The Effects of Racial/Ethnic and Masculine Identities on Self-Efficacy:

Examining Black and Latino Males in the Community College

by

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A dissertation submitted to the faculty of

San Diego State University

In Partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree

Doctor of Educational Leadership

December 28, 2015
SAN DIEGO STATE UNIVERSITY

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The Effects of Racial/Ethnic and Masculine Identities on Self-Efficacy:

Examining Black and Latino Males in the Community College

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this quantitative analysis was to examine the effect of racial/ethnic and masculine identities on self-efficacy for Black and Latino men in the community college. In the last decade, the academic achievement gap among male students of color in the community college has become the focal point of national conversations among college leaders and stakeholders.

Self-efficacy has been identified as one primary determinant of success for college men of color. Few studies have examined the role that identities have in fostering self-efficacy, particularly racial/ethnic and masculine identities. Using the Socio-Ecological Outcomes (SEO) model for this study, investigates the predictive utility of these identities on self-efficacy.

Data from this study were derived from the Community College Survey of Men (CCSM). The CCSM is an institutional-level needs assessment tool that examines factors that influence student success outcomes for men who have been historically underrepresented, underserved, and undersupported in education. The results indicated that three of the five identity variables were positive predictors of self-efficacy for both Black and Latino men (i.e., perceptions of school as a domain equally suited for men and women, help-seeking behavior, and breadwinner orientation). Implications for future research and practice are extended.
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ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I would like to begin with thanking God for giving me the strength and perseverance in accomplishing one of the most challenging and emotional decisions of my life. I’m grateful to my chair, Dr. Wood. You have been inspirational throughout this process and an integral part of this needed research. I would like to thank my committee members for their support, words of encouragement, and patience. Dr. Braswell, you have helped to keep me focused on the purpose of this process. Dr. Vasquez Urias, for your knowledge, guidance and consistent follow up, which came when the support was most needed. I would also like to extend a warm and sincere thank you to Dr. Mulholland for your support and assistance.

I would like to thank the San Diego State University faculty and staff in the Doctoral Educational Leadership program for assisting me with the education and experience on how to be an effective leader and advocate for positive change within the community college system. Thank you again for this opportunity.

To my friends and colleagues, thank you for being so supportive of me by way of simply checking in; the slightest jester of a thumbs up has motivated me to keep striving forward. Each of you has been instrumental in my transformation as a better friend and leader. I’m so thankful to my ancestors and all those who paved the way in history that has provided me with this opportunity of reaching a goal many were not given the opportunity, for a number of reasons. But I’m truly humbled and thankful. I would like to say thank you to my cohort, Synergy! You all have taught me how to improve as an educator and effective leader for change. Each one of you has touched my life in a unique way that will forever be cherished.
For my parents and sister, words can’t describe the spiritual and personal love each of you have provided me that has carried me through this journey. Each of you has given me support, encouragement and wisdom in your own special way that was significant in my ability to complete this goal. Mom, I admire you and thank you for being the best mother a son could ever have in their lifetime.

Finally, to my students, you have all inspired me to do my very best at all times as a professional and mentor. You have truly motivated me to be the example of the true meaning of a role model and not giving up on your dreams.
CHAPTER 1—INTRODUCTION

This chapter will articulate the problem that prompted this study on the effects of identity on male students’ self-efficacy in the community college. This chapter will provide a framework to understand the purpose and significance of this study. Research questions and hypotheses that guided this study will be discussed as well as an overview of the methodology employed. The chapter will conclude with a description of this study’s limitations, delimitations, and essential definitions.

Problem Statement

In the last decade, there has been an increasing preponderance of research and programs dedicated to supporting the success of male students in the community college, particularly men of color. Male students of color in the community college have demonstrated dismal success rates. These men perform at lower rates on every measure of success, including (but not limited to): persistence, academic achievement (GPA), course completion, and transferring to the university level (Bush, 2004; Wood, Harrison, & Turner, 2011; Wood, Hilton, & Harrell, 2011). For instance, persistence and attainment rates for men in the community college system reveal that after three years of enrollment, only 5.5% of Black men will have attained a certificate or associates degree, whereas 57.6% will have dropped out without a certificate or degree in the same time frame. In contrast, 43.5% of the total male population (excluding Black men) will have dropped out within three years. This suggests that the Black male dropout rate is 14.1% higher than that of non-Black men (Beginning Postsecondary Students Longitudinal Study [BPS], 2009a). While it is possible that some of these men stopped out (a temporary leave of absence with a plan to return), these rates are still alarming. For Latino men, 9.4% will
have attained a certificate or associate degree; however, 46.8% will have dropped out
without a certificate or degree in the same time frame (BPS, 2009a). On the opposite end
of the spectrum are outcome rates for Asian/Asian American males. Within a three year
time frame, only 23.3% of the total Asian/Asian American male population (BPS, 2009a)
will have dropped out without attaining a certificate or degree. Further data indicates that
44.4% of the White male population will have dropped out within three years (BPS,
2009a). As evidenced by these data in Table 1, Black and Latino males have significantly
higher departure rates than their White and Asian peers.

Table 1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Attained, still enrolled</th>
<th>Attained, not enrolled</th>
<th>No degree, still enrolled</th>
<th>No degree, not enrolled</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>9.8</td>
<td>5.9</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>45.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All men (non-Black)</td>
<td>10.5</td>
<td>5.9</td>
<td>40.1</td>
<td>43.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White</td>
<td>11.2</td>
<td>6.5</td>
<td>37.8</td>
<td>44.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black</td>
<td>5.5</td>
<td>5.7</td>
<td>31.2</td>
<td>57.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hispanic or Latino</td>
<td>9.4</td>
<td>3.7</td>
<td>40.1</td>
<td>46.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asian</td>
<td>6.6</td>
<td>5.7</td>
<td>64.4</td>
<td>23.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>5.9</td>
<td>6.3</td>
<td>41.9</td>
<td>45.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More than one race</td>
<td>10.4</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>33.8</td>
<td>55.8</td>
</tr>
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</table>

Persistence and attainment rates for men in the community college system reveal that after six years of enrollment, only 3.8% of Black men will have transferred and attained a bachelor’s degree, whereas 50.8% will have dropped out without a certificate or degree in the same time frame (BPS, 2009a). This is a slight decline from the three-year rate, suggesting that some Black men returned after stopping out. Table 2 shows the six-year persistence and attainment rates for men in community colleges.

Table 2

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Attained bachelor's degree</th>
<th>Attained associate's degree</th>
<th>Attained certificate</th>
<th>No degree, still enrolled</th>
<th>No degree, left without return</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>11.1</td>
<td>12.6</td>
<td>8.4</td>
<td>20.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All men (non-Black)</td>
<td>12.1</td>
<td>12.8</td>
<td>8.2</td>
<td>20.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White</td>
<td>12.9</td>
<td>13.6</td>
<td>9.2</td>
<td>18.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black</td>
<td>3.8</td>
<td>10.8</td>
<td>9.4</td>
<td>25.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hispanic or Latino</td>
<td>7.4</td>
<td>10.6</td>
<td>6.4</td>
<td>19.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asian</td>
<td>17.1</td>
<td>8.6</td>
<td>5.4</td>
<td>37.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>3.5</td>
<td>14.6</td>
<td>4.8</td>
<td>25.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More than one race</td>
<td>12.3</td>
<td>15.5</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>19.5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In contrast, 46.8% of the total male population (excluding Black men) will have dropped out within six years. This suggests that the Black male dropout rate is four percent higher than that of non-Black men. Subsequently, the outcomes for Asian/Asian-American males demonstrate that within six years, 17.1% will have attained a bachelor’s degree. In contrast, 31.9% of Asian/Asian-American males will have dropped out without a certificate or degree in the six-year timeframe. Additionally, data indicates that 12.1% of White males will have attained bachelor’s degree in this same timeframe. These data are reflected in Table 2.

It is important to consider the aforementioned data in light of the fact that not all men desire to transfer and earn a bachelor’s degree (BPS, 2009a). However, the strikingly low rate by which Black men do so is concerning. It should be noted that Black men have higher rates of attainment for certificate degrees, at 9.4% (BPS, 2009a). This is the highest rate for this outcome among all men, and may provide initial evidence that Black men are systematically being tracked into vocational training programs.

The above outcomes provide further evidence that men of color (particularly Black and Latino men) struggle to persist and complete community college within three-six year enrollment. There are a number of rationales that have been posited as to why these men have such poor rates of success. One predominant rationale is the cultural deficit perspective that blames students, their families, and their communities for dismal outcomes (see Wood & Essien-Wood, 2012 for a critique of this view). Moreover, other rationales for the lower success rates for men of color address the following perspectives: (a) the mental health perspective, which argues that for men of color, success in school is marred by feelings of hopelessness and stress (Mason, 1998); (b) the environmental
perspective, which suggests that factors outside of the institution (e.g., family commitments, life stress, employment, other obligations) have an adverse impact on student success (Mason, 1998; Wood & Williams, 2013); (c) the academic deficiency perspective, which argues that poor preparation in preK-12 education has negative ramifications on men of color in college who are underprepared to engage in collegiate level coursework (Wood & Hilton, 2012); and (d) structural perspectives, which suggest that social expectations (e.g., racism, classism, stereotypes) and wider social systems (e.g., capitalism) create socio-cultural environments that inhibit social and economic progress for men of color (Bush & Bush, 2010; Wood & Essien-Wood, 2012). In all, these perspectives provide a value-added, holistic understanding of the myriad of challenges facing men of color in postsecondary educational institutions.

One area of research that has been underdeveloped is the role of identity on male student success in the community college. Specifically, research on men and men of color in the community college has given little attention to the role of racial and gender identity in influencing academic outcomes. The limited research on masculine identity that does exist illustrates the importance of acknowledging identity in the context of student success. As noted by F. Harris and Harper (2008), men receive messages as boys about what it means to be a man. Parents, family members, and male peers shape their perceptions of the role of men in school. For example, they noted that boys are socialized by their fathers to be competitive, tough, and aggressive which are most commonly accepted interactions in predominately male surroundings. The authors also indicated that any behaviors demonstrated outside of this stereotypical norm could be perceived as indicators of weakness or femininity. These learned behaviors in the household are
reinforced in young men to demonstrate characteristics that are considered the desirable norm by peers. Moreover, school sites serve as domains where males are socialized with gender-related ideas about masculinity in relationship to school.

A core notion expressed by scholars (F. Harris & Harper, 2008; Harper, 2004) is that males are socialized to perceive school as a feminine domain; specifically that success in school is associated with being feminine. Thus, when a male succeeds in school, they are in essence, negating their own male identity. In addition, F. Harris and Harper (2008) also discussed the concept of a breadwinner, where a man is expected to serve as the primary provider for his family. The authors provided examples of situations where students’ internalized commitment to breadwinning conflicted with their desire to pursue academic endeavors. Finally, F. Harris and Harper (2008) addressed the difficulty some men have in seeking help from faculty and staff, as doing so can present an image of weakness, which again goes against characteristics like toughness that are typically associated with masculinity. Given the importance of identity on student outcomes, the next section will discuss the purpose of this study, which further investigates this relationship.

**Purpose Statement**

In prior research on men of color in the community college, there has been extensive discussion of the role of non-cognitive factors on male student success (Mason, 1998; Wood & Essien-Wood, 2012). However, one non-cognitive outcome that has been given much attention in recent years, relates to self-efficacy. Self-efficacy originates from the work of Bandura (1997) and refers to students’ confidence in their abilities to perform and execute academic endeavors (Wood & Harris, 2013). Given the importance of self-
efficacy in determining academic success in college, it will serve as the primary outcome variable in this research.

The purpose of this quantitative study is to investigate the effect of racial/ethnic and masculine identity on self-efficacy. More specifically, this study will examine the relationship between racial/ethnic identity, and the four masculine identity domains (i.e., breadwinner orientation, competitive ethos, school as a feminine domain, and help-seeking behavior) on self-efficacy among Black and Latino males in the community college system. The researcher will explore correlations and predictive utility via regression analyses of identity on students’ academic self-efficacy using data collected from the Community College Survey of Men (CCSM, 2014). The goal of this study is to inform administrators, faculty and staff members who work closely with men of color about strategies that can serve to increase their academic self-efficacy. Moreover, findings may shed light on factors that influence success for men of color that may be useful to inform programming. This information should be particularly relevant to the entire college leadership team (e.g., Presidents, Vice Presidents, and Deans). This research was guided by two primary questions.

RQ1: After controlling relevant confounding factors (e.g., background, academic, campus climate, environment), what is the effect of identity (e.g., masculine, racial) on self-efficacy for Black and Latino males in the community college?

RQ2: How do models differ (if at all) between Black and Latino males?

The next section will provide the significance of this study that addresses the purpose for this particular research for men of color in the community college.
Study Significance

At the national level, graduation rates among community college students have been a topic of increasing interest. For example, in 2009, President Barack Obama announced the American Graduation Initiative (AGI) that included a goal to increase the total number of community college graduates by five million by the year 2020 (Biden, 2009) for the purpose of creating an educated society to be competitive in the global marketplace. In California, this goal led to the establishment of a statewide student success taskforce, the California Community Colleges Student Success Task Force (CCCSSTF). This taskforce was charged with devising policies and practices to increase graduation rates among community college students in California. For example, community college professionals are required to assist students in the development of an education plan that includes their career goals.

