

ATTITUDINAL AND EXPERIENTIAL FACTORS OF INTERETHNIC ROMANTIC  
RELATIONSHIPS AMONG NATIVE AMERICAN EMERGING ADULTS

by

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## ABSTRACT

Attitudinal and Experiential Factors of Interethnic Romantic Relationships  
among Native American Emerging Adults

by

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Utah State University, 2011

Major Professor: Dr. Renee V. Galliher  
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This study investigated romantic relationship attitudes and experiences as factors of interethnic romantic relationships among Native American (NA) emerging adults. The study included 114 participants ages 18 to 25 years from about 70 NA indigenous groups across North America. Factors were organized into the moral, societal, and psychological domains of the social-cognitive domain theory. Factors identified by this study included four significant predictors of past interethnic dating and three significant predictors of future likelihood of NA dating among emerging adults with differences between NA relationships with Whites or with other minorities. Past dating experiences associated with strong White identity, past multicultural interaction, diversity climate in childhood community, and past parental support of interethnic dating relationships. Future likelihood of engagement in interethnic romantic relationships for NA emerging adults associated with past interethnic dating and other multicultural interactions. Past

multicultural interactions was the only predictor that emerged in NA romantic relationships with both Whites and other minorities.

(109 pages)

## PUBLIC ABSTRACT

Attitudinal and Experiential Factors of Interethnic Romantic Relationships  
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Doctoral student in psychology at Utah State University, Merrill Jones, and his major advisor, professor and licensed clinical psychologist, Renee V. Galliher, surveyed a sample of Native American individuals in the 18- to 25-year-old range about their romantic relationship attitudes and experiences with ethnically-different dating partners. The survey measured the participants' past dating experiences, with an emphasis on which social influences and individual characteristics might impact their current attitudes about choosing dating partners who are not Native American. The responses of the participants will also be analyzed to identify how these factors relate with the other factors, and which factors are the strongest predictors of how or why Native American young adults choose to date non-Native Americans or within their own ethnic group.

It is believed that this information will aid Native American young adults in understanding patterns of dating partner choices among their peers. The results of this study may also assist service providers, educators, administrators, and so forth in how they develop and approach their service delivery with Native American young adults. A substantial amount of existing literature has found that developing positive intimate relationships with members of other ethnicities, cultures, etc. help create a stronger acceptance of differences and more cohesive communities. It also has been found to help individuals interact in multiple environments more successfully and be more connected with members of other communities.

The costs of conducting this research are primarily related to the amount of time it takes each participant to complete the online survey. There are no specific financial costs associated with the development of the study, the administration of the survey, or with

the analysis of the data. There is little to no inherent risk for participants in completing the survey because it is optional to enter the survey, each item is optional to answer or not, and the survey does not inquire about any information that could identify any individual. Thus, the survey data is completely anonymous and confidential.

The analysis of the participants' responses showed that this sample of Native American young adults primarily dated White individuals, with a few dating partners who were members of other ethnicities, and least of all with other Native Americans. This pattern is consistent with research that has found that members of small minority groups typically have little interaction with individuals of their own group, but they frequently interact with members of majority groups, which is usually White. This study also found that the more the participants were active in multicultural events and experiences and who felt more support from their family, the more likely they were to have dated individuals from other ethnic groups. The likelihood of choosing future dating partners who are not Native American was related to past dating and their participation in cross-ethnic activities.

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## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

Individuals who identified as Native American (NA) constituted a mere 1.7% of the 2010 U.S. population (U.S. Census Bureau, 2011). With so much opportunity for interethnic relations with the other 98.3% of the population who do not identify as NA, it is likely that many of these interethnic relationships among NA individuals will be romantic in nature. Engagement in romantic relationships is often most active by late adolescents and young adults, who will hereafter be referred to as emerging adults (Arnett, 2000; Tanner, Arnett, & Leis, 2009). This study attempted to add important knowledge to the sparse literature regarding interethnic romantic relationships among NA emerging adults. More specifically, this study used social cognitive domain theory to investigate a range of factors linked to NA emerging adults' attitudes and experiences in interethnic romantic relationships.

Approximately 36.3% of the U.S. population self-identified as racial or ethnic minority in 2010 (U.S. Census Bureau, 2011), which is over double the 16.9% in 1980. The "White alone" population numbers, excluding "Hispanic or Latino" ethnicity, have decreased from 75.6% in 1990 to 63.7% in 2010 (U.S. Census Bureau, 2011). This rapidly increasing population of ethnic/racial minority group members will likely include an increase in their cross-ethnic interactions. NAs will likely develop interethnic relationships at higher rates than other minorities or Whites.

Wang, Kao, and Joyner (2006) found from a study of the National Longitudinal Study of Adolescent Health (Add Health) with over 20,000 adolescents from grades 7-12,

over 10,000 of the participants reported involvement in a romantic relationship. Of these who were romantically involved, only 47 were NAs, which represent less than 0.5 % of the adolescents in the sample who reported a romantic relationship (Wang et al., 2006). The NA representation in Wang et al. study demonstrates the need for more studies specific to NA youth relationships. In looking at interethnic marriages, a study by Passel, Wang, and Taylor (2010) found that 14.6% of new marriages, in 2008, and 8% of all current marriages were between partners of different race or ethnicity, and the increase of these relationships over the past few decades has been substantial. Interracial cohabitation is estimated at much higher rates than marriages, suggesting that intimate interracial relationships are rather common (Swanbrow, 2000).

These studies, as with many others, demonstrate a lack of specificity regarding NA peoples. The Add Health study omitted romantic relationships reported by multiracial participants, which may have eliminated NA adolescents because nearly one-half of the 2010 NA population identified with more than one race (U.S. Census Bureau, 2011). Wilson, McIntosh, and Insana (2007) recommended new research that does not include NAs in the category of “other” to improve data for analyzing relationship trends. Researchers have studied relationship factors in large minority groups, and frequently with college students, such as: African-American or Black-Americans, Asian-Americans or -Canadians, and the Hispanic/Latino population (Firmin & Firebaugh, 2008; Jacobson & Johnson, 2006; Levin, Taylor, & Caudle, 2007). Tanner and colleagues (2009) explained that adolescence and young adulthood have overlapped and that emerging adulthood encompasses this 18- to 29-year-old age ranges. This review found no

published studies that focused on individuals in this age range for interethnic relationships among NA peoples or other small minority groups, and this study attempts to address this research gap.

Despite the lack of NA relationship data, there is information from Native researchers that present unique contexts for NA identity development (Van Styvendale, 2008). NA emerging adults have unique challenges in developing romantic relationships, especially when looking to cross ethnic differences, which is almost inevitable with around 60% of NAs living in diverse urban areas (Indian Health Service, 2011). Young NAs may experience additional challenges in identity exploration and dating endeavors due to conflicting pressures from mainstream society and traditional lifestyles.

This study investigated ethnic identity as a specific relationship factor, along with several other social, personal, and systemic variables, such as: discrimination experiences, family attitudes, SES, gender, age, self-identity, and past multicultural experiences. These variables are organized into three social-cognitive domains—moral, societal, and psychological—and this framework will be presented in detail in the literature review (Killen, Lee-Kim, McGlothlin, & Stangor, 2002). Most of these variables were derived from the literature with larger minorities, and a consistent theme in the literature is that more opportunity for cross-ethnic personal interactions associates with higher occurrences of interethnic relationships (Hallinan & Smith, 1985).

Increasing diversity in the ethnic profile of the U.S. may amplify challenges in romantic relationship development for emerging adults given their developmental stage aimed at identity exploration (Eriksen, 1950; Tanner et al., 2009). Davila (2011) found

that mental health and romantic relationships among emerging adults are closely related, and several contextual factors affect romantic relationships, which consequently affect mental health. Davila added that positive romantic relationships promote protective factors in several health areas. Interethnic relationship development is salient for emerging adults given that attitudes and behaviors developed in adolescence persist well into adulthood, including romantic relationships (Joyner & Kao, 2000). Thus, social interactions during emerging adulthood can significantly influence how individuals and minority peoples form relationships in the world around them and can have a distinct impact on long-term interpersonal relationships.

There is an obvious increased need for research on how NA and all minority groups interrelate without group members. Data from this research project illuminates important factors in the development of interethnic romantic relationships among NA emerging adults. In general, it was expected that the findings for NA emerging adults would look similar to the findings for larger minority groups with the exception of higher levels of interethnic relationships due to greater opportunities for intergroup contact and fewer opportunities for contact with own tribal members.

## CHAPTER II

### REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

This literature review will briefly present and discuss areas that have been identified as relevant elements of interethnic relationships. The first area includes a summary of the controversial history and patterns of interethnic relationships. Second, the review presents NA experiences with a critical analysis of how the NA reservation system and other historical patterns create a unique context for interpersonal relationships among NA youth. Third, the literature review presents the social-cognitive domain model, which was selected as the theoretical framework for this project because of its structure for describing cross-ethnic interactions. Finally, discussion in relation to NA contexts addresses relationship factors that have been identified as important among larger ethnic minorities.

#### **History and Contexts of Interethnic Relationships**

There is little argument that both covert and overt discrimination have been a significant part of the history of the United States. European explorers and settlers displaced and often decimated NA groups through warfare and the spreading of diseases previously unknown to the Americas. Africans were imported to the Americas for the purpose of enslavement and forced servitude. Members of nonconventional religions were persecuted and driven from their homes time and time again. Women, sexual minority members, and others have been oppressed and treated unfairly despite federal laws to abolish discriminatory practices.

One example of institutionalized discrimination was state bans on interracial unions, which was not amended until the 1967 U.S. Supreme Court decision to terminate those bans. A short time later in 1968, the Motion Picture Production Code, or the Hays Code, which forbade the portrayal of interracial marriage, was abandoned, and the movie entertainment business led the media in reforming the public depiction of interethnic relationships. Public sentiment is slowly becoming more accepting of interracial relationships, but the actual prevalence of interracial relationships is still limited.

An example of these systemic changes is Jansezian's (2001) report that African American-Caucasian marriages grew from 51,000 in 1960 to 330,000 in 1998. In 2000, there were 10 times as many interracial marriages as there were in 1960. When including Latino ethnicity, the 2,000 numbers doubled to 3 million marriages that include partners from different ethnicities (Gaines & Leaver, 2002; Pugh, 2001). Passel and colleagues (2010) reported that 8% of all marriages are interracial. Systemic changes among youth began in the 1980s as reported by DuBois and Hirsch (1990), who found that 28% of a small sample of junior high school students in the U.S. Midwest reported a "close other-race" friend whom they saw frequently outside of school.

### **Benefits of Engaging In Interethnic Relationships**

It is increasingly important to understand the benefits of engaging in close relationships with members of different ethnicities. It seems extremely narrow minded to believe that only same-ethnic members could enjoy positive relationships. Yet, many researchers, leaders, and much of society propagandized this idea for many years, while



some still do (Gaines et al., 1999; Gaines & Ickes, 1997). Significant benefits may result from maintaining close interethnic relationships, both for the self and for others (Gijssberts & Dagevos, 2007; Hoffman, Wallach, & Sanchez, 2010; Troy, Lewis-Smith, & Laurenceau, 2006).

Allport (1954) suggested that to reduce the “us versus them” mentality, people will need to adopt ideals of teamwork in working for mutual goals, and this would be critical in motivating different peoples to interact more cooperatively with others (Hoffman et al., 2010). In couples, Gaines (1997) reported that interracial romantic partners behaved similarly to intraracial partners with regard to interchanges of respect and affection. Negy and Snyder (2000) found that interracial partners demonstrated better emotional expression than in their previous intraracial relationships. Additionally, partners in these interracial relationships appear to adapt to each other’s negative behaviors (Gaines & Agnew, 2003). Gaines and colleagues (1999) also reported that these partners seem to be securely attached in their interracial relationships. Troy and colleagues (2006) interpreted the high proportion of the secure attachments in the interracial relationships as indication that intrapersonal dysfunction is not a significant issue for either partner.

In addition to the individual benefits, there are also community and systemic benefits from seeking out interethnic relationships. Hoffman, Wallach, Sanchez, and Afkhami (2009) found that racial tension and ethnocentrism were reduced through interethnic community service groups. Also, individuals who participated in community service activities reported improved sense of their community identity and they felt more

connected to their ethnically diverse communities and school systems (Hoffman, Morales-Knight, & Wallach, 2007). Smith, Keating, and Stotland (1989) found that individuals who felt that they could help outgroup members reported feeling a stronger support network and empathic joy. Pettigrew (1997) posited that stereotypes can be disconfirmed through positive and goal-oriented intergroup activities, and these might otherwise be unavailable for many individuals (Hoffman, Espinosa, Sanchez, & Wallach, 2009).

These data seem to demonstrate that there is a gradual but steady increase in public openness towards intimate interracial relationships. Where the public openness to interethnic relationships and communication appear to be steadily improving, setbacks and new obstacles continue to impede progress. Ongoing research, such as this study, may inform and promote acceptance of difference and affirmation of diversity, especially within the context of romantic relationships.

### **Models of Interethnic Relationships**

Two theories of interracial relationship development have guided research. The exchange theory posits that members of a lower status in one area will be more likely to seek out relationships with members of a higher status to make up for their low status (Rosenfeld, 2005). For example, since patriarchal views of gender permeate U.S. society, ethnic minority men may “barter” their gender status for ethnic/racial status offered by White women. Similar exchange may occur with regard to socioeconomic status, physical attractiveness, or other personal characteristics. The opportunity theory, similar to the “contact hypothesis” (Allport, 1954), posits that the number of opportunities for

interracial contact determines the likelihood of developing an interracial intimate relationship (Hallinan & Smith, 1985).

While results from research on exchange theory have been mixed with large minority groups in the United States (i.e., Blacks, Hispanics, and Asians), most of the results from the research on opportunity theory seem to agree that greater opportunities for interracial contact lead to greater incidence of interracial relationships, including romantic relationships. Physical and/or interactional proximity has been identified as the strongest predictor of interracial dating participation (Fujino, 1997). Using data from the Add Health research, Joyner and Kao (2000) found that the opportunities for developing interracial friendships vary greatly by ethnicity due to each minority's group size. While Joyner and Kao ascribe primarily to the opportunity theory of interethnic relationship formation, they recognize that individual preferences for interethnic contact, which will be discussed in later sections of this literature review, are also probable factors that significantly impact intimate relationship development.

### **Patterns of Interethnic Relationships**

This study aimed to help fill the gap in the extent literature regarding interethnic romantic relationships among NAs. Because of the lack of research in this area, this study's hypotheses have been based on research with larger minority groups, such as Blacks, Latinos, and Asians. The majority of this research among emerging adults, however, looks at the quantity of interethnic dating more than the quality of the relationship. Because of the paucity of literature that focuses on the quality of interethnic dating, this study was informed by the literature on friendships and marriages to

supplement the dating literature. This review attempts to incorporate all of these data as a basis for conducting this relationship research among NA emerging adults.

