially, a web-based survey was used to collect data. African Americans in counselor education programs regularly use computers and e-mail in their classes and daily activities. The researcher used the Internet in combination with Qualtrics, an online survey software program, in order to optimize advantages of an online study. These advantages include availability and access, and data can be collected quickly and at a low cost.

During the summer semester 2011, the researcher requested and received permission of program coordinators from the participating counselor education programs. The program coordinators used their existing e-mail list to send an e-mail invitation asking their African American students to participate. The Qualtrics survey software enabled the researcher to select only African-Americans respondents. The invitation to participate in the study also included clearly defined goals of the research and an electronic consent form. In addition, a demographic sheet was included in the web survey.

On the demographic form, students were asked to furnish information regarding the following: (a) receipt of financial aid, (b) being a first generation student, (c) employment status while in graduate school, (d) student enrollment status as part time or full time, (e) current attendance at an HBCU, (f) relationship status, (g) gender, (h) age, (i) GPA, (j) course type, and (k) hours of coursework. Participants were assured confidentiality for their responses.

A follow-up e-mail was sent two weeks after the initial request for participation. This e-mail also served as a “thank you” to those who had already responded and as an encouragement for those who had not responded to complete the study.

Thirty five respondents participated in the online survey. Of that total, only 19 surveys were completed or usable. According to Cohen (1992), an estimated sample size of 381 (obtained from program coordinators) with eleven independent variables, requires a response rate of 28% or 107 subjects (34.6 subjects per variable). Therefore, additional study participants were needed.

A modification of the original protocol was requested from the University of Alabama IRB to permit the investigator to visit campuses and collect data at Fort Valley State University, Alabama State University, and Jackson State University. These HBCUs were selected to increase the sample size. The modification approval was received on September 29, 2011. After obtaining IRB approval from the HBCUs, additional data collection began during the spring semester 2012.

The face-to-face data collection was a standard procedure for each classroom visit and involved the following four steps:

1. The researcher identified himself and gave a brief explanation of the research (see Appendix A).
2. Informed Consent. The researcher informed participants of their rights. Participants were told that their participation was voluntary and anonymous (see Appendix I). They were also told that there were no foreseeable risks to them as participants in the study. Participants were informed that they would not receive direct benefits for participating in the study (see Appendix C).

3. Distribution. The research asked those who had participated in another class to raise their hands so they would not be included in the study again. Then researcher gave each participant a packet that included copies of the invitation cover letter (see Appendix C), the CEPSS (see Appendix A), and the Demographic Information Questionnaire (see appendix B). Participants were instructed to not put their names or any other identifying information on these forms and they were informed that the CEPSS and Demographic Information Questionnaires could be completed in 10 minutes.

4. Data Collection. The researcher collected the completed CEPSS and Demographic Questionnaires. Then, the researcher asked if there were any questions and questions were answered as fully as possible and as time allowed. Again, the researcher expressed appreciation for their participation.

Data Analysis

The data were analyzed using five stepwise multiple regression analyse. The outcome variables were the five factors derived from a principle components analysis of the CEPSS. The five factors were Academic Quality, Equity, Academic Support, Clinical Skills Development, and Scheduling. The predictor variables were receipt of financial aid, first-generation college student status, employment status while in graduate school, HBCU status, student enrollment status, relationship status, gender, age, GPA, course type, online, or blended, and hours of coursework. Eight of the predictor variables were dummy coded: (a) receipt of financial aid (0 = no, 1 = yes), (b) first-generation college student status (0 = no, 1 = yes), (c) employment status while in graduate school (0 = not employed, 1 = part time or full time), (d) student enrollment status (0 = full-time, 1 = part-time), (e) currently attending an HBCU status (0 = no, 1 = yes), (f) relationship status (0 = married or partnered, 1 = single, widowed, or divorced), (g) gender (0 =

female, 1 = male), and (h) course type (0 = online or blended, 1 = campus-based). Three of the predictor variables were coded as recorded: (a) age, (b) GPA, and (c) hours of coursework.

Summary

This study attempted to identify predictors of the level of satisfaction of African American master's degree students with their counselor education programs. Initially, the data were collected using a web-based survey that included clearly defined goals of the project and an electronic consent form. In order to increase the sample size, the study was modified to collect data by visiting HBCUs on campus.

The data were analyzed using five stepwise regressions. The outcome variables were academic quality, equity, academic support, scheduling, and clinical skills development. The predictor variables were receipt of financial aid, first-generation college student status, employment status while in graduate school, HBCU status, student enrollment status, relationship status, gender, age, GPA, and course type. Categorical predictor variables were dummy coded and the continuous variables were coded as recorded. The results are provided in Chapter IV.

CHAPTER IV

RESULTS

The purpose of this study was to identify predictors of the level of satisfaction of African American master's degree students with their counselor education programs. Specifically, this study examined selected variables that may predict African American students' satisfaction. The Counselor Education Program Satisfaction Scale (CEPSS) was used to measure student satisfaction.

This chapter presents the results of the study. The results is divided into the following sections: (a) statement of research question and hypothesis, (b) description of participants, (c) results of testing of the null hypothesis, and (d) a summary of the chapter.

Research Question

The research question posed for this study was as follows:

Will receipt of financial aid, being a first-generation college student, employment status while in graduate school, current attendance at an HBCU, student enrollment status as part time or full time, relationship status, gender, age, GPA, course type, and hours of coursework predict African American counselor education master's degree students' satisfaction with their graduate programs?