Another strategy emerging from the taskforce was that students are required to select a major early on in their academic career, thereby allowing students to attain measurable academic goals that can be completed in a timely manner (California Community College Student Success Task Force [CCCSSTF], 2011). These efforts at the national and state level have highlighted the need for community colleges to improve retention rates for all students. In fact, according to Hagedorn, Maxwell and Hampton (2001-2002) salient research has focused on the importance of age, grade point average, number of courses, a positive perspective of personal skills, and early educational planning for major coursework for these marginalized groups, which can provide insight to effective practices. As a result, increased attention has been given to disparate college outcomes (e.g., persistence, completion) by race and ethnicity among other factors. Based
on the researcher’s experiential knowledge as a community college counselor, this enhanced focus has led to increased scrutiny of outcomes for men of color, particularly African American and Latino students. This study will provide a significant contribution to the literature on student success as it provides needed insight into the success of these marginalized groups.

**Methodological Overview**

Data from this study were derived from the Community College Survey of Men (CCSM, 2014). The CCSM is the only survey instrument designed explicitly for determining factors that influence success for minority male community college students. The instrument’s development was guided by published research on college men (e.g., Dancy & Brown, 2011; Harper & Harris, 2010; F. Harris, 2010; Palmer & Strayhorn, 2008) and men of color in the community college (Mason, 1998; Sáenz & Ponjuan, 2009; Strayhorn, 2012; Wood, 2012a). Its scales focus directly on environmental variables (described as *extrinsic mediators*), non-cognitive factors, and measures of involvement (described as *academic immersion*).

Data were collected from participants via distribution of the CCSM. The sample included 3,147 men from 17 highly diverse community colleges located in seven states (i.e., Arizona, Arkansas, California, Illinois, Maryland, Minnesota, and Pennsylvania). A quantitative research approach was implemented in this study to examine the effects of racial/ethnic and masculine identity on male students’ self-efficacy. This study used multiple regression analysis to create separate models for Black and Latino male students.
A delimitation of this study is that the data of analysis confined to Black and Latino males from 17 community colleges, located in Western, Southern, Mid-Western, and Eastern regions of the United States. This study did not account for other students from underserved and underrepresented backgrounds that have also faced challenges in community college settings.

**Limitations**

As with all research, this study is not without limitations. First, the data analyzed in this study were collected from 17 colleges in the Western, Southern, Mid-Western, and Eastern regions of the United States. As a result, the demographic characteristics of the sample were not representative of the national population of community colleges. Second, the items and scales employed in the instrument were designed for institutional need (i.e., assessment of men of color) and not for research purposes. As such, the collection of data (e.g., scaling) may not address all the needs of a research-based inquiry. Third, data in this study were collected from an online questionnaire and possibly lead to response bias given that all men do not have access to technology. In particular, access could likely be a byproduct of certain characteristics, particularly low socio-economic status, which could skew the sample. Finally, given differences in the study population (e.g., race/ethnicity, culture), the participants in this study could interpret, perceive, and respond to the CCSM’s items and scales differently. Therefore, careful attention should be paid to the reliability of the instrument among groups.

**Definition of Terms**

The definition of terms will serve as a key reference for the primary concepts outlined within this research.
**Academic factors:** This term refers to students’ academic interactions on campus, specifically referring to their use of services and engagement with faculty.

**Academic integration.** The concept of academic integration has both structural and normative dimensions. The structural dimension involves meeting the explicit standards of the institution. The normative dimension involves the student’s identification with the prescribed or standard structure of the academic system (Tinto, 1975).

**African American and Black.** These terms are used interchangeably within this research to refer to the descendants of African slaves in the United States (Wood, 2010, p. 1).

**Background factors.** This term refers to students’ demographic characteristics (e.g., age, income), parental characteristics (e.g., mother’s highest level of education, father’s highest level of education), and may include defining variables (e.g., high school GPA, time status).

**Campus ethos factors.** This term refers to items and scales relevant to the campus climate and culture. In optimal circumstances, these considerations frame colleges as environments where support, affirmation, and belonging are fostered.

**Environmental factors.** This term refers to factors that occur outside of college (e.g., work obligations, family commitments, and transportation concerns) that influence students’ success inside of college.

**Mexican American and Latino.** The term Latino can refer to different groups, which include the male population or the majority Spanish-speaking population. For the purposes of this study, the term Mexican American/Latino will be used when discussing the more general and encompassing ethnic classification.
Persistence. This is a concept that refers to students’ continuation in college.

Racial Identity. An individual’s personal characteristics shared across gender, race, ethnicity, and culture and the cultural norms that connect groups of people (Cross, 1995).

Retention. This is a term used to refer to the completion of a course or courses within a given semester, whether or not passing grades were received.

Self-efficacy. The concept of a person’s beliefs, judgment or conviction in his/her capabilities to organize and execute a course of action, to produce outcomes or to exercise control over events that affect his/her own life (Bandura, 1997).

Stopped out. The term stopped out refers to a pattern where students withdraw temporarily from enrollment at the community college and return to their studies at a later date (Nora, 1990).

Students of Color. The term student of color used in this study refers to Latino and African American students.

Summary of Chapter

Chapter One has provided an overview of the role of identity on male students’ academic self-efficacy as well as a discussion of the poor academic success rates for men of color in the community college system. As noted earlier, men of color are performing lower on every measure of success, including (but not limited to): persistence, academic achievement (GPA), completion, and transfer. The limited research on masculine identity illustrates the importance of acknowledging the role of identity in student success outcomes.
Chapter Two investigates the current and foundational literature on the role of identity and its impact on male students’ self-efficacy in the community college. In particular, a focus on Black and Latino men and the research relevant to the confounding factors (e.g., background, academic, campus climate, and environment).

Chapter Three includes a discussion on the relationship between two factors outlined within the Socio-Ecological Outcomes (SEO) model, the identity domain, and the intrapersonal domain (with a focus on self-efficacy). Additionally, an extensive overview of the data source employed, The Community College Survey of Men (CCSM), will be provided as well as the analytic measures that were employed. Chapter Four presents the results of the quantitative analysis and discusses how they relate to the research study questions. And finally, Chapter Five includes a summary and interpretation of the findings, a discussion of the implications for practice for community colleges, and recommendations for future research.
CHAPTER 2—LITERATURE REVIEW

The purpose of this chapter is to investigate the current and foundational literatures on the effects of identities on male students’ self-efficacy in the community college. In particular, this review will focus on racial/ethnic, masculine, and spiritual identities with an emphasis on Black and Latino men. Moreover, this review will also cover research relevant to factors (e.g., background, academic, campus climate, and environment) influencing success for men of color in the community college.

Specifically, the academic outcome of interest in this study is self-efficacy, which refers to students’ confidence in their ability to perform academically.

This chapter presents a review of literature on men of color in the community college. It should be noted that the vast majority of research on men of color in this context has focused on Black/African American men. In fact, according to F. Harris and Wood (2013), research on the experiences, perceptions, and outcomes of Latino, Asian, and Native American men in the community college are woefully lacking. As such, the literature presented, while designed to inform this study’s focus on Black and Latino men, is undoubtedly grounded in research that unfortunately avoid Latino men. While a limitation for this review of research, this fact serves to bolster the importance of this research in etching new ground for future works on Latino men, who, like their Black male peers, enroll overwhelming in community colleges. For example, 71.3 percent of Latino males will enroll in the community college, which is a high enrollment rate. In comparison, 26.4 percent and 2.3 percent will attend a four-year institution or vocational program (Vasquez Urias, 2012).
This study employs data collected from the Community College Survey of Men (CCSM), an institutional-level needs assessment tool used by community colleges to examine factors influencing outcomes for historically underrepresented and underserved men in community colleges. The theoretical underpinning of this survey is rooted in the Socio-Ecological Outcomes (SEO) model, as articulated by F. Harris and Wood (2014). This model will serve as the theoretical framework for this study and will be discussed later in detail. This review begins with a focus on self-efficacy.

**Self-Efficacy**

For years, scholars have sought to understand factors that influence outcomes for men of color in community colleges (Bush & Bush, 2010; Flowers, 2006; Palmer & Wood, 2012; Sáenz & Ponjuan, 2009; Strayhorn, 2012; Wood & Harris, 2012; Wood & Williams, 2013). Recent evidence suggests continued interest in the role that self-efficacy and masculinity have on outcomes for these men (Wood & Harris, 2012). Research has shown that self-efficacy is a strong predictor of student retention, achievement, attainment, and transfer for community college men (F. Harris & Harper, 2008). Given the importance of self-efficacy in determining academic success, this concept will serve as the primary outcome variable in this research. Self-efficacy is defined as people’s beliefs about their capabilities to execute designated levels of performance to overcome obstacles that affect their lives (Bandura, 1997). For example, Wilkins (2005) conducted a qualitative study that examined practices utilized by Black male students to persist and complete college, while encountering racially motivated incidents within the institutions. The outcome of the study identified an increase of resilience from the academic achievement among Black males who developed higher levels of confidence in their
abilities to sustain academic success. Specifically, Bandura noted that self-efficacy is an individual’s ability to service reflective methods in assessing their level of confidence to accomplish desired outcomes (Bandura, 1977, 1986). In other words, a greater level of confidence replicates positive achievement. However, a lack of confidence can result in a person’s inability to accomplish desired objectives.

In an academic context, researchers have typically employed self-efficacy as a measure of students’ confidence in their ability to execute and to perform academically by acquiring, applying, and retaining knowledge (Solberg, O’Brien, Villarreal, Kennel, & Davis, 1993). A considerable body of literature has linked self-efficacy to positive outcomes on academic success for students attending college (Aguayo, Herman, Ojeda, & Flores, 2001; Bong, 2011; Choi, 2005; Gore, 2006; Majer, 2009; Pajares & Schunk, 2001; Vuong, Brown-Welty, & Tracz, 2010; Zimmerman, 2000). As noted, a number of scholars have connected self-efficacy to time on task, including homework completion and time spent studying (Hackett, Betz, Casas, & Rocha-Singh, 1992; Pajares & Miller, 1994; Schunk, 1991; Zimmerman & Martinez-Pons, 1990).

While a research on men of color in postsecondary education has articulated the importance of self-efficacy on student success, the vast majority of this literature has focused on the four-year university context (see Flowers, Moore, Flowers, & Clarke, 2011). In fact, in the researchers’ review of literature on men of color in the community college, few peer-reviewed studies were identified that have explored self-efficacy, its effect on student success, and/or factors that influence self-efficacy. In other words, scholarly works have suggested that self-efficacy is indeed influential to male students of color success in the community college without actually testing the relationship between
self-efficacy and success for these men. Therefore, to date, assumptions about predictors of self-efficacy and its importance on academic success are assumed, but lack the research to support the effects of academic outcomes. This is noteworthy, given that several conceptual models on male students of color success in the community college (F. Harris & Wood, 2013; Wood & Harris, 2013) have identified self-efficacy as an important component of student success. The next sections of literature explore identities that affect the outcome of self-efficacy.

**Racial/Ethnic Identities**

African American men, in the past and present, suffer from the chronic stress of living in a racist and oppressive society. This condition has historical roots, which dates back to enslavement and deportation from Africa (Elligan & Utsey, 1999). In the case of racism/discrimination experiences of Black and Latino male students in the community college, evidence of racialized experiences are clear. For instance, the interaction between many males of color and individuals in positions of authority on the college campus (i.e., teachers, campus police) have indicated predetermined perceptions of failure for these male collegians enrolled in the community college (Bush & Bush, 2010; Perrakis, 2008; Wood & Hilton, 2012). In addition, Sellers and Shelton (2003) suggested that Black male students faced racial harassment and discrimination more commonly than that of female students. In general, these racialized experiences serve as a concrete background for understanding the racial/ethnic identities of men of color with respect to how they identify themselves and the outside world (Sue, 1981). This leads to self-identity challenges or racial self-hatred for men of color, as they pursue refuge in seeking a sense of belonging within the community college environment.
The development of a racial identity has been best identified in Cross’s (1971a, 1971b) model of Nigrescence, which focuses on five stages of Black racial identity. These five stages are as follows: (a) Pre-encounter, where one denies one’s own self, such as internalizing the negative Black stereotypes (e.g., work ethics, criminal activity), and assimilates to characteristics of White identity; (b) Encounter, which occurs when one’s own culture has been exposed to the oppression of another culture; (c) Immersion, where an individuals’ African American heritage begins to become important to their identity; (d) Emersion, where individuals immerse themselves in African American culture and discard the philosophy of the oppressor; and (e) Internalization, the final stage in the identity process where one accepts African heritage while acknowledging the traditions, beliefs, and values of other differences in culture.

Cross (1971a, 1971b) argued that a healthy positive racial identity, ideological flexibility, and acceptance of one’s Black culture (as noted in the Emersion stage), leads to an increase of self-efficacy (Cross, 1971a, 1971b). In order to properly address educational concerns for male students of color, it is important that educators identify and acknowledge the cultural identity struggles faced by Black male students in and out of the classroom environment. Whaley (1993) asserted evidence of success for male students of color from research that investigated the practice of active commitment with campus support, which acknowledges community colleges’ responsibility to consistently implement cultural identity strategies and practices surrounding the campus environment.