One of the recent trends in relationship research has included the study of reciprocated friendships rather than one-sided endorsement of friendship. This has been considered a more accurate form of close-friendship research because it is believed that reciprocated friendships better identify relationships that include an element of intimacy (Vaquera & Kao, 2008). Vaquera and Kao found that interracial friendships are not as likely to be reciprocated as intraracial friendships, which may be extended to ethnicity as being a relevant factor in intimate relationship development. Also in their analysis of the Add Health dataset, they found that Asian Americans are the most likely of all major racial groups to have reciprocated interracial friendships followed by Latinos and Whites—who shared similar percentages. In contrast, NA emerging adults as a small minority group may not have the same opportunities for developing intimate relationships with members of their own ethnic group. NA youth living away from reservations rarely have similar opportunities for romantic relationships that frequently develop from the informal practices of casual dating within peer networks (Jackson, Kleiner, Geist, & Cebulko, 2011).

These attitudes and relationships may begin at an early age. In a study of kindergartners and third graders, Howes and Wu (1990) found that Asian-Americans, the smallest minority group in that sample, were most likely to have positive interactions with their interethnic peers, whereas Euro-Americans were the least likely. Furthermore, all minority groups were found to be more likely to have interethnic friends than the

Euro-American children. When they compared the amount of variance accounted for by ethnicity, age, and sex, ethnicity was found to account for 75% of the greater likelihood of minority children to have interethnic friends.

These friendship data for children and adolescents seem to reflect the patterns in marriages and cohabitation with interethnic partners. Passel and colleagues (2010) found that while interethnic/interracial marriages have markedly increased over the past few decades, but the current prevalence of these marriages is still less than 1-in-10. In the past few years, however, new interethnic marriages have reached nearly 15% of all new marriages. Swanbrow (2000) posited that because young couples continue to feel social pressure against interethnic marriage, many simply live together in committed relationships. It is assumed, then, that interethnic romantic relationships occur at rates much higher than what is reported.

Despite these increases in interethnic relationships, an interesting twist on the opportunity theory of relationship development is a possible result of an increase in minority group presence is what Korgen, Mahon, and Wang (2003) identified as a “tipping effect.” The tipping effect is described as decreased interracial interaction of minority individuals due to the growing localized population of their own minority group. Research dating back as far as 1957, may suggest that when a minority group population increases in a localized area of a larger community, higher levels of segregation often arise. Korgen and colleagues found mixed results for tipping effects in their college student study based on where students resided. A larger Black population on campus was associated with decreased interracial contact. However, off-campus Blacks, tended to

have more interracial contact at the same university. Other research with evidence of a possible tipping effect includes an analysis of the Add Health database by González, Herrmann, Kertész, and Vicsek (2007). They found that an increase of racial heterogeneity was associated with a decrease in interethnic friendship nominations. The tipping effect appears to be context dependent, then, and appears to have a significant impact on interethnic relationships.

Additional research, which used data from the Add Health project (González et al., 2007), found that Blacks in a small minority were more likely to become integrated in a White majority than were Whites from a small minority to integrate into a Black majority. Other studies that looked at interracial dating include Goforth (2002), and the 2002 study by Jones and Smith that was cited by Goforth. The Jones and Smith study reported that African American participants were twice as likely to be open to interracial dating as their peers. Knox, Zusman, Buggington, and Hemphill (2000) found similar results in that Blacks were more likely to report being accepting of an interracial relationship. It seems, then, that despite any possible tipping effects (Korgen et al., 2003), contemporary members of minority groups increasingly and typically approve of interethnic romantic relationships and close friendships.

These data seem to suggest that attitudes about interethnic relations are becoming increasingly positive and engagement in cross-ethnic relationships is increasing in notable ways. Trends in friendship and committed romantic relationships (i.e., marriages, cohabitation, etc.) appear to parallel the developing findings among minority group dating patterns. Although there are some obvious differences between minority-majority

group relations, the patterns for interethnic relationships seem to move in the same direction of greater involvement. These trends inform a model of NA interethnic dating with higher rates than for the large minority groups.

### **The NA Experience as a Unique Context**

The NA history illustrates a difficult past full of trauma after trauma, broken trust, and terrible amounts of loss (see: Duran, Duran, & Brave Heart, 1998; Mitchell & Maracle, 2005; Van Styvendale, 2008). The challenges they face compound in each generation, and this intergenerational trauma places an overwhelming burden on NA youth who have less support than that which their ancestors had. Traditional NA lifestyle is a fading memory of what it was before White settlers arrived, and today's NA youth have added challenges from tribal elders to maintain traditions while feeling pressure from mainstream White-American culture to assimilate and adopt Anglicized societal conventions.

Reservation life creates additional challenges where there remains same-ethnic social support, but limited access to mainstream society attracts NA youth away from the often subpoverty lifestyles of their families (Indian Health Service, 2011). Many reservations still lack electricity and running water; while perhaps preferable to Native elders, this is not likely affirmed as a positive quality of life by NA youth. Many NA emerging adults may attempt to "escape" reservation life, only to find that pursuing a college education does little to mediate the effects from the color of their skin. They may leave their studies behind for financial or family reasons and return home where they feel

their only source of genuine support (Hernandez, 2006; Tierney, Sallee, & Venegas, 2007).

These limited results are extraordinary given that recruitment for participants has proved difficult among NA peoples, partly because researchers and other professionals have historically not established trusting relationships with the indigenous peoples of North America (Mitchell & Baker, 2005). Other limited results appear in Joyner and Kao's (2000) analysis of the Add Health study, in which they found that NA females are 80.6 times more likely to have interracial relationships than White females. They also found that nearly all of the NA youth reported an interracial friendship. Both of these findings, Joyner and Kao attributed to the opportunity theory, but they also found that NA youth were still more likely to engage in interracial friendships than White youth, even when opportunity was controlled. However, when looking at more intimate friendships, NA females received only 59% reciprocation from those whom they identified as first-friends (Vaquera & Kao, 2008).

This study attempts to address the NA experience in relation to factors that influence attitudes about and involvement in interethnic romantic relationships among NA emerging adults.

### **Theoretical Framework**

This project analyzed factors related to attitudes toward and engagement in interethnic romantic relationships by NA emerging adults as framed by the social-cognitive domain model. The review of the history and description of the social-



cognitive domain model that was most concise and thorough was written by Killen and colleagues (2002). Therefore, much of this section is patterned after their organization for discussing the social-cognitive domain perspective.

The social-cognitive domain theory was developed and refined in the late 1970s and the early 1980s by various researchers who were looking for a way to describe moral development in a framework other than the stage theories that were prevalent at that time (Nucci, 1981; Nucci & Turiel, 1978; Smetana, 1984; Turiel, 1983). These researchers sought to assess social reasoning according to the contexts in which children and adolescents made judgments about exclusion. They also developed a methodology that provided an efficient and accurate process for categorizing and assessing the stability of the participants' reasons for social judgment and exclusion (Killen et al., 2002).

Over the past three decades, researchers have used the social-cognitive domain theory to analyze social reasoning of specific issues across a variety of contexts (Killen & Wainryb, 2000; Miller & Luthar, 1989; Nucci, 2001; Nucci, Killen, & Smetana, 1996; Smetana, 1988; Turiel & Wainryb, 1998; Wainryb & Turiel, 1994). Based on these and other studies, three primary domains of social knowledge were identified: moral, societal, and psychological (Killen et al., 2002). The moral domain subsumes the ideas of equality, fairness, justice, and individual rights. The societal domain includes the knowledge about norms, conventions, customs, and the general rules of etiquette within the identified cultures or local populous. The psychological domain contains the intra-individual processes such as autonomy, personal jurisdiction, self-development, and the overall sense of self as part of the community or local systems (Killen et al., 2002).

These domains of knowledge have assisted those who use the social-cognitive domain model through the emergence of the general strengths that are presented below. Killen and colleagues (2002) organized these general strengths into six categories with the first being that the social-cognitive domain model allows for analysis of multiple forms of reasoning in judgments rather than only looking at moral reasoning. Next, it seeks to study reasoning about everyday situations and familiar circumstances instead of studying reasoning in hypothetical scenarios or unfamiliar events, which an individual may only rarely encounter. The social-cognitive domain model attempts to examine actual reasoning within diverse contexts, whereas the stage theories propose a universal application of systematic progress across time. It also looks to move from a hierarchical progression of morality toward a more open and free stance for the examination of the different forms of reasoning and how individuals coordinate and use them during distinct periods of development. The social-cognitive domain model encourages allowance for cultural variation and contextual differences in social reasoning, and discourages comparison of individuals from different cultures according to one standard scale.

The social-cognitive domain theory has given researchers a practical framework for conducting research and evaluation of decisions not governed by explicit rules, which typically have only required one form of reasoning. More complex decision-making will involve multiple forms of reasoning, which requires what Killen and colleagues (2002) term “context analysis.” This means that as individuals reason what their judgment will be, they access knowledge from more than one of the three domains discussed above. Usually one area will be given higher priority by the individuals according to the present

context, which is why predictions of social reasoning from the social-cognitive domain perspective are dependent upon the varying contextual factors (Killen et al., 2002).

This project was organized after the social-cognitive domain model because of its strengths with minority social-reasoning analysis in relation to the objective of examining factors within the different contexts of interethnic romantic relationships among NA emerging adults.

### **Factors That Influence Interpersonal Relationship Development**

Many factors that have been identified as influential for relationship development seem likely to also have impact on the perceptions of interethnic relationships. Vaquera and Kao (2008) outlined as predictors of friendship reciprocity the following: gender, race or ethnicity, age, generational status, SES, school characteristics, and characteristics of the friendship itself. In addition to the factors above, other factors that have been considered include familial attitudes, community perceptions, reactions to stereotypes or discrimination, prior interethnic interaction, and peer influence. These factors are likely to be influential in the development of interethnic romantic relationships. Thus, these factors are discussed as pertaining to the moral, societal, and psychological domains from the social-cognitive domain model.

#### **Moral Domain Factors**

An integral piece of moral decision making must include consideration of fairness reasoning and prevalence of bias and discrimination in current society. There is an abundance of literature examining the causes, effects, and numerous aspects of prejudice,

bias, and discrimination, so this discussion includes only a few of the key areas that have relevance to interethnic or interracial relationships.

**Discrimination experiences and microaggressions.** One of the most salient among contemporary issues within multicultural psychology is that of covert and often unintentional discriminatory behaviors, known as microaggressions. Microaggressions are “commonplace verbal or behavioral indignities, whether intentional or unintentional, which communicate hostile, derogatory, or negative racial slights or insults” (Sue, Bucceri, Lin, Nadal, & Torino, 2007, p. 273). They classified three subcategories of microaggressions as: microassaults, microinsults, and microinvalidations.

Microassaults are conscious and often deliberate attacks, within limited or constrained settings, and against outgroup members (e.g., assuming criminal intent). Microassaults are considered covert because those who deliver them attempt to maintain some form of anonymity when using them in more intimate situations. Microinsults and microinvalidations are generally considered unconscious and are often unintentional, which is why these two forms of discrimination are so insidious. Microinsults often include nonverbal gestures and verbal messages of explicit or implicit outgroup inferiority (e.g., a White teacher ignoring a student of color). Microinvalidations are communications that suggest that outgroup differences are not important, and these communications can often be challenges to one’s identity (e.g., “You’re being oversensitive” or “I don’t see color; I only see human beings”; Sue et al., 2007).

The underlying messages implicit among all microaggressive behaviors include communications that would likely have both causes from and effects on individuals’

internal processes as well as external behaviors. While overt racism and other visible forms of discrimination have decreased significantly due to civil rights work, covert microaggressions have increased, and because clandestine racial discrimination is perceived as more harmful than open racism, it is important to include in this study. The effects of microaggressions are likely to have significant impact on how members of minority groups perceive interpersonal relationships because, systemically, microaggressions are the result of majority group members determining minority group members as less than equals.

This area is of great import to this study because individuals will certainly have unique interpretations of this difference in privilege and power, and it likely has a strong impact on the attitudes toward and involvement in interethnic relationships, regardless of majority or minority status. However, the likely impact that microaggressions may have on members of ethnic minorities is a wariness or reluctance to engage in interethnic relationships to avoid subjecting themselves to positions of inferiority, acts of exploitation, or any form of discrimination. These negative attitudes about outgroup members seem to be based on previous experiences of discrimination. One of the many studies that demonstrates this relationship found that a small sample of young elementary age children demonstrated outgroup prejudice based on prior group acceptance or rejection (Nesdale et al., 2007). This study seeks to find out whether experiences of microaggressions or discrimination among NA emerging adults deter them from forming interethnic romantic relationships.

**Previous dating experience and moral evaluations.** Prior experience with

interethnic friends and dating partners has been an area that has received some attention in existing literature about intimate relationships. Rosenblatt, Karis, and Powell (1995) reported that 92% of the college students in their sample were open to interracial dating based on previous experiences. Conversely, they also reported that of those who had no interracial dating experience, only 32% would consider becoming involved in an interracial romantic relationship. A different study looking at youth adaptation for Black students at predominantly White universities found that Black students who had more interracial contact before entering college had greater social comfort and competence for successful adaptation (Graham, Baker, & Wapner, 1995). Additionally, the Uskul, Lalonde, and Cheng (2007) study also found that when based on prior interracial experience, the Chinese Canadian minority group reported a more positive attitude and openness to interracial dating than the majority group comprised of European Canadians.

The differences in openness to interracial relationships seem to parallel the findings that of those who report acceptance of interracial dating, relatively few have actually engaged in interracial dating (Goforth, 2002; Knox et al., 2000; Zogby America, 2000). Goforth suggested that as an abstract idea, interracial relationships are accepted by most individuals, but external influences may affect actual behavior. While it can be argued that these experiences of attitudinal/behavioral discrepancies are personal perceptions, they are also part of the larger systemic worldviews that seem to be lingering from older conventional biases in society.

**Familial and intergenerational perspectives on interethnic dating.** One of the most obvious contexts where interpersonal attitudes are learned is in the home. Familial

and intergenerational attitudes have been investigated with varying results. Goforth (2002) cited a 2002 survey by Jones and Smith who found active involvement from parents in the process of how their children make decisions. Mok (1999) reported that possibly the most critical impediment to the development of interethnic dating relationships among Asian American youth was parental objection to the dating situation.

Uskul and colleagues (2007) suggested that the conflict for parents often lies in their belief that when their children engage in interethnic dating, the children may not maintain a continuity of cultural heritage and tradition. The Chinese Canadian young adults in this study were more likely to accept their parents' objections to interracial dating and marriage than their European Canadian counterparts. Additionally, Uskul and colleagues also found that Chinese Canadians did not score as high as European Canadians on openness to and general attitudes towards interracial dating. The study by Goforth (2002) was looking to confirm the conventional belief that older adults and parents are more likely to disapprove of interracial dating and would have a heavy influence on their children's attitudes about interracial dating.

However, in a poll of over 1,200 adults, parents approved of their children's engagement in interracial relationships at a rate of 67%. Blacks and Hispanics approved with 87% and 80%, respectively, while only 62% of Whites approved (Zogby America, 2000). Additionally, the findings from Goforth's study (2002) revealed that parents' reports of their approval of interracial dating than was greater than the willingness of their college-aged children to engage in interracial romantic relationships. These studies seem to demonstrate that familial and generational attitudes are not as condemning as

they may have been in the past, and interethnic romantic relationships appear to be more socially acceptable, even if they are not yet practiced.