Null Hypothesis

The null hypothesis for this study was as follows:

Receipt of financial aid, being a first-generation college student, employment status while in graduate school, current attendance at an HBCU, student enrollment status as part time or full

time, relationship status, gender, age, GPA, course type, and hours of coursework will not separately or jointly predict African American counselor education master's degree students' satisfaction with their graduate programs.

Participants

Participants in the online study were African American master's level graduate students enrolled in the participating counselor education programs. Only 35 participants responded to the online study. Of that total, 19 were usable. A modification of the original protocol was requested from the University of Alabama IRB to permit the investigator to visit the campuses and personally collect data at Fort Valley State University, Alabama State University, and Jackson State University. These HBCUs were selected to increase the sample size. After obtaining IRB approval from the HBCUs, additional data collection began during the spring semester, 2012. Responses from the campus visits were as follows: Fort Valley State University ($n=35$), Alabama State University ($n=64$), and Jackson State University ($n=54$). Of the 153 participants from the campus data collection, 135 surveys were usable. The total number of participants who completed the CEPSS from the online collection ($n = 19$) and campus collection ($n = 135$) combined was 154. An estimate of the response rate of the participants who completed the CEPSS was not possible.

Of the 154 who completed the CEPSS, a majority (81%, $n = 125$) were female, and 19% ($n = 29$) were male. The participants' age ranged from 21 to 62 years ($M = 32.68$, $SD = 9.04$). Participants' GPA range from 2.50 to 4.00 ($M = 3.51$, $SD = .366$). Sixty-four percent ($n = 98$) of the participants indicated that they were first-generation students, and 36% ($n = 56$) reported they were not first-generation students. The employment status most frequently reported by participants was full-time (65%, $n = 100$). Twenty three of the participants (15%) worked part-

time, and 31 (20%) were not employed. Most of the participants (90%, $n = 138$) indicated they were attending a HBCU, and 10% ($n = 16$) reported they were not attending an HBCU. When participants were asked about relationship status, 63% ($n = 97$) indicated they were single, and 37% ($n = 57$) reported they were married or partnered. Of the 154 participants, 76% ($n = 117$) were enrolled full-time, and 24% ($n = 37$) were enrolled part-time. Additionally, 53% ($n = 81$) described their school's course type as campus-based, and 47% ($n = 73$) indicated their course type as online or blended.

Participants were also asked to indicate their current number of credit hours. Review of the data suggested the participants did not understand this question, as some participants responded according to their current semester number of credit hours and others responded according to their total or accumulated number of credit hours. Therefore, this question was removed from the final analysis of the data.

Statistical analysis

The data were analyzed using five stepwise multiple regression. The outcome variables were five factors derived from a principle components analysis of the CEPSS. The five factors were academic quality, equity, academic support, clinical skills development, and scheduling.

Test for multicollinearity were performed for all combinations of predictor variables. Multicollinearity or collinearity refers to two variables falling on the same line. This means they are highly correlated. Multicollinearity may cause regression statistics to be useless or misleading (Pedhazur, 1997). When all correlations among variables are less than .8, multicollinearity is not a problem (MacEwen & Barling, 1991). This analysis indicated that none of the correlations of the predictor variables were greater than .4. The results of this analysis are found in Table 5.

Table 5

Correlations of all Predictor Variables

	FA	FG	ES	HBCU	REL	ENRS	G	A	GPA	CT
FA	1	.092	-.053	-.040	.121	-.233	.173	-.166	-.133	-.115
FG	.092	1	-.077	-.080	.203	-.049	.053	-.310	.039	-.123
ES	-.053	-.077	1	-.065	-.016	.017	-.172	-.072	.058	.042
HBCU	-.040	-.080	-.065	1	-.041	-.058	.110	.108	-.190	-.153
REL	.121	.203	-.016	-.041	1	-.136	-.078	-.306	-.095	-.108
ENRS	-.233	-.049	.017	-.058	-.136	1	-.115	.133	.084	.077
G	.173	.053	-.172	.110	-.078	-.115	1	-.033	-.120	-.008
A	-.166	-.310	-.072	.108	-.306	.133	-.033	1	-.067	.169
GPA	-.133	.039	.058	-.190	-.095	.084	-.120	.067	1	.079
CT	-.115	-.123	.042	-.153	-.108	.077	-.008	.169	.079	1

NOTE: FA = financial aid, FG = first generation college student, ES = employment status while in graduate school, HBCU = attendance at an Historical Black Colleges and University, REL = relationship status, ENRS = enrollment status as part time or full time, G = gender, A = age, GPA = grade point average, and CT = course type.

The first stepwise regression analysis for academic quality indicated that one variable was a significant predictor of satisfaction with academic quality. Receipt of financial aid

explained 3% of the variance in satisfaction with academic quality among participants. An inverse relationship was found between receipt of financial and an academic quality. Students who received financial aid were less likely to be satisfied with academic quality than students who did not receive financial aid. Table 6 shows the results of the analysis.

Table 6

Predictor of Satisfaction with Academic Quality

Variable	R^2	B	SEB	t	p
Receipt of Financial Aid	.03	-.995	.452	-2.199	.029

* $p < .05$

The second stepwise regression analysis for equity indicated that no variables were significant predictors of satisfaction with equity. Therefore, all of the variables were excluded from the regression model.

The third stepwise regression analysis for social support indicated that no variables were significant predictors of satisfaction with social support. Therefore, all of the variables were excluded from the regression model.

