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A MIXED-METHODS EXPLORATION OF MINORITY RESOURCE ELIGIBILITY
FOR HALF WHITE MULTIRACIAL COLLEGE STUDENTS

by

Nicholas Reyes Franco

A dissertation submitted in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

August 2016

Dissertation Committee

Robert Donmoyer, Ph.D.
Christopher Newman, Ph.D.
Joi Spencer, Ph.D.
Roxanne Kymaani, Ph.D.

University of San Diego

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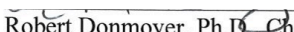
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CANDIDATE'S NAME: Nicholas Reyes Franco


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
A MIXED METHODS EXPLORATION OF MINORITY
RESOURCES ELIGIBILITY OF HALF-WHITE MULTIRACIAL
COLLEGE STUDENTS

APPROVAL:


Robert Donmoyer, Ph.D., Chair


Christopher Newman, Ph.D., Member


Tai Shandor, Ph.D., Member


Roxana Kymaani, Ph.D., Reader

DATE: April 21, 2016

ABSTRACT

Over the last several decades, multiracial populations have received increased attention in academic literature, particularly regarding identity development and psychological health and wellness. Less attention has been given to individuals with one minority and one white parent (i.e., half white individuals) in the context of affirmative action and higher education. Existing quantitative studies on this topic suggest, on the one hand, that half white individuals are likely to be considered members of racial minorities, yet, on the other hand, less of a minority—and less deserving of affirmative action benefits—than monoracial individuals or multiracial individuals with multiple minority identities. College students' and student affairs professionals' perspectives on this issue are absent from the literature.

This study used a mixed methods research design to gather college students' and student affairs professionals' perspectives of the minority status and minority resource eligibility of half white college students. Data collection occurred in two phases. The first phase entailed interviewing a purposefully selected group of half white college students. In the second phase, quotations from interviews were inserted into a survey that was then distributed to student affairs professionals.

Findings suggest that, despite explicitly articulating their status as racial minorities, my participants' perceptions of their eligibility for minority-based campus resources were not as clear and reflected some of what the literature review and survey data provided—that there were mitigating circumstances to their eligibility for minority resources. This most often involved being half white and not perceiving themselves to encounter the same levels of racism and oppression as their monoracial peers. Further,

participants almost always compared this lack of oppression to that of monoracial students in identity-based centers or groups on campus, such that their monoracial peers in those spaces faced greater levels of oppression. Participants in my study ultimately had to make decisions about their own appropriateness in accessing and using resources meant to assist racial minorities.

When considering the context of minority resource eligibility and the ever-increasing number of self-identifying multiracial students, this study raised ongoing questions about the purpose, framework, and utility of minority-based or race-based student groups and centers on college and university campuses. Additional questions were raised about the extent to which higher education institutions effectively provided resources to multiracial students in the same ways they provided resources to other minority students.

DEDICATION

I may not always know the way
the universe will guide my stay,
but comfort comes from knowing those
who share my journey's highs and lows—
who find a way to lift me up,
who give me love no matter what.

--

I fought to make it through each day;
I fought to make it here and say,
Hooray! It's done. This part can close.
And hopefully each of you knows
how much our kinship means to me—
how much your love helps me achieve.

To *the four of us*. I love you.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

In thinking of my acknowledgements, Kim Basinger's 1998 Academy Awards acceptance speech comes to mind, where she famously said, "I just want to thank everybody I've ever met in my entire life." I share this sentiment. My educational journey began with kindergarten at John Adams Middle School and ended at the University of San Diego, spanning 24 years, four diplomas, and myriad individuals who, in one way or another, guided me to one of the proudest moments of my life. I would not be who or where I am today without them. At the same time, there are specific people I want to acknowledge here who provided immense support and guidance during what were personally and professionally the most challenging years I have experienced to date.

I want to begin by thanking the wonderful educators to whom I owe a great deal. I would not have achieved this milestone without my dissertation committee: Dr. Robert Donmoyer, Dr. Christopher Newman, Dr. Joi Spencer, and Dr. Roxanne Kymaani. Their enthusiasm and support for the project made its completion possible. I am especially grateful for Dr. Donmoyer's guidance throughout my time in the Leadership Studies program at the University of San Diego. His student-centered approach to teaching and advising were invaluable on the multiple occasions where I felt lost, discouraged, and defeated. Additionally, I want to thank Anne Donadey, Jennifer Giannini, Susan Keehr, Dian Kern, John Little, Michelle Renée Matisons, Darlene Ott, and Jeff Ransford. These educators went above and beyond their roles to ensure that I, a marginalized student, succeeded throughout my primary, secondary, and post-secondary education.

I must thank my family, first and foremost *the four of us*, who have loved me unconditionally. This doctoral degree is as much yours as it is mine, because, above

anything or anyone else, you are the reason I have reached this milestone. My extended family members have also been invaluable and indirect support systems, regularly reminding me of my own worth and strength.

I want to end by thanking my chosen family—the Unicorns, the Rascals, Brilliant Minds, the queer communities in San Diego and Spokane, and my close friends around the world—who humble and honor me by their presence in my life. You made persevering through graduate school easier with all the laughter, tears, dance floor shenanigans, late night burritos, bottles of wine, day trips, happy hours, and existential dialogues we shared together. You each have given me such incredible gifts that it is genuinely overwhelming to consider the last eight years of graduate school without you. I am eternally grateful.

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PROLOGUE

*Within, outside, and between;
my body's boxes—
an inherited paradox.*

— personal journal entry

This dissertation reflects more than just a professional passion: it is born out of my own personal journey as someone who has one white parent and one parent of color. I authored the above prose after completing a semester-long autoethnographic project where I explored my identity as a non-white, white-passing person. It captures the essence of what I learned—that I simply do not fit neatly into current categorization structures of race and ethnicity, that the paradox I embody of not being white yet not being a person of color is an inherited one that we, as a nation, have grappled with for generations.

Throughout my life, I have wrestled with this notion of not being fully one or the other racial/ethnic identity. My white family always told me I was Mexican-American. My Mexican-American father told me I was Mexican-American. But, internally, it was not so clear to me. When I first started kindergarten at a public school, for example, I was placed in the English as a Second Language (ESL) section of the class and had no idea what was going on for that half of the day. I do not remember how long I was in the ESL program before my parents discovered what was happening and told the school I could not speak or understand Spanish; it felt like a long time at five years old. However long I was in ESL, I developed an ability to read words, English and Spanish, to avoid criticism or correction from the teachers, yet I did not comprehend what I read. To this day, I still struggle with reading comprehension, and I remember my time spent as an

ESL student in kindergarten whenever I finish reading an article and struggle to remember or comprehend its content.

It was also around this time that I first remember being told I was half-Mexican. I had been playing at my white great-grandmother's house with the daughter of one of her Mexican-American friends. She wore a yellow dress, and a white bow or ribbon in her hair. Her skin and eyes were dark brown, and her hair was black. We had a lot of fun together, and after they left I told Grams (as everyone called my great-grandmother) that I really liked that Chocolate girl—"Chocolate," of course, being my five-year-old way of identifying people who looked like my dad. Grams chuckled and replied, "Well, you're half Chocolate." I raced to the nearest mirror expecting to see half my body as brown, and the other half as white. When I saw this was not true, I shouted back to Grams, "No I'm not!" She continued to insist I was, but I could not understand what she meant. How could someone be "half" of anything? Wouldn't that look funny?

When I first began filling out forms on my own for scholarships, job applications, volunteer positions, etc. in high school, I asked my mom one night at the kitchen table what race/ethnicity I should mark. I told her I did not feel like I was "really" Mexican-American and did not feel right to indicate I was because I did not think it was honest. As my mom began telling me how she had always marked my younger sister and me as Mexican-American on forms, my father walked in and firmly stated, "My children are not white." My father, an easy-going man, rarely spoke with such decidedness, so from that point forward I based my identity choices on forms on what my dad had declared. It was not until a few years ago that I noticed his choice of words: he did not say his

children were Mexican or Mexican-American, he said we were not white, which are not necessarily the same thing.

Having my father tell me I was not white did not make it any easier to identify my race/ethnicity on forms for colleges, jobs, and scholarships in my late teens and early twenties. By marking “Hispanic/Latino,” I felt like I was lying to the people receiving my forms. I felt like they would have expectations about the experiences and perspectives I would offer as a “Hispanic/Latino” person, expectations I would not be able to meet. But by marking white only, I felt like I would deny an important piece of my identity and upbringing, as if I would effectively deny my connection to my father and Mexican family. I still grapple with these identity choices on forms, most recently during a job search process and particularly when applying to jobs in affirmative action states.

These and many other experiences have led me to where I am today, who I see myself as, and why I engaged in that autoethnographic project as well as this dissertation topic. I identify as multiracial, which, of course, is not “technically” accurate according to federal guidelines on what is and is not considered a race. I understand the reasons that the “Hispanic/Latino” category is an ethnicity and not a race. I get it. And, at the same time, my father—and many others like him—will never be considered a white person, ever. I have seen him treated poorly based on the stereotypes others hold about Mexicans. I grew up understanding that white and Mexican are not the same racially, which directly contributes to my identification as multiracial and why my racial and ethnic identity is both complex and paradoxical.

In writing this dissertation, I had to make some choices about the extent to which I included these aspects of my journey toward my multiracial identity. My story, particularly about filling out forms and feelings of confusion, directly relates to the stories of my research participants. Ultimately, though, I chose to exclude my story completely from the project because I had already done my own work through the autoethnographic project—I already had a vehicle through which my voice and journey was shared. I worried including my story would take the focus away from the depth and breadth of experiences my participants shared with me during their interviews. Instead, I chose to share my story as a prologue to offer readers an insight into my motivations and passions for the project while maintaining integrity to the stories of my participants.

CHAPTER ONE

BACKGROUND

Biracial, multiracial, and non-monoracial identities have been part of national conversations since the founding of the United States, most notably with the implementation of the “one-drop rule,” also referred to as *hypodescent*, and interracial marriages bans. Numerous scholars have outlined the history of hypodescent, which informally determined a person with “one drop” of black blood to be monoracially black, regardless of the amount of black ancestry. Hypodescent maintained white racial purity and superiority as well as the structure of slavery since these children were considered slaves despite often being the product of white slave owners raping their black female slaves. However, the eventual emancipation of slaves did not prevent white lawmakers from continuing to impose their desire to maintain white racial purity and superiority. For example, interracial marriage bans were passed to prevent legal marriages—or any sort of romantic relationships and interactions—between black and white individuals (Khanna, 2011). Of course, these laws did not prevent sexual relationships between these two races; in order to determine the race of any child born from a black/white interracial sexual relationship, the one-drop rule was formally written into law (Rockquemore & Brunnsma, 2002). The legacy of the one-drop rule and hypodescent persists today not only for people with black-white ancestry but also for minority-white multiracial individuals (Ho, Sidanius, Levin, & Banaji, 2011). This legacy is apparent in studies where half white white-looking participants describe experiences where friends or colleagues begin to treat them differently once it is discovered they are not “just” white (e.g., Khanna, 2011).

Over the last several decades, the non-monoracial population in the United States has received increased national attention. After ongoing public debates and advocacy, the 2000 census allowed people to choose more than one race for the first time ever, and 2.4 percent of the population did so that year (United States Department of Commerce, n.d.). Cheerios, the popular cereal company, unveiled a 2013 commercial featuring an interracial family: a white parent, a black parent, and their mixed-race child. The commercial received incredible national attention when praise for the commercial was matched almost equally by hate speech, prejudiced attitudes, and racist comments—so much so that Cheerios disabled users from commenting on the video on YouTube.¹ This mixed reaction from the public illuminates just how sensitive and controversial non-monoracial identities have been and still are in the United States. But this conversation is likely not one that will go away. Studies predict that the number of self-identifying non-monoracial people will more than triple by 2060 (United States Department of Commerce, 2012). For their 150th anniversary publication, National Geographic recently featured an article titled “The Changing Face of America” (Funderburg, 2013), which not only highlighted the complexity of how non-monoracial people self-identify, but also challenged our assumptions of others’ racial backgrounds based on their appearances.