**Summary of moral domain.** While traditional overt racism and discrimination have largely received attention, the covert discrimination and microaggressions continue to undermine the moral reasoning in interethnic romantic relationship development and among social interactions broadly. There appear to be influential variables that moderate people's behaviors when their professed beliefs do not correspond with the behaviors. These variables may well be explained by the historical moral beliefs among Western societies, which have deep roots in imperialism and colonization.

Whether cultural injustice, intergenerational family conventions, or minority group trends, these long-standing beliefs have only recently begun to see change on a large scale, and there is still much progress to be made both individually and systemically. This study attempts to incorporate important variables from the moral domain into an understanding of interethnic romantic relationship behaviors and attitudes of NA emerging adults. Specifically, this study inquired about microaggressions, familial attitudes about interethnic relationships, and how previous experiences of interethnic romantic relationships may have influenced current attitudes and likelihood of future engagement in NA interethnic romantic relationships.

### **Societal Domain Factors**

The societal domain is largely comprised of demographic and social variables—such as: gender, SES, and school/neighborhood ethnic composition—which have been well-studied among large populations. However, small populations such as NA groups



are frequently overlooked, and there is yet to be found literature specific to emerging adult interethnic romantic relationships among NAs. This study, then, draws from the literature that addresses romantic relationships in other minority groups.

**Gender and age.** Several studies looking at gender differences in attitudes about interracial dating have found that males are more likely to be accepting of interracial relationships (Datzman & Gardner, 2000; Goforth, 2002; Madison, 2003; Norcross, 2002; Uskul et al., 2007). Males could be more approving because power and privilege more frequently resides with men and they may experience more freedom in their relationships. However, other research has not found significant differences between males and females in their approval of interracial relationships (Elkthunder, 2000; Knox et al., 2000). In the studies that did find gender differences and those that did not, most of the participants were traditional college age with varying sample sizes and demographic composition.

In addition to the exchange and opportunity theories previously discussed, the mate-selection theory has also been used to explain the development of long-term intimate relationships. Buss and Schmitt (1993) suggested that females are more selective about whom they date because they tend to give more thought to survivability for their children. This idea has been found to transcend ethnic, racial, cultural, and other demographic variables. With regard to interethnic friendships, Vaquera and Kao (2008) found that females are more likely than males to have reciprocated friendships.

Wilson and colleagues (2007) also found that younger aged individuals tend to be more involved in interracial relationships, possibly because the younger generations are being raised in a society that advocates greater tolerance and acceptance of intimate

relationships that include diverse partners.

It may be argued, then, that females may be less likely to pursue interethnic relationships because it may create undue burden on their children, and at the same time, they could be more likely to develop cross-ethnic relationships to increase opportunities available to their children. The body of literature seems to portray inconsistent findings for gender differences in attitudes about cross-ethnic romantic relationships, and explanations for and against point to cultural values.

**Socioeconomic status.** Wang and Kao (2007) suggested that one of the factors that augmented findings for the opportunity theory was SES. In their analysis of data from the Add Health database, they found that the effect of SES alone on making a choice for interracial partners was only significant among Latinos. Wang and Kao found that Black Americans and Asian Americans of higher SES more often tended to have White partners than their lower SES counterparts. They suggested that the higher SES increased interracial contact between minorities and Whites, presumably because when minority individuals have higher SES they are more likely to be living among higher SES Whites. These findings may indicate that adolescent interethnic dating does not increase due simply to equal SES, but contact with White adolescents does increase for higher SES minority individuals living among higher SES Whites. This pattern likely increases opportunities for closer interaction between minority individuals and Whites.

While SES has not been found to be a significant factor in interethnic relationships, except for the Latinos in the one analysis discussed above, interethnic contact does appear to be one of the most consistent findings as a factor in opportunity

for intimate relationship development.

**Ethnic representation in local contexts.** School characteristics appear to be functions of the ethnic composition of the communities, which seems to influence the opportunity adolescents have for engaging in interethnic interaction because most adolescents attend school for much of the day. Attitudes inherent in curriculum and policies likely have an impact on students' perceptions about minority groups. Hallinan and Teixeira (1987) observed race differences in cross-race sociability due to classroom climate effects. The various instructional practices and educational structures within school systems appear to affect social attitudes and behaviors, and these are frequently evidenced in the activities, teaching methods, and social organization in classrooms. These organizational effects within schools (e.g., placement in classes, extracurricular activities, teaching approaches/methods, status expectations, cooperative versus competitive academic interactions) were found to have significant effects on attitudes about members of other ethnicities, cross-race interactions, and the likelihood of interracial relationships (Khmelkov & Hallinan, 1999).

The ethnic composition of a school also seems to have a significant effect on the development of interethnic relationships; Quillian and Campbell (2003) stated that race is and will continue to be a major determinant of friendship selection in multiracial schools. Obviously, schools are not the only venue where interethnic interactions take place, but the school context is arguably the most important opportunity for adolescents to interact with others with whom they may want to develop intimate relationships (Joyner & Kao, 2000). Youth develop intimate relationships for support and acceptance in addition to

exploration of their romantic selves, and friends and romantic partners would likely want to interact as often as possible, including throughout their school day.

DuBois and Hirsch (1990) found that friendship patterns among early adolescents indicate that, according to self-report, Black youth did not talk to as many friends as White youth throughout the school day. However, DuBois and Hirsch also found that Black students tended to more commonly spend time with close other-race school friends outside of the school context than did their White counterparts. Furthermore, their findings included results that even though nearly half of the Black and White students in their study reported some contact with other-race students outside of school, only 10% reported frequent contact outside of school. This finding might suggest that while many students of all ethnicities have interethnic friendships in school, interethnic contact does not necessarily extend to non-school related contexts.

After school settings are primarily thought to occur in their local neighborhoods. Black youth have been found to have developed much larger friendship networks in their neighborhoods than White youth (DuBois & Hirsch, 1990). Other neighborhood patterns demonstrated that all students who lived in culturally and ethnically diverse areas were more likely to have cross-ethnic friends in non-school settings. These friendship networks are highly important for the social support that teenagers establish, and greater numbers of friends increases the likelihood of interaction and support. However, reciprocity of friend identification among adolescents was found to be a stronger indicator of social support than was the numerical size of friendship networks (Vaquera & Kao, 2008).

**Summary of the societal domain.** Consistent with the opportunity theory, this section on the societal domain presented findings that support the idea that the prevalence of intergroup contact is largely based on opportunity in most communities and neighborhoods, regardless of whether they are homogeneous or heterogeneous in ethnic composition. Factors within this societal domain are numerous and while some factors have not been found to be significant, there are others which seem to have profound influence on relationship development among members of ethnic minorities. The societal factors that will be researched in this study include gender, age, socioeconomic status, ethnic representation in local contexts, and multicultural experience. The approach of these research queries was guided by the opportunity theory, and it is hoped that these findings will augment the literature body for NA youth and minority group relationship variables.

### **Psychological Domain Factors**

The psychological domain includes characteristics that are the more personal aspects of individuals and are heavily influenced by their self-identification and opportunity for positive personal interactions with cross-ethnic peers and authority figures. An individual's ethnic identification is a major element of self-identity and may affect how likely one is to engage in interethnic romantic relationships. Additionally, personal sense of belonging within the local system or community will be discussed as a factor in interethnic relationship development.

**Self-identification and acculturation.** An identity hypothesis was used to predict that instead of identifying with their heritage identity (Chinese), when Chinese

Canadians more strongly identified with their Canadian identity they would be more likely to date interracially (Uskul et al., 2007). The research did support the prediction, and stronger Canadian identity correlated with attitudes about interracial dating that were more open and favorable. This finding is consistent with previous research that found that when Asian Americans identified more strongly with an American/Western lifestyle, they were more likely to date White Americans (Mok, 1999). Uskul and colleagues posited that there was an ingroup-outgroup effect where the minority group had fears of the majority outgroup, whereas the majority ingroup was becoming more accepting of ethnic diversity. It appears then that ethnic identification is a significant factor in attitudes about interethnic dating among minority group members.

In a study looking at adolescent social support, loneliness, and friendship, Shams (2001) suggested that one of the reasons Asian American youth tend to choose friends from their own race first is due to a sense of security and self-pride. These reasons, they argue, seem to be part of their self-identification process, and as they formed ethnocentric friendships they also appeared to demonstrate a stronger sense of racial pride. This appears to correspond with the social support hypothesis of friendship segregation (Quillian & Campbell, 2003). Their hypothesis is consistent with the opportunity theory, but it adds a personal element of desire to assimilate. Same-race friendship networks may act as a buffer and a support during the acculturation process.

**Personal attitudes and peer experience.** Goforth (2002) observed cases in which individuals reported acceptance of interracial relationships, but their interracial dating behavior was much lower. This was attributed to a belief that interracial dating is

ideal in the abstract, but not a comfortable self-practice. Wilson et al. (2007) posited that people who actively seek out intimate cross-race relationships differ significantly from ones who are merely tolerant of interracial relationships. These relationship attitudes and involvement may be reflective of an individual's peer interactions and the desire to be accepted. Mayfield-Fleming (1999) found that social desirability effects were present among high school students who tended to avoid interracial partners. They preferred to interact with same-race peers in social settings even though they expressed positive attitudes about interracial relationships.

However, Knox and colleagues (2000) suggested that trends in interethnic dating attitudes are shifting toward greater approval and engagement in interethnic relationships, especially with young adult and adolescent populations. Where previous research (Tucker & Mitchell-Kernan, 1995; Wilensky, 2002) found higher attainment of formal education corresponded with greater tolerance of interracial romantic relationships, little of the research combined the tolerant attitudes with behaviors of seeking out cross-racial relationships. Wilson and colleagues (2007) did not find a direct relationship between more formal education and improved attitudes or involvement. They suggested that exposure to and opportunity for interethnic interaction, which is likely much greater in higher education settings, prompted elevations in cross-ethnic relationship development rather than acquired academic knowledge or earning of degrees.

**Summary of the psychological domain.** The psychological factors that have emerged from the literature are self-identification and personal experiences within environments in which there is more ethnic and cultural diversity. This domain is a

salient area for NA youth where the Anglo-American lifestyle has encroached upon traditional culture and influenced how they navigate their bicultural worlds. Many NA peoples have lost much of their traditional identity and today's youth appear to struggle to balance their ethnic identity and traditional customs with the values of the mainstream White-American society.

These predominantly White values are frequently proliferated in educational settings, and NA youth tend to feel obligated to adopt these values to succeed. These educational settings often provide more opportunity for interethnic interaction and exposure to people of other ethnicities. This study attempts to learn how self-identification relates to attitudes of interethnic intimacy tolerance and its impact on engagement in multicultural relationships for NA emerging adults.

### **Summary and Research Questions**

There is a significant dearth of research on interethnic relationships of NA emerging adults, especially as it pertains to romantic relationship involvement and attitudes. The social-cognitive domain model seemed an appropriate structure for investigating this area of research, and this study sought to organize findings in a meaningful manner based on this model. The factors that have been found to be relevant with larger minority groups include: moral aspects like group experience with discrimination and previous interethnic relations, societal influences (i.e., gender, age, SES, and local ethnic composition), and the psychological determinants of self-identification and social desirability. These factors will be investigated in this study with



a focus on how NA emerging adults interpret the importance of these factors within their own worldviews.

Therefore, the following research questions were the foci of this study.

1. What are the reported attitudinal and experiential trends in interethnic romantic relationships among NA emerging adults?
2. Which domain-specific factors are related to attitudes about and experiences of interethnic romantic relationships for NA emerging adults:
  - a. How are factors from the moral domain related to interethnic attitudes and experiences?
  - b. How are factors from the societal domain related to interethnic attitudes and experiences?
  - c. How are factors from the psychological domain related to interethnic attitudes and experiences?
3. Overall, which factors are the strongest predictors of positive interethnic romantic relationship attitudes and experiences for NA emerging adults?

## CHAPTER III

### METHODOLOGY

#### **Design**

This study implemented a self-report survey to investigate which factors influence how NA emerging adults develop interethnic romantic relationships. This study utilized a correlational design that sought to identify the relevant attitudes and experiences of these interethnic romantic relationships among NA emerging adults.

#### **Participants**

The participants in this study included 114 NA young adults aged 18-25. Participation was solicited primarily via emails that were nationally disseminated through NA support groups, such as: NA student clubs on college and university campuses, multicultural centers, professional organizations, and other appropriate means like personal and social networks. All 18- to 25-year-old NA individuals who had access to the internet and were capable of reading the survey were invited to participate. As an incentive, participants were given the opportunity to enter a random drawing to receive one of eleven online gift certificates to an internet store.

Participants are affiliated members, or children of an affiliated member, in their identified tribe, and this sample includes representation from approximately 70 distinct North American indigenous groups from Alaska, Canada, Mexico, and all across the contiguous United States. Fifty-two (45.6%) participants identified their ethnicity as only

NA, one (0.9%) participant identified as only Latino/Hispanic, and one (0.9%) participant identified as only Other (these two individual participants also identified specific indigenous group membership and are hereafter included with the NA only participants for the purposes of analyzing the data). Forty-two (36.8%) participants identified as NA and White, 17 (14.9%) participants identified as NA and one or more other minority groups, and one (0.9%) participant did not complete this item or any the demographic information. Among all participants, 13 (11.4%) indicated Latino/Hispanic ethnicity.

The gender of this sample included 83 (72.8%) participants who identified as females, and 30 (26.3%) participants identified as males. The age of this sample included 38 (33.3%) participants reporting an age of 24-25, 24 (21.1%) participants reported an age of 22-23, 25 (21.9%) participants reported an age of 20-21, and 25 (21.9%) participants reported an age of 18-19. One participant did not report age. Relationship status included 44 (38.6%) participants reporting marriages/committed partnerships, 35 (30.7%) participants reported that they are single and not dating, and 34 (29.8%) participants reported that they are single and dating. The average yearly income for the household in which participants were raised included 18 (15.8%) under \$20,000, 37 (32.5%) at \$20,000-50,000, 39 (34.2%) at \$50,000-100,000, 16 (14%) at \$100,000-250,000, and two (1.8%) reported household incomes of over \$250,000. One participant did not report this information.

Religious affiliation/spiritual identification included 64 (56.1%) identified Christian participants with 28 participants affiliating with The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, and 20 identifying as nondenominational or unspecified. The 16 other

Christian participants represent seven other denominations. Twenty (17.5%) participants reported Traditional affiliations, including several specific tribes and two affiliating with the NA Church. Sixteen (14%) participants indicated a general sense of being spiritual, including with nature, but they did not specify any religious affiliation. Fifteen (13.2%) participants did not identify with any spirituality or religion, to include atheism and agnosticism. Six (5.2%) participants identified other spiritual or religious affiliations, while four (3.5%) participants did not respond to this item. The percentages total over 100% because participants were allowed to identify multiple affiliations.