The fourth stepwise regression analysis for scheduling indicated that one variable was a significant predictor of satisfaction with scheduling. GPA explained 3% of the variance in scheduling. An inverse relationship was found between GPA and scheduling. As GPA increased, satisfaction with scheduling decreased. Table 7 shows the results of the analysis.

Table 7

Predictor of Satisfaction with Scheduling

Variable	R^2	B	SEB	t	p
GPA	.03	-1.218	.614	-1.984	.049

* $p < .05$

The fifth stepwise regression for clinical skills development indicated that one variable was a significant predictor of satisfaction with clinical skills development. Course type explained 3% of the variance in clinical skills development. A positive relationship was found between course type and clinical skills development. Students taking campus-based course were more satisfied with clinical skills development than students taking online or blended courses. Table 8 shows the results of the analysis.

Table 8

Predictor of Satisfaction with Clinical Skills Development

Variable	R^2	B	SEB	t	p
Course Type	.03	.634	.286	2.219	.028

* $p < .05$

Summary

The data were analyzed using five stepwise regressions to determine if the selected variables predicted satisfaction on the factors of the CEPSS. Significant findings were noted for receipt of financial aid, GPA, and course type. A discussion of the results from the study, implications, and foci for future research are presented in Chapter V.

CHAPTER V

DISCUSSION, IMPLICATIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Previous research has investigated the impact of demographic variables upon African-American students in higher education (Pascarella et al., 2004; Patitu, 2000; Tinto, 1993). Few investigations have focused on African American graduate students particularly in counselor education. The purpose of this study was to identify predictors of the level of satisfaction of African American master's degree students with their counselor education programs. Specifically, this study focused on selected variables that may predict African American students' satisfaction. The selected variables were (a) receipt of financial aid, (b) being a first-generation student, (c) employment status while in graduate school, (d) part-time or full-time enrollment status, (e) attendance at an HBCU, (f) relationship status, (g) gender, (h) age, and (i) GPA, and (j) course type. This chapter presents a discussion of the results of this study, implications, and recommendations for future research.

The participants in the study were African American master's level students enrolled in counselor education programs in Alabama, Georgia, and Mississippi. A total of 154 participants completed the demographic sheet and the CEPSS.

Five stepwise regression analyses were conducted to test the null hypothesis. The results indicated an inverse relationship between receipt of financial aid and satisfaction with academic quality. Students who received financial aid increased were less satisfied with academic quality. The results also indicated an inverse relationship between GPA and scheduling. As GPA

increased, satisfaction with scheduling decreased. Finally, a positive relationship was found between course type and clinical skills development.

Discussion

Previous research indicated that demographic variables affect African American student's perceptions of higher education (Bryant, 2004; Cuadra, 2008; Girves & Wemmerus, 1988; Tinto, 2006). The findings of this study suggest that receipt of financial aid is a significant predictor of African American counselor education student's satisfaction with the academic quality of their counselor education programs. Receipt of financial aid was associated with decreased satisfaction with academic quality. This finding is inconsistent with Johnson (2006) who indicated that students who receive financial aid are more likely to persist at their institutions. One possible explanation for this inconsistency is the effects of different types of financial aid on African American students. Kim and Ottis (2004) noted that grants have a more positive impact on students and place less of a financial burden than loans because grants do not have to be paid back. Additionally, Kim and Ottis reported that African American graduate students borrow more than White, Asian, and Latino graduate students. These findings are consistent with Weil (2005) who surveyed African American students attending 100 colleges and universities in the United States and reported that nearly two thirds (63%) believed that their school is not providing fair value for its cost. Skyrocketing college and graduate school cost for African American students may have contributed to student-consumers who may take a more critical look at the quality of education offered by their programs.

The study also found that GPA was a significant predictor of satisfaction with scheduling. As GPA increased, the level of satisfaction with scheduling decreased. This finding appears to be consistent with Grady (2011), who indicated that graduate students were dissatisfied with their program's curriculum. Specifically, graduate students reported dissatisfaction with a lack of curriculum flexibility and a lack of availability of certain courses in their concentration. The present study involves African American students who were enrolled in counselor education programs. CACREP standards were initially developed for the purpose of providing uniformity in the essential information and skills presented to students in counselor education programs (Wilcoxin, Cecil, & Comas, 1987). Therefore, counselor education programs have attempted to sequence coursework for developmentally appropriate counselor training, but the curriculum has not been consistent across programs. Often, courses are scheduled based on factors such as faculty teaching loads and scheduling necessities. Additionally, students do not matriculate in cohorts. Indeed, students tend to select classes based on the availability of courses on the schedule and their financial resources (Granello & Hazler, 1998). As a consequence, it is conceivable that students may not get the course of their choice (Ford, Stahl, Walker, & Ford, 2008). When students are unable to get the course of their choice they may need to make adjustments to their work schedule. Eighty percent of the students in this study were employed full or part-time. Students in the current study appeared to want flexibility in their schedule to have both class and time options from which to select. This type of scheduling inconvenience may explain why there is a negative relationship between GPA and scheduling as found in the present study.