Affirmative action and minority-based resources have been developed and used as tools to counteract the ways in which the systems and structures of power in the United States have prevented minority and underrepresented groups from achieving equality in—or, at the very least, equal access to—areas such as employment and higher education. Minority-based resources and affirmative-action programs originated from the

¹ Comments about the video can be found at: <http://mic.com/articles/45567/cheerios-ad-youtube-interracial-family-in-commercial-spurs-racist-response#.GPZRfksWm>

civil rights movements in the 1960s in order to combat systemic dynamics in the United States that resulted (and continue to result) in the unequal status of various communities, particularly women and girls and non-white racial and ethnic groups. Race-based affirmative action programs, in particular, are “intended to provide equal opportunity to persons *disadvantaged* by race” (Rich, 2013, p. 185, original emphasis). Though the Supreme Court of the United States has ruled on two different occasions that affirmative action programs are unconstitutional (see *Regents of the University of California v. Bakke* and *Scheutte v. BAMN*), the concept of diversity remains important for organizations in a variety of sectors, including higher education.

Colleges and universities provide a number of resources for minority college students in order to attract and retain these students on their campuses, including minority-based student organizations, multicultural centers, and scholarships. Yet some issues remain with regard to non-monoracial students and minority-based resources. As Leong (2007) argues, while non-white monoracial people are often “racialized” to feel subordinate as a result of their non-white racial identity and, thus, contribute to a “diverse” environment or community, this experience of racial subordination may not necessarily be true for multiracial people, at least not in the same way. So, multiracial people’s contributions to a diverse group or community is not so straightforward. Adding to this confusion, survey respondents in a study by Good, Sanchez, and Chavez (2013) perceived half white candidates as less worth of minority-based resources than non-white monoracial candidates.

Despite being considered less deserving of minority-based resources, several studies have demonstrated that half white, half minority individuals were more likely to

be perceived as a minority than not (e.g., Ho, Sidanius, Levin, & Banaji, 2011). In a series of five experiments, Ho, Sidanius, Levin, and Banaji (2011) found that “the rule of hypodescent works in a manner consistent with the hierarchical arrangement in the United States and similarly serves to maintain the existing hierarchy” (p. 504). Specifically, in all five experiments, they observed that respondents consistently rated Asian-white and black-white targets (“profiles”) as minorities even when respondents were given information that the child was not monoracially Asian or black. Furthermore, respondents tended to rate Asian-white and black-white targets as minorities almost equally, demonstrating that hypodescent may have a significant impact for all non-white minorities and not just those who are black-white.

Problem Statement

It is clear from the legacy of the one-drop rule and from recent public reactions to popular media that tensions around this topic will not be resolved soon, if at all. So where does that leave those who are identified as racially mixed? Academic scholars and practitioners have been exploring the unique experiences of non-monoracials in a variety of ways, from a variety of disciplines, and with a variety of purposes. What has been asked and said about biracial and multiracial identities? And, what *has not* been asked or said?

The current literature on biracial and multiracial identities discussed the nature of feeling oppressed and/or marginalized by various groups in various contexts (Herman, 2004; Khanna, 2011; Kilson, 2001; Miville, Constantine, Baysden, & So-Lloyd, 2005; Rockquemore & Brunisma, 2002). Several studies focused on these feelings within higher education contexts (Brittian, Umaña-Taylor, & Derlan, 2013; Good, Sanchez, &

Chavez, 2013; Good, Chavez, & Sanchez, 2010; Renn, 2000), but only Good, Sanchez, and Chavez (2013), Good, Chavez, and Sanchez (2010), and Ho, Sidanius, Levin, and Banaji (2011) focused on multiracial identities in relation to race-based affirmative action and/or minority resources. Their studies suggested that the amount of white ancestry a student had impacted perceptions of these individuals' minority status and appropriateness for accessing affirmative action and minority resources. Specifically, Good et. al (2013) found that "individuals with both black and white ancestry [were] less likely to be categorized as minority and [were] thus viewed as less appropriate for resources reserved for minorities (e.g., race-based affirmative action) than [were] monoracial black individuals," and that these perceptions were also "based partially on expectations of past discrimination" (p. 283). Further, quantitative data from Good et. al (2010) suggested that the more a multiracial person felt similar to a minority in-group, the more likely they were to identify as a minority and consider themselves eligible for affirmative action benefits. As the authors contended, these findings may have broader implications for who is considered a racial minority and who is eligible to access minority resources and/or receive race-based affirmative action. However, two critical perspectives are missing here—that of half white college students themselves as well as the higher education practitioners who work with and support college students.

Given the literature reviewed, there remains a deeper curiosity about the experiences that half-white college students have had with minority resources and race-based affirmative action, and how they see (or do not see) themselves as racial minorities. Specifically, there is a need for more information about how half-white racial identity influences the ways that college students' see themselves as minorities, how that

understanding influences the extent to which they feel they are eligible for minority-based resources on their respective college or university campuses, and the extent to which higher education practitioners consider (or do not consider) half-white college students to be racial minorities.

Purpose of the Study

This study will begin to respond to the need for more qualitative research about how half-white racial identity influences college students' actions in seeking out and applying for minority-based campus resources. Specifically, the study will explore the extent to which half-white college students' understand themselves as minorities, and how those perceptions influence the extent to which they feel they are eligible for minority-based resources on their respective college or university campuses. Additionally, this study will begin to capture the perspectives of higher education practitioners about the extent to which half-white college students are minorities and eligible for minority-based campus resources.

Research Questions

This study addressed the following research questions:

1. To what extent, if at all, do half-white college students consider themselves racial minorities?
2. To what extent, if at all, do half-white college students consider themselves eligible for minority-based campus resources?
3. What are student affairs professionals' perceptions of the extent to which the participants are minorities and are eligible for minority-based resources?

4. How do the perceptions of participants and student affairs professionals compare with each other?

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

This chapter focuses on three areas of research that provide context for the problem and research questions posed in Chapter 1. First, I discuss literature and research on multiracial identities, with a particular focus on prejudice and discrimination as well as stigmas surrounding psychological health and wellness of multiracial individuals. Next, I summarize and compare research on racial identity development, identifying the complexity of multiracial identity development and the tensions that exist between stage models of identity development and alternative models. Finally, I provide an overview of affirmative action's history in the U.S., focusing specifically on higher education, minority-based resources, and multiracial individuals. I conclude with questions that remain from the literature.

Multiracial Identities

Over the last several decades, an increasing amount of scholarship has emerged regarding multiracial populations. This scholarship provides extensive context on the ways in which multiracial individuals experience prejudice and discrimination, navigate others' perceptions and labels, and self-identify. For the purpose of clarity and readability, I discuss multiracial identity choices and development in the racial identity and identity development models section of this chapter.

A Word about the Nature of Race

Race as a concept is as meaningful as it is meaningless. By this I refer to the fact that while there is no biological basis for race (King, 1981), the sociohistorical meanings assigned to race—and the ways in which those meanings continue to both unite and

divide different peoples—maintain its importance and use today. Spickard (1992) outlined the ways Europeans and Americans developed—and reinforced afterward—concepts and typologies of race. They argued there were originally four or five “utterly distinct and pure races,” each possessing their “own distinctive physical, genotypical, and moral characteristics” (p. 14). Believed to be based on biology and science, this typological view was accepted as true and ultimately used to arrange these distinct “races” into hierarchies, with Caucasians and Africans at the top and bottom, respectively. As Kymaani (2014) summarized, these presumed racial distinctions and hierarchies were utilized in the American South and arguably throughout the United States—via the one-drop rule—to determine not only who was white and who was not, but also which individuals had access to what resources, spaces, and rights. Race, therefore, is not a matter of biology but, rather, a matter of social attribution.

As a matter of social attribution, using terms like *biracial* and *multiracial* could be not only considered irrelevant but also thought of as reinforcing the false notion that humans are divided biologically into distinct groupings from one another that the “mixing” of two or more creates additional distinct racial categories. These terms could also be seen as overlooking the fact that most “biologically distinct” racial categories have historically included biracial and multiracial people—that everyone’s ancestries include people of different races (Spickard, 1992). I agree that, in theory, this study’s focus and topic potentially reinforces the problematic nature of distinguishing biracial and multiracial individuals from other racial categories. However, as addressed earlier, while race is not biologically based, it does carry social meaning. As I illustrate in the remainder of this paper, biracial, multiracial, and mixed race individuals experience and

understand their racial identities differently than their monoracial counterparts. Further still, they are treated differently both by white and non-white monoracial communities as a result of their mixed race heritage.

Experiences of Prejudice and Discrimination

Multiracial populations experience prejudice and discrimination from both white and non-white monoracial communities. Experiences of racism were explicitly described by several groups of participants in studies on multiracial groups (e.g., Kilson, 2001; Miville et. al, 2005; and Rollins & Hunter, 2013). For example, multiracial individuals were often asked “What are you?” by white individuals, which felt uncomfortable and “othering.” Further, some black and white biracial individuals, who were not assumed at first to be black, experienced a negative change in attitude and/or interaction when white individuals discovered that the person they are talking with is half black (e.g., Kilson, 2001).

Experiences of rejection and discrimination were not only felt from white monoracial groups; black and other non-white monoracial groups also treat biracial individuals and multiracial individuals negatively at times. Michelle, one of Khanna’s (2011) participants, shared that, because of her self-described white features, she was sometimes told by other black women that she was not actually black despite being half black (pp. 80-81). Khanna notes that, among black and African-American communities (and, as she describes, particularly between black and African-American women), there was a “skin color stratification”—known as “colorism”—where women of color whose skin and features were more similar to those of white women were considered more privileged (p. 83). College students in Renn’s (2000) study also shared similar

sentiments when they attempted to affiliate with racially-based student groups on campus: “[E]ven when these students do choose to affiliate with monoracial student cultures, they are often rejected if they express their multiraciality” (p. 402). Overall, most biracial and multiracial individuals attributed their experiences (or lack of experiences) with racism, colorism, and discrimination to their physical appearance e.g., skin color, hair, and facial features: their experiences were shaped by how similar or dissimilar their physical features were perceived in relation to their minority or white heritage.

Stigmas Regarding Psychological Health and Wellness

Despite ongoing stereotypes that multiracial adolescents and adults more often experience (or are often more prone to experience) developmental difficulties, studies have shown mixed results. For example, Holton’s (2011) study of biracial and multiracial families (e.g., children and their parents), for example, found rather positive results regarding the self-esteem of her participants, who averaged in the intermediate to high ranges on the Culture-Free Self-Esteem Inventory (CSI) test she administered.

Shih and Sanchez (2005) also focused on the mental health and wellness of biracial individuals and multiracial individuals and found striking differences between clinical and nonclinical sampling populations:

[S]tudies that sampled clinical populations tended to find negative outcomes such as higher depression, problem behaviors, lower school performance, and lower self-esteem... [and] studies that sampled from nonclinical populations found more positive outcomes, such as periods of happiness and high self-esteem. (p. 577)

Multiracial individuals as a general population did not disproportionately experience psychological and mental health and wellness issues as compared to their monoracial

counterparts, and that one of the reasons why studies found disproportionately psychological and mental health and wellness issues was due, at least in part, to the fact that those studies used clinical population samples.

Racial Identity and Development Models

Racial identity choices and development was a frequent discussion point in studies on multiracial individuals because of their unique developmental circumstances, at least when compared to monoracially-based racial identity development models. Though these models focused more on monoracial identities, they formed a key foundation to understanding the processes of racial identity development for a variety of racial groups. In this section, I provide an overview of racial identity development models for both monoracial and multiracial individuals, and how each may or may be not inclusive of multiracial identities.

Monoracial Identity Development Models

People of color identity development. In general, minority identity development models (e.g., Atkinson, Morten, & Sue, 1989; Helms, 1995) posited that non-white individuals progress from a state of conformity with or identification in relation to whiteness toward a state of awareness, integration, and expression of one's own racial identity that also valued the expression of others' racial identities. Atkinson, Morten, and Sue (1989) and Helms (1995) both outlined five similar stages/statuses through which people of color progressed in their racial identity development: (1) a "conformity" stage, where one's own group was devalued in favor of white majority values; (2) a "dissonance" stage, where conflict and confusion emerged between commitment to white majority values and one's own racial group; (3) an "immersion" stage, in which one's

own racial group was idealized and centered, and white identities and interactions were devalued; (4) an “internalization” stage, where self-identification, choices, and perceptions resulted from personal reflection; and (5) an “integrative” stage, in which race was viewed as part of one’s collective identities. Progression through these stages resulted from different critical moments that prompted deeper levels of meaning making.