Parham (1989) expanded on Cross’ model by addressing the progression of racial identity in circular stages rather than as linear, systematic process. This was based on findings that suggested that individuals were likely to cycle back to a previous stagnate
stage or move forward to a progressive stage of racial identity. In addition, developmental stages of life may interact with these ethnic identity stages to form different patterns of opportunity to confront ethnic identity issues.

With that said, a healthy sense of one’s racial identity has been described as an important attribute to men of color success in college. Wood and Harris (2015) have indicated the importance of racial affinity as being a core component for persistence and achievement for men of color in the community college. According to their research, racial affinity refers to positive perceptions and feelings towards one’s own race. This is akin to the earlier theories (more developed stages) of Cross’ and other identity developmental theories. Their study is informative, as it articulates the importance of racial affinity for historically underrepresented and underserved men. Undergirded by Cross’s notion of identity, and Harris and Wood’s articulation of racial affinity, this study sought to identify the influence of racial and gender identities on self-efficacy.

**Spiritual Identity**

In a study on spirituality and academic performance, Walker and Dixon (2002) found that high achieving Black students had higher levels of spiritual beliefs, which may have influenced achievement by decreasing stress. Graham, Furr, Flowers, and Burke (2001) examined the relationship among religiosity (performance of religious tasks and rituals), spirituality, and stress, and determined that there was a positive correlation between these concepts. In their study of 148 students, they found the “more vital one’s spiritual health is, the more numerous are the coping skills” (p. 9). While it must be noted that the study participants were not male students of color, the findings may still have implications for men of color in community colleges. Specifically, research on college
climate and male students of color suggests that racism and racial micro-aggressions produce stress in its victims and impact their ability to cope effectively; thereby, spirituality can serve as a protective mechanism against this stress (Franklin & Boyd-Franklin, 2000; Herndon, 2003).

Wood and Hilton’s (2012) research explored the relationship between academic success and spirituality for men of color in the community college. This study used a conceptual framework from Herndon (2003), which stated that religious activities provided a method for coping with stress resulting from academic and social barriers. Their research defined spirituality, based on participants’ perspectives, as a “sense of purpose, direction, and focus in life” as affiliated with a Judeo-Christian perspective on God (p. 64). The research used a qualitative method (interviews) to examine students’ perceptions of factors related to academic success. The role of spirituality as a factor related to student success was identified by 11 of 28 participants in their research. While this does not suggest an overwhelming association between spirituality and academic success, they noted that for the men who identified spirituality as a success element, it was an integral factor that attributed to their success. Student responses indicated several interrelated ways in which their academic success was supported: (a) spirituality and God served as a confidant and entity with whom students could dialogue about challenges; (b) spirituality served as inspiration for excellence and pursuit of which was espoused as an important religious virtue; (c) spirituality provided life purpose, thus reassuring students of their academic plans; (d) spirituality provided an ability to overcome barriers; and (e) spirituality reduced relational distractions, particularly those not aligned with a spiritual worldview. These important benefits of spirituality demonstrate the importance of
affirming students spiritually. While the linkage between spirituality and self-efficacy was not identified in their research, given the role of spirituality in fostering other non-cognitive outcomes (e.g., resilience, goal commitment), it is anticipated that there may be also be an association with self-efficacy. While this section explored spirituality, the next section will explore masculine identity.

**Masculine Identity**

As previously stated, the success rates for men of color are dismal. Specifically, about a third of Black and Latino men will earn a certificate, associate’s degree, or transfer from a community college in six years (Wood & Harris, 2014). Some scholars have suggested that an important factor influencing the success puzzle (that has yet to be adequately understood) is masculine identity. According to F. Harris, Palmer, and Struve (2011), theories and concepts relating to the social construction of masculinity and gender role conflict (e.g., toughness, aggressiveness, material wealth, restrictive emotionality, and responsibility) emphasize the meanings ascribed to masculinities.

A core framework for understanding masculinity has been identified as that of hegemonic masculinities. As noted by O’Neil’s (1981) concept of male gender role conflict (MGRC), he defines the psychological and emotional anxiety that resonates from men’s fear of femininity and inability to function at the level of socially constructed masculinities. O’Neil (1981) noted that “When a man fears his feminine side, he really fears that others will see him as weak or less masculine, but fear of femininity and school as a feminine domain are different, and negatively feminine (e.g., dependent, submissive)” (p. 206). Conducting interviews with male collegians, F. Harris et al. (2011) found that participants expressed their masculinity through the pursuit of leadership,
achievement, homophobia, fear of femininity, and through the constrained relationships they experienced with women. As evidenced by the plethora of concepts articulated above, masculinity is complex. For brevity, this study focuses only on those concepts related directly to masculine identity for men in college.

The masculinities of Black males are exercised differently than their White counterparts because of differing social realities. These social influences, as interpreted by some scholars, have been viewed as dysfunctional and/or compensatory reaction to racial equality (Majors & Billson, 1992). Black males have devised coping mechanisms to address the opposition of social structures that deny them full access to achieve their masculine potential. This common depiction is referred to as cool pose, a masculine enactment for young Black males. Cool pose is characterized by way of conversation, dress attire, walking, and demeanor that are outwardly expressed as a notion of acceptance (Majors & Billson, 1992). Specifically, men illustrating cool pose act cool and nonchalant. According to Majors and Billson, cool pose can manifest positive behavior (e.g., pride, self-respect); yet in contrast can also manifest negative behavior (e.g., dropping out, illegal drugs, and gang activity). However, this behavior has been used as a way of addressing stressors such as anxiety, depression, and other psychological disorders that exist among Black males. The public image of displaying the cool pose phenomena for young Black males is modeled to gain respect and approval of peers (Anderson, 1990). This behavior of being portrayed as cool is more likely to be acceptable among peers as an identity that bolsters a sense of pride for many Black males.
In addition, studies have indicated that Black males’ perception of masculinity can be characterized as ascribing to a dominant gender role (Pierre, Mahalik, & Woodland, 2001). Pierre et al. (2001) examined dialogue regarding how Black men conceptualize manliness within their ethnic group based on conventional perspectives on masculinity. They found that Black males “are expected to imitate the dominant culture’s gender role anticipations such as success, rivalry, and belligerence in addition to ethnically defined requirements of the African American community that may often conflict” (p. 20). Harper (2004) noted that fathers do not want their sons to appear soft or to be considered a “pussy” or “weak” (p. 92) by peers, because this behavior for males portrays a feminine role that doesn’t measure up to traditional masculine norms. The masculine expectations of fathers (e.g., values of competitiveness, toughness, and aggressiveness) are imbued by involving their sons in sports, martial arts, and other socializing activities that are considered traditional masculine behaviors (Harper, 2004).

Socialized messages regarding masculinity that are learned as boys and can influence how men interpret and engage postsecondary institutions. For example, Wood and Essien-Wood (2012) examined factors affecting the academic success of Black males in the community college. These findings and literature reflected on the effects of materialism and capitalistic values on community college students. According to Wood and Essien-Wood (2012), Black men who focus on pursuing capital image is often redirected toward values that result in lower academic outcomes. These outcomes for example include splurging on personal image, such as the kind of vehicle driven and female associations, along with the importance of overall perceptions and views from others. They discussed the notion of capital identity projection, a psychosocial disposition
that is not only experienced by Black male students, but to any individuals who demonstrate a lifestyle that is affected by a capitalistic value system (Ahern, 1999). Therefore, these individuals are engaged in the attainment of materialistic values that becomes excessive, which leads to a detrimental pattern of academic achievement. In conclusion, many Black males between the ages of 18-24 in this study were financial and materialistic influenced in comparison to educational pursuits. The next section addresses some additional concepts related to masculine identity with a focus on Latino men.

**Latino Male Masculinity**

The educational achievement gap among Latino males has captured the attention of researchers and policy makers due to the continuing persistence and attainment challenges for Latino male students. The research focus on the Latino male experience has been marginalized within the general masculinity literature. Much of the earlier literature on Latino masculinity was researched through the lenses of White men, who often misunderstood the nuance of the Latino culture (Mirandé, 1997). Therefore, Latino masculinity (sometimes referred to as machismo) suffers from adverse viewpoints. For example, Latino men are often marginalized through stereotypical portrayals of their aggression, power, assertiveness, and obsession with achieving social status (De La Cancela, 1993; Rodriguez & Gonzales, 1997; Torres, Solberg, & Carlstrom, 2002).

Machismo is a popular stigma of Latino male masculinity. However, scholars have characterized the term in different ways. According to Ramirez (1999), the term is “used in various ways: sometimes as a set of attitudes, other times as a configuration of traits and still other times as a syndrome” (p. 8). De La Cancela (1986) also described negative images of the macho man, which is seen “as sick, primitive, and in need of
reform and subscribes to single causality and deficit models of behavior” (p. 292). Torres and colleagues (2002) suggested that “researchers describing machismo exclusively based on their own views, primarily define the negative implications of machismo as dysfunctional patterns of demeanors linked to reparation and passive-aggressive syndrome; allied with various power relations in the overall structure of masculinity” (p. 166). De La Cancela (1986) who writes, “machismo is a socially fabricated, erudite, and reinforced set of behaviors comprising the content of masculine gender roles in Latino society” (p. 291). These definitions add to the confusion for many Latinos (Mexican/Mexican American and Chicano) of what it means to be a man (Connell, 1995). In addition, these definitions are restricted (at least typically) too, thereby blurring different conceptions of masculinity evident across Latino ethnic populations.

Torres and colleagues (2002) contends that Latino males are often confronted with a socio-economic and labor market environment that reflects a prevailing culture. Therefore, this patriarchal structure offers limited access for young Latino males to reach a level of masculine achievement. In similar ways, Latinos may develop a set of attitudes that defines them as men. Abalos (2002) describes Latino men’s façade as “machismo, a hereditary understanding of being in control and taking control” (p. 3). For example, macho or machismo connotes an air of patriarchy and womanizing, while the cool pose suggests that men take unnecessary risks and are often detached and unexpressive. Young men resort to the use violence, drugs, and promiscuity as a source of proven manhood and social acceptance (Abalos, 2002; Majors & Billson, 1992).

Moreover, researchers have also countered the negative hereditary characteristics of machismo; scholars such as Arciniega, Anderson, Tovar-Blank, and Tracey (2008)
have illustrated an alternative to the deleterious mindset that depicts the machismo behavior to a more positive perception. According to their collective research, an alternative term called *caballerismo*, which is more comprehensive of additional components regarding Latino masculinity. The traditions of *machismo* customs, Latino men approach problems with less awareness, more impetuosity, and a desirous mentality. As opposed to machismo, *caballerismo* focuses on positive characteristics of masculinity, such as being provider, protector, and nurturer. For this term, *caballerismo*, male scholars address problems with more emotional comprehensiveness, enhanced psychological perspective, and problem-solving attributes. Therefore, these gender and masculine paradigms could be exaggerated by way of the Latino males’ interactions within the community college (Cerna, Perez, & Sáenz, 2009; Gloria, Castellanos, Scull, & Villegas, 2009; Sáenz & Ponjuan, 2009).

Guided by this backdrop on ‘cool pose,’ ‘capital identity projection,’ ‘machismo’ ‘caballerismo,’ the next section explores four key masculine domains identified by F. Harris and Wood (2014) as having the most influence on outcomes for men of color in the community college system.

**Four Masculine Domains**

**Help Seeking Behavior**

Flowers (2006) noted that Black males in community college were less likely to seek out academic assistance in fear of being perceived as incompetent from peers and/or faculty. On the other hand, Black male students attendance in the four-year institutions were less apprehensive in seeking help from faculty and illustrated more assertiveness in utilizing other related resources that existed throughout the campus (Maisto & Tammi,

In a study of Latino men in Texas community colleges, Sáenz, Bukoski, Lu, and Rodriguez (2013) found that male students internalized cultural notions of *machismo*, including strength, pride, power and competition. This was often demonstrated through a lack of willingness to seek help from faculty for fear of failure. In addition, Black male students’ reluctance to approaching faculty for assistance in the community college is due in part to the fear of being perceived as academically incompetent by professors (Wood, Harris, & White, 2015). Wood and colleagues suggest that the interaction between faculty and students during the course of the semester resulted in the decline of academic performance and/or stopping out college for Black male students. However, scholars have found that those who sought out help from faculty/staff were perceived as mentally weak and illustrated character of feminine behavior by peers, which correlates with the early developmental constructs socialized from family and peers (Harper, Harris, & Mmeje, 2005; Ludeman, 2004). Their findings echo Harper’s (2009) research of Black males’ lack of engagement in the community college support services with regard to the institutional infrastructure that isolates resources that are less accessible and welcoming to underrepresented groups.

