

Methods of studying of multiracial identity



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In order to address the multiple aims of the present study, this dissertation utilized a quantitative approach. This study was designed to fill in the gaps that exist in the current empirical literature on multiracial identity and psychological well-being. This study incorporated the role of others' perceptions as well as quantitative assessment of multiracial individuals' self-reported feelings, beliefs, experiences and challenges in order to develop insight into the lived experiences of multiracial individuals. The following section discusses the sample, measures, and procedure.

Participants Based on inclusion criteria, 149 self-identifying multiracial individuals completed the web-based survey over a 4-month period (October 2012-January 2013). In order to be included in this study, individuals had to self-identify as multiracial, were aged 18 to 40 years of age, were native to or residing in the United States, and English-speaking. Regarding age, individuals ranged from 18 to 40 years old ($M = 27$,

$SD = 5.78$). The majority of the sample identified as female ($n = 117$, 78.5%), with the remaining sample reporting that they were male ($n = 29$, 19.5%), or transgender ($n = 2$, 1.3%), and one individual did not report their gender. This sample was largely drawn from the United States with 97.3% of the sample indicating currently living in the U.

S and 94.6% being born in the United States. Participants represented every region of the United States, however, the majority indicated that they lived in the Mid-Atlantic ($n = 24$, 16.1%), South Atlantic ($n = 43$, 28.

9%), and the West Pacific (n = 33, 22.1%). A large portion of the sample identified as single (n = 98, 65.8%). Participants ranged regarding income and educational attainment. (See Table 1).

51 Racial Demographic Information. Given the changing social construction of race in the United States as evidenced by the evolving racial categories on the US Census, anyone who self-identified as multiracial was included in this study. According to the US Census, a multiracial person is someone who chooses to check multiple boxes of racial categories: 1) White, 2) Black or African American, 3) American Indian or Alaskan Native, 4) Asian, 5) Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander (Jones & Symen Smith, 2001).

Furthermore, individuals who reported ethnic backgrounds that are of different racial groups were included in the study (i. e., Filipino and Hispanic).

Currently, there is controversy over including Hispanic or Latino as a race on the next US Census as most of the individuals who reported some other race identified as Hispanic (Humes, Jones, & Ramirez, 2011). Therefore, individuals who identified as Latino or Hispanic as one of their races were included in this study as they elected to participate in the study and considered themselves multiracial. Currently, the US Census describes race as, “ a social definition of race recognized in this country and not an attempt to define race biologically, anthropologically, or genetically. In addition, it is recognized that the categories of the race item include racial and national origin or sociocultural groups” (U. S. Census Bureau, 2012). Participants indicated 25 different racial identity combinations. In this study, participants most commonly identified in the following ways: Black-White (n = 65, 43.

6%), Asian-White (n = 17, 11.4%), Black-Asian (n = 7, 4.7%), Black-Latino (n = 7, 4.7%), Asian-Latino, (n = 4, 2.7%), Black-White-Native American (n = 7, 4.7%), and Latino-White (n = 8, 5.

4%). Eight participants checked only one racial designator box. It is important to note that these 8 individuals only checked one box, but in open-ended 52 questions identified multiple races. Given that some racial checkbox queries only allow individuals to check one box, it is possible that checking multiple boxes may be unfamiliar to multiracial individuals and therefore they default to checking one box despite instructions to check all that apply. Additionally, some participants indicated that they identified three or racial heritages. (See Table 2).

Regarding phenotype, the majority of participants (n = 125, 83.9%) described themselves as racially ambiguous. (See Table 1). According to research conducted on the US Census by Jones and Bullock (2013), this sample is representative of the general multiracial population in the United States. Similar to the US Census, the largest portion of this sample identified as Black-White, followed by Asian-White. The second largest population in the US Census was White and Some Other Race, which were mostly identified to be of Latino origin; in the current study Latino-White people were a smaller portion of this sample.