The ethnic composition of the educational settings that correspond to emerging adulthood (i.e., high school and college or university) are depicted in Table 1. Educational attainment had a majority of 51 (44.7%) participants having attended some college, 24 (21.1%) participants had a bachelor's degree, and 11 (9.6%) participants had an associate's degree or a technical certification. Additionally, 12 (10.5%) participants reported graduate school training, 12 (10.5%) participants reported a high school diploma or G.E.D., and three (2.6%) participants reported less than high school completion.

Table 1

*Ethnic Composition of Schools During Emerging Adulthood*

School	Ethnic composition of school	<i>n</i>	%
High school	Mostly from my tribe	21	18.4
	Mostly NAs, but not my tribe	8	7.0
	Mostly other ethnic minorities, but non-Native	16	14.0
	Mostly Whites/Anglos	69	60.5
College/University	Mostly from my tribe	5	4.4
	Mostly NAs, but not my tribe	8	7.0
	Mostly other ethnic minorities, but non-Native	18	15.8
	Mostly Whites/Anglos	82	71.9

Personal incomes included 69 (60.5%) participants reporting under \$10,000 annually, and 21 (18.4%) participants earned \$10,000-20,000. Seventeen (14.9%) participants reported annual incomes of \$20,000-50,000, and only six (5.3%) participants earned over \$50,000.

Residency reports indicated that the largest number, 30 (26.3%), of participants lived only with roommates. Twenty-eight (24.6%) participants reported only living with partners and/or children, and 25 (21.9%) participants reported only living with parents and/or siblings. Fourteen (12.3%) participants indicated that they live alone, and 16 (14%) indicated other living arrangements. History of residence on and visits to reservations is presented below in Table 2.

Table 2

*Frequencies of Reservation Activity*

Variable	Frequency	<i>n</i>	%
Years lived on a reservation	none	57	50.0
	less than 2	14	12.3
	2—7	0	0.0
	8 or more	34	29.8
Age when last lived on a reservation	never	54	47.4
	5 or younger	9	7.9
	6—14	0	0.0
	15—17	11	9.6
	18 or older	18	15.8
	currently do	14	12.3
Frequency of visits to homes on a reservation	less than once per year	43	37.7
	1—3 time(s) per year	25	21.9
	4—11 times per year	18	15.8
	12 or more times per year	27	23.7

Limited demographic information was collected for the parents of the participants. Sixty-six (57.9%) mother figures were only NA, 19 (16.7%) were only White, and 16 (14%) were NA and White. The remaining 12 (10.5%) were other minority and/or a mix of NA, White, and other minorities. Fifty (43.9%) father figures were only NA, 28 (24.6%) were only White, and 11 (9.6%) were NA and White. Nine (7.9%) participants reported no father figure, and the remaining 14% were a mix of NA, White, and other minorities.

Education attained by mother figures included 7 (6.1%) who reported less than high school completion, 33 (28.9%) with a high school diploma/G.E.D., 18 (15.8%) had some college, 16 (14%) had an associate's degree or technical certification, 17 (14.9%) had bachelor's degrees, and 22 (19.3%) mothers had at least some graduate school training. Education for father figures included 7 (6.1%) who reported less than high school completion, 30 (26.3%) with high school diplomas/G.E.D.s, 18 (15.8%) had some college, 15 (13.2%) had associate's degrees or technical certifications, 13 (11.4%) had bachelor's degrees, and 22 (19.3%) had at least some graduate school training.

Parental relationships indicated that 66 (57.9%) participants had married parents, 34 (29.8%) participants had separated/divorced parents, 8 (7%) participants had parents who never married, and 5 participants reported that one or both parents were deceased.

### **Procedures**

Data were collected via an online survey that was linked to the recruitment email (see Appendix A). Participants were recruited through snowball sampling, with the

recruitment email sent to various professional organizations, university and college student groups, personal contacts, and posted on internet social networking sites. The participants gave informed consent by continuing to the survey items after reading the letter of information (see Appendix B). As an incentive, participants were offered an opportunity to submit an email address to enter a random drawing for a gift certificate to an online store.

### **Instruments**

The various instruments used for this study are described below and are found in Appendix C.

**Discrimination.** Experiences of discrimination were measured using the short-form scale of the Daily Racial Microaggressions (DRM; Mercer, Ziegler-Hill, Wallace, & Hayes, 2010). Items included statements such as: “I was made to feel as if the cultural values of another race/ethnic group were better than my own” and “Someone made a statement to me that they are not racist or prejudiced because they have friends from different racial/ethnic backgrounds.” This 14-item self-report survey was found to meaningfully correlate with other race-/ethnicity-related scales, as well as high correlation with the 45-item long form of the DRM. In addition to the single idea of microaggression experiences, the DRM long form was separated into the two constructs of microinsults and microinvalidations, along with seven individual factors. In the short-form, the first eight items comprise the microinsults queries and four of the factors, while the remaining six items make up the microinvalidations queries and the other three factors. The items are scored on a likert-type scale ranging from 1 to 5 with the

following meanings: 1—“Never happened to me;” 2—“Happened to me, but I was not upset;” 3—“Happened to me and I was slightly upset;” 4—“Happened to me and I was moderately upset;” 5—“Happened to me and I was extremely upset.” The short-form can be scored dichotomously (are experiences reported: 1 = no, or 2-5 = yes) or continuously (how upset by experiences: 1-5) with internal consistencies were observed at  $\alpha = .95$  and  $.94$ . Reliability for this study was scored continuously with a Cronbach’s alpha of  $.87$  for the total score, and the subscale scores for microinsults and microinvalidations were  $.84$  and  $.83$ , respectively.

**Cross-ethnic social activity.** Exposure to and attitudes about interethnic contact were gathered using the Multicultural Experiences Inventory (MEI; Ramirez, 1999). This 23-item self-report inventory measures past and present multicultural interaction by an individual, and assesses engagement in multicultural activity among three cultural groups (same culture, majority culture, other minority). Items include statements such as: “My childhood friends who visited me and related well to my parents were...” and “At present, my close friends are...” The items are scored on a likert-type scale, ranging from 1 to 5 with the following meanings: 1—“almost entirely NA;” 2—“Mostly NA with a few minorities from other ethnic groups;” 3—mixed Anglos/White, NA, and other minorities about equally;” 4—mostly Anglos/White with a few minorities including NA;” 5—almost entirely Anglos/White.” Reliability has been estimated at  $.86$ , and the MEI has been correlated with racial attitudes and cultural orientation to majority White culture (Lee, 1999). Reliability for this study included a Cronbach’s alpha of  $.95$  for the experiences total, and  $.94$  and  $.90$  for the past experiences and present experiences,



respectively. The multicultural behaviors for NAs, Whites, and Other Minorities had respective alphas of .84, .86, and .79 for this sample.

**Ethnic identity.** Self-identification of ethnicity was assessed using the 12-item Multigroup Ethnic Identity Measure (MEIM; Phinney, 1992). It was developed to assess ethnic identity exploration (5-items) and identity commitment (7-items) through statements such as: “I participate in cultural practices of my own group, such as special food, music, or customs” and “I am happy to be a member of the group I belong to.” The items are scored on a Likert-type scale ranging from 1 (strongly agree) to 4 (strongly disagree). The current version has shown reliability alphas ranging from .81 to .89 for 11 different ethnic groups (Roberts et al., 1999) and .90 for college students. Reliability for this study yielded a Cronbach’s alpha of .91 for the total score, and .80 and .89 for identity exploration and identity commitment, respectively.

Identification with distinct cultures independent of other cultural identification was measured by the Orthogonal Cultural Identification Scale (OCIS; Oetting & Beauvais, 1991). Items include answers that have six options for major ethnic groups that answer questions such as: “How many traditions does your family have that are based on...,” and “Do you live by or follow the way of life of...” The items are scored on a Likert-type scale ranging from 0 (none at all) to 3 (a lot). This 6-item self-report inventory has been shown to have good reliability, above .80 (Oetting & Beauvais, 1991), and when coupled with the 8-item Indian Activities addendum (which has the same answer options for questions about activity in NA traditions and events), the alpha raised above .90. Reliability for this study yielded a Cronbach’s alpha of .92 for both the NA

and White cultures, and alphas ranged from .85 to .88 for the other minority groups. The Indian Activities addendum had an alpha of .89 for this sample.

**Information specific to this study.** Several items were generated to gather specific data regarding the attitudes about and experiences of NA emerging adults in romantic interethnic relationships. Previous dating experiences were measured with questions like: “How often have you pursued romantic relationships in the past with...” and “Which reason most accurately reflects why you have never dated...;” participants were asked to respond for four ethnic categories that ranged from most like me (“members of your tribe”) to least like me (“Anglos/Whites”). Attitudes about engaging in romantic relationships in the future were measured with questions like: “How likely are you to pursue a romantic relationship in the future with...” and “Which reason most accurately reflects why you would never date in the future...” Influences on participant attitudes were also measured by ranking several factors (e.g., past relationships, peers, family, etc.) from 1 (least) to 10 (most). Family attitudes about romantic relationships among the four ethnic categories were measured with questions like: “How supported by your parents have you felt (would you feel) with dating partners...” from each of the four ethnic categories, and “I have a close family member who has been (is) involved in a romantic relationship with a non-Native...” and responses indicate the occurrence and whether the family was supportive. Diversity climates in community and educational settings were measured with items like: “Thinking about the overall climate for diversity and equality, [it] was/is...” with possible responses of 1 (mostly negative) to 4 (mostly positive) for two community environments, and for high school and college settings.

**Demographic information.** A brief questionnaire obtained information such as: tribal affiliations, ethnic identifications, spiritual beliefs, relationship status, household residents, income, education levels attained, age, and gender. Additionally, reservation residence and activity was queried, along with the estimated ethnic compositions of their high schools and university/college environments as these are likely settings for emerging adult relationships.

Table 3 shows a summary of measures and study variables in the social cognitive domains.

Table 3

*Summary of Measures and Study Variables in the Social Cognitive Domains*

Variables	Measure
<b>Moral</b>	
Experiences of discrimination	DRM
Previous dating experiences	Study-specific items
Parental support for interethnic relationships	Study-specific items
<b>Societal</b>	
Multicultural experiences	MEI & Indian Activities Addendum (OCIS)
Ethnic compositions/diversity climates	Study-specific items
Gender, age, SES, education	Demographic information items
<b>Psychological</b>	
Ethnic identification	MEIM & OCIS
Personal/peer attitudes and experiences	Study-specific items
<b>Outcome Variables</b>	
Past experiences with interethnic romantic relationships	Study-specific items
Likelihood of future interethnic romantic relationships	Study-specific items

## CHAPTER IV

### RESULTS

The results are organized and presented by research question.

#### **Research Question 1**

Research question 1 asked, “What are the reported attitudinal and experiential trends in interethnic romantic relationships among NA emerging adults?”

#### **Summary of Attitudes and Experiences**

Descriptive statistics were calculated for all variables from the social-cognitive domains. The results indicate that the primary determinant of emerging adult NAs’ involvement in interethnic romantic relationships the availability of dating partners. The reason that was most reported for not engaging in romantic relationships with other NA or minority members was few available members to date (see Table 4). Additionally, the participants in this sample reported that the strongest influence on their relationship attitudes was their parents and family, followed by close friends, and then past educational experiences (see Table 5).

#### **Moral Domain: Experiences of Racism, Previous Dating, and Familial Support**

Data from the Daily Racial Microaggressions (DRM) scale are found in Table 6 which shows this sample reporting little discomfort with having been the recipient of microaggressive acts. Microinvalidations were reported as being slightly more upsetting

Table 4

*Frequencies of Reasons for Not Engaging in Romantic Relationships*

Reason	Own tribe				Other tribe				Other minority				White			
	Past		Future		Past		Future		Past		Future		Past		Future	
	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%
No attraction	21	18.4	23	20.2	20	17.5	17	14.9	31	27.2	26	22.8	35	30.7	32	28.1
Few members available	61	53.5	45	39.5	64	56.1	34	29.8	38	34.2	13	11.4	5	4.4	1	.9
Negative past relationships	4	3.5	7	6.1	3	2.6	3	2.6	6	5.3	8	7.0	6	5.3	13	11.4
Negative peer pressure	2	1.8	5	4.4	3	2.6	3	2.6	2	1.8	5	4.4	4	3.5	2	1.8
Negative family attitude	7	6.1	5	4.4	3	2.6	4	3.5	6	5.3	11	9.6	2	1.8	4	3.5
Have dated or would date	16	14.0	24	21.1	18	15.8	48	42.1	28	24.6	49	43.0	59	51.8	61	53.5

Table 5

*Means and Standard Deviations for Influences on Relationships**Attitudes (range = 1-10)*

Type of influence	Mean	<i>SD</i>
Parents and/or other family members	8.54	1.933
Close friends	7.64	1.941
Past educational experiences	7.27	2.215
Past relationship experiences	6.41	2.678
Native peers	5.75	2.533
Non-Native peers	5.53	2.260
White-American culture	5.50	2.563
Native lifestyle during youth	5.48	3.131
Past experiences of discrimination	5.04	2.637
Popular media (TV, movies, music, etc.)	4.49	2.608

Table 6

*Descriptive Statistics for the Daily Racial Microaggressions Scale (range 1-5)*

Scale	mean	SD	Min	Max	Skewness	SE skewness
DRM Total	2.47	.847	1	4.43	.148	.226
Microinsults	2.39	.989	1	4.88	.356	.226
Microinvalidations	2.58	.941	1	5	.265	.226

than microinsults among the 96% of the participants who have been the targets of microaggressions. However, participants also reported that experiences of discrimination were one of the weakest influences on their current relationship attitudes (see Table 5).

Previous dating experience data are found in Tables 7 and 8, and they show that participants reported more past romantic relationship activity with White individuals and less past romantic relationship activity with members of their own tribe. Note also that this sample reported that past relationship experiences were fourth in influential factors on current relationship attitudes (see Table 5).

Familial influences were reported to be the strongest factors in this sample's current relationship attitudes (see Table 5), and Table 8 shows that family support was reported to be very strong for past and current interethnic romantic relationships within participants' families. Parental support was found to be generally higher for relationships with other NA groups than for relationships with other minority groups or with Whites (see Table 7).

Table 7

*Means and Standard Deviations for Romantic Relationship Activity and Parental Support (range 1-4)*

	Own tribe		Other tribe		Other minority		White	
	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
Relationship activity and support								
Past romantic relationship activity	1.75	1.096	1.90	1.043	2.08	.961	2.60	1.142
Future likelihood of romantic activity	2.39	1.213	2.58	1.075	2.40	1.040	2.62	1.113
Past parental support of relationships	3.11	1.111	3.21	1.009	2.64	1.098	2.98	1.072
Future likelihood of parental support	2.87	1.205	3.02	1.109	2.51	1.135	2.89	1.102

Table 8

*Family Members' Past and Current Involvement in Romantic Relationships with Non-Natives and Family Support*

	Past involvement		Current involvement	
	<i>n</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>n</i>	<i>SD</i>
Relationship and support				
Family members involved and supported	82	71.9	85	74.6
Family members not involved, but would be supported	11	9.6	18	15.8
Family members involved and unsupported	18	15.8	6	5.3
Family members not involved, but would be unsupported	1	.9	4	3.5

### **Societal Domain: Gender, Age, SES, Educational Experiences, Local Ethnic Composition, Diversity Climate, and Multicultural Experiences**

The descriptive information for gender, age, SES, and educational experiences can be found in the demographics portion of the methodology section. Diversity climate data and the Multicultural Experiences Inventory (MEI) data are found in Table 9.