White identity development. Similar to people of color identity development, Helms (1995) also developed and refined a white identity development model that described five different statuses white individuals progressed through in understanding their racial identity and privilege: *contact*, *disintegration*, *reintegration*, *pseudoindependence*, *immersion-emersion*, and *autonomy*. These statuses reflected the process of moving away from protecting white racial privilege on an individual and group level and toward a “healthy development” that involved “the capacity to recognize and abandon the normative strategies of white people for coping with race” (p. 188). Helms’s model was considered a seminal work that provided an important understanding of white identity development.

Criticisms of both people of color and white identity development models.

The models described above are useful in that they can help us understand how a person’s stage or status of racial identity development may impact how they are able to make meaning of their interactions with others and their environment. As Helms (1995) writes, the models may help to “mediate racial problems once they have occurred” and also “anticipate and resolve tensions before they become problems” (p. 196). These models are not without their criticisms, though. As Kymaani (2014) and others have noted, the white identity development model seems to “focus more on a development of

sensitivity to other racial groups rather than the task of developing a positive white identity,” and, in a sense, reinforces the racial dynamics Helms’s model hopes white individuals move beyond by centering white identity development as responding to the “stimuli” (as Helms phrased it) of racial difference rather than focusing on what white racial identity means or can mean.

What is also missing from Helms’s model is the predominance among white individuals to not see themselves as white or even as having a race. As Crenshaw (1989) describes in her work on anti-discrimination policy, white people (and white men, in particular) are the implicit norm in society:

For [white women] there is no need to specify discrimination as *white* females because their race does not contribute to the disadvantage for which they seek redress. The view of discrimination that is derived from this grounding takes race privilege as a given. (pp. 144-145)

Crenshaw further explains that race and sex “become significant only when they operate to explicitly *disadvantage* the victims; because the *privileging* of whiteness or maleness is implicit, it is generally not perceived at all” (p. 151). As a result of whiteness being the norm in the U.S., white individuals may find it difficult to see themselves as having a racial identity.

Additionally, both types of models seemed to ignore issues specific to multiracial individuals, specifically individuals with one minority and one white parent, suggesting that half white/half minority individuals eventually “choose” one or the other racial identity. As the next section describes, this is not necessarily true for many multiracial individuals, leading many scholars to develop alternative models that describe a racial identity development process that more accurately reflects the lives of multiracial individuals.

Multiracial Identity Development Models

Gibbs’ observed conflicts in the developmental tasks of biracial adolescents.

In her work, Gibbs (1987) outlined the developmental tasks of adolescents—racial identity, social marginality, sexuality, autonomy, and aspirations—while overlaying the conflicts uniquely faced by black and white biracial youth. Gibbs argued that the stressors of having a “dual racial and sociocultural heritage” (p. 268) posed additional psychological challenges to biracial youth and made them “particularly vulnerable to the vicissitudes of this developmental stage” (p. 277). Her research provided therapists with strategies for helping biracial youth overcome these unique and more difficult challenges in order to achieve a truly integrated identity.

Poston’s biracial identity development model. Recognizing that existing models of biracial identity development came from a deficit perspective (e.g., Gibbs, 1987) or were exclusive of biracial individuals all together (e.g., Atkinson, Morten, & Sue, 1989), Poston (1990) developed a more “progressive” developmental model for biracial individuals over their life spans. He developed five stages through which biracial individuals progress through: *personal identity*, *choice of group orientation*, *enmeshment/denial*, *appreciation*, and *integration*. According to the model, the final stage was “associated with positive indicators of mental health” (p. 154). Poston’s model certainly helped advance academic understandings of biracial identity development. However, as he admitted, his model was based on the limited information about biracial individuals at the time and needed additional “testing” to strengthen its validity. It also assumed that an integrated identity—one that would “recognize and value all of [one’s] ethnic identities” (p. 154)—was the “best” stage of development in terms of positive

mental health. As discussed in this chapter, biracial and multiracial individuals may not necessarily recognize themselves as more than one race depending on one's life experiences and environment, thus posing a significant limitation to Poston's model. Despite the limitations, his work is often referenced as being critical to advancing knowledge of biracial identity development.

Patterns of identity among multiracial college students. Moving away from stage models of understanding multiracial identity, Renn (2000, 2003, 2008) identified six different patterns of identity among multiracial college students across several of her studies. She found that multiracial students identified in one of five patterns: (1) as holding a monoracial identity; (2) as having multiple monoracial identities; (3) as having a multiracial identity; (4) as having an "extraracial" identity (e.g., "human race"); and (5) as having a situational identity i.e., an identity that changes depending on the context. These patterns of identity were similar to those found in other studies (Kilson, 2001; Rockquemore and Brunsma, 2002) and appeared across individuals of different racial ancestry and genders.

Multiracial Identity Choices Across Multiple Studies

Across multiple studies (Holton, 2011; Kilson, 2001; Renn, 2000, 2003; Rockquemore & Brunsma, 2002; Good, Chavez, & Sanchez, 2010; Wilton, Sanchez, & Garcia, 2013), physical traits—skin color, facial features, and even hair—as well as the extent to which they felt connected to racial groups and/or their cultures remarkably impacted the identities multiracial individuals felt comfortable choosing. Multiracial individuals also tended to identify differently over time. In her study of biracial children and their parents, Holton (2011) outlined how each child currently identified and, then,

what labels they used previously. Identities included black-white, mixed, zebra, none, and monoracial labels (p. 24). These patterns were mirrored in Kilson's (2001) study of biracial adults. Finally, multiracial individuals sometimes identified differently depending on the context. Wilton, Sanchez, & Garcia (2013) found that, for those with half white ancestry, the presence of white and non-white individuals affected the ways in which half white multiracial individuals identified publicly and/or heightened feelings of "threat" and "stigma consciousness." For example, their study suggested, "in the presence of whites, those who were predominantly perceived as minority reported reduced white identification, but that those who were predominantly perceived as white reported increased minority racial identity threat" (p. 52).

Affirmative Action and Minority-Based Resources in Higher Education

Because this study explored the extent to which multiracial college students were racial minorities and eligible for minority-based resources, it was essential to review literature regarding affirmative action in higher education as well as the ways multiracial students fit into the increasing pressure on universities to demonstrate a commitment to diversity. In this section, I provide a brief history of affirmative action and other diversity initiatives in the U.S. as well as the complexity of including and reporting multiracial students on college campuses.

A Brief History of Affirmative Action

Minority-based resources and affirmative-action (AA) programs originated from the civil rights movements in the 1960s in order to combat systemic dynamics in the United States that resulted (and continue to result) in the unequal status of various communities, particularly women and girls and non-white racial and ethnic groups.

Race-based AA programs, in particular, were “intended to provide equal opportunity to persons *disadvantaged* by race” (Rich, 2013, p. 185, original emphasis). The 1960s and 1970s saw an increase in the number of racial minorities on predominantly white college campuses as a result of these programs, but there began a shift “away from race-based discrimination” and toward a “celebration of differences”—i.e., diversity—as the original intent of AA folded under mounting criticisms of reverse racism and was ultimately considered undemocratic (Collins, 2011, pp. 518-519). This folding of AA’s intent was crystallized by *Regents of the University of California v. Bakke*, a ruling in which the Supreme Court found racial quotas unconstitutional but “encouraged the use of racial preferences to achieve educational diversity” (Lispon, 2011, p. 132).

The concept of diversity remains important for organizations in a variety of sectors. This importance is exemplified in the demographic data collected from employees and students, the recruitment and retention of “diverse” employees, students, and constituents, and the mission statements and strategic goals for various organizations. What is often lost, however, is the “intent of affirmative action because it equates all social differences, which then should be treated equally” (Collins, 2011, p. 519). Issues of social injustice toward minorities, particularly non-white minorities, tend to be left out of the conversation as a result.

Title VII, Equal Employment Opportunity, and Definitions of Minority

Equal Employment Opportunity, or EEO, describes itself as “ensuring that employment opportunities are fair, equal, and consistent for all employees” and strives to ensure work environments are free from discrimination in accordance with federal guidelines (Equal employment opportunity program, n.d.). One of those federal

guidelines is Title VII, which outlines provisions and regulations for employers.

Specifically, Title VII “prohibits employer actions that discriminate, by motivation or impact, against persons because of race. Title VII does not contain a definition of ‘race,’ nor has the [U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission] adopted one” (Section 15, 2006). Title VII also prohibits *color discrimination*; again, a definition is not provided, but the Commission interprets *color* to mean “pigmentation, complexion, or skin shade or tone.”

Similar to race, Title VII does not define *minority*. However, EEO’s website provides several definitions that clarify who can be classified as a racial minority. First, in defining minority, EEO offers the following:

[Minority is the] smaller part of a group. A group within a country or state that differs in race, religion or national origin from the dominant group. According to EEOC guidelines, minority is used to mean four particular groups who share a race, color or national origin. (Equal employment opportunity (EEO) terminology, n.d.)

These “four particular groups” included American Indian or Alaska Native, Asian or Pacific Islander, black, and Hispanic, while the dominant group consisted of “the many peoples with origins in Europe, North Africa, or the Middle East.” Other groups, e.g. women, can be considered minorities for experiencing “the same kind of systematic exclusion from the economy as the various minorities [listed above]” and thus have “‘minority status’ as far as the law is concerned.” Minority, then, appears primarily to refer to a racial minority.

Other programs have elaborated on the EEO’s definition of minority, one of which is the U.S. Small Business Administration, or SBA. They offer a business development program—the 8(a) Business Development Program—to assist “socially and

economically disadvantaged entrepreneurs gain access to the economic mainstream of American society” (About the 8(a) business development program, n.d.). Again, SBA uses minority to mean racial minority, stating that “some minority groups are presumed to be socially and economically disadvantaged and can qualify for the 8(a) [Business Development] program. These groups include: African Americans, Hispanic Americans, Native Americans, Asian Pacific Americans and Subcontinent Asian Americans” (Minority-owned business, n.d.). Businesses owned by “Alaska Native Corporations,” “Indian Tribes,” and “Native Hawaiian Organizations” are also eligible to apply for the 8(a) Business Development program.

Because the SBA maintains a specific understanding of racial minorities as socially and economically disadvantaged, there are specific guidelines for potential applicants to use in determining whether or not they qualify for the 8(a) program. First, the SBA assumes someone is socially disadvantaged by virtue of being a member of a minority group:

“In the absence of evidence to the contrary, an individual applicant is presumed socially disadvantaged if he/she: (1) Holds him or herself out to be a member of a presumed group; (2) Is currently identified by others as a member of a presumed group” (Social disadvantage eligibility, n.d.).

The SBA does not equate social disadvantage with economic disadvantage, however. According to SBA’s regulations, “economically disadvantaged individuals are socially disadvantaged individuals whose ability to compete in the free enterprise system has been impaired due to diminished capital and credit opportunities” (Economic disadvantage eligibility, n.d.). There are two criteria the SBA uses to determine whether or not a socially disadvantaged applicant is also economically disadvantaged:

“To determine if an individual is also economically disadvantaged, each socially disadvantaged individual must provide the following to SBA: (1) Narrative statement of economic disadvantage; (2) Personal financial information (including tax returns and certain SBA forms)” (Economic disadvantage eligibility, n.d.).

Thus, to be economically disadvantaged is to also be socially disadvantaged and a non-white minority, but holding a socially disadvantaged and non-white identity does not necessarily mean an applicant is also economically disadvantaged.

Higher Education and Multiracial Students

Because higher education has been seen as the “great equalizer,” and because colleges and universities want to recruit and retain students to ensure the diversity of their student populations, minority-based resources and other AA-type programs exist to help minorities access, transition into, and graduate from colleges and universities. Minority-based resources regarding racial identities on college campuses—e.g., student organizations, multicultural centers, and scholarships—tend to focus on monoracial identities, though there are a few resources dedicated to multiracial students.