Further, the regions of the United States most represented in this sample follow a similar pattern to the US Census whereby the majority of the individuals reported living in the West Pacific, MidAtlantic, and South Atlantic regions of the United States. Measures In consideration of the effects of

priming in measurement administration (Campbell & Stanley, 1963), the measures were given in the following order. Specifically, the demographic questionnaire was administered first as a way to orient participants to thinking about their multiracial identity. Following the measure of racial malleability was the measure of authenticity. Given the literature and the aims of the present study, the measure of authenticity was administered prior to the measure of 53 identity questioning in order to assess one's sense of overall authenticity prior to thinking about experiences of identity questioning or discrimination.

Since this study was based on research demonstrating the role of context, it was decided to assess for contextual factors after assessing for one's overall authenticity and malleability and then explore experiences related to one's multiracial identity, which may have primed individuals to think about their racial identity and authenticity differently. The scales assessing identity questioning, identity challenges, and identity resilience followed the measure of authenticity. The outcome variables of interest related to psychological well-being assessed using measures of global stress and life satisfaction were administered after the assessment of multiracial experiences. Finally, the measure of general life experiences was administered, as a way of assessing the general stressors the participant was experiencing recently.

Demographic Questionnaire. The demographic measure consisted of questions to assess participants' age, sex, races, country of birth, preferred language, socioeconomic status (e. g., highest educational level attained, current income), as well as the racial composition of their neighborhood, work, and school. This measure was created for this study based on previous <https://assignbuster.com/methods-of-studying-of-multiracial-identity/>

research with multiracial individuals and recommendations for the quantitative assessment of racial identity (Binning et al., 2009). To avoid reductionist approaches such as checkbox options for identity self-report, multiple response formats were utilized.

First, a self-report check all that apply question was based on the 2010 U. S. Census Bureau's racial and ethnic identity options.

Second, the Survey of Multiracial Experience (Lou, Lalonde, & Wilson, 2011; Rockquemore, 1999; Rockquemore & Brunσμα, 2002) was utilized to assess for participants multiracial identity. The Survey of Multiracial Experience instructed participants to select from 7 identity constructions based on which option best described their racial identity. A third way to identify multiracial heritage asked participants to check all that apply (checkbox question) for race of biological mother and biological father. Additionally, participants were asked to respond to the following open-ended question: Categories like the above are inherently unable to capture the complexity of multiracial individuals' identity so in the following space please describe how you see yourself in terms of race and/or ethnicity. (See Appendix C). Racial Malleability.

Participants' racial malleability was assessed utilizing Sanchez, Shih and Garcia's (2009) Malleable Racial Identification measure. The measure contained 5 items with responses ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 7 (strongly agree) where higher scores reflected greater racial malleability in social situations (See Appendix D). Scores from this measure are based on the mean score of the items, for the current sample, scores ranged from 1 to

7 ($M = 4.09$, $SD = 1.49$). Items reflect the individual's tendency to adapt identity across situations, activities, and timepoints. The mean suggests that this sample is slightly more malleable than other studies using this measure with multiracial samples. Measures of internal consistency for this scale have ranged from $\alpha = .$

$.78$ to $\alpha = .89$. Further, exploratory factor analyses demonstrated that all items loaded highly on one factor with components $\lambda = .6$ (Sanchez, Shih ; Garcia, 2009). Internal consistency was demonstrated for the present study ($\alpha = .81$). Identity Experiences. In order to assess the participants' experiences of identity questioning, identity challenges, and identity resilience, the Multiracial Challenges and 55 Resilience Scale (MCRS; Salahuddin ; O'Brian, 2011) (See Appendix F) was utilized.

Item development for the MCRS was based on relevant literature regarding race-related experiences of multiracial individuals. Additionally, focus groups with multiracial people were conducted exploring the challenges and strengths multiracial individuals developed based on their multiracial experiences. A confirmatory factor analysis demonstrated evidence for six factor loadings for the original 74-item measure.