Results of the present study differ from findings by previous researchers who found the Internet to be an effective tool for teaching or practicing clinical skills (Austin & Dean, 2006; Boeltzig, 2011; Larson, Amodeo, Stori, Steketee, & Smith, 2009; Lewis & Coursol, 2007). For example, Larson et al. (2009) examined counselor's perceptions of a web-based course for teaching cognitive behavioral therapy (CBT). The findings showed that counselors learned new information, found the format effective compared to other types of training, and participants wanted to complete the full CBT web course. However, the current study is consistent with the findings by Myers (2006) who reported that African American graduate students were more comfortable with face-to-face than online discussions. The present study found that participants in campus-based or face-to-face courses were more satisfied with clinical skills development than participants in online or blended courses. The current findings are not conclusive and should be interpreted with caution considering no other research was found that specifically examined course type as a predictor of the level of satisfaction of African American masters degree students with their counselor education programs. Thus, the results of the current study may be unique in that no previous research can offer a direct comparison of the findings.

The results of the present study conflict with the findings of previous studies that focused on variables that impact African American students perceptions and persistence in higher education. Previous studies found that being a first-generation student(Longwell-Grice & Longwell-Grice, 2007; Pascarella et al., 2004), employment status while in graduate school(Sampson, 2007; Tuttle et al., 2005), part-time or full-time enrollment(Gardner, 2008; O'Toole et al., 2003), attendance at a HBCU (Taylor & Olswang, 1997; Thomas, 2004), marriage

status(Kardatzke, 2009; P. D. Lewis, 2005), gender(Carter, 1997; Ellis, 1997; Michie et al., 2001) and age(Adderley, 2008; Linnartz, 2005; Wazelle, 2005) influenced African American students' perceptions and persistence in higher education. The present study did not find any of these variables to be statistically significant. The findings suggest that variables other than these selected variables may predict African-American students' satisfaction with their counselor education programs.

There were limitations to this study. First, participants were from counselor education programs, at HBCUs and PWIs, located in three southeast states Alabama, Georgia, and Mississippi. Therefore, generalization to other counselor education programs is limited. Second, the participants were all African American students, which limits generalization to students of other ethnic groups. Third, the data from this study consist of self-report items that could compromise the reliability because of socially desirable response bias.

Implications and recommendations

1. The finding that receipt of financial aid predicted less satisfaction with academic quality has implications not only for counselor education administrators, but also for financial aid policymakers and institutional practices. Bryant (2004) reported that African American students at all institutional types (HBCUs and PWIs) were less satisfied than White students with their academic experiences. African American students expressed dissatisfaction with faculty knowledge and fairness, the institution's concern for individual students, and financial aid related services. In addition, drastic cuts in appropriations from both federal and state government, coupled with rising tuition costs, has shifted the burden of financing higher

education from the taxpayer to the student (McPherson & Shapiro, 1998). Consequently, African-American students, as consumers, expect the same quality of academic experiences at HBCUs as they do at the PWIs (Heller, 2006; Priest & St. John, 2006). In an effort to adapt to the needs of African American students, administrators and policymakers should update their curriculum and classroom experiences to remain relevant and increase satisfaction with academic quality.

2. The findings suggest a negative relationship with GPA and scheduling satisfaction. Counselor education advisors should note high achieving African American students (with high GPAs) concerns with course scheduling. These concerns could be indicative of a larger issue with first-generation and nontraditional students who are less likely to ask for needed assistance (Longwell-Grice & Longwell-Grice, 2007). Counselor educators should be more proactive in informing African American students that advisory assistance is available for navigating the course schedule.

3. In this study participants who indicated that they were in campus-based or face-to-face courses were more satisfied with opportunities to practice clinical skills. This finding is consistent with the skill-based models by Carkhuff (2000) and Baumgarten and Roffers (2003) who suggested that counselor preparation programs should provide a practical system of skill attainment by which students have the opportunity to role play and reflect on how well they demonstrate attending behaviors, content, and reflection of feelings. While online skills training seems to be the trend of the future (Chapman, Baker, Nassar-McMillan, & Gerler, 2011), counselor educators

should continue to incorporate as many face-to-face opportunities as possible in their course schedule to encourage clinical skills development for African American counselors in training.

Future Research

The findings of this study are not conclusive. Further examination of variables that influence African-American masters level students satisfaction with their counselor education programs appears to be warranted. Such efforts would contribute to the growing body of research on African-American counselor education students. Specific recommendations for further research included in the following:

1. The present study focused on participants from HBCUs and PWIs located in the Southeast and the sample was not randomized. Further research needs to be conducted using a national random sample of African-American counselor education students enrolled in all counselor education programs to increase the generalization of the findings.
2. This study could be replicated using counselor education students of more than one race. Such an effort would focus more attention to multicultural factors than the present study.
3. Further research is needed in order to determine why and how the selected variables under investigation affect African-American counselor education student's satisfaction with their graduate programs. A better understanding of these selected variables may be found by conducting qualitative research.
4. Course-work hours were excluded from the study because most of the participants interpreted the question "What is your current number of course-work hours?" to mean what is your current

number of course-work hours for the current semester? Future research is needed that includes a more clearly designed question to assess cumulative course-work hours.

5. This study could be replicated comparing CACREP and NONCREP Program. The results could provide useful data concerning the accreditation of counselor education programs.