**Competitive Ethos**

According to O’Neil (1981), men assert their masculinity via dominant behavior that is evident through “competitive behavior, ambition, wealth, power and influence” (p. 206). Young males embracing masculine superiority for the approval of peers are more
likely to develop identities that encourage competitive behavior between peers (O’Neil, 1981). Researchers refer to competitive ethos as a validating factor for males interacting with their peers. These societal standards influence young boys to demonstrate competitive attitudes to outperform their counterparts. Studies have indicated that such behavior pattern of competition extends beyond the stages of adolescence and into adulthood (Askew & Ross, 1998; Gilbert & Gilbert, 1998). However, when it comes to academia, in particular at the college level, scholars have found both positive and negative implications of competitive ethos among men of color (S. M. Harris, 1995; Head, 1999; Martino & Meyenn, 2001).

In their studies, Gilligan (1993) and Head (1999) found males to be more competitive and less likely to engage with their peers within the campus culture that involved a collaborative nature. Sáenz et al. (2013) examined the competitive character among Latino males in community colleges. Using qualitative methods of inquiry, the researchers found that Latino male students expressed discomfort with Latina female peers surpassing academically them in the classroom. Yet, such discomfort also triggered their competitive nature that fueled them to want to excel in their studies. This example of competitive ethos resulted in a positive demonstration of masculine superiority for Latino males that increased their academic efforts. While scholars have investigated the role of competitive ethos among men of color in the classroom, others have examined its role outside of the classroom.

**Feminine Domain**

The third masculine domain identified by F. Harris and Wood (2014) as having the most influence on outcomes for men of color in the community college is the
perception of school as a feminine domain. This concept refers to the notion that men, particularly men of color, perceive school as a place better suited for women than for men. As noted earlier, men receive messages that typically originate from parents, family members and peers that influence their perception of masculinity (F. Harris & Harper, 2008). For instance, during adolescence, young men are socialized to express behaviors that are considered acceptable masculine norms. Harris and Harper contend that school settings are one of the most influential spaces in which young boys of color learn gender-related concepts. F. Harris and Wood (2014) asserted that the perceptions of school as a feminine domain emerge as a result of the compositional diversity of the teaching pool. In grade levels K-12, the vast majority of teachers are White females. Therefore, the social hierarchy and power structure in class is one that is not reflective of people of color or young boys. Thus, when students of color engage in school, their peers may perceive them as acting White. Following this line of thinking, when young boys engage in school, they may be perceived by their peers as acting like a wuss, sissy, or punk. Therefore, embracing an academic identity can often conflict with both gendered and racial identities. The challenge for boys and men of color is that the confluence of rejecting both their masculine and racial identities simultaneously become a larger barrier to overcome. As such, the compositional diversity of the institution often presents conflicting messages about whether school is a place that is suited for young boys of color. Thus, when a male succeeds in school, they are in essence, negating their own male identity.
Breadwinner

The final masculine domain in F. Harris and Wood’s (2014) *Socioecological Outcomes Model* is the breadwinner concept. Breadwinner refers to the role of being the sole household provider, which is culturally acceptable for many Black and Latino males (F. Harris, Palmer, & Struve, 2011). Scholars such as Gardenhire-Crooks, Collado, Martin, and Castro (2010) examined the role of masculinity as the sole provider of the household. According to the study of 87 African American, Hispanic, and Native American male students who participated in qualitative interviews and focus groups emphasized the significance of having a lucrative job to meet the responsibilities of the household provider was predictable. The expectations for these male students of color were expressed via statements such as, “a man is supposed to be at the helm of his household” and “I have to have a well-paying job to take care of my family” (Gardenhire-Crooks et al., 2010, p. 41). These findings reinforced the concept of men as breadwinners, which emerged as a theme in this study.

Scholars have also found the concept of help seeking to be interconnected to that of being a breadwinner. In their qualitative work on male students of color in community college, Gardenhire-Crooks et al. (2010) found that participants were reluctant to seek any form of academic, personal, and financial assistance during the course of their studies. This suggested that seeking help was an option viewed as less acceptable than exhibiting vigor, resilience, and independence. Related to this was the notion of maintaining the *breadwinner* status amongst their family and peers. Findings revealed the need for participants to convey their male identities by supporting themselves and their
families, financially. As a result, many of these decisions, such as a commitment to working long hours, impeded their ability to engage fully in their education.

Men also associated masculinity with assuming responsibility. This meaning was related primarily to men who provided for their families by successfully fulfilling breadwinner roles and expectations in their homes. The internal perceptions of masculinity and societal responsibilities of providing financial stability to family has also been a contributor to the educational gap of Latino males in the community college (Sáenz et al., 2013). For example, the cultural factors are salient to the social construction of masculinity characteristics that suggest the external pressure for Latino males to provide familial support. Guided by the four key masculine domains, the next section reviews the literature on men of color in the community college.

**Literature on Men of Color in the Community College**

Literature on men of color in the community college has explored factors that affect outcomes for these students. The outcomes explored in prior literature include persistence, achievement, and graduation. Based upon a review of extant literature on men of color, the next section presents findings specific to these outcomes.

**Persistence and Retention**

As stated earlier, student persistence in the community college for males of color has become an area of concern, particularly over the last six years (Nevarez & Wood, 2010). Earlier research by Mason (1998) explored possible variables that contributed to significant patterns of declining persistence and attainment for Black males attending urban community colleges. Using a one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) the researcher examined the relationship between students’ expectations, prior experiences,
capability, and the effects of campus culture on student persistence. The results were based on quantitative and qualitative procedures (interviews) from 93 participants. Mason’s quantitative analysis found an increase of persistence amongst students who established an early educational plan as they worked toward an educational objective. In addition, students who were consistent with course planning illustrated greater success in completing the requirements needed to fulfill their educational goals.

Further, Mosby (2009) found that students who indicated distinct academic goals revealed positive outcomes toward college success; however, students who had no educational plans were reportedly less likely to succeed. In addition to academic planning, the respondents of this study identified the following factors as contributors to their persistence: (a) support of others (e.g., mother, girlfriend, and wife) outside of the campus environment; (b) student interaction on campus (e.g., student-faculty relationships, campus programs); and (c) positive experiences associated with the campus culture. The influence of outside campus support was further evidence from studies conducted by Mosby (2009) and Stevens (2006), who found that the success of Black male college students was based on strong family; in particular, strong relationships with mothers who served as key motivational agents. Thus, a student’s pride and confidence in their ability to be successful was driven by their passion to honor a family member.

Community college faculty, staff, and administration are increasingly evaluating the marginal success for men of color as it pertains to persistence and retention rates. Much of this increase explores best strategies and practices that could address this ongoing phenomenon of dismal success rates for these specific groups. Scholars have found positive correlations between student-faculty relationships within the college
environment and student persistence. Other research has indicated a positive correlation between mentoring programs and increased relationships between students and faculty (Bush, 2004; Freeman, 2003; Poole, 2006; Riley, 2007; Stevens, 2006).

A study conducted by Wood (2012a) examined multiple variables affecting the persistence and attainment of Black males in community colleges. Specifically, this study examined the following variables: Grade point average, selection of college major, and the number of informal meetings with faculty. Using data collected from Beginning Postsecondary Students Longitudinal Study (BPS), which collected data from 16,100 respondents at 380 community colleges. Wood employed a logistic regression analysis for this research. The findings indicated that those who repeated courses had 152% greater odds of persistence and successfully passing the course than those who did not repeat coursework. In addition, students who were more likely to engage with faculty informally and/or socially had 184% greater odds of persistence and/or attainment than those who selected not to interact. Moreover, the study specified greater success for Black males who were most likely to interact in faculty-student relationships informally or socially (Bush, Bush, & Wilcoxson, 2009; Freeman & Huggans, 2009; Glenn, 2004). Wood (2012b) explains that receiving an incomplete in a course requires students to interact with faculty and be proactive enough to make the request, which could explain the connection between receiving an incomplete in a course and persistence. Research suggests that indicators, such as high school grade point average, test scores, parental education level, and a positive self-efficacy, are correlated to the success of African American males in higher education (Brooks-Leonard, 1991).
The literature on student persistence has also brought attention to the increased departure rate amongst community college students. Students who find themselves on a continuous cycle of enrolling and departing the community college are commonly referred to as the stop-out student (Burley, Butner, & Cejda, 2001; Grosset, 1993). Although limited research has focused on the stop-out factors associated with Black and Latino students, research by Wood (2012a) has been helpful in shedding light on this issue. In his study, Wood investigated variables pertaining to the behavior of repetitive departure from the community college by Black male students. Findings indicated that the financial pressure of being the sole provider for the family household affected their ability to maintain college studies. While this study’s findings were important, additional research is needed to better understand the factors that lead Black and Latino males to depart from the community college prior to completing their academic goals.

Scholarly considerations have associated the deleterious number of departure for men of color is due to the lack of academic preparation for college studies has affected their persistence in college. In particular, Oaks, Franke, Quartz, and Rogers (2002) noted the advanced placement (AP) courses, which are referred to as college preparation courses, were somewhat obsolete within urban schools enrolling a greater percentage of disadvantaged students of color. These scholars found that the marginalized offering of AP courses offered to students of color reduced their academic preparedness to sustain the rigor necessary to be successful in college level coursework. However, the course offerings of Advanced Placement and other college preparation options were more accessible in suburban schools and many affluent neighborhoods when compared to schools in urban neighborhoods.
In all, these studies suggest the importance of faculty-student engagement, interaction with peers, familial support, and the role of financial responsibilities on persistence for men of color in college. The following section outlines the literature pertaining to the achievement and success for males of color in the community college.

**Achievement / Success**

Prior research suggests that academic achievement and/or success in college is a function of academic preparation (Adelman, 1999). This suggested measure of achievement is a catalyst for male students of color in the community college who are unprepared. The following literature employs engaging factors that may have helped students succeed in the community college in spite of the lack of academic preparation. Hurtado et al. (2007) and Museus, Palmer, Davis, and Maramba (2011), found male students of color who were more engaged in campus activities, such as STEM and other similar college programs, were more likely to achieve success in accomplishing college completion and degree attainment. Additionally, Tinto (1993) emphasized that students who were academically and socially integrated into the campus environment were more likely to persist and complete their educational pursuits. In addition, research has identified the significance of campus integration on success for men of color (Flowers, 2006; Ingram & Gonzalez-Matthews, 2013), particularly the importance of faculty/staff-student relationships in the community college (Bauer, 2014; Harrison & Palacios, 2014).

A recent systematic review of literature by Wood and Harris (2012) revealed various factors influencing the persistence of African American men in community colleges. One important finding demonstrated students’ perception of faculty as generally supportive, respectful, and appreciative of campus diversity.
These important factors of student success for males of color indicate the importance of developing and implementing pedagogy practices that impact the academic achievement of Black and Latino males in the community college. While this section examined factors affecting the success of men of color in community college, the next section will explore literature on graduation for this student group.

**Graduation**

The term *graduation* refers to a status given to students who complete all required coursework for a particular degree. The importance of increased graduation rates has been placed on institutional commitment to success, due to the lack of graduation completion for male students, specifically for men of color. A study conducted by Crisp and Nora (2010) indicated higher rates of persistence, transfer, or degree attainment for Latino students that continued their second year of community college. As it relates to this study, the finding suggests a significance of full-time enrollment for Latino students and the academic outcome of graduation. These findings infer that full-time enrollment is related to both student level and institutional level graduation outcomes for Latino males. Institutional differences, such as degree of urbanization, have also found to be associated with graduation rates of Latino males. Findings from Goble, Rosenbaum, and Stephan (2008) illustrated that male students of color attending suburban community colleges had higher graduation rates than those enrolled at urban (i.e., city) colleges. This study also suggested that suburban colleges outperform other campus types (e.g., rural and town), however, there were no significant differences for such comparisons. In contrast, a study conducted by Vasquez Urias and Wood (2014) found Black males had higher graduation rates for those enrolled in rural and town community colleges.
Wood and Turner’s (2011) qualitative study identified four key elements to student-faculty relationships that increased the graduation rate for male students of color in the community college. These included, (a) a welcoming campus environment, (b) a mechanism that monitors and follows up on students’ academic progress, (c) providing students an encouraging and challenging environment with high academic expectations, and (d) a positive culture of promoting faculty-student relationships.

Social Integration

Social integration has been defined by scholars as interactions with peers within the campus environment, which consist of friendships, informal academic discussions and collaborative activities. Tinto (1993) refers to the students’ connection to or the amount of time engaged on campus outside the classroom environment. For example, students are connected to the campus environment by way of peer relationships, interactions with counterparts throughout the campus, active participation in extracurricular activities and intramural sports. Tinto (1975, 1993) noted that a student’s social relations on campus, including those with faculty, staff, and peers, could influence their overall college satisfaction. According to Spady (1971), social integration is influenced by the positive and/or negative experiences students have on campus. While scholars have investigated the effect of social integration on various student success outcomes at four-year campuses, few have done so with a focus on men of color at two-year institutions.

In another study utilizing data from the Beginning Postsecondary Students Longitudinal Study, examined the effect of social integration on transfer predictors including: academic and social integration, background characteristics, and environment
variables (Flowers, 2006; Freeman and Huggans, 2009; Glenn, 2004; Hagedorn et al., 2001-2002; Mason, 1998; Rideaux, 2004; Wood, 2012a). According to Scaggs (2004), a research study was conducted at higher institutions that identified a large percentage of enrolled Black male students. Based on the findings of the study the implementation of designed social integration with the campus culture resulted in higher retention and graduation rates for Black male students. Specifically, these students were actively engaged in college developing programs, student organizations, academic support services for underprepared students and extracurricular programming. While the previous sections outlined the relevant literature for this research, the following section will discuss the theoretical framework that guided this study.