Diversity climates were reported to be somewhat supportive during childhood and

Table 9

*Descriptive Statistics for the Diversity/Equality Climates and the Multicultural Experiences Inventory (range 1-5)*

Scale	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	Min	Max	Skewness	SE skewness
Diversity/equality climate						
In childhood community	2.83	.915	1	4	-.369	.227
In high school	2.74	.971	1	4	-.296	.227
In college or university	3.12	.836	1	4	-.705	.227
In current community	3.02	.845	1	4	-.667	.227
MEI						
Total (past & present)	3.22	.608	1.59	4.24	-.461	.226
Past experiences	3.35	1.044	1	5	-.355	.226
Present experiences	3.11	.828	1	5	-.102	.226
Activity with NAs	3.13	.998	1	5	-.258	.226
Activity w/ Whites	3.52	.928	1.33	5	-.012	.226
Activity w/other minorities	2.81	.780	1	4.67	.009	.226

adolescence, and mostly supportive post high school. MEI data shows that on average participants have past and present experiences with a nearly equal mix of NA individuals, Whites, and other minorities, and that current multicultural activity is more likely to be with Whites.

An independent samples *t* test was conducted on the MEI activity data along with the past and present dating experiences across ethnicities to evaluate differences between males and females. The only significant difference was in MEI activity with Whites ( $t = 3.117, p = .002$ ), with females reporting higher levels of interaction with Whites than



males (females:  $M = 3.69$ ,  $SD = .93$ ; males:  $M = 3.10$ ,  $SD = .73$ ). All other gender differences had nonsignificant with  $t$  values ranging from .145 to 1.476.

Participants also reported that past educational experiences were the third strongest influence on their current interethnic relationship attitudes. White-American culture was reported as the fourth weakest influence, Native lifestyle during youth was reported as the third weakest influence, and popular media was reported as the weakest influence on current relationship attitudes (see Table 5).

### **Psychological Domain: Identity and Personal Attitudes**

Data from the Multigroup Ethnic Identity Measure (MEIM) and the Orthogonal Cultural Identification Scale (OCIS) are found in Table 10. Participants reported strong NA identification, and yet, they also reported slightly stronger White identification.

Table 10

*Descriptive Statistics for the Multigroup Ethnic Identity Measure and the Orthogonal Cultural Identification Scale (range 1-4)*

Scale	$M$	$SD$	Min	Max	Skewness	SE skewness
MEIM						
Total	3.24	.593	1	4	-1.066	.226
Exploration	3.10	.652	1	4	-.930	.226
Commitment	3.35	.615	1	4	-1.026	.226
OCIS						
NA	2.85	.836	1.17	4	-.443	.226
Indian activities	2.62	.732	1	4	-.165	.227
White	3.10	.770	1	4	-.946	.228

Additionally, participants reported that they only moderately engage in traditional NA activities.

It was necessary to conduct transformations for the MEIM Total score and for the OCIS White score as these data were negatively skewed well outside of normal ranges. The data were transformed using reflection before taking the natural logarithm to normalize the distribution, followed by another reflection to correctly portray the original negative skew. These transformations eliminated problems with skewness and transformed variables were used for all subsequent analyses.

Personal attitudes are reflected in Table 5, and peer influence included close friends as the second strongest influence, and both Native and non-Native peers having only a moderate influence on current relationship attitudes. Negative peer pressure was not reported to be a strong reason for not engaging in romantic relationships among different groups for the NA participants in this sample (see Table 4).

## **Research Question 2**

Research question 2 asked, “Which domain-specific factors are related to attitudes about and experiences of interethnic romantic relationships for NA emerging adults:

- a. How are factors from the moral domain related to interethnic attitudes and experiences?
- b. How are factors from the societal domain related to interethnic attitudes and experiences?
- c. How are factors from the psychological domain related to interethnic

attitudes and experiences”?

Correlational statistics were used on predictor variables to identify intercorrelated variables in each domain, and to identify significant factors among the outcome variables.

### **Preliminary Domain Analyses**

The intercorrelations of moral domain variables for this sample included general patterns of more engagement in past relationships with Whites and other minorities intercorrelating with greater parental support within and across both interethnic relationships (see Table 11). Very strong positive associations between past and future parental support emerged, as well as between past relationships and parental support overall. The DRM variable data show that more experiences of microaggressions relate to less engagement in and less parental support for future relationships with Whites.

Table 11

#### *Intercorrelations Among the Moral Domain Independent Variables*

Variables	DRM total	Past romantic relationships with Whites	Past parental support—White	Future parental support—White	Past romantic relationships with minorities	Past parental support—minorities	Future parental support—minorities
DRM Total		-.294*	-.184	-.231*	-.048	-.021	-.163
Past romantic relationships with Whites			.412**	.478**	.166	.125	.151
Past parental support—White				.855**	.095	.464**	.424**
Future parental support—White					.139	.387**	.476**
Past romantic relationships with minorities						.336*	.237*
Past parental support—minorities							.800**
Future parental support—minorities							

\*  $p < .05$ .

\*\*  $p < .01$ .

Societal domain variables that significantly intercorrelated (see Table 12) with other societal domain factors included the MEI Total, with higher scores meaning more involvement with mostly Whites, relating to lower age, greater household income, and mostly White ethnic compositions in high school and college. Mostly White multicultural experiences from the MEI also related to a more positive diversity climate in current community, and all diversity climates related to each other positively. Higher income also related with mostly White ethnic compositions in high school and college, and mostly White high school experiences related with mostly White college or university experiences.

Table 12

*Intercorrelations Among the Societal Domain Independent Variables*

Variables	Age	Income for home raised in	Ethnicity of high school students	Ethnicity of college/ university students	Diversity climate in childhood community	Diversity climate in high school	Diversity climate in college/ university	Diversity climate in current community	MEI total
Age		-.008	-.137	-.086	-.113	-.132	-.058	-.037	-.187*
Income for home raised in			.193*	.201*	.104	.046	.031	.104	.187*
Ethnicity of high school students				.220*	-.041	-.081	.016	.015	.462**
Ethnicity of college/ university students					-.112	-.042	-.019	-.101	.202*
Diversity climate in childhood community							.584**	.343**	.396**
Diversity climate in high school							.447**	.310**	.064
Diversity climate in college/ university								.401**	.148
Diversity climate in current community									.193*
MEI total									

\*  $p < .05$ .\*\*  $p < .01$ .

Intercorrelations of each psychological domain variable significantly related with at least one other variable (see Table 13). stronger Native identity and activity related with more reservation activity. Conversely, stronger White identity related less with Native identity and reservation activity, but did relate to more educational experience.

### Primary Domain Analyses

**Moral domain.** All associations between predictor and outcome variables within both White and other Minorities categories were significant (see Table 14). The strongest associations that emerged were positive with more involvement in past romantic relationships relating to greater likelihood of future relationships with both Whites and other minorities. More perceived future parental support with Whites relating to more

Table 13

#### *Intercorrelations Among the Psychological Domain Independent Variables*

	MEIM total	OCIS Native identity	OCIS Native activity	OCIS White identity	Years lived on reservation	Age last lived on reservation	Visits to reservation	Educational experience
MEIM total		.693**	.738**	-.186*	.196*	.205*	.325**	.043
OCIS Native identity			.807**	-.317**	.401**	.363**	.556**	.028
OCIS Native activity				-.241*	.423**	.336**	.533**	-.029
OCIS White identity					-.197*	-.124	-.114	.250**
Years lived on reservation						.895**	.602**	.036
Age last lived on reservation							.596**	.063
Visits to reservation								-.004
Educational experience								

\*  $p < .05$ .

\*\*  $p < .01$ .

Table 14

*Correlations Between Moral Domain Predictor and Outcome Variables*

Predictors	Outcomes			
	Past romantic relationships with Whites	Likelihood of future romantic relationships with Whites	past romantic relationships with minorities	Likelihood of future romantic relationships with Whites
DRM Total	-.294**	-.269**	-.048	-.096
Past romantic relationships with Whites		.649**	.166	.118
Past parental support–White	.412**	.311**	.095	.186*
Future parental support–White	.478**	.373**	.139	.170
Past romantic relationships with minorities	.166	.074		.474**
Past parental support–minorities	.125	.094	.336**	.313**
Future parental support–minorities	.151	.104	.237*	.264*

\*  $p < .05$ .\*\*  $p < .01$ .

past romantic relationships with Whites was also among the strongest correlations.

Additionally, greater past parental support for White relationships related significantly with increased likelihood of future romantic relationships with minorities. Significant DRM correlations included the associations between more experiences of microaggressions and: less involvement in past romantic relationships with Whites, and less likelihood of future romantic relationships with Whites.

**Societal domain.** The societal domain predictor-outcome correlations are found in Table 15, with more involvement in past romantic relationships with Whites being significantly related with mostly White college or university experiences and mostly White MEI experiences.

Table 15

*Correlations Between Societal Domain Predictor and Outcome Variables*

Predictors	Outcomes			
	Past romantic relationships with Whites	Likelihood of future romantic relationships with Whites	Past romantic relationships with minorities	Likelihood of future romantic relationships with Whites
Age	-.119	-.236*	-.008	.000
Household income for home in which raised	.106	.018	.011	-.124
Ethnicity of students in high school	.168	.019	-.019	-.110
Ethnicity of students in college/university	.221*	.150	-.052	-.135
Diversity climate in childhood community	-.168	-.029	-.298**	-.127
Diversity climate in high school	-.022	.073	-.007	-.023
Diversity climate in college/university	.062	.124	-.134	-.051
Diversity climate in current community	.100	.235*	-.122	.023
MEI total	.514**	.459**	.065	.050

\*  $p < .05$ .\*\*  $p < .01$ .

The likelihood of future romantic relationships with Whites was significantly related with lower age, a more positive diversity climate in current community, and mostly White MEI experiences. A less positive diversity climate in childhood community related significantly with more past romantic relationships with minorities.

**Psychological domain.** The predictor-outcome correlations for the psychological domain variables are depicted in Table 16, and past romantic relationships with Whites was significantly related with all of the predictor variables except for educational experience. Less past romantic relationships with Whites was associated with greater

Table 16

*Correlations Between the Psychological Domain Predictor and Outcome Variables*

Predictors	Outcomes			
	Past romantic relationships with Whites	Likelihood of future romantic relationships with Whites	Past romantic relationships with minorities	Likelihood of future romantic relationships with Whites
MEIM Total	-.363**	-.340**	.033	.057
OCIS Native identity	-.467**	-.398**	-.063	-.001
OCIS Native activity	-.434**	-.390**	.003	-.003
OCIS White identity	.456**	.397**	.011	.022
Years lived on reservation	-.310**	-.228*	-.167	-.107
Age last lived on reservation	-.232*	-.169	-.145	-.013
Visits to reservation	-.345**	-.151	-.118	-.026
Educational experience	.024	-.133	-.006	-.125

\*  $p < .05$ .\*\*  $p < .01$ .

Native identity and reservation activity, while more past romantic relationships with Whites related with stronger White identity. Less future romantic relationships with Whites was associated with stronger Native identity and activity, along with more years lived on a reservation, while more future romantic relationships with Whites was related with stronger White identity. No significant associations emerged for past or future romantic relationships with minorities.

### Research Question 3

Research question 3 asked, “Overall, which factors are the strongest predictors of positive interethnic relationship attitudes and experiences for NA emerging adults?”



To identify the strongest predictors of positive interethnic relationship attitudes and experiences for NA emerging adults a hierarchical multiple regression was conducted on each of the four dependent variables: Past romantic relationships with Whites, future romantic relationships with Whites, past romantic relationships with minorities, future romantic relationships with minorities. The regressions were all significant, and they included the significant predictor variables in each domain that had the strongest correlations with the outcome variables. For the purposes of this study, some of the significant predictor-outcome correlations were omitted from the regressions due to strong intercorrelations with other predictor variables within the same domain. The regressions will be presented in terms of the dependent variables.

### **Past Romantic Relationships with Whites**

This outcome variable resulted in several significant correlations with predictor variables across the three domains. The regression model for this variable contains a large number of variables, and the overall model was still significant in each step of the regression (see Table 17). In step one, two moral domain variables were analyzed with perceived parental support for future relationships with Whites being significant in steps one and two ( $p < .01$ ), but not in the full model at step three. Step two introduced three societal domain variables with MEI Total and future parental support with Whites being significant. Step three introduced five psychological domain variables, with the full model containing 10 variables and only two remaining significant in the overall model. White identity as assessed by the OCIS emerged as the strongest predictor of past romantic relationships with Whites, and MEI Total was the second significant predictor.

Table 17

*Hierarchical Regressions of Social-Cognitive Domain Variables for Past Romantic Relationships with Whites Outcome among NA Emerging Adults*

Step	Domain	Predictors	Adj. $R^2$	$F$	$p$	Beta	$t$	$p$
1			.253	17.592	< .001			
	Moral	DRM total				-.152	-1.664	.099
		Future parental support-Whites				.454	4.982	<.001
2			.350	11.555	< .001			
	Moral	DRM Total				-.101	-1.132	.260
		Future parental support-Whites				.261	2.659	.009
	Societal	Age				.040	.463	.644
		Diversity climate in current community				.003	.038	.970
		MEI total				.407	4.085	<.001
3			.418	8.037	< .001			
	Moral	DRM total				-.022	-.236	.814
		Future parental support-Whites				.140	1.416	.160
	Societal	Age				.005	.055	.956
		Diversity climate in current community				.005	.065	.948
		MEI total				.249	2.044	.044
	Psychological	MEIM total				.000	-.002	.998
		OCIS White				.272	3.038	.003
		OCIS Native				-.087	-.626	.533
		OCIS NA activity				-.159	-1.061	.292
		Years lived on reservation				.006	.059	.953

### **Future Romantic Relationships with Whites**

This outcome variable also resulted in a large number of significant bivariate correlations across the three domains, but given the strong intercorrelations between the significant variables, only six were chosen for the regression model. However, after running the first regression on this outcome variable, it was clear that one predictor—Past Romantic Relationships with Whites—dominated the entire model and was significant ( $p < .001$ ) in all three steps (see Table 18). MEI Total emerged as significant in steps two

Table 18

*Hierarchical Regressions of Social-Cognitive Domain Variables for Future Romantic Relationships with Whites Outcome Among NA Emerging Adults (with Past Romantic Relationships with Whites as a Moral Predictor)*

Step	Domain	Predictors	Adj. $R^2$	$F$	$p$	Beta	$t$	$p$
1			.450	42.267	< .001			
	Moral	Past romantic relationships with Whites				.622	7.242	<.001
		Future parental support-Whites				.101	1.177	.242
2			.468	30.562	< .001			
	Moral	Past romantic relationships with Whites				.546	5.946	<.001
		Future parental support-Whites				.047	.527	.599
	Societal	MEI total				.189	2.078	.040
3			.465	15.624	< .001			
	Moral	Past romantic relationships with Whites				.542	5.430	<.001
		Future parental support-Whites				.041	.445	.657
	Societal	MEI Total				.290	2.534	.013
	Psychological	OCIS White				.018	.206	.837
		OCIS Native				.180	.194	.846
		Years lived on reservation				.145	1.516	.133

and three. While we recognize this as the most accurate model, we were interested to see if any other predictors would be significant in a model without the strength of the Past Romantic Relationships with Whites variable dominating. A second regression was conducted using the DRM Total instead of Past Romantic Relationships with Whites, and the results of this regression are seen in Table 19. In steps one and two, Future Parental Support with Whites was significant, but in step three it was not. MEI Total emerged as the strongest predictor in step two and was the only significant predictor variable in the final model at step three.