Some issues remain with regard to multiracial students and minority-based resources, the first of which is how colleges and universities report multiracial college students as part of their enrollment data. In response to changes to the U.S. census regarding the option to select more than one race, the Office of Budget and Management (OBM) in 1997 revised its standards for the classification of federal data on race and ethnicity such that there can be a “collective description” for displaying responses containing multiple racial identities:

When the primary focus of a report is on two or more specific identifiable groups in the population, one or more of which is racial or ethnic, it is acceptable to display data for each of the particular groups separately and to describe data relating to the remainder of the population by an appropriate collective description.

And yet, despite reporting in this collective manner, the OBM requires that the “method for respondents to report more than one race should take the form of multiple responses to a single question and not a ‘multiracial’ category.” On paper, this appears a bit contradictory—to instruct institutions to allow students to select more than one race, yet only report multiracial students under one collective category. What does this look like in institutional practice?

In a quick review of several U.S. institutions’ websites, there were inconsistent reporting methods regarding multiracial students on their respective campuses. For example, for Fall 2015, Sacramento State University reported that 56.3% of its student population were racial minorities; multiracial students, though reported in a separate category, were not included in its minority student population (Section 3: All students, n.d.). The institution also excluded them in a table (p. 14) illustrating enrollment by ethnicity. Boston College, by contrast, listed “Two or More Races” as part of its African-American, Hispanic, Asian, and Native American (AHANA) student population (Facts at a glance, n.d.). The University of San Diego (Race/ethnicity of students, n.d.) and the University of Colorado at Boulder (Diversity, n.d.) also included multiracial students as part of their minority student population. Other universities, like Eastern Washington University (Fall 2015 enrollment statistics, n.d.), the University of Montana-Missoula (Common data set, n.d.), and Emory University (Factbook, 2012) did not make such distinctions about which racial categories they considered to be racial minorities.

The University of San Diego (USD) and University of Montana-Missoula (Missoula) offered additional insights into their reporting methods. USD explicitly

articulated the difficulties of reporting the exact number of non-white students on campus due to new reporting requirements:

Effective 2010-11, students can check off multiple categories to identify their race/ethnicity instead of checking a single box that ‘best describes them.’ In Fall 2012, 1055 students did check more than one box, and that makes it much more difficult to answer questions such as, ‘How many black students attend USD?’ and ‘How many undergraduates are Latinos?’ The people haven’t changed, but the data have. (Race/ethnicity of students, n.d.)

One of the primary reasons those questions are difficult to answer is because students can only be counted once. In their document Common Data Set 2014-2015 (n.d.), Missoula instructed that “persons who are non-Hispanic multi-racial should be reported only under ‘Two or more races.’” Thus, if a student marked more than one race, then they would automatically be categorized as “two or more races” or “multiracial,” regardless of how they looked or identified in day-to-day life. This is problematic, particularly because, as mentioned previously, multiracial individuals’ self-identification (e.g., multiracial, monoracial, extraracial, etc.) could change over time or depending on the context.

Another issue regarding multiracial students and minority-based resources has been the sometimes-conflicting dynamics between the legacy of hypodescent, racial prototypicality, and perceptions of eligibility for resources. Multiracial individuals’ experiences with the ways in which race becomes salient for them would qualify their experiences as contributing to the diversity of any given group or community (Leong, 2007), but half white multiracial individuals, in particular, have been perceived as less deserving of minority-based resources when compared to monoracial candidates or multiracial candidates with multiple minority identities (Good, Sanchez, & Chavez, 2013). In their survey, Campbell and Herman (2010) also found that “respondents were unlikely to support including multiracial people in anti-discrimination laws and

affirmative action policies” despite the fact that multiracial individuals, in a separate survey, indicated they experienced high levels of discrimination—levels similar to other monoracial groups (p. 1528). Further, in their study on the impacts of racial prototypicality on hiring practices, Colarelli, Poole, Unterborn, and D’Souza (2010) discovered that the physical features of job candidates impacted perceptions of their qualifications and how they were hired, such that “the more minority facial features job candidates had, the more likely it was that their hires would be attributed to [Affirmative Action]” (p. 171).

Even though they were considered less deserving of minority-based resources, Ho, Sidanius, Levin, and Banaji (2011) reported that half white/half minority individuals were more likely to be perceived as a minority than not. In a series of five experiments, Ho et. al found that “the rule of hypodescent works in a manner consistent with the hierarchical arrangement in the United States and similarly serves to maintain the existing hierarchy” (p. 504). Specifically, in all five experiments, they observed that respondents consistently rated Asian-white and black-white targets as minorities even when respondents were given information that the child was not monoracially Asian or black. Furthermore, respondents tended to rate Asian-white and black-white targets as minorities almost equally, demonstrating that hypodescent may have a significant impact for all non-white minorities and not just those of black and African descent.

Good, Chavez, and Sanchez (2010) explored the extent to which multiracial individuals of part-white ancestry self-categorized as minorities and felt eligible for minority resources and affirmative action benefits. Their study found that physical appearance and connection to minority groups greatly impacted the extent to which they

self-categorized as a racial minority. The more their participants felt connected to and believed they looked like a minority group, the more likely they were to self-categorize as a minority. Further, self-categorizing as a minority increased the likelihood that these participants perceived themselves as eligible for affirmative action.

Areas Not Yet Addressed in the Literature

The literature reviewed in this chapter provided several critical themes regarding multiracial identities, racial identity development, and affirmative action. Of particular interest to this dissertation was that half white individuals were more likely to self-categorize as a minority—and, as a result, were more likely to consider themselves eligible for affirmative action programs—if they felt similar to minority in-groups, primarily through social connections to that in-group. We also know that, despite the persistence of the one-drop rule and hypodescent, half white candidates are often perceived as less of a minority, and, therefore, less appropriate for affirmative action benefits than other monoracial and multiracial candidates. These important yet conflicting findings begin to help us understand the complexity of half white college students and minority-based resources in higher education.

However, there are areas of inquiry that are needed to provide important information regarding half white college students and minority status, but are not yet addressed in the literature. First and foremost, I could not locate a study that qualitatively explores the extent to which half white college students consider themselves racial minorities and/or eligible for affirmative action programs or minority-based campus resources. As previously discussed, Good, Chavez, and Sanchez (2010) provide important context for how half white individuals identify as minorities and perceive

themselves as eligible for affirmative action programs. This is primarily impacted by social connections to a minority in-group as well as similarities in physical appearance. However, their data are quantitative in nature, and gathered through surveys. To what extent will this be true for participants in my study as they share their stories qualitatively?

Second, we do not yet know how higher education practitioners perceive half white college students as minorities and as eligible for affirmative action programs or minority-based campus resources. Studies mentioned earlier in this chapter surveyed public perceptions, generally, or the perceptions of college students in psychology courses. Knowing the perspectives of these student affairs practitioners is important given their potential influence on a) creating and/or maintaining minority-based campus resources and b) on the experiences of students on their campuses.

Finally, studies have not yet compared the extent to which half white self-perceptions regarding minority status and eligibility compare with those of “respondents” e.g., individuals sharing their perceptions about other people. Some studies (e.g., Sanchez & Chavez, 2010) have compared self- and other perceptions of minority status and eligibility for affirmative action benefits, but these and other studies used hypothetical student profiles or vignettes for respondents to consider as they completed surveys. While these profiles and vignettes are, of course, rooted in the lived experiences of multiracial and half white individuals, the self-perceptions of a person or profile described in a vignette cannot be assumed. For example, while someone may perceive a specific half white person to be a minority and eligible for minority-based resources, it may not necessarily be the case that that half white person sees themselves in that way.

This information may deepen and extend existing data on multiracial identities as well as provide needed insights for student affairs practitioners regarding how to best support and advise half white college students.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODS

This dissertation explored the extent to which half-white college students' understand themselves as minorities, and how those perceptions influenced the extent to which they felt they were eligible for minority-based resources on their respective college or university campuses. Additionally, this study captured the perspectives of student affairs practitioners about the extent to which half-white college students were minorities and eligible for minority-based campus resources. I used a mixed methods research design in order to collect data that responded to the following research questions:

5. To what extent, if at all, do half-White college students consider themselves racial minorities?
6. To what extent, if at all, do half-White college students consider themselves eligible for minority-based campus resources?
7. What are student affairs professionals' perceptions of the extent to which the participants are minorities and are eligible for minority-based resources?
8. How do the perceptions of participants and student affairs professionals compare with each other?

In this section, I will, first, describe the overarching template for my mixed methods research design. Next, I outline the two methodological phases: an initial qualitative phase involving interviews with half-white college students, and a quantitative phase involving a survey that incorporated participant stories from interview transcripts and was then distributed to student affairs professionals. I then explain my processes for

collecting and analyzing data throughout my description of each phase. I conclude by discussing strategies for mitigating researcher bias, limitations to the study, and how the study was significant.

Mixed Methods Research Design

Creswell and Plano-Clark's (2011) template for an exploratory sequential mixed methods design informed, to an extent, the design of this study. The purpose of an exploratory sequential design is to use quantitative data gathered from a relatively large sample during the second phase of the research process to "generalize qualitative findings based on a few individuals from the first phase"; in other words, "the results of the first, qualitative method can help develop or inform the second, quantitative method" (p. 86). My study, indeed, used information gathered by the qualitative methods to inform some of what was included in a survey I distributed in the second, quantitative phase of the study. My goal was not so much to generalize the qualitative data but, rather, to capture different stakeholder perspectives on half-white college students in a way not previously explored.

First, I sent out a national call for participants to recruit undergraduate students with one white parent and one parent of color to participate in qualitative interviews. I posted the recruitment flyer on social media sites like Twitter, Facebook, and Tumblr (including to specific groups focused on mixed race experiences e.g., National Association of Mixed Student Organizations, Multiracial Americans of Southern California, and NASPA Multiracial Knowledge Community), and also sent the recruitment flyer via e-mail directly to 10 student affairs offices across the country in hopes they would assist in distributing it to potential research participants. I, then,

developed and distributed a survey to student affairs professionals to gain their perspectives on the extent to which my study's participants were minorities and were eligible for minority-based resources.

Interview Data Collection and Analysis

Interview data collection. The initial qualitative phase involved 60-minute one-to-one interviews with half-white college student participants. I employed an interview guide approach (Patton, 2002), which ensures researchers cover specific topics in advance and “makes data collection somewhat systematic for each respondent,” while also allowing interviews to “remain fairly conversational and situational” (p. 349). To support an interview guide approach, I developed a semi-structured interview guide that listed prompting questions for participants and allowed for questions to arise based on participants' responses (Appendix A).

My study sought participants who were half-white college students who had completed at least 30 units of undergraduate coursework at four-year, not-for-profit colleges and universities. I distributed a call for participants (Appendix B) electronically to social media outlets (e.g., Facebook and Twitter) and student affairs offices at various four-year not-for-profit universities across multiple regions of the U.S. Student affairs offices are effective contacts for recruiting participants because they are designed to provide direct services and support to college students, thus increasing the likelihood of distributing my call for participants to students who may fit my study's criteria.

Four participants from a private, faith-based university in the southwestern United States (Southwestern University) responded to my call for participants. I conducted interviews in person and on Southwestern University's campus. I transcribed the

recorded interviews verbatim so I could code and analyze the data based on what participants actually said and, also, to notice when “fillers” like *um*, *uh*, and extended pauses took place.

Interview data analysis. The data analysis procedures for this study involved two primary strategies—*analysis of narrative* approach and coding. I employed an *analysis of narrative* approach to best capture themes that connected all participant stories with one another. To do this, I coded interview transcripts using pre-determined codes as well as other codes that emerged during the transcript coding process.

Analysis of narrative. The term *analysis of narrative* (Polkinghorne, 1995) refers to a process in which researchers “collect stories as data and analyze them with paradigmatic processes,” which “results in descriptions of themes that hold across the stories” (p. 12). Stated differently, it is a way of observing themes and stories found within each interview transcript that can then be used to compare with the themes and stories of other interviews, tentatively forming overall understandings of or broader statements about what participants have shared. While theory may be referenced before and after the process, I attempted to bracket my knowledge of theory during the initial period of data analysis and used an inductive paradigmatic approach during my analyses of the qualitative data. Stated differently, I developed “concepts from the data rather than imposing previous theoretically derived concepts” (Polkinghorne, 1995, p. 13). I considered each participant interview as its own separate story; once all stories were considered and analyzed, I summarized what I believed to be the key findings, or themes, that connected the participant stories with one another.