**Theoretical Framework**

According to Creswell (2009), the development of theories begins with a series of predictions that are tested repeatedly by research. The outcome of a theory is to provide an explanation to the how and why of specific variables within a study. This forming of information leads into this particular study that focuses on evaluating male students of color in the community colleges who have been historically underrepresented and underserved in higher education. The theoretical framework guiding this study was F. Harris and Wood’s (2014) Socio-Ecological Outcome (SEO) model to address the salient influences of student success for men of color that involves the societal, environment, intrapersonal, and campus ecological factors. Given that the researcher hoped to gain insight into how men of color are influenced by background characteristics and societal factors (e.g., racial prejudice, economic conditions), the SEO model seemed most appropriate. The SEO model allowed the researcher to investigate factors that affected
male of color perceptions, experiences, and outcomes in college. The following sections provide further context about the SEO model's development, components, and usefulness for this study (see Figure 1).

The SEO model was developed based on the research from men of color in the community college and the published literature. The significant components of the model is examining the influences of success for men of color interactions between environmental, societal, campus ecological factors and interpersonal.

Figure 1. Socio-Ecological Outcomes Model. Used with permission from the Minority Male Community College Collaborative, by Community College Survey of Men (CCSM). (2014). About the CCSM. Retrieved from http://interwork.sdsu.edu/sp/m2c3/the-ccsm-project/ccsm/.

The core constructs of the SEO model are illustrated in several rectangular boxes. The two boxes on the far left of the model are described as background/defining and societal factors. These factors are best understood as "input" variables in that they capture
experiences that occur prior to men's matriculation to community college but must be taken into account in educational programming, service delivery, and teaching. Some of these factors include students' age, generational status, and experiences with racial/ethnic prejudice among others. For example, men of color who have negative educational experiences before matriculating to community college and attribute these experiences to their status as racial/ethnic minorities may be reluctant to engage White faculty and peers. The four boxes situated at the center of the model represent the socio-ecological domains and are the core constructs of the model. These constructs capture variables and interactions between societal and environmental factors that have a salient influence on experiences and outcomes for men of color in community colleges. While each domain is depicted discretely, relationships among them are fluid and dynamic.

The non-cognitive domain is comprised of both identity and intrapersonal factors that shape men of color's self-concepts. The academic domain includes variables that are directly related to students' academic experiences and outcomes, including: interactions with faculty, academic service usage, and the extent to which they are committed to their course of study. The environmental domain is comprised of variables and experiences that are situated outside of the immediate campus context, but have an impact on men of color's engagement and success in community college. External commitments, such as jobs and family responsibilities, and unforeseen stressful life events (e.g., eviction, job loss, incarceration, health concerns) are examples of these environmental variables. Finally, the campus ethos domain includes the institutional structures, policies, practices, programs, and resources that are available to facilitate student success for men of color. The domain also accounts for the campus climate and interpersonal relationships within
the campus that influence men of color's sense of belonging and connectedness to the campus.

The SEO model suggests that interactions between "inputs" and the socio-ecological constructs of the model interact and ultimately shape student success outcomes for men of color. This assumption is represented in the outcomes construct of the model. The SEO model served as the conceptual framework in this study. In addition, in this study we sought to explore a key assumption within the model's non-cognitive domain -that there is a relationship between identity (e.g., gender, racial/ethnic, spiritual) and intrapersonal (e.g., efficacy, locus of control, degree utility, action control, intrinsic interest) factors. Specifically, we examined the effects of masculine and racial/ethnic identity on action control. We hypothesize that there will be a positive effect for healthy conceptions of identity on action control. What follows is a discussion of the method that was employed in conducting this study and the results of our inquiry.

In addition, F. Harris and Wood (2014) have postulated that there is interplay between non-cognitive identity factors (e.g., spiritual, masculine, racial identity) and non-cognitive intrapersonal factors (e.g., self-efficacy, degree utility, locus of control). This study will test this assumption, to determine whether or not this relationship exists with a focus on the outcome of self-efficacy. According to Turner (2013) more than ever the educational challenges experienced by Black and Latino males within higher education raise many concerns, but the access of literature on this population is limited, especially within the context of community colleges.
CHAPTER 3—METHODOLOGY

Guided by the theoretical framework outlined in chapter two, the relationship between the identity domain and the intrapersonal domain (with a focus on self-efficacy) from the Socio-Ecological Outcomes (SEO) model was assessed. In articulating the methods that will be employed in this research, the purpose statement and research questions will be revisited. Further, an extensive overview will be provided of the data source employed, The Community College Survey of Men (CCSM). Following this presentation of the CCSM will be a discussion of the variables (i.e., predictors, controls, and outcome) employed in this investigation. This chapter will conclude with an in-depth description of the analytic technique used (multiple regression) to investigate the effect of identity on self-efficacy for Black and Latino men in the community college system.

Purpose Statement and Research Questions

As noted in chapter one, the purpose of this quantitative study was to investigate the effect of racial and masculine identity on self-efficacy using data taken from the Community College Survey of Men (CCSM). More specifically, this study will examine the relationship between racial identity, and the four masculine domains from the CCSM (i.e., breadwinner orientation, competitive ethos, school as a feminine domain, help-seeking behavior) on academic self-efficacy among Black and Latino males in the community college. Correlation data and regression analyses were used to assess the predictive utility of models of identity on students’ academic self-efficacy by racial/ethnic affiliation. This research was guided by two primary questions:

RQ1: After controlling relevant confounding factors (e.g., background, academic, campus climate, environment), and what is the effect of identity
(e.g., masculine, racial, spiritual) on self-efficacy for Black and Latino males in the community college?

RQ 2: How do models differ (if at all) between Black and Latino males?

Guided by the aforementioned questions, the research employed a comprehensive quantitative analysis of the effect of identity on self-efficacy for men of color in the community college. Given that quantitative methods are traditionally associated with a greater degree of objectivity and are useful in exploring topics where numerous variables are of interest (Creswell, 2009), the researcher determined that this research design was most applicable for this study. A discussion of the data source is discussed more extensively in the next section.

**Data Source**

Data from this study were derived from the Community College Survey of Men (CCSM). The CCSM is an institutional-level needs assessment tool used by community colleges to examine factors that influence outcomes for men from historically underrepresented and underserved populations in education. In particular, the focus for the CCSM is Black, Latino, Native American, and Southeast Asian men. However, the instrument was designed to collect data on all ethnic groups to facilitate between-group comparisons. The CCSM was designed by the Minority Male Community College Collaborative (M2C3), based at the Interwork Institute at San Diego State University (CCSM, 2014; Wood & Harris, 2013).

The instrument’s items and scales were based on published research on college men and community college student success (Wood & Harris, 2013). The instrument features 32 question blocks that refer to multiple questions directed towards specific
domains. These blocks/constructs include the items and scales pertaining to non-cognitive, academic, environmental, and campus ethos domains. In addition, the instrument also provides five additional question blocks that can be added at the request of participating colleges. Collectively, these blocks enable colleges to: (a) create benchmarks that can be used as indicators of student success (e.g., persistence, completion, and transfer); (b) track the progress and outcomes of men of color; and (c) identify areas of concern that require intervention. The CCSM collects data from respondents during the mid-to-late part of an academic semester. Collection of information occurs at this point in the term to ensure the respondents (especially those who are first-time collegians) have enough experiences to draw from when completing the instrument. The instrument features two distribution options, including an online and paper-based questionnaire.

As previously noted, the CCSM is designed to gather data within four primary domains. These domains are:

The **Non-Cognitive Domain**, which encompasses both intrapersonal and identity factors. Intrapersonal factors include students’ psychosocial dispositions resulting from their educational experiences. Intrapersonal data is collected via scales for: intrinsic interest, academic self-efficacy, degree utility, locus of control, and action control. Identity factors are focused on two primary domains, racial/ethnic identity and masculine identity. Masculine identity is broken into four sub-domains, including: (a) breadwinner orientation, (b) competitive ethos, (c) perceptions of school as a feminine domain, and (d) help-seeking behaviors.
The Academic Domain, which refers to variables that focus on students’ level of academic involvement and engagement. Data collected on the academic domain include: time on task (e.g., time spent studying), faculty-student interactions, academic service use, and commitment to course of study.

Variables in the Environmental Domain in the CCSM refer to factors external to the institution that have an effect on students’ progress and outcomes in the community college. Typically, these factors serve to pull students away and detract from their focus on academic matters. Data collected include: marital status, number of children, dependents supported, the number of stressful life events, encouragement from friends and family to pursue education, employment status, and amount of time spent commuting to class and work.

The Campus Ethos Domain refers to factors pertaining to the campus climate. The CCSM includes scales for: sense of belonging instilled by faculty, sense of belonging instilled by other students, perceptions of care from staff, sense of connectedness to campus, access and efficacy of campus resources, and the existence of validating faculty and staff. In addition to the above domains, the CCSM also provides background/contextual information about participants. Such factors include information on students’ prior academic performance. Data collected about background/contextual information includes: enrollment status (e.g., full-time, less than full-time), attendance at other institutions, participation in remedial mathematics, reading, and writing courses, high school GPA, racial/ethnic identification, respondents age, citizenship status, family income bracket, mother and father’s highest level of education, students’ educational
aspirations, students’ current level of education, students’ primary enrollment goals, and disability status.

The CCSM instrument was developed in winter of 2011 and was based on a synthesis of prior research on men of color in community college, college student success, and men and masculinities. Altogether, the instrument has been subjected to an extensive three-part, two-year validation cycle. Field tests from the initial instrument were conducted in Spring 2012. Lay experts were employed to test the face validity of the instrument. The panel of experts included student affairs and community college leaders (N=64). The experts examined the instrument and provided feedback on the wording of items (phraseology), language employed (terminology), and the ease of understanding (interpretability) of the CCSM. Feedback from the lay experts was integrated and used to modify subsequent versions of the instrument. The CCSM was first piloted in the Summer and Fall of 2012 using the modified version of the instrument.

Two colleges participated in the initial distribution of the instrument (N=595). Of the colleges, one was from California and another from Pennsylvania. Data from the initial pilot were used to test the initial dimensionality and reliability of the instrument scales and sub-scales. Results from the initial validation of the instrument were published in the *Community College Journal of Research and Practice* (see Wood & Harris, 2013). Initial validation efforts focused on the CCSM’s non-cognitive domain. Results indicated that the instrument had strong construct reliability as well as high cross-racial/ethnic reliability. Wood and Harris (2013) noted that the latter (cross racial/ethnic reliability) was particularly important given that the instrument was designed to make comparison between different male racial/ethnic groups.
Results from this analysis, as well as other unpublished analyses of the instrument resulted in further refinements of the CCSM. The second pilot of the CCSM took place in Spring of 2013. This pilot was more expansive than the first, and included eight community colleges from three states, including Arkansas, California, and Minnesota (N=737). Extensive psychometric analyses of the instruments items and scales were conducted (see Rousche, 1968). These analyses indicated that the instrument had strong factor loading and reliability. As such, only additional minor revisions were needed for the third pilot of the CCSM. The third (and final) pilot of the instrument took place in Fall of 2013. The pilot included a large sample of community colleges from Arizona, California, Illinois, and Maryland. In all, 25 community colleges participated in the final pilot of the CCSM (N=3,781). Data from the last pilot of the CCSM were employed in this dissertation research. The researcher obtained access to the CCSM file as an affiliate doctoral researcher for M2C3.

**Dependent Variable**

The dependent variable in this study was self-efficacy. As noted in chapter one, self-efficacy refers to students’ confidence in their abilities to perform and execute academic endeavors (Bong, 2001; Choi, 2005; Wood & Harris, 2013). Within this research, self-efficacy was a composite variable derived from responses to four statements on the CCSM: “I have the ability to excel at coursework,” “I can understand difficult concepts,” “I can master the skill in my coursework,” and “I am confident in my academic abilities.” Students indicated their level of agreement for each of the statements on a scale from one to six, with one representing strongly disagree and six representing strongly agree. Responses to these items were summed to develop a composite score for
self-efficacy with total scores ranging from four to 24. This composite variable illustrated a strong reliability.

**Predictor Variables**

Two primary types of identity were explored in this study, including racial/ethnic identity and masculine identity. Racial/ethnic identity is characterized by M2C3 (CCSM, 2014) as racial affinity, or students’ positive perceptions of their own racial identity. This variable is comprised of students’ responses to four questions on the CCSM. On a six point scale ranging from strongly disagree (coded 1) to strongly agree (coded 6), participants responded to the following statements: “my race/ethnicity is important to me,” “I am proud of my racial/ethnic heritage,” “my race/ethnicity is an essential aspect of who I am,” and “I have a strong connection to my racial/ethnic community.” Responses to these items were summed to develop a composite score for racial affinity with total scores ranging from four to 24. This composite score illustrated strong reliability.