Table 19

*Hierarchical Regressions of Social-Cognitive Domain Variables for Future Romantic Relationships with Whites Outcome among NA Emerging Adults (with DRM Total as a Moral Predictor)*

Step	Domain	Predictors	Adj. $R^2$	$F$	$p$	Beta	$t$	$p$
1			.177	11.824	< .001			
	Moral	DRM total				-.139	-1.487	.140
		Future parental support-Whites				.383	4.099	<.001
2			.279	14.019	< .001			
	Moral	DRM total				-.061	-.681	.497
		Future parental support-Whites				.212	2.173	.032
	Societal	MEI total				.386	3.880	<.001
3			.302	8.267	< .001			
	Moral	DRM total				-.057	-.606	.546
		Future parental support-Whites				.138	1.344	.182
	Societal	MEI total				.427	3.345	.001
	Psychological	OCIS White				.169	1.759	.082
		OCIS Native				-.068	-.614	.541
		Years lived on reservation				.161	1.473	.144

### **Past Romantic Relationships with Minorities**

This outcome variable resulted in three significant predictor-outcome variables emerging through bivariate correlation. Table 20 presents the results of this regression with the overall model being significant in each step, just as with the other regressions for this study. In step one, Past Parental Support for romantic relationships with Minorities was significant, and remained significant ( $p = .01$ ) in the final model at step two. However, step two introduced Diversity Climate in Childhood Community, which

Table 20

*Hierarchical Regressions of Social-Cognitive Domain Variables for Past Romantic Relationships with Minorities Outcome Among NA Emerging Adults*

Step	Domain	Predictors	Adj. $R^2$	$F$	$p$	Beta	$t$	$p$
1			.100	7.085	.001			
	Moral	Past parental support-minorities				.418	2.752	.007
		Future parental support-minorities				-.102	-.673	.502
2			.171	8.496	< .001			
	Moral	Past parental support-minorities				.384	2.622	.010
		Future parental support- minorities				-.069	-.473	.637
	Societal	Diversity climate in childhood community				-.278	-3.180	.002

became the strongest predictor in this model. It appears then, that more positive diversity climates in childhood communities and parental support for past relationships with members of other ethnic minority groups are significant predictors of past relationships with different ethnic minority members.

### **Future Romantic Relationships with Minorities**

The predictor-outcome correlations resulted in significant variables in the moral domain only, thereby necessitating only one step in regression model. Table 21 shows the four predictors that were included in the model and that the only significant predictor of likelihood of future romantic relationships with individuals from other ethnic minority groups was past romantic relationships with minorities.

### **Summary of the Results**

With a focus on the interethnic aspect of romantic relationships for NA emerging

Table 21

*Hierarchical Regressions of Social-Cognitive Domain Variables for Future Romantic Relationships with Minorities Outcome Among NA Emerging Adults*

Step	Domain	Predictors	Adj. $R^2$	$F$	$p$	Beta	$t$	$p$
1			.240	9.704	< .000			
	Moral	Past parental support-Whites				.081	.854	.395
		Past romantic relationships with minorities				.437	4.927	<.001
		Past parental support-minorities				.078	.526	.600
		Future parental support-minorities				.064	.461	.646

adults, there appeared differences between NA relationships with Whites versus NA relationships with individuals from other ethnic minority groups. These differences were primarily in opportunity for involvement in interethnic relationships and multicultural activities.

With regard to the domain-specific variables, the moral domain included past relationships and parental support as the stronger factors of positive interethnic relationships for NA emerging adults. The stronger factors from the other domains included cross-ethnic multicultural experience including perception of diversity climates in the societal domain, and the psychological domain included self-identification.

Overall outcomes of past experiences in romantic relationships with interethnic partners appeared to be best predicted by cross-ethnic multicultural experience, including experiences in positive diversity climates, and past relationships with positive parental support (see Table 22). Attitudes about future likelihood of engagement in romantic relationships across ethnicity appeared to be best predicted by past relationship experiences and other multicultural experience.

Table 22

*Summary Table of Significant Variables from Significant Regression Models as Predictors of Past and Future Romantic Relationships with Whites and with Other Minorities*

Outcome	Predictors (domain)	Beta	t	p
Past romantic relationships with Whites	OCIS White (psychological)	.272	3.038	.003
	MEI total (societal)	.249	2.044	.044
Past romantic relationships with minorities	Diversity climate in childhood community (societal)	-.278	-3.180	.002
	Past parental support-minorities (moral)	.384	2.622	.010
Future romantic relationships with Whites	Past romantic relationships with whites (moral)	.542	5.430	<.001
	MEI total (societal)	.290	2.534	.013
Future romantic relationships with minorities	Past romantic relationships with minorities (moral)	.437	4.927	<.001

## CHAPTER V

### DISCUSSION

This study sought to contribute unique information about attitudes and experiences in interethnic romantic relationships among NA emerging adults. A survey was administered that queried NA participants about their intimate relationship experiences and attitudes. Several established measures were utilized in gathering information about various factors that had been identified with larger minority groups. Several other questions were developed to further pinpoint factors that may relate more specifically to NA individuals who are transitioning from adolescence to adulthood.

Emerging adulthood has been noted by many developmental theorists, including Erikson (1950), as a critical point in one's life during which identity, psychosocial development, and intimate relationships become driving forces (Davila, 2011; Tanner et al., 2009). These challenges are complicated for many NA youth because unique acculturation issues are at play, especially in their romantic relationships.

While acculturation issues are evident among all minority groups, the differences between NA youth and ethnically different youth are most pronounced within the White-NA comparison where the White youth comparison group is the largest group for comparisons. Within our society, White-American culture pervades self-identification and interpersonal relationship attitudes and experiences among emerging adults, and this appears to significantly impact relationships of all minority group members. This profound influence appears to be an important aspect of emerging adult relationships, so comparisons against Whites as a group appears to be the best (at present) way to tease



apart differences between majority and minority relationship dynamics. We chose to organize findings for differences in NA relationships with Whites and in NA relationships with other minorities. This decision was further strengthened by the results of the OCIS, which showed little to no identification with groups other than NA and White, along with low variability in identification with other minority groups, and a great deal of missing data for those other group identifications.

### **Differences Between NA Romantic Relationships with Whites and with Other Minorities**

Availability and experience with other-ethnic individuals is relevant to the results of this study, since romantic relationships were more frequently with Whites than with any other group, and the likelihood of dating Whites in the future was higher than for other ethnic minorities. Ethnic identification likely has some effect on this, but perceived parental support was also strong for relationships with minorities, which appears similar to the results on parental support by Mok (1999). Parental support was reported in this study to be lower for other minority romantic relationships than for any of the groups in the survey, which could be a function of lack of other ethnic minority interaction and/or attitudinal beliefs among participants' individual lives, family systems, and other moral influences. The results of this study seem to be consistent with the results in Goforth's (2002) study, as well as the Jones and Smith (2002) study (as cited in Goforth, 2002)

The differences between engagement in romantic relationships with Whites versus with other minorities as evidenced by the results of this study are interesting, but

not necessarily surprising. Consistent with the opportunity theory of relationship development (Hallinan & Smith, 1985) and Allport's (1954) "contact hypothesis," this sample reported more involvement in and higher likelihoods of future romantic relationships with Whites than with other minorities. Status-exchange theory also supports preference for relationships with Whites, given the privileged position of Whites in access to resources and power in contemporary U.S. society (Rosenfeld, 2005).

Perhaps where same-ethnic romantic relationships may not be available for many of the participants in this sample, if not more preferable, it may at least be more easy to become involved in a romantic relationship with a White partner than with another ethnic minority. These data seem to corroborate Jackson and colleagues' (2011) assertion that casual dating within peer networks leads to more serious romantic relationships, and this sample's multicultural experiences—and presumably their peer networks—are largely comprised of mostly White individuals with few available minority members. Importantly, same-tribe relationship opportunities were even fewer than with other minorities.

Discrimination experiences correlated significantly with past and future relationships with Whites in this study, but discrimination experiences were not significant in relationships with other minorities. It may be less likely for NA youth to be as strongly impacted by discrimination from other minorities, given less exposure to and interaction with other minorities. Further, the current power structure of the U.S. heightens the impact of discriminatory behaviors perpetrated by Whites, relative to those perpetrated by other ethnic minorities.

### **Links Among the Components of the Social-Cognitive Domain Theory**

The strengths of the social-cognitive domain model allow for cultural differences in social reasoning and in everyday situations. Contextual factors are acknowledged within the diverse circumstances of NA life, which is why the decision-making process of choosing dating partners incorporates factors from multiple domains in this social-reasoning situation (Killen et al., 2002). NA emerging adults operate under unique circumstances and in contexts that many Western cultures do not understand, or are even aware of in many cases.

The moral domain includes previous cross-ethnic dating experiences as a factor because of the moral evaluations from systemic convention and norms. In this study, past romantic relationships with both Whites and Minorities associated strongly with possible future relationships, and this seems to also be related to familial and parental support from the moral domain. This study's results are similar to the data in the Zogby America (2000) poll, in which minority parents supported their children in interracial relationships significantly more than White parents, of whom 62% approved of interracial relationships. The interrelatedness of the domain factors includes multicultural experiences from the MEI and diversity climates in the societal domain, and also peer influence on personal attitudes and ethnic identification from the psychological domain. The social-cognitive domain theory encourages seeking out the connections across domains to better understand and explain the contextual factors.

This interrelation of multiple influences seems to be a good fit with the systems of many Native and indigenous groups which are frequently collective societies that

encourage mutual cooperation for the good of the whole. Interpersonal relationships are typically much more important than the self in NA culture, and social-cognitive domain theory appears to effectively meet the needs of members of collective societies such as NA peoples.

The moral, societal, and psychological domains were all represented by factors from within their domains, which may suggest that interethnic romantic relationships among NA emerging adults is much more complex than mere opportunity or status-exchange. These results seem to indicate that a dynamic context analysis occurs, whether at the conscious or unconscious level, within NA individuals as they consider choosing an interethnic romantic partner.

### **Links with Dating Behaviors and Attitudes**

It is said that the best predictor of future behavior is past behavior, and with NA interethnic romantic relationships, this is no exception. For cross-ethnic relationships in this study, past relationships predict students' expectations about future relationships for each group, which is consistent with existing research (Rosenblatt et al., 1995). Another factor that was not unexpected given the literature body (Graham et al. 1995; Uskul et al., 2007) was the result that when the NA participants in this study had more cross-ethnic experiences, they were more likely to have been involved in interethnic romantic relationships. This seems to suggest that interethnic relations are generally positive among NA individuals, and may be improving as a function of pushes in professional and academic settings for better multicultural awareness, sensitivity, and competence.

Exposure to and activity in multicultural and interethnic relationships is frequently modeled by behaviors within the home. In this study, family attitudes and experiences—especially for parents—were reported to be the strongest influence on dating attitudes among the participants. In conjunction with personal past experiences with interethnic dating and other multicultural experiences, familial influence was found to be stronger than peer influence on NA interethnic dating.

Unexpected outcomes included strong effects of White identification for this sample and links between age and intentions for future romances with Whites. White identity predicted past romantic relationships with Whites more strongly than any other variable, which seems intuitive. In this study, it was not expected that participants would report stronger White identity than NA identity, but White identification appears to be one of the strongest predictors of interethnic dating activity with Whites. In consideration of the demographic data, however, over one third of the participants reported having at least one parent who was White or part-White, thereby strengthening the likelihood of strong White identity for this sample. These findings are similar to those which found that stronger national identity was more influential than ethnic identity on interethnic dating attitudes (Mok, 1999; Uskul et al., 2007).

Gender differences were not expected in this study based on the inconsistent findings in the literature body. However, one gender difference was detected that showed NA females as being significantly more likely than NA males to interact with Whites in White and NA homes, as well as with Whites at typically White events. This activity in cross-ethnic interaction may be an effect of females typically being more socially active.

Younger age correlating with more past romances with Whites was also somewhat surprising, especially given that the age range of this sample was so narrow. Joyner and Kao (2005) found that interracial sexual relationships declined as age increased among 18- to 35-year-olds, and they suspected that this was a function of marriage increasing with age, and also because interracial relationships are more prevalent in recent years, possibly due to greater societal acceptance. Another study also found that younger aged individuals tend to be more involved in interracial relationships due to increased societal acceptance (Wilson et al., 2007).

Ethnic identity maturation may also figure into a model of older NA individuals engaging in less romantic relationships with Whites because young adults approaching adulthood may have developed a stronger sense of ethnic identity than their younger counterparts. It could also be as simple as the younger participants reporting their immediate experience, whereas the older participants may be in committed relationships or not seeking romantic relationships and their past experience may not be as relevant as it once may have been.

### **NA Identity and Acculturation**

Vance (1995) posited a model for NA identity development that differs from general acculturation or identity models, and that allows for four levels of cultural-self definitions: Traditional, Assimilated, Transitional, Bicultural. Vance's model lacks the level of "marginalized" that is typically included in other minority identity developmental models, but the "traditional" and "marginalized" definitions are especially relevant to NA

youth. The results of this study directly reflect the underlying facets of acculturation through ethnic self-identification and its relationship with interethnic romantic relationship development outside of Native culture.

Considering the importance of ethnic identification during emerging adulthood, it is not surprising that the identity measures correlated so strongly with attitudes and experiences in romantic relationships with Whites. This sample reported a moderately strong Native identity along with a slightly stronger White identity, which may suggest bicultural achievement or assimilation for most participants. However, despite the high average scores for the MEIM exploration and commitment subscales, the OCIS Indian Activities results coupled with the lower frequencies of reservation activity may point towards participants who were more likely assimilated, rather than bicultural.

On the other hand, this sample included college-aged young adults who may arguably be at the tail end of their transition out of emerging adulthood. This sample was also top heavy in the age range, and most participants were in a committed relationship or dating. Many participants came from fairly affluent homes and have already attained higher levels of education. Additionally, this survey was primarily disseminated through internet based communications and college or university organizations, which may suggest that the participants have financial and educational opportunities that may not be available to many youth who live on reservations or in remote areas of North America. In consideration of these ideas, it could be argued that many of the participants have moved through identity conflict in their identity development and on to intimacy versus isolation in Erikson's stages of psychosocial adjustment.