Coding. Coding refers to a system of classifying codes of the qualitative data that are used while analyzing all stories in order to form themes. Codes, or “units,” are helpful in providing a “standard basis of comparison of one text with another” so that information obtained from interviews is objective to the best extent possible (Smith, 2000, p. 320). Coding was my primary strategy for performing an analysis of narrative approach. I initially developed codes based on the interview questions. For example, because I asked participants about the extent to which they considered themselves minorities, *minority* was an initial code. Additional codes and subcodes were developed using a blend of *in vivo*, *themeing*, and *simultaneous* coding strategies (Saldaña, 2013). In vivo and themeing coding allowed me to “prioritize and honor” participants’ voices by using codes that reflected what they said verbatim (p. 91) as well as develop “extended phrases or sentences” to use for coding (p. 175). Simultaneous coding allowed passages to be coded for “multiple meanings” (p. 80). The simultaneous coding strategy was an appropriate given that it paralleled my participants’ lived experiences of embodying an intersection of two racial identities. During a previous study (Franco, 2015), simultaneous coding emerged as critical and necessary for understanding the complexities of multiracial student experiences.

I performed two different rounds of coding. The first phase relied heavily on emergent codes from participants’ stories, which yielded a total of 8 primary codes and 31 secondary codes. I focused on code application frequency (i.e., which codes occurred most often) as well as which codes co-occurred most frequently from the simultaneous coding strategy mentioned previously. From these first phase observations, three themes

emerged: multiracial identity development; identity, community, and use of space; and minority definition and eligibility.

I performed a second round of coding that reorganized codes to be more structured and purposeful. I created 10 primary codes (keeping two of the original primary codes) and 14 secondary codes. This code reorganization was based on the frequency of code applications, primary or (in most cases) secondary, and the frequency of code co-occurrences. This allowed me to (a) identify the most salient themes and information across all participant stories, (b) shift codes about racial identity to align with Renn's patterns of identity, and (c) add more direct codes relating to eligibility, which were not present during the initial round of coding.

Survey Data Collection and Analysis

Survey Data Collection

For the second, quantitative portion of my mixed methods research design, I created an online survey to distribute to student affairs professionals. The survey assessed student affairs professionals' perceptions of my study's half-white student participants. The purpose of using a survey in this way was to compare participants' understandings of themselves as minorities—and their perceptions of their eligibility for minority-based campus resources—with student affairs professionals' perceptions of the extent to which the participants were racial minorities and were eligible for minority-based resources. This survey was intended simply to add more complex and nuanced understanding to the issue of half-white college students; it was not meant to draw significant conclusions (i.e., causal links) about the impact of student affairs professionals' perceptions of half-white college students on those students' experiences

with minority-based campus-resources. A total of 37 student affairs professionals (“respondents”) responded to and completed the survey.

While the perspectives of other higher education administrators would add richer comparison points in analyzing survey data, limits needed to be set for this study and, thus, only one perspective was selected here—that of student affairs professionals. Administrators in student affairs were appropriate for serving as respondents to this survey because of their level of interaction with students, particularly with a focus on developing students holistically.

Respondents first answered demographic information about themselves, including information about their race, gender, and the type of institution at which they worked, and also indicated the extent to which they were familiar with biracial, multiracial, and non-monoracial issues. Respondents were then presented with two different sets of information about the four interview participants: 1) vignettes from participant interviews that provided richer context for respondents to consider as they completed the survey, and 2) simple demographic information about participants’ gender, the race of each of their biological parents, and self-identification of their racial identity. The survey presented each set of participant information (i.e., participant vignettes, and, separately, demographic information only) on two different pages, with the participant vignettes appearing first. Respondents were not allowed to change their responses to previous questions as they proceeded through the survey. This allowed me to see when respondents’ responses changed between vignette ratings and demographic ratings, if they did at all, and for which participants’ stories their answers changed. I also randomized each set of data to prevent practitioners from linking a participant’s

demographic information with their vignette as well as limit “order effect” (Perreault Jr., 1975), at least to the best extent possible.

Finch (1987) referred to vignettes as “a way into eliciting material about commonly understood norms” (p. 107) through “short stories about hypothetical characters in specified circumstances, to whose situation the interviewee is invited to respond” (p. 105). In my study, I referred to the inclusion of participant information as vignettes. However, the information contained in each vignette was not hypothetical. Rather, it was based on actual lived experiences articulated by the participants. The purpose was still largely the same, though, in that the participant vignettes in this survey were designed to provide context as respondents decided whether or not participants were minorities and eligible for minority-based resources. See Appendix C for a template of the survey distributed.

The end of the survey provided respondents an opportunity to explain their decision-making processes in about four sentences. These short paragraphs offered insights not only about how respondents made their decisions but also how they felt about the topic of multiracial students and minority eligibility in general.

Survey Data Analysis

In order to analyze the numerical data from the survey (i.e., the respondents’ ratings), I performed paired samples t-tests using IBM SPSS Statistics software. The purpose of a paired samples t-test is to “determine whether there is statistical evidence that the mean difference between paired observations on a particular outcome is significantly different from zero” (Paired sample t test, n.d.). This test allowed me to determine if there were statistically significant differences in perceptions between reading

simply about students' racial backgrounds and reading about the deeper complexities of students' understandings of themselves as minorities (see Tables 1-4). These tests also allowed me to determine if there were statistically significant differences among the demographics ratings and, separately, the vignette ratings (see Tables 5-6).

For the open response paragraphs provided at the end of the survey, I again used an analysis of narrative approach (Polkinghorne, 1995) in order to identify common themes among each respondent's written statements. Three themes emerged: (a) multiracial students can "choose" minority and eligibility status; (b) the impact information and context had on decision-making processes; and (c) complications of resource allocation, which included discomfort identifying another person's racial minority status and eligibility, explaining current racial classification systems and issues of identity, and how multiracial identities can shift or change over time.

Addressing Researcher Bias

As a half Latina/o and half white person, and as someone who has struggled with understanding the ways in which I am and am not a racial minority, my location to this research topic and study was personal and intimate. On one hand, this intimacy could have aided in my ability to reach deeply into the data to "see" in ways other researchers might not. On the other, this intimacy could have inhibited me from identifying certain themes in the data or biased my interpretation of the data. While true objectivity is not necessarily possible for any qualitative researcher, I tried my best to mitigate my biases in such a way that my interpretation of the data remained as true to participant and respondent voices as possible. To accomplish this, I kept a journal of analytical memos,

structured all note-taking to record any personal or emotional reactions that emerged, and consulted participants to ensure I remained true to their voices i.e., member-checking.

Analytical Memos and Note-Taking

My analytical memos functioned as a sort of researcher journal where I kept a written account of my immediate or initial observations, speculations, and reactions as my study unfolded. Glesne (2006) wrote that the contributions of analytical memos—or *analytic notes*—ranged from “problem identification, to question development, to understanding the patterns and themes” (p. 59). I focused my analytical memos on summarizing what I believed were critical insights offered by each participant, connecting these insights to the literature reviewed and to other participants’ stories, and forming questions or points of curiosity that arise.

In addition to analytical memos, I tracked those moments that brought about strong emotional reactions that could have obscured or distorted my observations and interpretations of the data. As I wrote my analytical memos, recorded notes during participant interviews, and coded and analyzed all qualitative and quantitative data, I recorded these sorts of moments in a column or section of my notes that was separate from other notes and observations I made. In this way, as I critically reviewed my analytical memos and notes, I could see what sections needed more attention i.e., when I might have been more prone to using descriptive words like “*wonderful, mundane, interesting, doing nothing, nice, or good*” that “obscure rather than clarify” the data (Glesne, 2006, p. 57, emphases from author).

Member-Checking

Another strategy to ensure I stayed as true to interview participant voices as possible was through member-checking, a process where “interview transcripts, analytical thoughts, and/or drafts of the final report with research participants [are shared] to make sure you are representing them and their ideas accurately” (Glesne, 2006, p. 38). Participants were provided excerpts from their interview transcripts where I had applied one or more codes. I sent these excerpts electronically, and participants had one week to send me their thoughts, comments, or concerns about the accuracy of their transcription.

Limitations

As is the nature of research studies, particularly those rich in qualitative methods and data, limitations existed as they relate to the researcher, the researched, and the research methodology. I have mentioned several limitations of my study throughout this paper, and address them again here for clarity as well as to address additional limitations not previously discussed.

The first limitation was my positionality as a researcher on the subject of half white college students. As mentioned earlier in this proposal, my lived experiences as half Latina/o, half white person who has struggled with understanding the extent to which I am and am not a racial minority may have biased my ability to interpret the data in ways that stayed true to participant and respondent voices. I named this bias at the outset of this project and outlined several different ways I accounted for these biases; however, they likely still impacted the execution of the study and analysis of the data in ways I may not be able to account for, and, thus, form a limitation to this research project.

The second limitation of this study involves the selection of both my participants and respondents. While my call for participants did not use words like “biracial” or “multiracial” because many individuals who are mixed race do not identify their race in such a way and, instead, may identify monoracially, those who did choose to participate were likely more comfortable discussing their racial identity and/or have a more complex understanding of how being half white impacted them. These participants may not represent the voices of all college students who are half white. Similarly, survey respondents may have been more inclined or comfortable to voice their opinion about this topic, which, again, may not necessarily be representative of the voices of all—or even the majority—of student affairs professionals. Furthermore, the distribution of both my call for participants and respondents did not reach all possible half white college students or student affairs professionals, again limiting the extent to which my findings would be applicable to those populations on a national scale.

Significance of the Study

Despite the limitations listed above, this study contributed to existing knowledge about half white multiracial individuals and to the field of higher education in several significant ways. First, while there were several studies that explored this topic previously, these studies had been almost exclusively quantitative in nature—no published study to my knowledge performed qualitative research exploring how half-white college students understood themselves as minorities, and how that understanding impacted the extent to which they feel they are eligible for minority-based resources. Additionally, studies that explored public perceptions of half white individuals’ eligibility and appropriateness for minority-based resources and affirmative action programs asked

respondents to complete quantitative surveys using vignettes and other hypothetical contexts. My study provided respondents with actual lived experiences of half-white college students as they completed my survey, allowing me to compare respondent and participant perspectives about the extent to which my study's participants were or were not minorities and were or were not eligible for minority-based campus programs. This comparison had not been performed in previous research studies. Further, studies exploring these public perceptions had not, to my knowledge, surveyed the perceptions of professionals who work in college and university settings. This last knowledge gap was an important one, particularly regarding professionals who not only interact with students regularly but also help students find resources to help them succeed as college students.

Outside of “filling in” knowledge gaps in existing literature, my study had practical implications for colleges and universities in the United States. Students are increasingly identifying as more than one race and studies have shown that the needs of non-monoracial people are different than those of their monoracial peers (e.g., Renn, 2000), but few resources have been explicitly designated for them. These students, particularly those who are half white, ultimately must make decisions about their own appropriateness in accessing and using resources meant to assist racial minorities. However, as many research studies have shown, non-monoracial students may or may not feel comfortable accessing or using these resources because of what they have been told about their racial identity and by whom. Results from this study provided clarity on how half-white college students currently understand their minority status and eligibility for minority-based resources and, in doing so, may help higher education administrators address non-monoracial student needs in ways not currently taking place.

CHAPTER FOUR

FINDINGS

This study sought data regarding the extent to which college students with one white parent and one parent of color were considered by themselves and others to be racial minorities and eligible for minority-based campus resources. Data collection for this study occurred in two phases: (a) a qualitative phase consisting of interviews with four college students with one white parent and one parent of color, and (b) a quantitative phase consisting of a survey responded to by 37 student affairs professionals at colleges and universities across the country. The two phases were connected by the use of the qualitative interview data generated in the first phase of the study to develop the survey administered during the study's second phase. This chapter reports data collected during these two phases, beginning first with some general information about the qualitative interview participants.

Participant Information

In order to be included in the project, interview participants had to (a) be at least a junior or senior undergraduate student, or have completed a minimum of 30 units/credits at the time of the study, (b) be enrolled full-time at a four-year college or university as an undergraduate student, and (c) have biological parents that were each from different racial backgrounds, specifically one white parent and one parent of color. Four students from Southwestern University, a private, Catholic, predominantly white university, responded to my call for participants—Elmer, Jordan, Lewis, and Susan—and all four were accepted as research participants.