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APPENDIX A
COUNSELOR EDUCATION PROGRAM SATISFACTION SCALE

COUNSELOR EDUCATION PROGRAM SATISFACTION SCALE

Please indicate your level of agreement with the following items about your Counselor Education program by placing a checkmark in the appropriate box. Please use the following scale:

**Strongly Disagree = 1 Disagree = 2 Neither Agree nor Disagree = 3
Agree = 4 Strongly Agree = 5**

In my Counselor Education Program...	1	2	3	4	5
1. The faculty provide quality instruction					
2. The courses offered are relevant to my career goals					
3. I have opportunities to practice individual counseling skills					
4. I have opportunities to practice group counseling skills					
5. My opinions are respected by the faculty					
6. My opinions are respected by my peers					
7. I have adequate access to technology					
8. I have adequate access to technology assistance					
9. I have a variety of electives from which to choose					
10. I have a clear understanding of what is needed for me to complete requirements for my major					
11. I have access to a mentor					
12. I am pleased with the accreditation of the program					
13. I am learning the knowledge and skills essential to become a professional counselor					
14. The course schedule allows flexibility to complete degree requirements					
15. Course offerings within my field of study are available each semester					
16. The grading system is fair					
17. Adequate field placements are available to me					

APPENDIX B
DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION

Demographic Information

1. Are you currently receiving financial aid?
 - A. Yes
 - B. No
2. Did either of your parents attend college?
 - A. Yes
 - B. No
3. What is your current employment status?
 - A. Not employed
 - B. Part-Time
 - C. Full-Time
4. Are you currently attending a Historically Black College or University (HBCU)?
 - A. Yes
 - B. No
5. What is your current relationship?
 - A. Married/Partnered
 - B. Single, Widowed, or Divorced
6. What is your current enrollment status in the counselor education program?
 - A. Full-time
 - B. Part-time
7. What is your gender?
 - A. Male
 - B. Female
8. What is your age in years? _____
9. What is your current GPA? _____
10. What type of course are you currently attending?
 - A. Campus-based
 - B. Online
 - C. Blended (both campus-based and online)
11. What is your current number of coursework hours? _____

APPENDIX C
INVITATION COVER LETTER

Invitation Cover Letter

Dear Counselor Education Student:

My name is Jessie Latten, and I am a doctoral candidate in the Counselor Education Program at the University of Alabama. I will be conducting a study during the fall 2011 on factors that predict African American counselor education students' satisfaction with their programs.

As an African American student I am very interested in the matriculation and persistence of African American students pursuing master's degrees at both Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs) and Predominantly White Institutions (PWIs). This study will be beneficial in understanding how institutional and individual characteristics may predict African American students' satisfaction with their counselor education programs. The title of my study is: "Selected Predictors of Satisfaction With Their Programs for African American Counselor Education Master's Degree Students". You are invited to participate in this important research.

Your participation in this study is entirely voluntary. You can decide to stop at any time. There will be no direct benefits to you for participating in this pilot study. However, the results of this study may be useful for counselor education programs to measure their progress in meeting your needs. There are also no foreseeable risks to you as a participant in this study. Your completed survey is completely anonymous and cannot be tracked back to you in any manner. Your assistance in this research is greatly appreciated.

Participating students will be asked to complete the Counselor Education Program Satisfaction Scale (CEPSS) and a demographic questionnaire. The CEPSS and demographic questionnaire should take approximately 10 minutes to complete.

If you have questions about your rights as a research participant, please contact The University of Alabama Institutional Review Board at (205) 348-8461 or toll free 1-877-3066. If you have questions about this study, please contact Mr. Jessie Latten at (205) 841-6644 or Dr. Jamie Satcher at (205) 384-1178

Thank you in advance for your willingness to participate and assist with this important study.

Sincerely,

APPENDIX D
INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD APPROVAL
FOR PILOT STUDY

Office for Research
Institutional Review Board for the
Protection of Human Subjects

THE UNIVERSITY OF
ALABAMA
RESEARCH

November 30, 2009

Jessie Latten
4015 29th Street North
Birmingham, AL 35207

Re: IRB#: EA-09-CM-088, A Pilot Study to Examine the Validity and Reliability of the Counselor Education Program Satisfaction Survey (CEPSS)

Dear Mr. Latten:

Your application has been given exempt approval according to 45 CFR part 46.101(b)(2) as outlined below:

(2) Research involving the use of educational tests (cognitive, diagnostic, aptitude, achievement), survey procedures, interview procedures or observation of public behavior, unless:
(i) information obtained is recorded in such a manner that human subjects can be identified, directly or through identifiers linked to the subjects; and (ii) any disclosure of the human subjects' responses outside the research could reasonably place the subjects at risk of criminal or civil liability or be damaging to the subjects' financial standing, employability, or reputation.

This approval expires on 11/29/10. If the study continues beyond that date, you must complete the appropriate portion of the Continuing Review and Closure Form. If you modify the application, please complete the Modification of an Approved Protocol Form. Changes in this study cannot be initiated without IRB approval, except when necessary to eliminate apparent immediate hazards to participants. When the study closes, please complete the Continuing Review and Closure for closure.

Should you need to submit any further correspondence regarding this application, please include the assigned IRB application number.

Good luck with your research.