This measure has six subscales addressing different aspects of being multiracial: 1.) Others' Surprise and Disbelief Regarding Racial Heritage, 2.) Lack of Family Acceptance, 3.

3.) Multiracial Discrimination, 4.) Challenges with Racial Identity, 5.) Multiracial Pride, and 6.) Appreciation of Human Differences. The 2-month test-retest

reliability ranged from . 67 to . 84, with the exception of the Lack of Family Acceptance subscale, which was less stable over time ($r = . 54$).

Further, there was evidence for convergent and divergent validity (Salahuddin ; O'Brian, 2011). The authors implore future researchers to investigate the factor structure of the 30-item measure with a diverse sample. Therefore, this study employed confirmatory and exploratory factor analyses to examine the factor structure of this measure with the present sample. Based on existing literature on experiences of multiracial identity, it was expected that the following factors would be derived. With regard to identity questioning, the subscale addressing Others' Surprise and Disbelief Regarding Racial Heritage comprises five questions addressing experiences of having one's identity questioned. Individuals responded using a 6-point Likert-type scale to identify the frequency of the experience described in the item.

There is evidence for the internal consistency of this subscale ($\alpha = . 83$). 56 Based on results of the factor analyses, identity challenges will be assessed by summing the scores of three subscales of the MCRS: Lack of Family Acceptance, Multiracial Discrimination, and Challenges with Racial Identity. The Lack of Family Acceptance subscale has evidence for internal consistency ($\alpha = . 82$) and addresses family's perceptions of multiracial identity (e. g.

, A family member said that I am NOT a " real" member of a racial group(s) with whom I identify). The Multiracial Discrimination has evidence for internal consistency ($\alpha = . 79$) and addresses broader societal discrimination based

on multiracial identity (e. g., I was discriminated against because of one or more of my racial backgrounds).

Both subscales have five questions each, which are based on a 6-point Likert-type response scale to identify frequency. An additional challenge may be lacking a sense of belongingness and identity, which is assessed by Challenges with Racial Identity (e. g., I feel the need to prove my racial identity to others) and has moderate evidence for internal consistency ($\alpha = .68$). This subscale contained five items and was based on a 6-point Likert-type scale ranging from 0 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). To assess for identity resilience, the remaining two subscales of the MCRS will be utilized.

The Multiracial Pride has evidence for internal consistency ($\alpha = .80$) and focuses upon the individuals' pride for their heritage (e. g., I love being multiracial).

The Appreciation of Human Differences has evidence for internal consistency ($\alpha = .89$) and focuses upon and the extent to which experiences as a multiracial person aided in the development of overall human appreciation (e. g.

, Being multiracial has taught me to understand multiple perspectives). For this sample, Appreciation of Human Differences had evidence for internal consistency ($\alpha = .90$).

These subscales contained five items 57 each and were based on a 6-point Likert-type scale ranging from 0 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree).

Authenticity. To assess the participants' sense of authenticity, the Authenticity Scale was utilized (Wood, Linley, Maltby, Baliousis, ; Joseph, 2008) (See Appendix E).

Exploratory and confirmatory factor analyses demonstrated evidence for a three-factor structure of authenticity with an ethnically and racially diverse sample, including acceptance of external influence ($\alpha = .78$), authentic living ($\alpha = .69$), and self-alienation ($\alpha = .78$). For the current study, internal consistency was demonstrated for the three subscales as follows: acceptance of external influence ($\alpha = .83$), authentic living ($\alpha = .$

.72), and self-alienation ($\alpha = .89$). Wood and colleagues (2008) demonstrated convergent and discriminant validity for the Authenticity Scale. Test-retest reliability was also examined for a 2-week and a 4-week period, for each subscale responses from Time 1 correlated with responses from Time 2 ranging between $r = .$