The demographic characteristics of this sample begs the question, however, are the less traditional participants' lives merely demonstrating lower NA values, or have those values been replaced with White American values? Jones (2008) found that cultural and ethnic identification improved psychosocial adjustment for Navajo youth, so it seems likely that strong Native and White identification could improve NA youth's ability to successfully navigate their relationships. This study focused on NA interethnic romantic relationships, this sample reported strong White identification in conjunction with positive Native identification, which might imply that psychosocial adjustment in White-American culture could aid in successful romantic relationships with Whites.

Reservation life as a unique context was not strongly represented in this sample, as the reported frequency of reservation activities assessed by this study was relatively low. Despite minimal connection to reservation life among these participants, the reservation lifestyle pervades NA culture regardless of how far removed an individual may be, both in proximity and in spirit. One significant aspect of NA culture that likely influences both reservation and urban NA individuals is the impact of intergenerational trauma. The development of the reservation system marked a dramatic change to traditional NA ways and to the lives of NA peoples across North America. Many oral histories from NA elders recount the loss of NA values, culture, traditions, and language (among so much else) as the U.S. forced Native peoples onto reservations. Native cultures are fading out of mainstream society as colonial forced assimilation has reduced opportunities for NA peoples to maintain their interpersonal relationships with members of their same tribe, and the available potential dating partners are usually White.



### **Limitations and Future Directions**

The first limitation of this study is the fact that in generalizing all NA groups into one pan-indigenous category, cultural differences and important group-specific characteristics may be lost. Much of the research among Native peoples today is being conducted through local indigenous communities to help Native peoples organize and collaborate on moving Native issues forward. This study's intent was to gather a more broad representation from different geographic areas where indigenous lifestyles are likely to be different. The goal of this study was also to provide a more generalizable knowledge-base for application in various professional, community, and personal settings.

Another limitation that is related to the first in this study was that the participants represented nearly 70 distinct Native groups, which meant that most groups were only represented by one or two members of their group. And even a small number of same-group members could influence the data somewhat according to that group's collective values, experiences, and attitudes. It is not expected, however, that the factors assessed in this study would vary greatly between different North American indigenous groups. It would be wonderful to see this type of study be replicated for individual groups and analyzed for intertribal, rather than just interethnic, romantic relationships.

Another related limitation was that this study was conducted solely through the internet. A large and possibly more traditional subset of potential participants may be reached through rural and local recruitment efforts, which could provide access to many NA individuals with paper/pencil type collection or with more qualitative approaches.

Other future directions for research in this area might include close friendships within and across ethnicity or tribal affiliation as an indicator of intimacy and/or interaction among indigenous groups. It would also be beneficial to open this type of study to middle-aged adults and elders to examine intergenerational differences and similarities. It would be exciting to see this line of research be utilized and modified for community-based research, which is probably the most appropriate manner by which to conduct research among wary indigenous groups.

The information provided from this study could potentially be useful to mental health professionals, community organizations, indigenous group leaders, educational administrators and faculty through better understanding of romantic relationship factors. These data could be used in developing community outreach programs for increased interethnic and multicultural activities, along with fostering interethnic relationship support. Promoting and facilitating healthy romantic relationships could lead to stronger connections to NA traditions and communities, and could possibly provide positive intergenerational support for coping with the challenges of being Native and being strangers in our ancestral lands that lie underneath the colonized Americas.

### **Conclusion**

The goal of this study was to add vital information to the existing body of literature regarding minority romantic relationships that cross ethnic differences, with a specific examination of these relationships among NA emerging adults. Several factors reported by the participants in this sample were relevant to their past interethnic dating

experiences and attitudes regarding future likelihood of engaging in interethnic dating. Very strong positive associations emerged between past experiences of interethnic dating and multicultural activity with expectations about future experiences of interethnic dating. Other strong factors predicting the likelihood of future interethnic dating included past experiences of childhood diversity climate, parental support of interethnic relationships, and multicultural activity, along with a self-identified strong connection with White identity, or perhaps a highly functional bicultural Native and White identity. All three of the social-cognitive domains were represented by these factors, and several other domain variables were significantly correlated as individual associations with past and future interethnic romantic relationships. Notable differences emerged between NA emerging adults' attitudes about relationships with Whites and their attitudes about relationships with other minority members. This information adds to the emerging adult relationships research and minority relationships research, but especially for the limited NA relationships research.

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APPENDICES

Appendix A  
Recruitment Email

## Recruitment Email

### **Why am I getting this email?**

Hello! My name is Merrill Jones and I am a Ph.D. student at Utah State University. I am working with Dr. Renee Galliher, psychology professor at USU, and we would like to **invite you to participate in a research study** designed to explore the experiences and attitudes of Native American young adults about close relationships across ethnic differences. We are both sensitive to and interested in promoting appropriate research among young Native Americans. I am a member of the Navajo (Diné) tribe, and I have a strong desire to find out about other young Natives' relationship attitudes. The goal of our research is to develop a better understanding of the relationship experiences of Native adolescents and young adults to provide information to future young Natives and to those who work with them. We invite you to participate in our study if you are age 18-25 and you OR one of your parents affiliates with at least one tribe.

### **What would I have to do?**

Your participation would involve completing an anonymous online survey about your cross-ethnic attitudes and experiences. This may take you **between 20 and 30 minutes**. All survey responses will be anonymous and completely confidential.

### **What is in it for me?**

You may choose to submit your email address to be entered into a **drawing for one of ten \$15 and one \$100 gift certificates** given away after data collection ends. Email addresses for the drawing will be held in a separate database, so survey responses will not be traceable to specific email addresses. In addition, you may request a summary of the study results by email.

If you have any questions about the research, please do not hesitate to contact me, Merrill Jones at [merrill.jones@aggiemail.usu.edu](mailto:merrill.jones@aggiemail.usu.edu). You may also contact my faculty advisor, Renee V. Galliher, Ph.D. at [Renee.Galliher@usu.edu](mailto:Renee.Galliher@usu.edu) or (435) 797-3391.

Thanks!

**To participate, please follow the link below to reach the survey:**

Appendix B  
Letter of Information

## Letter of Information

**Introduction/Purpose:** Dr. Renee Galliher and Merrill Jones in the Department of Psychology at Utah State University are conducting a study on the experiences and attitudes about interethnic relationships among Native American emerging adults. You have been asked to participate in this study because you are a Native American between the ages 18-25 years, and you and/or your parents are affiliated members of your tribe. We expect approximately 100 participants.

**Procedure:** If you agree to participate in this study, you will be asked to complete an online survey. You will be asked questions about your past and current experiences regarding close cross-ethnic relationships, as well as your attitudes about dating partners or friends who are not Native American. The questionnaire may take about 20-30 minutes.

**Risks:** There are minimal anticipated risks to this study. If you feel uncomfortable answering a question you may skip the question(s) and proceed with the questionnaire.

**Benefits:** If the findings of this study are meaningful, the results may help service professionals to more effectively create safer and more supportive environments for Native American emerging adults in areas such as mental health, education, community involvement, etc.

**Explanation & offer to answer questions:** If you have any questions, complaints, or research-related problems please contact Merrill Jones by email: [merrill.jones@aggiemail.usu.edu](mailto:merrill.jones@aggiemail.usu.edu). You can also contact Dr. Renee Galliher at [Renee.Galliher@usu.edu](mailto:Renee.Galliher@usu.edu), or by phone at (435) 797-3391.

**Payment/Compensation:** Upon completion of the survey, you may choose to follow another link to submit your email address for a chance to win one of ten \$15 gift certificates and one \$100 gift certificate to Amazon. In no way will your personal information be connected with your survey responses.

**Voluntary nature of participation and right to withdraw without consequence:** Participation in research is completely voluntary. You may refuse to participate or withdraw at any time without consequence.

**Confidentiality:** All survey responses are confidential, and it will not be possible to identify your computer, as the survey uses a Secure Survey Environment. Email addresses entered for the chance to receive a gift certificate will be held in a separate database, and will not be linked to survey responses in any way. Research records will be kept confidential, consistent with federal and state regulations. Only the investigators will have access to the data, which will be downloaded from the survey provider's secure database, and stored on a password-protected computer. All email addresses will be disposed of after the results of the study have been distributed by email.



**IRB Approval Statement:** The Institutional Review Board (IRB) for the protection of human participants at USU has reviewed and approved this research study. If you have any pertinent questions or concerns about your rights or think the research may have harmed you, you may contact the IRB Administrator at (435) 797-0567 or email [irb@usu.edu](mailto:irb@usu.edu). If you have a concern or complaint about the research and you would like to contact someone other than the research team, you may contact the IRB Administrator to obtain information or to offer input.

**Copy of Consent:** Please print a copy of this informed consent for your files.

**PI & Student Researchers (CO-PIs):**

Renee V. Galliher, Ph.D., Principle Investigator  
Merrill L. Jones, Student Researcher (Co-PI)

**Participant Consent:** If you have read and understand the above statements, please click on the “CONTINUE” button below. This indicates your consent to participate in this study.

Thank you very much for your participation! Your assistance is truly appreciated.

Appendix C  
Instruments

### Multigroup Ethnic Identity Measures

In this country, people come from many different countries and cultures, and there are many different words to describe the different backgrounds or ethnic groups that people come from. Some examples of the names of ethnic groups are Hispanic or Latino, Black or African American, Asian American, Caucasian or White, American Indian or Native American, and many others. These questions are about your Native American ethnicity or Native Americans, and how you feel about it or react to it.

Use the numbers below to indicate how much you agree or disagree with each statement.

**(4) Strongly agree   (3) Agree   (2) Disagree   (1) Strongly disagree**

- 1- I have spent time trying to find out more about my ethnic group, such as its history, traditions, and customs.
- 2- I am active in organizations or social groups that include mostly members of my own ethnic group.
- 3- I have a clear sense of my ethnic background and what it means for me.
- 4- I think a lot about how my life will be affected by my ethnic group membership.
- 5- I am happy that I am a member of the group I belong to.
- 6- I have a strong sense of belonging to my own ethnic group.
- 7- I understand pretty well what my ethnic group membership means to me.
- 8- In order to learn more about my ethnic background, I have often talked to other people about my ethnic group.
- 9- I have a lot of pride in my ethnic group.
- 10- I participate in cultural practices of my own group, such as special food, music, or customs.
- 11- I feel a strong attachment towards my own ethnic group.
- 12- I feel good about my cultural or ethnic background.

### Orthogonal Cultural Identification Scale - Adult Scale

The following questions ask how close you are to different cultures. When answering the questions about “family,” think about the family that is most important to you now. How would you define that family? You can include your current family, your family of origin, or both. Answer the questions keeping that definition in mind. You may identify with more than one culture, so please mark all responses that apply to you.

**1. Some families have special activities or traditions that take place every year at particular times (such as holiday parties, special meals, religious activities, trips or visits). How many of these special activities or traditions does your family have that are based on...**

	A lot	Some	A few	None at all
White American or Anglo culture	( )	( )	( )	( )
Asian or Asian American culture	( )	( )	( )	( )
Mexican American or Spanish culture	( )	( )	( )	( )
Black or African American culture	( )	( )	( )	( )
Native American culture	( )	( )	( )	( )
Other culture	( )	( )	( )	( )

**2. In the future, with your own family, will you do special things together or have special traditions, which are based on...**

	A lot	Some	A few	None at all
Mexican American or Spanish culture	( )	( )	( )	( )
Asian or Asian American culture	( )	( )	( )	( )
White American or Anglo culture	( )	( )	( )	( )
Black or African American culture	( )	( )	( )	( )
Native American culture	( )	( )	( )	( )
Other culture	( )	( )	( )	( )

**3. Does your family live by or follow the...**

	A lot	Some	Not much	None at all
Native American way of life	( )	( )	( )	( )
White American or Anglo way of life	( )	( )	( )	( )
Mexican American or Spanish way of life	( )	( )	( )	( )
Black or African American way of life	( )	( )	( )	( )
Asian or Asian American way of life	( )	( )	( )	( )

**4. Do you live by or follow the...**

	A lot	Some	Not much	None at all
An Asian or Asian American way of life	( )	( )	( )	( )
White American or Anglo way of life	( )	( )	( )	( )
Mexican American or Spanish way of life	( )	( )	( )	( )
Black or African American way of life	( )	( )	( )	( )
Native American way of life	( )	( )	( )	( )

**5. Is your family a success in the...**

	A lot	Some	Not much	None at all
Black or African American way of life	( )	( )	( )	( )
Mexican American or Spanish way of life	( )	( )	( )	( )
Native American way of life	( )	( )	( )	( )
White American or Anglo way of life	( )	( )	( )	( )
Asian or Asian American way of life	( )	( )	( )	( )

**6. Are you a success in the...**

	A lot	Some	Not much	None at all
Native American way of life	( )	( )	( )	( )
Asian or Asian American way of life	( )	( )	( )	( )
Mexican American or Spanish way of life	( )	( )	( )	( )
Black or African American way of life	( )	( )	( )	( )
White American or Anglo way of life	( )	( )	( )	( )

**Indian Activity Addendum (answer the same as above)**

1. Does your family teach you about Indian ways?
2. Do you take part in Indian religious ceremonies?
3. Does your family take part in Indian activities and events?
4. Do you take part in Indian activities and events?
5. How much do you want to know Indian legends and stories?
6. Do you speak an Indian language?
7. How important is going to a medicine man/spiritual healer when you are sick?
8. How important is it to participate in giveaways?

*The Multicultural Experience Inventory* (Ramirez, 1999)

Next to each item, circle the number of the response that best describes your past and present behavior. (Type A items)

1 = almost entirely Native American

2 = mostly Native American with a few minorities from other ethnic groups

3 = mixed Anglos/White, Native American, and other minorities about equally

4 = mostly Anglos/White with a few minorities including Native American

5 = almost entirely Anglos/White

- 1 2 3 4 5    1. The ethnic composition of the neighborhoods in which I lived
  - 1 2 3 4 5    a) before I started attending school
  - 1 2 3 4 5    b) while I attended elementary school
  - 1 2 3 4 5    c) while I attended middle school
  - 1 2 3 4 5    d) while I attended high school
- 1 2 3 4 5    2. My childhood friends who visited me and related well to my parents were...
- 1 2 3 4 5    3. Teachers and counselors with whom I had the closest relationships have been...
- 1 2 3 4 5    4. The people who have most influenced me in my education have been...
- 1 2 3 4 5    5. In high school my close friends were...
- 1 2 3 4 5    6. The ethnic backgrounds of the people I have dated have been...
- 1 2 3 4 5    7. In past jobs I have had, my close friends were ...
- 1 2 3 4 5    8. People that I have established close, meaningful relationships with have been...
- 1 2 3 4 5    9. At present, my close friends are...
- 1 2 3 4 5    10. My close friends at work now are...
- 1 2 3 4 5    11. I enjoy going to gatherings at which the people are...
- 1 2 3 4 5    12. When I study or work on a project with others, I am usually with persons who are...