Sincerely,

Carpathato T. Myles, MSQI, CIM
Director & Research Compliance Officer
Office for Research Compliance
The University of Alabama



Office Administration Building
Box 8709
1000 Alabama Street
Tuscaloosa, AL 35686
205-884-1282

1307-100-038

UNIVERSITY OF ALABAMA INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD FOR THE PROTECTION OF HUMAN SUBJECTS
REQUEST FOR APPROVAL OF RESEARCH INVOLVING HUMAN SUBJECTS

I. Identifying information

	Principal Investigator	Second Investigator	Third Investigator
Name:	Jessie Latten	Jamie Satcher	Not applicable
Department:	Counselor education	Counselor education	
College:	Educational studies in psychology research methodology and counseling	Educational studies in psychology research methodology and counseling	
University:	The University of Alabama	The University of Alabama	
Address:	4015 29th St north Birmingham, AL 35207	Box 870231 Tuscaloosa, AL 35487	
Telephone:	205 841-6644	205 384-1178	
FAX:			
E-mail:	jessielatten@hotmail.com	jsatcher@bamaed.ua.edu	

Title of Research Project: A pilot study to examine the validity and reliability of the Counselor Education Program Satisfaction Survey (CEPSS).

Date Printed: _____ Funding Source: _____

Type of Proposal: New Revision Renewal Completed Exempt

Attach a renewal application
 Attach a continuing review of studies form
Please enter the original IRB # at the top of the page.

UA faculty or staff member signature: _____

II. NOTIFICATION OF IRB ACTION (to be completed by IRB):

Type of Review: Full board Expedited

IRB Action:

- Rejected Date: _____
- Tabled Pending Revisions Date: _____
- Approved Pending Revisions Date: _____

Approved—this proposal complies with University and federal regulations for the protection of human subject.
Approval is effective until the following date: _____

- Items approved:
- Research protocol: dated _____
 - Informed consent: dated _____
 - Recruitment materials: dated _____
 - Other: dated _____

Approval signature: _____ Date: 01/30/09

APPENDIX D
INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD APPROVAL
FOR REVISED PILOT STUDY

Office of Research
Institutional Review Board
Division of Human Sciences

September 16, 2010



Jessie Latten
4015 29th Street North
Birmingham, AL 35207

Re: IRB # TX-09-CM-088 (Revision) "A Pilot Study to Examine the Validity and Reliability of the Counselor Education Program Satisfaction Survey (CEPSS)"

Dear Mr. Latten:

The University of Alabama Institutional Review Board has reviewed the revision to your previously approved exempt protocol. The board has determined that the change does not affect the exempt status of your protocol.

Should you need to submit any further correspondence regarding this proposal, please include the assigned IRB application number. Changes in this study cannot be initiated without IRB approval, except when necessary to eliminate apparent immediate hazards to participants.

Good luck with your research.

Sincerely,


Carpanato J. Myles, MSM, CIM
Director of Research Compliance & Research Compliance Officer
Office of Research Compliance
The University of Alabama



EX-07-UM-088
IRB Project #:

UNIVERSITY OF ALABAMA
INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD FOR THE PROTECTION OF HUMAN SUBJECTS
REQUEST FOR APPROVAL OF RESEARCH INVOLVING HUMAN SUBJECTS

I. Identifying information

	Principal Investigator	Second Investigator	Third Investigator
Names:	Jessie Latten	Jamie Satcher	
Department:	ESPRMC-Counselor Ed	ESPRMC-Counselor Ed	
College:	Education	Education	
University:	University of Alabama	University of Alabama	
Address:	4015 29 th St. North, Birmingham, AL 35207	Box 870231	
Telephone:	205-841-6644	348-1178	
FAX:			
E-mail:	jessielatten@hotmail.com	jsatcher@bamaed.ua.edu	

Title of Research Project: A Pilot Study to Examine the Validity and Reliability of the Counselor Education Program Satisfaction Survey (CEPSS)

Date Submitted: 9/1/10
Funding Source:

Type of Proposal: New Revision Renewal Completed Exempt

Please attach a renewal application:
Please attach a continuing review of studies form:
Please enter the original IRB # at the top of the page.

UA faculty or staff member signature: _____

II. NOTIFICATION OF IRB ACTION (to be completed by IRB):
Type of Review: Full board Expedited

IRB Action:

Rejected Date: _____
Tabled Pending Revisions Date: _____
Approved Pending Revisions Date: _____

Approved-this proposal complies with University and federal regulations for the protection of human subjects.

Approval is effective until the following date: 11-29-10 a.s.
Items approved: Research protocol (dated _____)
 Informed consent (dated _____)
 Recruitment materials (dated _____)
 Other (dated _____)

Approval signature: _____ Date: 9/10/2010

APPENDIX F
INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD APPROVAL
FOR STUDY

Office for Research
Institutional Review Board for the
Protection of Human Subjects

April 20, 2011

THE UNIVERSITY OF
ALABAMA
R E S E A R C H

Jessie Latten
Department of Counselor Education
College of Education
Box 870231

Re: IRB : EX-11-CM-037, Selected predictors of Satisfaction with Their
programs for African American Counselor Education Masters' Degree Students

Dear Jessie Latten:

The University of Alabama Institutional Review Board has granted approval for
your proposed research.

Your application has been given exempt approval according to 45 CFR part
46.101(b)(2) as outlined below:

(2) Research involving the use of educational tests (cognitive, diagnostic,
aptitude, achievement), survey procedures, interview procedures or observation
of public behavior.

This approval expires on April 19, 2012. If the study continues beyond that date,
you must complete the appropriate portions of the IRB Renewal Application. If
you modify the application, please complete the Modification of an Approved
Protocol Form. Changes in this study cannot be initiated without IRB approval,
except when necessary to eliminate apparent immediate hazards to participants.
When the study closes, please complete the IRB Study Closure Form.

Should you need to submit any further correspondence regarding this application,
please include the assigned IRB application number.

Good luck with your research.