Masculinity was measured by the CCSM in four domains, including (a) breadwinner orientation, (b) school as a feminine domain, (c) help-seeking behavior, and (d) competitive ethos. Each domain included composite variables comprised of multiple questions, with each domain illustrating strong reliability. Healthier perceptions of masculinity were associated with higher values while lower perceptions of masculinity correspond with lower values. All of the masculine domains (i.e., breadwinner orientation, competitive ethos, school as a feminine domain, and help-seeking behavior) were comprised of responses to statements that ranged on a six-point scale from strongly disagree (coded 1) to strongly agree (coded 6). Breadwinner orientation refers to
perceived role of men as providers and was measured by responses to the statements, “Becoming a better educated man is more important than the amount of money I will earn from a college certificate/degree,” “I will choose (or have chosen) a major that I am genuinely interested in regardless of how much money it will allow me to make,” and “Being able to provide for a family is not the main reason I decided to go to college.”

Competitive ethos refers to men’s perceptions of whether being a man is associated with competition. Perceptions of competitive ethos were measured by responses to three statements: “As a man, I do not find it necessary to compete with my classmates,” “It is more important to meet my own standards than to compete with others,” and “I am not concerned about earning more money than my male friends.” A perception of help-seeking behavior refers to the degree of comfort in asking for help from others (e.g., faculty, staff). This domain is comprised of responses to three statements: “I am comfortable asking for help when I need it,” “I am not concerned that using support services (e.g., counseling, tutoring, computer labs) will make others see me as a weak man,” and “Asking my professors for help is not a threat to my manhood.” Lastly, school as feminine domain measured whether respondents believed that school is equally suitable for men and for women. Unlike the other masculine domains, this domain was comprised of responses to four statements: “School is structured to serve both men and women,” “School is equally important for men and women,” “Being in school does not make me feminine (e.g., punk, sissy, wuss),” and “Men and women are equally capable of doing well in school.”
Control Variables

Four groups of control variables were employed in this study that included background, academic, environmental, and campus climate variables. The decision to include these control variables was based on extensive research illustrating their influence as confounding variables on student success (Bush & Bush, 2010; Flowers, 2006; Hagedorn et al., 2001-2002; Mason, 1998; Strayhorn, 2012; Wood & Williams, 2013; Wood & Harris, 2013). The two background variables included in this study were as follows: (a) respondents’ age, (b) annual family income from all sources (e.g., work, government aid, stocks). Background variables refer to variables and factors that occur prior to students’ enrollment in college and are expected to affect their academic outcomes (Bean & Metzner, 1985; Mason, 1998). Though ordinal in nature, the above variables will be examined as continuous variables in this study.

The following three academic variables served as controls in this study: (a) high school GPA, (b) time status, and (c) total credits earned. High school GPA was collected on a 4.0 scale, regardless of whether or not respondents’ completed high school. These intervals were coded on the following scale: 0.5 to 0.9 (F to D) (“1”); 1.0 to 1.4 (D to C-) (“2”); 1.5 to 1.9 (C- to C) (“3”); 2.0 to 2.4 (C to B-) (“4”); 2.4 to 2.9 (B- to B) (“5”); 3.0 to 3.4 (B to A-) (“6”); and 3.5 to 4.0 (A- to A) (“7”) scales.

Time status referred to enrollment during the academic term (semester, quarter) in which the survey was completed. The scale for this variable included: full-time (12 credits/units or more) and less than full-time (less than 12 credits/units). Total credits earned reflected the total number of credits/units a student had earned, not counting the courses they were enrolled in during the term they completed the CCSM. This variable
include the following scale: none yet (coded “1”); one to 14 credits (coded “2”), 15 to 29 credits (coded “3”); 30 to 44 credits (coded “4”); 45 to 60 credits (coded “5”); and 61 credits or more (coded “6”).

Time status referred to students’ enrollment intensity, whether they enrolled full-time or less than full-time. This variable was coded “1” for less than full-time enrollment and “2” for full-time enrollment.

Life stress was the primary environmental variable included in this study. Life stress was measured by the total number of stressful life events experienced in the past two years. Stressful life events were measured using the following scale: no event, one event, two events, three events, four events, five events, six events, and seven or more events.

Data Analysis

Data in this study were analyzed using multiple regression analysis. Multiple regression is an analytic procedure that allows the use multiple independent variables to predict a continuous outcome. For this study, the researcher tested the predictive utility of identity domains (i.e., racial/ethnic identity and masculine identity) on self-efficacy. There are a number of assumptions associated with multiple regression that must be satisfied to produce reliable coefficients and standard errors. These include (but are not limited to) the following: (a) normality, meaning that the dependent variable illustrates a normal distribution in the independent variable; (b) equality of population variances, signifying that the variances in the dependent variable across the levels of the independent variable are the same; (c) randomness, meaning that the data represent a
random sample from the population; and (d) independence, meaning that all scores are independent from one another (Green & Salkind, 2009).

There are two primary types of effect sizes associated with multiple regression, these include part and partial correlations (to assess the relative effect of each predictor on the outcome) and the multiple correlation indices (this study will focus on the latter). Multiple correlation indices examine the total effect of the predictor variables (and controls) on the outcome variable. Taken together, these multiple correlation indices provide a comprehensive perspective on the predictive utility of the predictor variables on the outcome. These effect sizes are merely an extension of the Pearson Product Moment correlation, but in context of multiple predictors. The multiple correlation ($R$) ranges on a scale from 0 to 1, with 0 indicating no predictive utility (or relationship among the linear combination) and 1 indicating perfect prediction of the outcome. In essence, the greater the $R$, the greater the value of the model in understanding the dependent variable. Often, more meaningful than the multiple correlations are the square ($R^2$) and adjusted squared multiple correlations (adjusted $R^2$). The $R^2$ represents the value of the multiple correlations squared and is indicative of the percentage of variance in the outcome variable explained by the model. In general, an $R^2$ of .30 and higher is social science literature is viewed as a large effect, though this is dependent on the outcome of interest.

Using a three-stage analytic process, this study examined the relationship between the primary predictors of identity and self-efficacy. First, the dataset was divided into two groups, one with cases for Black males and the other for Latino males. The researcher engaged in exploratory data analysis, including a review of missing data and examination of the characteristics of the dataset to ensure that assumptions of testing were met. In
cases where less than five percent of the cases were missing, single imputation was used to replace missing values. In cases where more than five but less than 15 percent were missing, multiple imputations were used. Also during this stage, descriptive data was generated.

After this data review, multiple regression models were used to determine the total effect of the identity variables (i.e., ethnic/racial identity and masculine identity) on self-efficacy, while controlling for the confounding variables. The utility of the models as a whole was evaluated using the multiple correlation indices. In addition, the relative effect of the identity variables on self-efficacy was examined. Comparisons between significant predictors in the models for Black and Latino males were also made.

Finally, subsequent models were employed to examine interactions. Specifically, control variables were examined to determine whether they interacted with predictor variables. Here too, comparisons between significant interaction effects in models between Black and Latino men were made. Taken together, this three stage analytic process provided insight into the effects of identity on self-efficacy and how those effects differ by contextual factors.
CHAPTER 4—FINDINGS

This chapter will present findings from this study on identity and self-efficacy among Black and Latino males in community colleges. This chapter will provide a brief overview of the two research questions and methods used to conduct this study. Then, this chapter will present the results derived from the analyses.

Overview of the Methodology

As described in chapter three, a three-stage analytic process was used to address the research questions. Multiple regression models were constructed to answer the following research questions on the effect of racial identity and masculine identity on self-efficacy.

RQ1: After controlling relevant confounding factors (e.g., background, academic, campus climate, environment), what is the effect of identity (e.g., masculine, and racial) on self-efficacy for Black and Latino males in the community college?

RQ2: How do models differ (if at all) between Black and Latino males?

To answer these questions, data from 718 Black and Latino respondents via the Community College Survey of Men (CCSM) were used. The data were analyzed using the SPSS 22.0 software. The next section presents the descriptive findings from this study.

Descriptive Statistics

This study’s sample included a total of 254 Black men and 464 Latino men. Table 3 presents the descriptive statistics for the scale variables employed in this study. The means and standard deviations were as follows: self-efficacy (M=20.26, SD=3.31), school as feminine domain (M=21.85, SD=3.01), help-seeking (M=9.75, SD=2.09),
competitive ethos (M=12.48, SD=4.22), breadwinner orientation (M=14.01, SD=3.13), and ethnic affinity (M=19.03, SD=4.44). Minimum and maximum scores are presented below in Table 3.

Table 3

*Descriptive Statistics for Scale Variables*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Minimum</th>
<th>Maximum</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std. Deviation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Self-Efficacy</td>
<td>718</td>
<td>4.00</td>
<td>24.00</td>
<td>20.2563</td>
<td>3.31323</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feminine Domain</td>
<td>718</td>
<td>4.00</td>
<td>25.00</td>
<td>21.8593</td>
<td>3.00877</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Help-Seeking</td>
<td>718</td>
<td>2.00</td>
<td>12.00</td>
<td>9.7591</td>
<td>2.09912</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Competitive Ethos</td>
<td>718</td>
<td>3.00</td>
<td>18.00</td>
<td>12.4861</td>
<td>4.22508</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Breadwinner</td>
<td>718</td>
<td>3.00</td>
<td>18.00</td>
<td>14.0139</td>
<td>3.13478</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ethnic</td>
<td>718</td>
<td>4.00</td>
<td>24.00</td>
<td>19.0348</td>
<td>4.44463</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Valid N (Listwise)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4 provides the descriptive statistics for self-reported high school grade point average (GPA). A large percentage of the population, 42.2%, had GPAs of 3.0 or higher. These students may, in some contexts, be conceptualized as high achieving. However, there were a noticeable percentage of students who could be classified as low achieving; 10.7% of the sample had GPAs of less than 2.0.
Table 4

High School GPAs

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
<th>Valid Percent</th>
<th>Cumulative Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Valid</td>
<td>5 - 0.9 (F to D)</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>1.3</td>
<td>1.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1.0 - 1.4 (D to C-)</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>1.9</td>
<td>3.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1.5 - 1.9 (C- to C)</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>7.5</td>
<td>10.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2.0 - 2.4 (C to B-)</td>
<td>137</td>
<td>19.1</td>
<td>29.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2.4 - 2.9 (B- to B)</td>
<td>201</td>
<td>28.0</td>
<td>57.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3.0 - 3.4 (B to A-)</td>
<td>196</td>
<td>27.3</td>
<td>85.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3.5 - 4.0 (A- to A)</td>
<td>107</td>
<td>14.9</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td></td>
<td>718</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4 presents data on the total credits/units a student has earned. Students were instructed to omit courses that they were currently taking at the time of response. In the sample, 13.2% of students reported that they had yet to earn any units. These students were most likely first-time, freshmen students who had yet to complete a full semester/term of college. Moreover, a large percentage of students, 23.1%, reported
having earned 15 to 29 units. Further, 13.6% of students had earned 61 or more credits. These students are traditionally considered to be transfer ready or nearing transfer ready.

Table 5

*Student Credits*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Valid</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
<th>Valid Percent</th>
<th>Cumulative Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>None yet</td>
<td>95</td>
<td>13.2</td>
<td>13.2</td>
<td>13.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 to 14 credits</td>
<td>140</td>
<td>19.5</td>
<td>19.5</td>
<td>32.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15 to 29 credits</td>
<td>166</td>
<td>23.1</td>
<td>23.1</td>
<td>55.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30 to 44 credits</td>
<td>125</td>
<td>17.4</td>
<td>17.4</td>
<td>73.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>45 to 60 credits</td>
<td>94</td>
<td>13.1</td>
<td>13.1</td>
<td>86.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>61 or more credits</td>
<td>98</td>
<td>13.6</td>
<td>13.6</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>718</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Students were also asked to report their annual income. They were asked to provide information about their income and the income of other family members who supported them. This view of income is traditionally referred to as *household income*. A striking percentage of students reported being very low income. In fact, 36.8% of the respondents reported an income of under $10,000. Moreover, nearly 60% (57.1%) of students had an income of $20,000 or less per year. These data provide contextual insight into financial challenges and barriers that may face respondents in this study.

In terms of respondents’ age, the vast majority of the sample included men who were between 18 and 24 years of age. In fact, these men accounted for 51.1% of the
sample. Community colleges also serve a high population of men who are non-traditional college age. This was evident in the sample, as 28% of respondents were age 32 or older. Table 6 provides an additional description of respondents’ ages.

Table 6

*Respondent Age*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Valid Age Group</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
<th>Valid Percent</th>
<th>Cumulative Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Under 18</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>.4</td>
<td>.4</td>
<td>.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18 to 24 years old</td>
<td>367</td>
<td>51.1</td>
<td>51.1</td>
<td>51.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25 to 31 years old</td>
<td>147</td>
<td>20.5</td>
<td>20.5</td>
<td>72.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>32 to 38 years old</td>
<td>83</td>
<td>11.6</td>
<td>11.6</td>
<td>83.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>39 to 45 years old</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>6.8</td>
<td>6.8</td>
<td>90.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>46 to 52 years old</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>4.5</td>
<td>4.5</td>
<td>94.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>53 to 59 years old</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>4.3</td>
<td>4.3</td>
<td>99.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>60 to 66 years old</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>.7</td>
<td>.7</td>
<td>99.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>67 or older</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.1</td>
<td>.1</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>718</strong></td>
<td><strong>100.0</strong></td>
<td><strong>100.0</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Respondents were asked to indicate the total number of major stressful life events that they experienced in the past two years. Examples of stressful life events included: death in the family, divorce, eviction, incarceration, major health concern, relationship breakup, and other salient challenges. Of the men sampled, 15.5% reported having no major stressful life events. The majority of men reported numerous experiences with
these events. In fact, 53.7% of men in the sample reported having experienced three or more major stressful life events in the past two years. Possibly more concerning, was that 10.3% of men reported having experienced seven or more major stressful events. These reports, as noted in Table 7, allude to significant life challenges facing men of color.