Elmer

Elmer was a male senior who self-identified as black and white, and was raised by a black and white biracial mother who was “fairly white-acting” since she was raised by a white mother; his father, who left the home as a young child, was white. Elmer considered his upbringing to be “pretty white,” and his family lived in a predominantly white neighborhood during high school. Growing up, Elmer was often neither black nor white enough, and struggled to find community with either black or white peers. Elmer described his lived experiences as reflecting a minority person’s experience and a white person’s experience. Elmer felt like “another minority,” where someone is treated “as a minority that is not the minority they are.” After enrolling at Southwestern University, Elmer learned that black students were invited via e-mail to participate in a course open only to black students; Elmer never received this e-mail, and was confused, hurt, and disappointed not to be invited, particularly since his application (e.g., racial identification box and personal essay) indicated black ancestry. However, Elmer pursued and received black student scholarships, and participated in academic programs catering exclusively to underrepresented students and students of color. In Elmer’s perspective, other campus programs and support did not apply to him because he had a strong academic record prior to attending the university.

Jordan

Jordan was a female sophomore who self-identified as half Filipina and half Irish/white (or sometimes *hapa*), and admitted she did not really think about racial identity until college. This was due, in part, to Jordan’s Filipina mother being “Americanized,” which meant that her mother did not pass on or discuss Filipino cultural

knowledge and traditions growing up. Before college, Jordan said she was colorblind and never really paid attention to race or racial demographics. Jordan became involved with the campus's Filipino Student Organization (FSO) in college, which created an awareness of racial demographics as well as social justice issues. Jordan felt included in FSO because the group recognized and welcomed that being Filipina/o was not a monolithic experience. Jordan never really felt personally victimized or attacked because of race due, in part, to her self-described ambiguous physical appearance. While Jordan considered applying for scholarships and seeking out campus resources designated for racial minorities and/or Filipina/o students, she had not done so.

Lewis

Lewis self-identified as African-American, and was originally from a small town in central California. Growing up, Lewis primarily interacted with white family members, and would feel left out at family reunions, partly because he could not relate to his white family members. Lewis was also one of the only African-American students in elementary and high school, where peers often made assumptions about him, from work ethic to picking sports teams to celebrating Black History Month. Lewis enrolled at Southwestern University and was sometimes asked how he afforded the university's expensive tuition since he was not on a scholarship with a sports team. Lewis identified as a racial minority (in part because he claimed to look more like his black father), and applied for and received minority-based scholarships. Many of these scholarships were sent to Lewis directly, either by the university or via a student organization listserv. Lewis also accessed black-centered student spaces on campus, but often felt outcasted by his monoracial black peers because he had one white and one black parent.

Susan

Susan self-identified as mixed or biracial, and was originally from a small town in the upper Midwest. Susan's father, a black man, passed away when she was a child. Growing up, Susan was raised by her white mother, primarily interacted with white family members, and was enrolled in a high achievers program in high school, a program with a large number of students of color. Though they were not affluent, money was not a concern for Susan's family. Susan identified as a racial minority, but, using her words, she did not identify with the experiences of black youth from the ghetto. When choosing between colleges to attend, Susan decided not to attend an HBCU (historically black college or university) because it would have been a culture shock in comparison to where she grew up. She decided to attend Southwestern University instead. Susan took advantage of an identity-based student center on campus, where the experiences of being mixed or *light-skinned* were not as valid as other experiences of monoracial black students. Susan had not sought out resources dedicated to racial minorities or black students because, at least to some extent, she did not want to "ride too much" on being black, and would feel guilty taking advantage of affirmative action types of programs. Susan felt those types of programs did not apply to her.

Interview Findings

Qualitative interviews with the study's four participants yielded three distinct themes that fell along Renn's (2000) patterns of multiracial identity. Each participant exhibited all three themes at different times during their interviews depending upon the experiences, situations, or context discussed. First, there were strong patterns of multiracial identity in connection with identity-based spaces and white and non-white

communities. Participants also utilized a monoracial identity when describing their interactions in white and non-white spaces. Finally, participants utilized a situational identity when explaining their minority status and eligibility.

Patterns of Multiracial Identity and Community

Throughout their interviews, all four participants often spoke of feeling judged by their peers based largely on both their multiracial identity and status as a person of color. These judgments impacted their use of minority resources as well as their connection to both white and non-white communities. Stated differently, all four participants felt not only devalued because of their half white ancestry but also stereotyped as people of color. Three participants also identified a lack of connection to both white and non-white communities.

The three participants who accessed the campus's black student support structures—either a Black Resource Center (BRC) or a Black Student Group (BSG)—mentioned feeling like their experiences of oppression were not “as bad” as their monoracial peers. Their black racial minority status was even indirectly questioned at times because they had one white parent.

Susan's experiences. Susan talked about not feeling connected to either white or black communities. She shared that her lack of connection to black communities may have been due, in part, to her lack of connection to the black side of her family:

I didn't really have a connection with the black side of my family as much because my dad passed away when I was five. And I'm still close with his side of the family, but as far as my immediate home life, it was my Scandinavian mother who raised me.

When navigating the predominantly white college campus of Southwestern University, though, she did not feel strongly connected to white communities, either:

I just feel like I'm always being watched. ...not in a creepy way, but if I were to wear sweatpants to class or something like that, people would notice. I feel like because I can't blend in... I know everyone is, like, "Oh my gosh, you'll be unique and different," but it would be so much easier if I could just slip under the radar.

Because she stands out and is watched as a person of color, Susan found that she did not fit into the campus's predominantly white environment. This lack of connection to either black or white communities seemed to influence her experiences with the campus's BSG. Susan felt her issues were not as pressing when in BSG meetings because she did not have a "true" black experience like her monoracial black peers in the group:

I feel like since I could potentially get out if I wanted to from that classification [as monoracial black], that my identity issues are not as pressing or important or worth merit or scholarship or admission or anything because it's not like I've had the entire... like a true black experience, like being followed in shopping stores because you're going to steal something or being pulled over because they would assume it's not your car. Or I've never had, as far as I know, any form of racism directed to me, and so I sit [there] and complain about how racist the world is in my BSG meetings or in general. And then, I feel as though I can't speak on it because I'm still too white to be black and not... I'm too black to be white, so just kind of in the middle, like, limbo space.

Susan cited her physical appearance, which she described as privileged because her skin is a lighter shade of brown, and her upbringing in a predominantly white community in her state as contributing to why her issues not as pressing in a group of predominantly monoracial black peers.

Elmer's experiences. When Elmer and his family moved into a mostly white neighborhood during his childhood, he did not feel accepted by this white community. He grew to realize that this white community could accept him "as he was... but not as a

black person, as well,” meaning that his assertion of his black ancestry was challenged because he did not look or act in stereotypically black ways. Elmer did not feel accepted by black communities, either. He frequently mentioned his lack of connection to both black and white communities and peers, and offered one example:

I just, it just made me feel more alone, like I could see black people and say, “Oh, I’m black,” and try to connect with them. But, then, our home lives would be drastically different or the way that we communicate with each other would be different and, so, [black peers] wouldn’t accept me as a black person, except, like, “Oh, that’s Brent, he’s black,” and not necessarily, “Oh, that’s Brent, he’s our brother.”

Not being raised in a black family or having a strong connection to black communities growing up made Elmer feel like he could connect with other black peers. As a result, Elmer felt he did not really fit in either the white or black communities because he wasn’t fully accepted either way.

Lewis’s experiences. Lewis described feeling left out and not able to relate to family members when he would attend family reunions on his white mother’s side of the family as well as throughout his predominantly white elementary school and high school years:

So, like big family reunions, we kind of felt left out or couldn’t really relate to as much with everybody else when we were younger. And just growing up through school, I was the only African American student besides my brother that went to our elementary school. So, it just came up a lot, these random remarks from people or jokes from other kids on campus.

When talking about the Black Resource Center (BRC), Lewis also described feeling like he did not belong or that his experiences were not as valuable in comparison to his monoracial black peers:

Some of us that are from a majority and a minority parent, [are] not outcasted but are treated a little bit differently than the people that have two minority parents. They just assume... They have assumptions that our life was different than theirs growing up. Just in how people treated us, I guess. That we aren't always seen as just minorities. They felt like, "You have a white mother, so people assume that you're a white, too, so you got treated somewhat like an average white person would be treated like. You weren't treated like... every other minority."

Lewis's statement highlighted feelings of being less legitimate than typical students from underrepresented groups not only in his identification as African American but also as a racial minority, generally. This was significant given that the context for the conversation was a resource center designed to assist racial minorities, specifically those who identify as black or African-American, which was how Lewis identified himself.

Jordan's experiences. In contrast, Jordan had quite a different experience as a mixed race student in the Filipino Student Organization (FSO) than her black and white peers did in the BRC and BSG. Prior to joining FSO, however, Jordan had not really thought about her racial identity. In addition to not knowing about or forming a connection to her mother's Filipina/o culture, Jordan also had not connected to her father's European cultures: "I don't really know anything about Irish culture or German or Italian culture. That's never been part of my dad's side of the family, really."

Jordan's lack of cultural connections seemed to influence what she described as her colorblindness to issues of race and her own racial identity. FSO helped provide a sense of connection and community to at least one of her parents' cultures—her mother's Filipina culture. She became aware of the group during a student organization fair when FSO members handed her a flyer and shouted out to passers-by that anyone could join the group; students did not need to be Filipina/o to join the group. After attending a few meetings, Jordan found the group openly embraced how different the Filipino-American

experience can be for each member. FSO became a place for Jordan to discover more about a culture she has no “real” connection to because her Filipina mother was raised to be very “Americanized.” Jordan became an officer for FSO, which signaled, at least to some extent, that she felt welcomed and embraced within the group.

Patterns of Monoracial Identity in White and Non-White Spaces

During the second round of coding the data, I employed the codes *monoracial* and *multiracial* to students comments recorded in the interview transcripts. Interestingly, I applied the “monoracial” code (n=78) approximately 50 percent more often than the “multiracial” code (n=56). Despite the fact that three out of four participants exclusively used multiracial labels to self-identify their race, all four participants referred to themselves in exclusively monoracial ways throughout their interviews. Monoracial code applications occurred most often when participants discussed their experiences in predominantly white spaces as well as in relation to non-white student groups or affinity centers.

Predominantly white spaces. All four participants often talked about and referred to themselves as having a monoracial non-white identity when describing their experiences in predominantly white spaces. For example, growing up in a white neighborhood and attending predominantly white elementary and high schools, Susan remembered at age five excitedly telling her mother she saw another black girl in her class. Susan continued to identify herself monoracially as black when describing her classroom experiences at Southwestern University:

I'm usually the only person of color, [in] my classes or [a] classroom setting. Even in a sociology class, I might be one of two people of color, at least, you know, the only black person for sure as far as, like, I perceive them to be of color.

Across a variety of predominantly white settings, Susan identified monoracially as black when she perceived herself to be one of the only people of color.

Elmer similarly referred to himself monoracially as black in predominantly white contexts. He specifically pointed out how his university did not recognize him as a black person when disseminating information about a freshman course designed to exclusively support black students. Despite marking both black and white on application forms when he applied, during high school, for scholarships and universities, Southwestern University had not provided initial support in the same way it had to his black peers:

I've heard of black students getting e-mailed from the campus photography people, like, "Come, be in our brochure." Literally, they say this. And I've never gotten one of those e-mails. Or, apparently, there was a class that all of the black students were allowed to take their freshmen year, and I never got asked to be put in that class or enrolled in that class when it sounds like there wasn't really a choice. [Black students] could have dropped the class, but it sounds like all of the black people that I knew in my freshmen year were enrolled in this class, and I've known black people that are younger than me to be enrolled in this class. So...I feel left out, almost, like, why doesn't the school recognize me as a black person?

The university's treatment of Elmer as a non-black student prompted him to refer to himself as a black-only student, and not as a black and white student as he had throughout other segments of his interview.

Minority affinity groups and centers. At the same time that participants identified monoracially in predominantly white spaces, they also identified monoracially when they felt a sense of community in that space. Again, three out of four participants identified in multiracial ways, generally, yet all three referred to themselves in monoracial terms when claiming membership in or their ability to access particular racial/ethnic clubs or designated spaces on campus.