.78 and $r = .91$. Further, there is evidence for discriminant validity with measures of social desirability, which suggests that responses to the Authenticity Scale are not influenced by social desirability. There are a total of 12-items with a Likert-type response scale ranging from 1 (does not describe me at all) to 7 (describes me very well). In this sample scores ranged from 4 to 28 ($M = 11.51$, $SD = 5.02$) for acceptance of external influence, from 10 to 28 ($M = 23.86$, $SD = 3.$

19) for authentic living, and from 4 to 27 ($M = 8.83$, $SD = 5.63$) for self-alienation. Items on this measure reflect individuals' incorporation others' perceptions (I am strongly influenced by the opinions of others), beliefs (I

always stand by what I believe in), and sense of self (I feel as if I don't know myself very well). Scores on this measure are similar to other diverse samples utilizing this measure. 58 Psychological Well-Being. Psychological well-being has been measured using various psychological constructs that assess positive aspects of psychological characteristics as well as the absence of negative aspects of psychological characteristics (Suzuki-Crumly ; Hyers, 2004). Therefore, this dissertation study utilized measures of global stress and life satisfaction that have been employed in previous studies on psychological well-being in multiracial individuals.

Perceived Stress. To assess individuals' experience of global stress as a measure of psychological well-being, the Perceived Stress Scale (PSS; Cohen, Kamarck, ; Mermelstein, 1983) was used. This measure is a widely used measure (Lavoie and Douglas, 2011) to assess how unpredictable, uncontrollable and overwhelmed individuals' assess their lives to be. Participants were asked to reflect on the last month when responding to general questions about their feelings of stress (e. g., In the last month, how often have you felt that you were unable to control the important things in your life?). The PSS is a ten-item scale whereby respondents indicated their responses using a Likert-type scale ranging from 0 (never) to 4 (very often). For the current sample, scores ranged from four to 38 (M = 16.

55 SD = 6. 74). The mean for this sample is slightly lower than other diverse community and student samples (Lavoie and Douglas, 2011) and therefore demonstrates a low level of perceived stress for this sample. The scale demonstrated convergent validity with health behavior and stress-related illness assessments (Cohen ; Williamson, 1988). Additionally, this measure
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has been normed on a racially diverse sample (Cohen ; Williamson, 1988). Previous studies provided evidence for internal consistency ($\alpha = .78$). For the current sample, internal consistency was demonstrated ($\alpha = .$

87). 59 Life Satisfaction. The other measure of psychological well-being in this study was life satisfaction, measured using the Satisfaction With Life Scale (SWLS; Diener, Emmons, Larsen ; Griffin 1985). The SWLS is a five-item measure with a Likert-type response scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 7 (strongly agree). There is evidence for convergent and divergent validity based on diverse normative samples as well as temporal stability (Pavot ; Diener, 1993). For the current sample, scores ranged from six to 35 ($M = 24.18$, $SD = 6.39$). This mean score suggests that this sample has an average level of life satisfaction. Previous studies demonstrated evidence for internal consistency ($\alpha = .87$); there is evidence for internal consistency of this measure with the current sample ($\alpha = .87$). The SWLS measured positive characteristics of psychological well-being by assessing the agreement with statements (e.

g., The conditions of my life are excellent). General Life Experiences. In order to control for general life experiences that may be stressful and impact psychological well-being, the Survey of Recent Life Experiences-Short Form (SRLE; Kohn ; Macdonald, 1992) was utilized. The SRLE consisted of 41 items regarding daily experiences such as being taken advantage of, a lot of responsibilities, and financial burdens. Participants were instructed to indicate the intensity of the experience over the past month ranging from 1 (not at all part of my life) to 4 (very much part of my life).

Scores could range from 41 to 164. For the current sample, scores ranged from 49 to 127 ($M = 75.07$, $SD = 17.03$), which indicates an average degree of hassles in the last month. For the short form utilized in this study, there is evidence for internal consistency ($\alpha = .90$); in the current sample there was evidence 60 for internal consistency ($\alpha = .$

91). There is also evidence for content validity of this measure (Mayberry ; Graham, 2001).