Table 7

*Stressful Life Events*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
<th>Valid Percent</th>
<th>Cumulative Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Valid</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>111</td>
<td>15.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>101</td>
<td>14.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2</td>
<td>120</td>
<td>16.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3</td>
<td>124</td>
<td>17.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>4</td>
<td>107</td>
<td>14.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>5</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>7.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>6</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>3.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>7 or more</td>
<td>74</td>
<td>10.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td></td>
<td>718</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Correlation Analysis**

In addition to descriptive statistics, a correlation analysis was also conducted to identify whether there were significant relationships between ethnic and masculine identities and the control variables on self-efficacy. Significant correlational findings (at the p<.01 and p<.05 levels) are denoted with an asterisk in Appendix A. First, correlation
analyses were used to investigate relationships between self-efficacy and the masculine identity variables (i.e., feminine domain, competitive ethos, help-seeking behavior, breadwinner orientation), followed by the control variables (i.e., high school grade point average, academic term, credit/units earned, annual income, age, and stressful events). Results indicated that there were significant correlations between self-efficacy and the identity predictors, as well significant correlations between self-efficacy and control variables. Self-efficacy was positively and significantly correlated with feminine domain (r =.307, p<.001), help seeking behavior (r =.266, p<.001), competitive ethos (r=.080, p <.05), and breadwinner orientation (r =.223, p <.001). Results also indicated that self-efficacy was significantly and positively correlated with high school GPA (r=.092, p<.05), total credits/units earned (r=.091, p<.05), and respondents’ annual income (r=.110, p<.01).

In addition, significant correlations among identity variables were also identified. For example, school as a feminine domain was positively and significantly correlated with help-seeking (r=.404, p<.01), competitive ethos (r=.167, p<.01), breadwinner orientation (r=.292, p<.01), and ethnic affinity (r=.133, p<.01). Help-seeking was also correlated with all other predictors; competitive ethos (r=.521, p<.01), breadwinner orientation (r=.192, p<.01), and ethnic affinity (r=.153, p<.01). Competitive ethos was correlated with all other variables (as noted above) except for ethnic affinity (r=.160, p<.01).

**Regression Analyses**

The first regression analysis examined the effect of the identity variables and control variables on self-efficacy for Black males. None of the six control variables
indicated a significant effect on self-efficacy. This suggests that for Black men in this sample, self-efficacy was not a function of background characteristics (e.g., age, income), external stressors, or time status. However, most interestingly, the model indicated that prior academic performance (operationalized as high school GPA in this study) had no effect on Black male students’ self-efficacy in community colleges. Three of the five predictor variables examined in this study significantly predicted self-efficacy. For Black men, perceptions of school as a domain equally suited for men and women was a positive predictor of self-efficacy (B = .276, p < .001). Moreover, a positive conception of help-seeking was also positively predictive of self-efficacy (B = .431, p < .001). This suggests that men who do not perceive help-seeking behaviors as weak or feminine are more likely to have increased confidence in their academic abilities. Finally, breadwinner orientation was also found to predict self-efficacy (B = .162, p < .01). Those men who perceived that breadwinning was a responsibility that could be shared demonstrated higher scores for self-efficacy. Collectively, these results indicated that Black men who have healthy perceptions of masculinity in the key areas of feminine domain, help-seeking, and breadwinner orientation had greater levels of self-efficacy. Review of the standardized beta coefficients revealed that healthy perceptions of help-seeking represented the strongest predictor of self-efficacy (β = .272), closely followed by healthy perceptions of school as a feminine domain (β = .236). Overall, the model significantly predicted self-efficacy (F = 6.284, p < .001), and accounted for 18.7% of the variance (R² = .222, R² adj = .187). Table 8 provides the unstandardized and standardized coefficients for each variable.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Model</th>
<th>Unstandardized Coefficients</th>
<th>Standardized Coefficients</th>
<th>T</th>
<th>Sig.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>B</td>
<td>Std. Error</td>
<td>Beta</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Constant)</td>
<td>9.113</td>
<td>2.042</td>
<td></td>
<td>4.464</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HS GPA</td>
<td>.120</td>
<td>.137</td>
<td>.052</td>
<td>.875</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TIME STATUS</td>
<td>-.463</td>
<td>.396</td>
<td>-.069</td>
<td>-1.169</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CREDITS</td>
<td>.103</td>
<td>.127</td>
<td>.048</td>
<td>.813</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>INCOME</td>
<td>.173</td>
<td>.090</td>
<td>.120</td>
<td>1.918</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AGE</td>
<td>-.171</td>
<td>.119</td>
<td>-.093</td>
<td>-1.443</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>STRESSFUL</td>
<td>-.087</td>
<td>.090</td>
<td>-.057</td>
<td>-.969</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FEMININE DOMAIN</td>
<td>.276</td>
<td>.074</td>
<td>.236</td>
<td>3.711</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HELP SEEKING</td>
<td>.431</td>
<td>.120</td>
<td>.272</td>
<td>3.605</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>COMPETITIVE_ETHOS</td>
<td>-.117</td>
<td>.052</td>
<td>-.158</td>
<td>-2.243</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BREADWINNER</td>
<td>.162</td>
<td>.061</td>
<td>.158</td>
<td>2.641</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ETHNIC</td>
<td>.011</td>
<td>.053</td>
<td>.013</td>
<td>.216</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The second analysis examined the effect of the identity and control variables on self-efficacy for Latino males. Of the 11 control variables, only annual income positively predicted self-efficacy for Latino males ($B=.174$, $p<.01$). This suggests that the more money students or their families made, the greater their confidence in their academic abilities. Similar to the results for Black males, several of the identity variables
significantly predicted of self-efficacy for Latino men. Perceptions of school as a domain equally suited for men and women (B=.187, p<001) and breadwinner orientation (B=.173, p=.001) positively significant predicted self-efficacy. Regarding the latter, men who perceived that being a provider was not a role restricted solely to them had greater confidence in their academic abilities. Lastly, help-seeking was also positively predictive of self-efficacy among Latino men (B=.260, p<.01). The model illustrated that the strongest predictor of self-efficacy was school as a feminine domain (β =.175), followed by help-seeking (β =.165), and breadwinner orientation (β =.161). The model demonstrated significant prediction of self-efficacy (F=7.569, p<.001), and accounted for 13.5% of the variance (R²=.156, R² adj=.135). These data are illustrated in Table 9.
Table 9

**Latino Male Control Variables**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Model</th>
<th>Unstandardized Coefficients</th>
<th>Standardized Coefficients</th>
<th>T</th>
<th>Sig.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>B</td>
<td>Std. Error</td>
<td>Beta</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>(Constant)</td>
<td>9.704</td>
<td>1.433</td>
<td>6.774</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>HS GPA</td>
<td>.165</td>
<td>.119</td>
<td>.061</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>TIME STATUS</td>
<td>-.067</td>
<td>.300</td>
<td>-.010</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>CREDITS</td>
<td>.187</td>
<td>.092</td>
<td>.090</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>INCOME</td>
<td>.174</td>
<td>.062</td>
<td>.132</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>AGE</td>
<td>-.047</td>
<td>.143</td>
<td>-.016</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>STRESSFUL</td>
<td>.137</td>
<td>.069</td>
<td>.089</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>FEMININE_DOMAIN</td>
<td>.187</td>
<td>.053</td>
<td>.175</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>HELP_SEEKING</td>
<td>.260</td>
<td>.088</td>
<td>.165</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>COMPETITIVE_ETHOS</td>
<td>-.029</td>
<td>.042</td>
<td>-.036</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>BREADWINNER</td>
<td>.173</td>
<td>.051</td>
<td>.161</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>ETHNIC</td>
<td>-.025</td>
<td>.032</td>
<td>-.036</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

According to the adjusted $R^2$, the model for Black men accounted for a larger proportion of the variance in the outcome than the model for Latino men. Based on the results of the models, the masculinity variables examined in this study had a greater association on self-efficacy for Black males than Latino males.
Summary

This study sought to determine the relationships between identity predictors and control variables on self-efficacy among Black and Latino community college men. The sample for this study included 718 respondents from 17 community colleges in the Western, Southern, Mid-Western, and Eastern regions of the United States from an online survey questionnaire.

Correlation and regression analyses indicated that there were positive linear relationships between multiple predictors and control variables on self-efficacy for both groups. More specifically, the results indicated that three of the five identity variables were significant and positive predictors of self-efficacy for both Black and Latino men (i.e., perceptions of school as a domain equally suited for men and women, help-seeking behavior, and breadwinner orientation). Inspection of the standardized beta coefficients revealed that the strongest predictor of self-efficacy differed among groups. Specifically for Black males, help-seeking was the strongest predictor of self-efficacy. For Latino males, the strongest predictor for self-efficacy was perception of school as a feminine domain. The standardized beta coefficients indicated the lowest predictor of self-efficacy was the perception of ethnic identity among both groups. Specifically, for Latino males (B= -.036), which indicated a negative predictor of self-efficacy. For Black males, Competitive Ethos (B= -.158), illustrated a negative predictor of self-efficacy. The next chapter will discuss the findings of the study, recommendations for implementing effective strategies to enhance academic abilities, and suggestions for further research.
CHAPTER 5—SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The purpose of this study was to examine the effects of racial/ethnic and masculine identities on self-efficacy for Black and Mexican American male students in the community college. The research sought to identify variables that were significant predictors of self-efficacy, which can impact the academic achievement for men of color. Data collected from the study can inform recommendations and conclusions that can be utilized by community college staff, faculty, and administration to employ practices that would best serve the needs of male students of color. As previously stated, data analysis used in this research was collected from the Community College Survey of Men (CCSM), a national survey that includes variables that address outcomes for historically underrepresented and underserved men in community colleges. The study examined the findings as they relate to each of the following two research questions:

RQ1: After controlling relevant confounding factors (e.g., background, academic, campus climate, environment), what is the effect of identity (e.g., masculine, and racial) on self-efficacy for Black and Latino males in the community college?

RQ2: How do models differ (if at all) between Black and Latino males?

The theoretical underpinning of this research was guided by multiple variables from the Socio-Ecological Outcomes (SEO) model. This model suggests that there are four essential socio-ecological domains that influence student success: (a) campus ethos (e.g., sense of belonging, campus resources, presence of validating agents), (b) environmental factors (e.g., external commitments, familial commitments, work obligations, stress life events), (c) academic factors (e.g., time on task, faculty-student interaction, service use) and finally, (d) non-cognitive factors (e.g., interpersonal,
identity). In particular, the model postulates that environmental and campus ethos elements influence non-cognitive and academic factors (which have a bi-directional relationship). The SEO model was examined to provide data information for the next section of summary findings.

**Summary of Findings**

Data from the correlation and regression analyses were found perceptions of school as a domain equally suited for men and women to be positively significant for both Black and Latino males. In other words, Black and Latino men who perceived school as equally suited for both men and women had higher levels of self-efficacy. Previous research states that early perceptions of schooling by young boys are influenced by the overrepresentation of White females commonly seen as the authority figure in K-12 education (F. Harris & Harper, 2008; O’Neil, 1981). As a result, scholars have postulated that men of color are less likely to persist in higher education. This finding provides additional insight to the role that these perceptions have on students’ confidence in their academic abilities.

With regard to the role of help-seeking on self-efficacy, findings from this study indicated that both Black and Latino men who did not perceive seeking help as a sign of weakness or as feminine behavior had higher self-efficacy. This result illuminates prior research findings on college men of color. For example, Wood and Turner (2011) examined the perception of faculty-student relationships from a qualitative study that consisted of 28 Black male students. Most of the men indicated greater interaction with faculty, who established a welcoming environment within the classroom and office hours that encouraged students to ask questions. Furthermore, the positive behavior of respect
from faculty and staff toward men of color contributed to a higher level of self-efficacy for students, particularly for students who were willing to seek out or accept help.

Finally, breadwinner orientation suggests that men are often expected to serve as the sole financial provider for their families (F. Harris & Harper, 2008). As such, male students of color may not prioritize college engagement in order to balance both family and academic responsibilities. Findings from this study provide new insight into this concept. Results of the regression analysis for Black and Mexican American men indicated positive significant predictors of self-efficacy. Thus, Black and Latino men who did not perceive their role as being the sole provider of the household had higher levels of self-efficacy. It is possible that for these men, feeling that they do have a shared responsibility of household responsibilities enables them to prioritize their academics. Research also notes the cultural complexities of men of color pursing higher education. In particular, Sáenz, Mayo, Miller, and Rodriguez (2015) noted the cultural pressure for Latino men to enter the workforce rather than prioritize their education in order to financially provide for their families. This perception of the sole family provider is evident in for men of color as an expected role when transitioning into adulthood (F. Harris & Harper, 2008).