Jordan regularly referred to herself as monoracially Filipina when talking about her involvement in the Filipino Student Organization (FSO). For example, in describing how Southwestern University campus administrators asked FSO how they planned to help the campus provide support for one of the deadly typhoon's that hit the Philippines that year, Jordan expressed the group's frustration about being tasked with this effort: "Just because we're Filipino doesn't mean we're the only ones who should care, you know?" She continued this monoracial pattern of identity when describing an incident FSO experienced on Facebook:

We had an incident on Facebook last year where someone said some pretty degrading things towards Filipinos, so I took that personally because I identify as Filipina and I'm part of that group.

Up until college, Jordan did not really care what race or ethnicity she was and did not identify with either. She also identified in multiracial ways when asked, during my interview with her, about the words and labels she used to describe her racial identity to others. However, this multiracial identification became flexible when referencing her involvement with FSO, where Jordan frequently included herself as Filipina by using the pronoun "we."

Susan also referred to herself monoracially as black when discussing her involvement with the Black Student Group (BSG). This may be due, in part, to the fact that BSG provided her a sense of community at a predominantly white institution, where she sometimes experienced negative behaviors from white peers:

BSG has been a good outlet to kind of just get angry without having people be, like, "There are the angry black kids," because we are all black, but we are just in the space together. That makes it okay [to express anger].

Given the small number of black students on campus and Susan's experiences with racial prejudice, BSG provided a place for Susan to be in community with others who had similar experiences. This contextual factor seemed to influence how she referred to her racial identity (monoracial black) at specific points during her interview.

Patterns of Situational Identity with Minority Status and Eligibility

During their interviews, participants were asked about the extent to which they identified as racial minorities and perceived themselves as eligible for racial minority resources on campus. Participants very clearly and similarly defined a racial minority as a non-white person who experienced struggles or oppressions as a result of their non-white racial identity. They were less clear, however, on the extent to which they considered themselves racial minorities and also eligible for resources designated for those minorities. On one hand, they identified in various ways as racial minorities and, in doing so, spoke of and emphasized themselves as non-white. On the other, they did not often feel they were definitively eligible to use and access minority resources. This flexibility or fluidity of identifying their race—identifying as monoracially non-white in one context, but identifying as multiracial in a different context—comprised what Renn (2000) referred to as a pattern of situational identity.

Definitions of minority. Participants had clear definitions of who and what a racial minority was. They all identified racial minorities as non-white groups—"pretty much any ethnicity or race that's not Caucasian," as Lewis put it—who are less valued in society. Reflecting on personal experiences, Elmer provided more context for the last part of this definition:

I think just feeling like society values you less. I don't know exactly how that looks, but just a feeling that you're valued less. Whether that would be in the

media or by your peers or by potential employers, I just get this idea that somehow you're worth less than a white person.

Jordan added that white individuals also experienced privileges that minorities did not:

If you're white, you do have certain privileges that some minorities may not ever get to experience. And [minorities] have certain struggles that, I don't know, that they have to go through on a daily basis that others might not even think about.

Descriptions of what was and was not a racial minority were consistent and clear across all participant interviews. Even the three participants who classified themselves as multiracial were also very clear in identifying themselves as a non-white racial minority.

Strong minority and non-white identification. All four participants strongly agreed that they were racial minorities, and, in line with their definition of racial minority, talked about themselves as non-white. For example, Elmer felt he was a racial minority because he was not white. He noted he did not look like a white person or “identify as strictly a white person,” which, therefore, classified him as a racial minority.

Lewis also considered himself a racial minority “not only because I'm in the African American community, but here at [the university], the majority of the school tends to be of Caucasian or European descent.” Jordan did not identify strongly as a racial minority on her own, however, she explained her experiences “as a minority have more been in solidarity with others than, like, feeling personally victimized or attacked or anything like that.”

Weak minority/eligibility and multiracial identity. While all four participants identified themselves as racial minorities, they did not necessarily feel they were definitively eligible for minority resources, which was most often in connection with their multiracial identity. Specifically, participants identified their upbringing as children

and having a white parent, skin color, and lack of experiences with racism as mitigating the extent to which they considered themselves eligible for and/or sought out resources, no matter how strongly they had previously identified as racial minorities. For Elmer, his culturally white upbringing and multiracial identity provided him with lived experiences of both a minority and a white person, which complicated his understanding of himself as a racial minority and prohibited him from feeling comfortable accessing the university's Black Resource Center (BRC). However, he pursued and received academic opportunities for underrepresented students (i.e., students of color), including a summer internship related to his major at a different university.

Susan also felt her multiracial identity complicated her racial minority status. She spoke of the privilege associated with being half white:

I have an immense amount of privilege because I'm mixed, that I'm still halfway, I'm halfway closer to being white, which I guess is the ideal... Someone kind of referred to it as, like, I can pass basically, so I'm kind of a chameleon. I could act white or be white or whatever that means, or also code switch and then act more black. And so, in that sense, I have a lot more privilege or ability because of the way I was raised and stuff like that. I have sort of that lens and at the same time I can switch lenses whereas my other friends who are not mixed or aren't light skinned will always just be known as black and they don't have the ability to fit in necessarily as much or engage in conversation or be approached by white people. But then if I do ever complain about the struggle of being black or being mixed or something, it's kind of an invalid complaint at times.

In addition to her upbringing by her white mother, Susan identified her lighter skin color and ability to code switch between black and white communities as mitigating her status as a racial minority. These factors prevented her from even applying for certain scholarships designated for racial minorities. She provided one example:

There's a scholarship where the question was very specific about a struggle that you've had... I could be messing this up, but it was a struggle dealing with racism. And, at the time, I never really experienced it, maybe like

microaggressions, which I didn't know what those were at that time. So, I didn't feel like I could really answer or relate to that question, so I just never applied for it.

Susan's privileges and lack of experiences with racism, which were linked to her multiracial identity, led her to not apply for a scholarship designated for racial minorities.

Lewis also identified having a white mother as inhibiting the extent to which he was a racial minority, particularly in comparison to his peers who had two minority parents. He stated:

I'd say there is just more, just from my mother's side, there is more... I don't know, I guess in a sense offered to her that she could offer to us or just like some privileges she would receive compared to my father, just like when out in public or at events or anything like that, that I guess you wouldn't really receive if it was two minority parents. So, just those few instances where people sided more with my majority mother instead of my minority father, I guess, those instances would be easier for me compared to somebody that had to deal with or was raised by two minority parents.

When asked to share more about what he said, Lewis described conversations he had had with his monoracial black peers:

Just in how people treated us, I guess, that we aren't always seen as just minorities. They felt like, "you have a white mother, so people assume that you're a white, too. So you got treated somewhat like an average white person would be treated like. You weren't treated like... every other minority."

Peers' perceptions of Lewis's racial identity as African-American influenced the extent to which Lewis understood himself as a racial minority. Because Lewis had a white parent—because of his multiracial identity—he did not experience the same levels or kinds of racial discrimination as his peers and, thus, was not as much of a racial minority as other African-Americans. Lewis's participation in the BRC and BSG waned throughout the remainder of his time at Southwestern University.

Jordan's responses about the extent to which she considered herself a racial minority were more nuanced. Prior to college, she didn't really identify with either" her Filipina or white side—she "didn't really care" what ethnicity she was. It was not until attending college and joining the Filipino Student Organization (FSO) that Jordan began to explore her mother's Filipina culture:

And so, once I got to college, I got really... now I'm really interested in the Filipino-American experience and how different it is for every person. Because a lot of people in FSO have really drastically different experiences from person to person. Some are very involved in their culture and they know all the traditions and the traditional foods and stuff like that. And then, there's me where I don't even, I only know certain words in Tagalog for like "grandma" and "grandpa" and stuff like that, and I have no real connection to my culture because my mom was raised to be very Americanized.

Jordan further explained that she grew to understand herself as a racial minority "in solidarity with others than like, feeling personally victimized or attacked or anything like that," which she explained may be because she had not "experienced anything personally because of my race, and I don't know how much of that has to do with the fact that I don't look like I'm one thing or another." FSO's inclusive understanding of "Filipino-American" allowed Jordan to feel part of a collective Filipino minority experience, but having a white parent and an "Americanized" mother mitigated the extent to which she identified as an individual racial minority. Jordan did not pursue scholarships or other resources for racial minorities.

Summary of Qualitative Findings

As part of this research project, I interviewed four college students with one white parent and one parent of color about the extent to which they considered themselves racial minorities and eligible for minority-based campus resources. Three themes

emerged from the participants' interview transcripts, each of which fell along Renn's (2000) patterns of multiracial identity. First, there were strong patterns of multiracial identity among the interview participants when they discussed their experiences with identity-based spaces as well as white and non-white communities. Susan and Elmer, for example, did not feel connected to certain black and white communities because, to varying degrees, they were not "black enough" or "white enough." Participants also utilized a monoracial identity when describing their interactions in white and non-white spaces. Jordan self-identified as half Filipina and half white, but regularly referred to herself as a monoracial Filipina student when explaining her involvement with the Filipino Student Organization (FSO).

Finally, participants utilized a situational identity when explaining their minority status and eligibility. Overall, all four participants clearly identified a racial minority as a non-white person who, in various ways, experienced discrimination and prejudice, and believed themselves to be racial minorities. However, to varying degrees, none of them felt they were definitively eligible for minority-based campus resources because of their multiracial identity. Factors like upbringing, skin color, and (lack of) experiences with prejudice, racism, and oppression mitigated their eligibility. For example, growing up in predominantly white neighborhoods, raised by white (or, in one participant's case, "white acting") mothers, and not having certain phenotypically black features, Elmer and Susan did not feel at times that they could strongly identify with black communities and/or the experiences of their monoracial black peers. This inhibited Susan from applying for scholarships designated for black or minority students, and prevented Elmer from feeling comfortable accessing the Black Resource Center (BRC) and Black Student Group

(BSG). Lewis also did not feel comfortable accessing the BRC and attending BSG meetings because monoracial black peers believed Lewis received privileges by having a white mother; his participation in these groups waned throughout his time at the university. Jordan shared that she regularly attended the meetings of, and even became an officer for, the FSO because she felt they actively welcomed any student who identified in some way as Filipina/o. She also described herself as appearing racially ambiguous and lacking individual experiences with racism and racial prejudice, which partially explained why she did not seek out or apply for scholarships designated for minority students.

The qualitative interviews helped answer my research question about the extent to which college students with one white parent and one parent of color considered themselves racial minorities and eligible for minority-based campus resources. The next section of this chapter summarizes findings from a quantitative survey that attempted to answer my other research question about the perspectives student affairs professionals have regarding my participants' racial minority status and eligibility.

Survey Findings

In addition to qualitative interviews, I distributed a survey to student affairs professionals to assess the extent to which they considered my research participants as racial minorities and eligible for minority-based campus resources. The first section of the survey asked several demographic questions about respondents and their respective institutions. The second section presented respondents with my participants' profiles and asked them to state their opinion about the extent to which those participants were racial minorities and eligible for minority-based campus resources at their respective

institutions. I separated this second section into two sub-sections: one that provided short vignettes about my participants based on interview transcripts, and one that provided only demographic information about participants e.g., parents' racial ancestry and how participants self-identified their own race. At the end of the survey, respondents had an opportunity to explain their decision-making processes and offer any additional thoughts. Only full-time student affairs professionals at four-year, not-for-profit colleges and universities in the United States qualified to participate in the survey.

Respondent Demographics

Respondents who completed the survey (n=39) were predominantly white (64%), but also represented a variety of racial/ethnic groups—American Indian/Alaska Native (3%), Asian (23%), Black or African American (3%), Latina/o or Hispanic (13%), and some other race²—and identified predominantly as women (64%). About half worked at public institutions (62%), at institutions with more than 15,000 students (51%), and in California (56%). A total of 11 states were represented in the survey data. Most respondents were either new professionals (41%) or mid-level professionals (44%), and interacted with students at least once per day (85%). 21 percent of respondents belonged to or participated in organizations relevant to multiracial issues/individuals, with smaller percentages in specifically student affairs multiracial organizations: NASPA's Multiracial Knowledge Community (10%) and/or ACPA's Multiracial Network (8%).