Sincerely,

Carmitato T. Myles, MSW, CIM
Director & Research Compliance Officer
Office of Research Compliance
The University of Alabama



151 Ross Administration Building
Box 870117
Tuscaloosa, Alabama 35487-0117
(205) 348-0461
fax (205) 348-8882
Toll Free (877) 820-3686

EX-11-CM-037

45-CFR-46.101(b)(2)

UNIVERSITY OF ALABAMA INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD FOR THE PROTECTION OF HUMAN SUBJECTS
REQUEST FOR APPROVAL OF RESEARCH INVOLVING HUMAN SUBJECTS

I. Identifying information

	Principal Investigator	Second Investigator	Third Investigator
Name:	Jessie Latten	Jamie Satcher	Not applicable
Department:	Counselor education	Counselor education	
College:	Educational studies in psychology research methodology and counseling	Educational studies in psychology research methodology and counseling	
University:	The University of Alabama	The University of Alabama	
Address:	4015 29th St north Birmingham, AL 35207	Box 870231 Tuscaloosa, AL 35487	
Telephone:	205 841-6644	205 384-1178	
FAX:			
E-mail:	jessielatten@hotmail.com	jsatcher@bamaed.ua.edu	

Title of Research Project: Selected predictors of Satisfaction with Their programs for African American Counselor Education Masters' Degree Students

Date Printed: _____ Funding Source: _____

Type of Proposal: New Revision Renewal Completed Exempt

Attach a renewal application

Attach a continuing review of studies form

Please enter the original IRB # at the top of the page

UA faculty or staff member signature: _____

II. NOTIFICATION OF IRB ACTION (to be completed by IRB):

Type of Review: Full board Expedited

IRB Action:

Rejected Date: _____

Tabled Pending Revisions Date: _____

Approved Pending Revisions Date: _____

Approved—this proposal complies with University and federal regulations for the protection of human subjects.

Approval is effective until the following date: 4/19/12

Items approved: Research protocol: dated 4/20/11

Informed consent: dated

Recruitment materials: dated

Other: dated

Approval signature: _____ DATE: 4/20/2011

APPENDIX G
INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD APPROVAL
REVISION FOR STUDY

September 29, 2011

Office for Research
Institutional Review Board for the
Protection of Human Subjects

Jessie Latten
College of Education
The University of Alabama
Box 870231

THE UNIVERSITY OF
ALABAMA
R E S E A R C H

Re: IRB # EX-11-CM-037 (Revision) "Selected Predictors of Satisfaction with Their Programs for African American Counselor Education Master's Degree Students"

Dear Jessie Latten:

The University of Alabama Institutional Review Board has reviewed the revisions to your previously approved exempt protocol. The board has approved the changes in your protocol.

Please remember that your approval period expires one year from the date of your original approval, April 20, 2011, not the date of this revision approval.

Should you need to submit any further correspondence regarding this proposal, please include the assigned IRB application number.

Good luck with your research.

Sincerely,

Carpanto T. Myles, MSM, CIM
Director & Research Compliance Officer
Office for Research Compliance
The University of Alabama



358 Rose Administration Building
Box 870127
Tuscaloosa, Alabama 35487-0127
(205) 348-8661
fax (205) 348-7189
TOLL FREE (877) 820-3066

IRB Project #: EX-11-CM-037

UNIVERSITY OF ALABAMA
INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD FOR THE PROTECTION OF HUMAN SUBJECTS
REQUEST FOR APPROVAL OF RESEARCH INVOLVING HUMAN SUBJECTS

I. Identifying information

	Principal Investigator	Second Investigator	Third Investigator
Names:	Jessie Latten	Jamie Satcher	
Department:	ESPRMC-Counselor Ed	ESPRMC-Counselor Ed	
College:	Education	Education	
University:	University of Alabama	University of Alabama	
Address:	4015 29 th St. North, Birmingham, AL 35207	Box 870231	
Telephone:	205-841-6644	348-1178	
FAX:			
E-mail:	jessielatten@hotmail.com	jsatcher@bamaed.ua.edu	

Title of Research Project: Selected Predictors of Satisfaction with Their Programs for African American Counselor Education Master's Degree Students

Date Submitted: 10/19/11

Funding Source:

Type of Proposal New Revision Renewal Completed Exempt

Please attach a renewal application
Please attach a continuing review of studies form
Please enter the original IRB # at the top of the page

UA faculty or staff member signature: _____

II. NOTIFICATION OF IRB ACTION (to be completed by IRB):

Type of Review: _____ Full board _____ Expedited

IRB Action:

____ Rejected Date: _____
____ Tabled Pending Revisions Date: _____
____ Approved Pending Revisions Date: _____

Approved-this proposal complies with University and federal regulations for the protection of human subjects.

Approval is effective until the following date: 4/19/2012 (Revision)

Items approved: Research protocol (dated 11/29/11)
____ Informed consent (dated _____)
____ Recruitment materials (dated _____)
____ _____ (dated _____)

Approval signature _____ Date 11/30/2011

APPENDIX H
INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD APPROVAL
RENEWAL FOR STUDY

February 27, 2012

Office for Research
Institutional Review Board for the
Protection of Human Subjects

Jessie Latten
ESPRMC
College of Education
The University of Alabama

THE UNIVERSITY OF
ALABAMA
R E S E A R C H

Re: IRB # EX-11-CM-037-R1 "Selected Predictors of Satisfaction with
Their Programs for African American Counselor Education Masters'
Degree Students"

Dear Mr. Latten:

The University of Alabama Institutional Review Board has granted approval for your renewal application. Please be advised that your protocol will expire one year from the date of approval, February 27, 2012.