The results identified in this study, Latino and Black males illustrated no significant effect for race/ethnic identity on self-efficacy. These findings indicate an opportunity for institutions to enhance the success of men of color by developing educational opportunities for cultural and personal identity experiences. As stated earlier, the indication of self-identity challenges or self-hatred for men of color may lead to issue of sense of belonging in the community college.
These findings provide important implications for future research and practice. As noted earlier in chapter two, this study identified predictor variables that affect the outcome of success for males of color in the community college. This research also supports the importance of positive role models within the college campus that value the academic achievement of male students of color.

**Recommendations for Future Research**

The recommendations for additional research described in this section are based on the findings of this study. This section offers important perceptions of masculine identities that can influence students’ self-efficacy. This section describes suggestions for additional research that is necessary to fully understand predictors of positive non-cognitive outcomes for men of color in community colleges. The following areas are suggestions for future research that could help enhance academic outcomes for men of color.

Given the limited perspective of quantitative research, this study could be complemented with the use of qualitative data collection. The findings of this study suggested a need for additional research utilizing qualitative techniques that could provide further insight into the effect of masculine identities on self-efficacy for Black and Latino males. Specifically, student interviews and focus groups with men of color in community colleges may provide a more holistic understanding of the challenges encountered by these men and how their conceptions of masculine and racial identity affect their retention, persistence and success in the community college.

As noted in this study’s findings, healthy help-seeking behavior among Black and Latino men has a positive effect on self-efficacy. Scholars such as Wood et al. (2015)
emphasize the importance of positive and supportive relationships between men of color and faculty members, both in and outside of the classroom. Such relationships can help promote help-seeking by men of color, who have been found to be less likely to do so, particularly with faculty (Palacios & Wood, 2015; Wood et al., 2015). Thus, future research could examine the consequences of faculty-student interaction between community college men of color and their faculty.

Variations of such research can include understanding the role of faculty on the persistence, engagement, and completion of men of color in their classrooms by discipline, faculty gender, or faculty ethnicity. Future research could also examine effective teaching practices for men of color, particularly teaching pedagogy approaches within the classroom and its effect on group dynamics and student success. On the other hand, data could also be collected for male students of color that have experienced negative student and faculty relationships, but have found resources or networks to remain successful. The outcome may suggest professional development workshops and/or training that could address the importance of creating a space for students to feel respected and encouraged to seek help.

Another suggestion for future research is to examine other domains of the SEO model that may also have predictive effects on self-efficacy or other outcomes for men of color. For example, the SEO model posits that other non-cognitive outcomes (locus of control, degree utility, action control, and intrinsic interest) have a direct impact on student success (i.e., persistence, achievement, attainment, transfer, goal accomplishment, labor market outcomes). Further quantitative analyses could provide additional insight into the affects these outcomes have on men of color in community college.
The research would examine the masculine domains of help seeking, competitive ethos, and breadwinner orientation among various classifications (e.g., crime affiliation, financial status, educational background, family support), which could provide more insight for college constituents to employ strategies that have greater success for these groups.

**Recommendations for Practice**

The outcome of this study echoes the complex subtleties within the academic experience for Black and Mexican American males in the community college. The results of this study provide insight into innovative strategies that educators could implement to address the detrimental success rate for men of color. Based on this study’s findings, as well as the recent legislative policies from the California Community College Chancellor’s Office (CCCCO, 2013), the following recommendations for promising praxis are valuable interventions designed to engage and inspire males of color during their quest toward college completion and success.

Prior to describing the recommendations for practice, it is important to provide additional context for readers regarding the recent state-level policies to support student success. In 2012, California’s Governor Jerry Brown signed into law the Student Success Act, a California Community College reform initiative aimed at improving educational outcomes for students and better preparing the workforce needed for California’s changing economy. As a result of this bill, a statewide task force was convened to examine effective models within higher education throughout the nation to improve educational achievements in California. The task force produced a final report, which outlined 22 recommendations intended to make community colleges more responsive to
the needs of students and the workforce. The recommendations were adopted by the board of governors and approved by the California State Senate, who later enacted Senate Bill 1456, the Student Success Act of 2012, in May 2012.

In response to the 22 recommendations, the Community College Chancellor's Office convened five adhoc workgroups, comprised of key system stakeholders, to develop proposals and implement the provisions of SB 1456. One such workgroup was the Student Equity Planning workgroup, whose task was to assess such proposals from each community college district on how to implement policies and procedures to increase student success, particularly for targeted student populations. In accordance with Senate Bill 860, the Chancellor’s Office outlined the following regulations that each of the 72 community college districts must adhere to when producing their plan for student equity:

College student equity plans focus on increasing access, course completion, ESL and basic skills completion, degrees, certificates and transfer for all students as measured by success indicators linked to the CCC Student Success Scorecard, and other measures developed in consultation with local colleges. “Success indicators” are used to identify and measure areas for which disadvantaged populations may be impacted by issues of equal opportunity. Title 5 regulations specify that colleges must review and address the following populations when looking at disproportionate impact: American Indians or Alaskan natives, Asians or Pacific Islanders, Blacks, Hispanics, Whites, men, women, and persons with disabilities (§54220(d)). The State Budget trailer bill, SB 860 (2014) added requirements to address foster youth, veterans and low income students. Each college develops specific goals/outcomes and actions to address disparities that
are discovered, disaggregating data for indicators by student demographics, preferably in program review. College plans must describe the implementation of each indicator, as well as policies, activities and procedures as they relate to improving equity and success at the college.

In light of this context, the recommendations for practice outlined as a result of this study are aligned with the legislative mandate by the California Community College Chancellor’s Office (CCCGO, 2013).

Research practice of assessment indicators that would identify students who are assessed or report substandard levels of confidence with transitioning to college. An example of this is a student that is not college ready within his/her academic abilities. Counselors would play a significant role in identifying these students during a group workshop or one-on-one counseling appointment. The quantitative data collected from specific academic interventions that identified students with lower level confidence would be recommended for an academic early alert process, which offers access to multiple campus resources that would increase students’ confidence in academic abilities to persist. It is important that a collective effort from college constituents address such disparity in order to increase a positive academic outcome for men of color in the community college.

1. Develop a series of days during each semester a campus wide dialogue workshop between students and administration, faculty/staff that provides opportunities for campus engaging to discuss students’ needs. Such discussion should be organized around the role of racial and masculine identity in creating conditions that foster and inhibit student success. For example, during each semester a forum would be
scheduled in various areas of the campus that is accessible for students to engage with campus representatives. The format would consist of active listening from campus representatives to engage in productive dialogue as students voice concerns. This dialogue would be followed up with a task force that reports improvement in the areas of concern from student engagement. This workshop would employ the relationship building between students and those individuals in leadership roles within the college community.

2. Encourage active support programs that encourage students to integrate academically and socially within campus culture. However, in doing so, practitioners must recognize the role of identity in driving students’ integration into the campus setting. Thus, men of color can no longer be supported by interventions that ignore their identities as men who are also people of color. Orientation models and outreach programs that engage family members, for example, could be viable design, as this can reinforce the positive role of family in the lives of Latino males.

3. Develop a structured financial reserve through the Financial Aid department that provides books and other college supplies that most often place students at a disadvantage early in the semester. Given the importance of breadwinner orientation on student success, the inability of men to provide for simple academic needs may serve as a deterrent to their success. Thus, additional institutional resources that enable men to focus on school without the constant reminder of financial responsibilities from family that can be a key factor of their success.
4. New Innovative approaches to professional development workshops for faculty and staff by implementing pedagogy practices and promising practices to support Black/Latino males to discuss racial/ethnic and masculine identity. Reinforce the importance of cultural understanding to the public service of its population. However, in doing so, faculty and staff must be encouraged to recognize the role of masculinity and race in culture, as opposed to viewing culture and identity as isolated topical areas.

5. Develop a series of matriculation workshops that serves the needs of underserved and underprepared students. These workshops will focus on establishing student-faculty relationships among males (Latino/Black males) with a focus on: orientation to college, addressing masculine domains, seeking help from student services, cultural identity, and racial/ethnic identities. In particular, men of color should be taught early on in their academic careers to be aware of how their perceptions of what is means to be a man can influence their use of services, interactions with faculty, and perceptions of the utility of college.

6. Implementation of mentoring programs for Black and Mexican American males that have a role model/mentor for both groups embedded within the core curriculum. These programs would recruit role/mentors who represent diversity in culture, identity, and racial/ethnicity. In addition, role models/mentors should be active participants throughout the campus community as representatives from administration, faculty, staff and local community leaders. For example, mentoring models were significant factors with increasing higher levels of self-efficacy for students of color. The mentors were visible individuals around
campus, who served in the capacity of faculty and staff roles that benefited students to have greater access to receive assistance with academic achievement and personal success. In addition, this study supports previous literature that examines the effects of employing programs to increase self-efficacy as evidence for student retention, achievement, attainment, and transfer rates for community college men (F. Harris & Harper, 2008). The support for intervention programs, services, and educational reforms of pedagogical strategies directed toward the sustainability issues faced by Black and Mexican American males has resulted in more positive identity development and strengthening pliability, so that educators may, in essence, improve academic outcomes for male students of color in the community college. Community colleges should facilitate effective mentoring programs, which are linked with development courses designed for Black and Mexican American males. The personal development courses are primarily designed to use pedagogy themes that employ strategies that encourage the success of men of color. The mentoring component connect students to Black and Mexican American community leaders that have compatible interest in effort to link these male students with visible positive male role models/mentors that would help promote the value of help-seeking.

7. Educational planning should assist Black and Latino students with the early identification of their academic and career goals. Community Colleges should strive to implement early educational planning practices as part of the curriculum. The institution should develop programs that address strategies that would identify the personal and academic needs for males of color during the early
stages of attending the community college. Many interventions are employed during the probation stages of students’ educational pursuits, which is normally too late in the semester to have any significant effect on academics. However, mandatory development of educational planning would better serve the academic attainment for men of color to obtain a sense of control and ownership of their educational experience.

8. Educational environments should employ an early alert system that would be used as intervention mechanism, when students are identified as lacking success is coursework. An instructor would have access to a mechanism that would alert the counseling center to contact the student via email, phone or text to schedule an appointment. Campus tutoring services would follow-up with classroom presentations for students to identify their support and services. The consistent in-reach support from faculty and staff will encourage male students of color to diminish the perception of help seeking as a negative representation of a community college student.

9. Transitional support at the transfer colleges for males of color with mentors is an effective approach to retention and persistence beyond the community college system. A program that provides a seamless process for males of color through mentoring and peer programs that are in conjunction with community college and four year colleges transitioning for men of color in the community college. For many underprepared and students to receive an extended support system beyond the community college level helps alleviate the help seeking masculine domain through the partnering of these two institutions. These programs should seek to
promote the inclusion of mentoring between the two colleges and on-going support throughout the college experience.

The collective recommendations for best practices will help to prioritize identity as a primary focus of discourse, preventions, and interventions for men of color. The employing of campus strategies and programs that connect males of color to the campus community is supported by this research that indicates a positive effect of self-efficacy.

As many of these students are underprepared and underserved with multiple challenges, it is imperative to generate a campus environment that is conducive to their college success. This includes the hiring of faculty and administrators of color, gender equality, to ensure the efforts of mentoring models that effectively promote the success of men of color. Research has indicated an increase of African American male students persistence in college based on the relationship methods of mentoring by individuals in leadership roles who look “like themselves” (Pope, 2002). In addition, on-campus development and activities that are set up to accommodate the various schedules that would normally be a challenge for the “nontraditional student” to participate and practice.

**Conclusion**

The purpose of this research stems from the detrimental success rates for males of color in community colleges, who are generally reported as an underachieving population. In particular, data indicate that fewer than 20% of Black and Latino men graduate from the community college within three years (Digest of Education Statistics, 2010). This study utilized the Socio-Ecological Outcomes (SEO) model as the framework to examine the effects of masculine and racial identities on self-efficacy among Black and Latino males. The findings indicated identity predictors and control variables for
Black and Latino males who face similar challenge that affect their efforts in being successful in the community college. As stated earlier, when a student believes in the support system that has their best interest to assist them with succeeding, the more likely he will persist. This active participation begins with the campus community support of college constituents to support student services efforts and instructional, which are paramount to the persistence for students of color.

As administrators, faculty, and staff in the community college it is important to recognize and engage in research strategies and promising practices that address the achievement gap for underprepared and underserved populations. It is also critical that leaders recognize and acknowledge the impact that early education has on identity development and self-efficacy for male students of color in college. The outcome of this research confirmed the need to reconsider practices and policies within the current educational system’s approach to better address the achievement gap for underserved and underrepresented students. It is imperative that educators within the community college develop and implement services that could increase various outcomes for Black and Latino men who are enrolled in the community college. My aspirations for this study are to increase the awareness of community college leaders and constituents on how to implement best practices and mechanisms that would address the relationship between men of color and identity variables that effect the personal and academic success for men of color in the community college.
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