- 1 2 3 4 5 13. When I am involved in group discussions where I am expected to participate, I prefer a group of people who are...
- 1 2 3 4 5 14. I am active in organizations or social groups in which the majority of the members are...
- 1 2 3 4 5 15. When I am with my friends, I usually attend functions where the people are...
- 1 2 3 4 5 16. When I discuss personal problems or issues, I discuss them with people who are...
- 1 2 3 4 5 17. I most often spend time with people who are...

Next to each item below, circle the response that best describes you: (Type B Items)

- 1 = Extensively  
2 = Frequently  
3 = Occasionally  
4 = Seldom  
5 = Never

- 1 2 3 4 5 18. I attend functions that are predominantly Anglo/White in nature.
- 1 2 3 4 5 19. I attend functions that are predominantly of minority groups other than my own.
- 1 2 3 4 5 20. I attend functions that are predominantly Native American in nature.
- 1 2 3 4 5 21. I visit the homes of Anglos/Whites.
- 1 2 3 4 5 22. I invite Anglos/Whites to my home.
- 1 2 3 4 5 23. I visit the homes of Native Americans (other than relatives).
- 1 2 3 4 5 24. I invite Native Americans (other than relatives) to my home.
- 1 2 3 4 5 25. I visit the homes of minorities (other than Native American).
- 1 2 3 4 5 26. I invite persons of minorities (other than Native American) to my home.

### Daily Racial Microaggressions Scale—Short Form

Please rate the items below according to the following scale:

1 = This has never happened to me

2 = This has happened to me but I was not upset

3 = This happened to me and I was slightly upset

4 = This happened to me and I was moderately upset

5 = This happened to me and I was extremely upset

1. Someone was surprised at my skills or intelligence because they believed people of my racial/ethnic background are typically not that smart.
2. I was made to feel that my achievements were primarily due to preferential treatment based on my racial/ethnic background.
3. I was treated like I was of inferior status because of my racial/ethnic background.
4. Someone assumed I was a service worker or laborer because of my race/ethnicity.
5. I was treated as if I was a potential criminal because of my racial/ethnic background.
6. I was followed in a store due to my race/ethnicity.
7. I was made to feel as if the cultural values of another race/ethnic group were better than my own.
8. Someone reacted negatively to the way I dress because of my racial/ethnic background.
9. Someone told me that I am not like other people of my racial/ethnic background.
10. Someone asked my opinion as a representative of my race/ethnicity.
11. Someone made a statement to me that they are not racist or prejudiced because they have friends from different racial/ethnic backgrounds.
12. Someone told me that they are not racist or prejudiced even though their behavior suggests that they might be.
13. Someone did not take me seriously when I attempted to discuss issues related to my racial/ethnic background in a school or work setting.
14. Someone suggested that my racial/ethnic background has not had much of an influence on my life experiences.



## Experiences and Attitudes

- How many years have you lived on a reservation?  
 None /never did    Less than 2    2-7    8 or more
- In which age range were you when you last lived on a reservation?  
 Still live on reservation    18 or older    17-15    14-12    11-6    5 or younger    Never
- How often do you visit in the homes of close-friends or family who currently live on a reservation?  
 12 or more times per year    11-4 times per year    3-1times per year    Less than once per year
- The students in my high school were/are:  
 mostly from my tribe    mostly other ethnic minorities, but non-Native  
 mostly Native Americans, but not my tribe    mostly Whites/Anglos
- The students in my college or university were/are:  
 mostly from my tribe    mostly other ethnic minorities, but non-Native  
 mostly Native Americans, but not my tribe    mostly Whites/Anglos
- Thinking about the overall climate for diversity and equality (acceptance and validation of differences by faculty and students, teaching approaches, discipline methods, incorporation of local and national cultures, etc.), in the following environments the climate was/is:  

Community I grew up in	Mostly Positive - Somewhat Positive - Somewhat Negative - Mostly Negative
High School	Mostly Positive - Somewhat Positive - Somewhat Negative - Mostly Negative
College or University	Mostly Positive - Somewhat Positive - Somewhat Negative - Mostly Negative
Community I now live in	Mostly Positive - Somewhat Positive - Somewhat Negative - Mostly Negative
- Rank each item from 1 (most) to 10 (least) how much you think your current relationship attitudes are influenced by...  
 your exposure to Native lifestyle while growing up?  
 your past relationship experiences?  
 your experiences with discrimination?  
 your educational experiences?  
 your non-Native peers?  
 your Native peers?  
 your close friends?  
 your parents or other family?  
 White American culture?  
 popular media (tv, movies, music, etc)?

## Dating and Romantic Relationships

- How often have you pursued romantic relationships in the past with...  

members of your tribe?	Very	Fairly	Somewhat	Not Very
Native Americans, but from a different tribe?	Very	Fairly	Somewhat	Not Very
ethnic minority members, but non-Native?	Very	Fairly	Somewhat	Not Very
Anglos/Whites?	Very	Fairly	Somewhat	Not Very
- How likely are you to pursue a romantic relationship in the future with...  

members of your tribe?	Very	Fairly	Somewhat	Not Very
Native Americans, but from a different tribe?	Very	Fairly	Somewhat	Not Very
ethnic minority members, but non-Native?	Very	Fairly	Somewhat	Not Very
Anglos/Whites?	Very	Fairly	Somewhat	Not Very

10. How supported by your parent(s) have you felt with your past dating partners who have been ...
- |   |      |        |          |          |  |
|---|------|--------|----------|----------|--|
| members of your tribe?                        | Very | Fairly | Somewhat | Not Very |  |
| Native Americans, but from a different tribe? | Very | Fairly | Somewhat | Not Very |  |
| ethnic minority members, but non-Native?      | Very | Fairly | Somewhat | Not Very |  |
| Anglos/Whites?                                | Very | Fairly | Somewhat | Not Very |  |
11. How supported by your parent(s) would you feel with a future dating partner who is ...
- |   |      |        |          |          |  |
|---|------|--------|----------|----------|--|
| members of your tribe?                        | Very | Fairly | Somewhat | Not Very |  |
| Native Americans, but from a different tribe? | Very | Fairly | Somewhat | Not Very |  |
| ethnic minority members, but non-Native?      | Very | Fairly | Somewhat | Not Very |  |
| Anglos/Whites?                                | Very | Fairly | Somewhat | Not Very |  |
12. Which reason most accurately reflects why you have never dated...
- |                        |                             |                                |               |  |
|------------------------|-----------------------------|--------------------------------|---------------|--|
| a. lack of opportunity | c. negative family pressure | e. negative past relationships |               |  |
| b. no attraction       | d. negative peer pressure   | f. other: _____                | g. have dated |  |
- members of your tribe? \_\_\_\_
- Native Americans, but from a different tribe? \_\_\_\_
- ethnic minority members, but non-Native? \_\_\_\_
- Anglos/Whites? \_\_\_\_
13. Which reason most accurately reflects why you would never date in the future...
- |                        |                             |                                |               |  |
|------------------------|-----------------------------|--------------------------------|---------------|--|
| a. lack of opportunity | c. negative family pressure | e. negative past relationships |               |  |
| b. no attraction       | d. negative peer pressure   | f. other: _____                | g. would date |  |
- a member of your tribe? \_\_\_\_
- a Native American, but from a different tribe? \_\_\_\_
- an ethnic minority member, but non-Native? \_\_\_\_
- an Anglo/White? \_\_\_\_
14. I have close family members who in the past have been involved in romantic relationships with non-Natives:
- \_\_\_\_ Yes, and the majority of my family supported the intimate relationships
- \_\_\_\_ Yes, but the majority of my family did not support the intimate relationships
- \_\_\_\_ No, because the rest of my family would not have supported the relationships
- \_\_\_\_ No, but the rest of my family would have supported the relationships
15. I have a close family member who is currently involved in a romantic relationship with a non-Native:
- \_\_\_\_ Yes, and the majority of my family supports the intimate relationship
- \_\_\_\_ Yes, but the majority of my family does not support the intimate relationship
- \_\_\_\_ No, because the rest of my family would not support the relationship
- \_\_\_\_ No, but the rest of my family would support the relationship

### Close Friendships

16. How much have you invested yourself into close-friendships in the past with...
- |   |      |        |          |          |
|---|------|--------|----------|----------|
| members of your tribe?                        | Very | Fairly | Somewhat | Not Very |
| Native Americans, but from a different tribe? | Very | Fairly | Somewhat | Not Very |
| ethnic minority members, but non-Native?      | Very | Fairly | Somewhat | Not Very |
| Anglos/Whites?                                | Very | Fairly | Somewhat | Not Very |
17. How likely are you to invest yourself into a close-friendship in the future with...
- |   |      |        |          |          |
|---|------|--------|----------|----------|
| members of your tribe?                        | Very | Fairly | Somewhat | Not Very |
| Native Americans, but from a different tribe? | Very | Fairly | Somewhat | Not Very |
| ethnic minority members, but non-Native?      | Very | Fairly | Somewhat | Not Very |
| Anglos/Whites?                                | Very | Fairly | Somewhat | Not Very |

18. How supported by your parent(s) have you felt with your close-friends who were...  
 members of your tribe? Very Fairly Somewhat Not Very  
 Native Americans, but from a different tribe? Very Fairly Somewhat Not Very  
 ethnic minority members, but non-Native? Very Fairly Somewhat Not Very  
 Anglos/Whites? Very Fairly Somewhat Not Very
19. How supported by your parent(s) would you feel with your having a close-friend who is...  
 members of your tribe? Very Fairly Somewhat Not Very  
 Native Americans, but from a different tribe? Very Fairly Somewhat Not Very  
 ethnic minority members, but non-Native? Very Fairly Somewhat Not Very  
 Anglos/Whites? Very Fairly Somewhat Not Very
20. Which reason most accurately reflects why you have never made close-friends with...  
 a. lack of opportunity c. negative family pressure e. negative past relationships  
 b. no attraction d. negative peer pressure f. other: \_\_\_\_\_ g. have had friends  
 members of your tribe? \_\_\_\_  
 Native Americans, but from a different tribe? \_\_\_\_  
 ethnic minority members, but non-Native? \_\_\_\_  
 Anglos/Whites? \_\_\_\_
21. Which reason most accurately reflects why you would never make close-friends in the future...  
 a. lack of opportunity c. negative family pressure e. negative past relationships  
 b. no attraction d. negative peer pressure f. other: \_\_\_\_\_ g. would make friends  
 a member of your tribe? \_\_\_\_  
 a Native American, but from a different tribe? \_\_\_\_  
 an ethnic minority member, but non-Native? \_\_\_\_  
 an Anglo/White? \_\_\_\_
22. I have close family members who in the past have been involved in close-friendships with non-Natives:  
 \_\_\_ Yes, and the majority of my family supported the intimate relationships  
 \_\_\_ Yes, but the majority of my family did not support the intimate relationships  
 \_\_\_ No, because the rest of my family would not have supported the relationships  
 \_\_\_ No, but the rest of my family would have supported the relationships
23. I have a close family member who is currently involved in a close-friendship with a non-Native:  
 \_\_\_ Yes, and the majority of my family supports the intimate relationship  
 \_\_\_ Yes, but the majority of my family does not support the intimate relationship  
 \_\_\_ No, because the rest of my family would not support the relationship  
 \_\_\_ No, but the rest of my family would support the relationship

### Demographic Information

1. Which tribe(s) do you identify with? (*list all*) \_\_\_\_\_
2. What is your ethnicity? (*mark all that apply*)
 

<input type="checkbox"/> Native American/Alaskan Native	<input type="checkbox"/> Latino/Hispanic
<input type="checkbox"/> White American/Anglo	<input type="checkbox"/> Asian American/Asian Descent
<input type="checkbox"/> Native Hawaiian/ Other Pacific Islander	<input type="checkbox"/> Other: ( <i>describe</i> ) _____
<input type="checkbox"/> Black American/African Descent	
3. What is your religious affiliation/spiritual identification? (*describe*) \_\_\_\_\_
4. What is your current relationship status?
 

<input type="checkbox"/> Single not dating	<input type="checkbox"/> Married/committed partnership
<input type="checkbox"/> Single and dating	<input type="checkbox"/> Divorced, separated, or widowed
5. Who do you currently live with? (*mark all that apply*)
 

<input type="checkbox"/> Parents and/or siblings	<input type="checkbox"/> Roommates	<input type="checkbox"/> Grandparents
<input type="checkbox"/> Partner and/or children	<input type="checkbox"/> Alone	<input type="checkbox"/> Aunties, uncles, cousins
6. What is your personal yearly income?  \$10K or less  \$10K-20K  \$20K-50K  Over \$50K
7. What is the highest level of education you have completed?
 

<input type="checkbox"/> Some high school or less	<input type="checkbox"/> Bachelor's degree
<input type="checkbox"/> High School Diploma/G.E.D.	<input type="checkbox"/> Graduate or professional school
<input type="checkbox"/> Some college/trade/technical school	<input type="checkbox"/> Other: ( <i>describe</i> ) _____
<input type="checkbox"/> Associate degree/trade/technical certification	<input type="checkbox"/> Formal schooling was not a part of my life
8. What is the highest level of education each of your **primary** parent figures (mother/father, grandmother/grandfather, auntie/uncle, etc.) has completed?
 

Mother	Father
<input type="checkbox"/> Some high school or less	<input type="checkbox"/> Some high school or less
<input type="checkbox"/> High School Diploma/G.E.D.	<input type="checkbox"/> High School Diploma/G.E.D.
<input type="checkbox"/> Some college/trade/technical school	<input type="checkbox"/> Some college/trade/technical school
<input type="checkbox"/> Associate degree/trade/technical certification	<input type="checkbox"/> Associate degree/trade/technical certification
<input type="checkbox"/> Bachelor's degree	<input type="checkbox"/> Bachelor's degree

- Graduate or professional school                       Graduate or professional school  
 Other: *(describe)* \_\_\_\_\_                       Other: *(describe)* \_\_\_\_\_  
 Formal schooling was not a part of her life                       Formal schooling was not a part of his life  
 No mother figure while growing up                       No father figure while growing up

10. Which ethnicity are your primary parent figures? *(mark all that apply)*

- | Mother   | Father   |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Native American/Alaskan Native    | <input type="checkbox"/> Native American/Alaskan Native    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> White American/Anglo              | <input type="checkbox"/> White American/Anglo              |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Latino/Hispanic                   | <input type="checkbox"/> Latino/Hispanic                   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander  | <input type="checkbox"/> Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Asian American                    | <input type="checkbox"/> Asian American                    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Black American                    | <input type="checkbox"/> Black American                    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other: <i>(describe)</i> _____    | <input type="checkbox"/> Other: <i>(describe)</i> _____    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> No mother figure while growing up | <input type="checkbox"/> No father figure while growing up |

11. What is the current relationship status of your primary parent figures?

- Married/committed partnership    Divorced or separated    Widowed    Never married

12. What was the average yearly income for the household that you were raised in?

- Less than \$20K    \$20-49K    \$50-100K    \$100-250K    Over \$250K

13. What is your age?

- 18-19    20-21    22-23    24-25

14. What is your gender?

- Female    Male