Your protocol has been given exempt approval according to 45 CFR part 46.101(b) (2) as outlined below:

(2) Research involving the use of educational tests (cognitive, diagnostic, aptitude, achievement), survey procedures, interview procedures or observation of public behavior, unless:
(i) information obtained is recorded in such a manner that human subjects can be identified, directly or through identifiers linked to the subjects; and
(ii) any disclosure of the human subjects' responses outside the research could reasonably place the subjects at risk of criminal or civil liability or be damaging to the subjects' financial standing, employability, or reputation.

Should you need to submit any further correspondence regarding this proposal, please include the assigned IRB application number. Changes in this study cannot be initiated without IRB approval, except when necessary to eliminate apparent immediate hazards to participants. Please use reproductions of the IRB approved consent form to obtain consent from your participants.

Good luck with your research.

Sincerely,



158 Rose Administration Building
Box 870127
Tuscaloosa, Alabama 35487-0127
(205) 348-8461
fax (205) 348-7189
TOLL FREE (877) 820-3066

Carpatho T. Myres, EdS, CIM
Director of Research Compliance & Research Compliance Officer
Office of Research Compliance
The University of Alabama

EX-11-UM-057-R1

UNIVERSITY OF ALABAMA INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD FOR THE PROTECTION OF HUMAN SUBJECTS
REQUEST FOR APPROVAL OF RESEARCH INVOLVING HUMAN SUBJECTS

FEB 20 2012 PM 01:17

I. Identifying information

	Principal Investigator	Second Investigator	Third Investigator
Name:	Jessie Latten	Jamie Satcher	Not applicable
Department:	Counselor education	Counselor education	
College:	Educational studies in psychology research methodology and counseling	Educational studies in psychology research methodology and counseling	
University:	The University of Alabama	The University of Alabama	
Address:	4015 29th St north Birmingham, AL 35207	Box 870231 Tuscaloosa, AL 35487	
Telephone:	205 841-6644	205 384-1178	
FAX:			
E-mail:	jessielatten@hotmail.com	jsatcher@bamaed.ua.edu	

Title of Research Project: Selected predictors of Satisfaction with Their programs for African American Counselor Education Masters' Degree Students

Date Printed: 2/8/12 Funding Source: self-funded

Type of Proposal: New Revision Renewal Completed Exempt

Attach a renewal application
Attach a continuing review of studies form
Please enter the original IRB # at the top of the page

UA faculty or staff member signature: _____

II. NOTIFICATION OF IRB ACTION (to be completed by IRB):

Type of Review: Full board Expedited

IRB Action:

Rejected Date: _____

Tabled Pending Revisions Date: _____

Approved Pending Revisions Date: _____

Approved—this proposal complies with University and federal regulations for the protection of human subject

Approval is effective until the following date: 2-26-13

Items approved: Research protocol: dated
 Informed consent: dated
 Recruitment materials: dated
 Other: dated

Approval signature: _____ Date 2/27/2012

APPENDIX I
INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD APPROVAL
WAIVER OF WRITTEN DOCUMENTATION OF INFORMED CONSENT

AAHRPP DOCUMENT # 117

**THE UNIVERSITY OF ALABAMA HUMAN RESEARCH PROTECTIONS PROGRAM
FORM: Request for Waiver of Written Documentation of Informed Consent**

Directions: Address the criteria listed below and attach this form to your application. Also, state in your application that you are requesting a waiver of written documentation of informed consent and describe what you will do to obtain consent in the procedure section of your application. The IRB often requires investigators to provide participants with a written information statement about the research when written documentation is waived; you may wish to include one in your initial application.

NOTE that the UA IRB does not allow passive consent and that waivers may not be granted for FDA-regulated research.

You are welcome to call Research Compliance staff at 205-348-5152 to discuss your need for a waiver in advance of application submission.

(1) The only record linking the subject and the research would be the consent document and the principal risk would be potential harm resulting from a breach of confidentiality; or

(2) The research presents no more than minimal risk of harm to subjects and involves no procedures for which written consent is normally required outside of the research context.

There are no known foreseeable risks or discomforts associated with this research. It does not involve any procedures for which written consent is normally required outside of the research context.

An online survey will be used with this research. The Informed Consent will be sent as an attachment to an e-mail invitation to students enroll in counselor education programs in Mississippi, Alabama, and Georgia to participate in this study. The Informed Consent will also be displayed on the first page of the survey. The form includes the following instruction, "Proceeding to the attached questionnaire/survey constitutes your consent to participate." Participants may withdraw/exit from the study at anytime without repercussions.

The name of the respondent will not be included in the survey. The researcher will have no way of identifying the participants.

Because the research involves minimal risk and the only link to the additional participants' identities would be a signed informed consent document, signed informed consent will not be collected. Prior to completing the survey, Students will be provided with a cover page that provides/explains elements of informed consent.

APPENDIX J

NATIONAL INSTITUTES OF HEALTH
CERTIFICATE OF COMPLETION

Certificate of Completion

The National Institutes of Health (NIH) Office of Extramural Research certifies that **Jessie Latten** successfully completed the NIH Web-based training course “Protecting Human Research Participants”.

Date of completion: 05/31/2011

Certification Number: 694181