Respondent Ratings Results

Tables 1 through 4 displays the average ratings for each of my participants individually, separated by vignettes ratings and demographics ratings. Tables 5 and 6

² Of those who identified as "some other race" (n=4), three identified as mixed/multiracial and one as West Indian.

summarize the data by vignette ratings only (Table 5) and, then, by demographics ratings only (Table 6) so that comparisons can be made between participants' individual ratings in those categories. I also performed paired samples t-tests to determine the extent to which any differences between ratings were statistically significant.

Comparisons between vignette and demographics ratings for each participant. Respondents had the opportunity to rate my participants based, first, on vignettes that summarized information gathered during participant interviews and, then, only demographic information e.g., participants' self-identification and racial ancestry of their parents. Tables 1 through 4 display these average ratings for each participant as well as the extent to which the differences between these average ratings were statistically significant; percentages listed next to the *p*-value reflect confidence levels.

Table 1

Respondent Ratings for Elmer

<u>Statement</u>	<u>Vignette</u>	<u>Demographics</u>	<u>Significance</u>
This student should be considered a racial minority.	9.33	9.00	$p = 0.10$ (90%)
This student is a racial minority.	9.41	9.05	$p = 0.03$ (95%)
In my personal opinion, I believe this student is eligible for minority-based resources.	9.38	9.05	$p = 0.02$ (98%)
In my role at my current institution, I believe this student is eligible for minority-based resources.	8.62	8.23	$p = 0.15$ (80%)

Note. Numbers represent the mean ratings for each item, with 1=Strongly Disagree and 10=Strongly Agree.

Table 2

Respondent Ratings for Jordan

<u>Statement</u>	<u>Vignette</u>	<u>Demographics</u>	<u>Significance</u>
This student should be considered a racial minority.	9.23	9.26	$p = 0.88$ (0%)
This student is a racial minority.	9.23	9.44	$p = 0.07$ (90%)
In my personal opinion, I believe this student is eligible for minority-based resources.	9.26	9.38	$p = 0.10$ (90%)
In my role at my current institution, I believe this student is eligible for minority-based resources.	8.46	8.59	$p = 0.34$ (60%)

Note. Numbers represent the mean ratings for each item, with 1=Strongly Disagree and 10=Strongly Agree.

Table 3

Respondent Ratings for Lewis

<u>Statement</u>	<u>Vignette</u>	<u>Demographics</u>	<u>Significance</u>
This student should be considered a racial minority.	9.33	9.36	$p = 0.71$ (0%)
This student is a racial minority.	9.46	9.49	$p = 0.71$ (0%)
In my personal opinion, I believe this student is eligible for minority-based resources.	9.51	9.38	$p = 0.10$ (90%)
In my role at my current institution, I believe this student is eligible for minority-based resources.	9.08	8.87	$p = 0.16$ (80%)

Note. Numbers represent the mean ratings for each item, with 1=Strongly Disagree and 10=Strongly Agree.

Table 4

Respondent Ratings for Susan

<u>Statement</u>	<u>Vignette</u>	<u>Demographics</u>	<u>Significance</u>
This student should be considered a racial minority.	8.87	9.33	$p = 0.01$ (99%)
This student is a racial minority.	9.21	9.46	$p = 0.10$ (90%)
In my personal opinion, I believe this student is eligible for minority-based resources.	9.36	9.44	$p = 0.26$ (70%)
In my role at my current institution, I believe this student is eligible for minority-based resources.	8.62	8.90	$p = 0.10$ (90%)

Note. Numbers represent the mean ratings for each item, with 1=Strongly Disagree and 10=Strongly Agree.

Significant differences between vignette and demographics ratings for individual participants. Respondents had the opportunity to give ratings for each statement depending upon whether the vignette or demographic information was presented during the survey. The paired samples t-test analyses yielded three statistically significant differences. The first two were in Elmer's table, where the differences between his vignette and demographic ratings for statement two ($p=0.03$) and statement three ($p=0.02$) were statistically significant. For statement two, I could reject the null hypothesis—that the difference was *not* significant—with 95% confidence; for statement three, we can reject the null hypothesis with 98% confidence. A third statistically significance difference was found in the difference between Susan's vignette and demographic ratings for statement one ($p=0.01$), which meant I could reject the null

hypothesis with 99% confidence. There were no statistically significant differences between the average vignette and demographic ratings for both Jordan and Lewis.

Comparisons between vignette and demographics ratings for each participant. Tables 5 and 6 compare participants' average vignette and demographics ratings side-by-side. Comparing the data in this way illuminated some important statistically significant differences in how some participants were rated in comparison to other participants.

Table 5

Respondent Ratings for Vignettes

<u>Statement</u>	<u>Elmer</u>	<u>Jordan</u>	<u>Lewis</u>	<u>Susan</u>
This student should be considered a racial minority.	9.33	9.23	9.33	8.87
This student is a racial minority.	9.41	9.23	9.46	9.21
In my personal opinion, I believe this student is eligible for minority-based resources.	9.38	9.26	9.51	9.36
In my role at my current institution, I believe this student is eligible for minority-based resources.	8.62	8.46	9.08	8.62

Note. Numbers represent the mean ratings for each item, with 1=Strongly Disagree and 10=Strongly Agree.

Table 6

Respondent Ratings for Demographic Data

<u>Statement</u>	<u>Elmer</u>	<u>Jordan</u>	<u>Lewis</u>	<u>Susan</u>
This student should be considered a racial minority.	9.00	9.26	9.36	9.33
This student is a racial minority.	9.05	9.44	9.49	9.46
In my personal opinion, I believe this student is eligible for minority-based resources.	9.05	9.38	9.38	9.44
In my role at my current institution, I believe this student is eligible for minority-based resources.	8.23	8.59	8.87	8.90

Note. Numbers represent the mean ratings for each item, with 1=Strongly Disagree and 10=Strongly Agree.

Vignettes. When comparing the vignette ratings for each participant, paired samples t-tests yielded two statistically significant differences. For statement one, the difference between Lewis's and Susan's average ratings—9.33 and 8.87, respectively—resulted in a *p*-value of 0.01, meaning I could reject the null hypothesis that the difference was not statistically significant with 99% confidence. For statement four, the difference between Lewis's and Jordan's average ratings—9.08 and 8.46, respectively—resulted in a *p*-value of 0.03, meaning I could reject the null hypothesis with at least 95% confidence.

Demographics. When comparing the vignette ratings for each participant, paired samples t-tests yielded three statistically significant differences. For statement two, the difference between Lewis's and Elmer's average ratings—9.49 and 9.05, respectively—resulted in a *p*-value of 0.001, meaning I could reject the null hypothesis with 99.9%

confidence. The difference between Susan's and Elmer's average ratings for statement three—9.44 and 9.05, respectively—resulted in a p -value of 0.005, meaning I could reject the null hypothesis with at least 99% confidence. Finally, the difference between Susan's and Elmer's average ratings for statement four—8.90 and 8.23, respectively—resulted in a p -value of 0.001, meaning I could reject the null hypothesis with 99.9% confidence.

Open Responses

After entering their demographic information and, then, rating each of my interview participants, the end of the survey provided respondents space (approximately four sentences) to explain their decision-making processes in completing the survey as well as share any additional thoughts or comments. The open responses coalesced around several themes: (a) multiracial identities can choose to be racial minorities and eligible for resources; (b) some respondents answered questions *differently* between the vignettes and the demographic information, while others answered them *the same*; (c) allocation of resources is a complicated, messy, and sometimes ineffective process; and (d) multiracial identities can shift or change over time and between contexts.

Multiracial students can “choose” minority and eligibility status. Seven respondents claimed that my participants—and multiracial students, in general—were racial minorities if they identified as such and were eligible to access minority-based resources if they chose to do so. One respondent explained:

I am curious about the motives behind these questions – if students have ancestry that is black, Asian, or Latino, they are entitled to resources serving “minority” students. There is no more authentic experience, they [sic] are only perspectives which are overrepresented, and underrepresented. If one's family includes such underserved perspectives, they are included.

Other respondents similarly felt that any multiracial student, regardless of identity or need, should receive, or at least was eligible to receive, the same resources and services as other racial minority students. Comments that reflect this perspective include:

- A student who is biracial should be provided the same services, if they choose to access them, as other minority students.
- My decision making process was simple: if they belong to a minority group, despite need they are eligible for additional support that is offered to those minority groups.
- Multi-racial students are still students of color. Marginalization happens in a way that is often consistent with other students of color. My opinion is that they should not be treated any differently.
- I feel that... any multi-racial person is a racial minority.
- Since all of the examples were of students who are of mixed racial backgrounds, I considered them all racial minorities. I would not differentiate between them based on their backgrounds.
- I think that most if not all students with a non-white parent should be supported by programs at a university.

Because respondents perceived “multiracial” as a racial minority group, they experienced few hesitations in rating participants highly as racial minorities.

The impact information and context had on decision-making processes. As mentioned previously, the middle portion of the survey presented respondents with two different profiles about my participants in random order (see Appendix D for an example of participant vignette information and demographics-only information). The first set of profiles were vignettes that shared details about how my participants self-identified, how they understood themselves as racial minorities, and some of their lived experiences as multiracial individuals. The second set of profiles shared only demographic information about participants’ parents, and how participants described their racial identities. The survey sought information about the extent to which respondents rated participants’

minority status and eligibility differently depending on how much or how little information was provided. The survey also prompted respondents to distinguish their perspectives—to respond based on their individual perspectives as well as their current institution’s practices.

Three respondents answered questions differently based on changing information or context. One respondent detailed how the context mattered in the decision-making process:

I [rated] all of these students... as racial minorities given the demographics (regardless of how much or how little the “minority” percentage was). However, I based my... current institution’s assessment... on how individuals who work in those areas perceive students based on appearance of identity (i.e., will they [reach out to students] based on... appearance?). For scholarships through admissions, it was based on what I perceived my institution to consider racial minority and how administrators determined racial minority (asian [sic] students are seen as a majority minority on campus and therefore not always provided the same resources).

This respondent highlighted that different practices existed in providing resources depending on the functional area within an institution as well as the physical features (“appearance”) of multiracial students i.e., how much they look like a person of color. Another respondent recognized the difference in their answers when responding to “descriptions of participants’ racial identity vs. the earlier descriptions with context about their lived racial experience.”

Two respondents, however, stated they did not change their responses between the vignettes and demographic information. For instance, one wrote that, regardless of the information provided, “it was necessary to recognize the non-white aspects of each student’s identity.” Another recognized the importance of the narratives provided in the

vignettes, but those narratives were not a key factor: “The story is important, but wasn’t a factor in how decisions were made.”

Complications of resource allocation. The majority of respondents used this open-ended survey question to share their confusion and concern about their decision-making processes and the survey itself. Respondents’ concerns often related to the inherently complicated and “messy” nature of allocating resources to students. There were three distinct concerns: discomfort in identifying another person’s racial minority status and eligibility, current racial classification systems and issues of identity, and the variation in racial self-identification among multiracial students.

Discomfort identifying another person’s racial minority status and eligibility.

For two respondents, identifying someone’s status and eligibility as a racial minority was uncomfortable. One respondent explicitly talked about this discomfort:

It is not up to me to pass judgment on who I should think is a racial minority. There are many people, based on their identity, their community and many other factors [who] could be considered a racial identity. To me, it comes down to how the student/person identifies themselves so that I do not take that feeling/identity away from them.

This emphasis on respecting how students identify themselves was also present for another respondent:

I found this exercise [of filling out the survey] difficult because I did not feel comfortable placing an identity on to a student. It is not my role, however, I do feel as though multiracial students deserve the same resources as any other minority student. I would like to [see] multiracial centers arise on campuses.

These two passages distinguished *racial minority* as an identity existing separately or independently from—though connected to—*racial identity*, such that my participants

could choose to identify as racial minorities (or not) in addition to identifying as multiracial (or not).

Current racial classification systems and issues of identity. Nineteen percent of respondents (n=7) also expressed concern about how current racial classification systems, and issues of identity in general, were unclear, open to interpretation, or otherwise problematic. One respondent simply stated that the “questions [on the survey] were a bit simplistic – [identity] to me is a complex issue with lots of layers.” Other respondents suggested that one such layer, as mentioned previously, was students’ self-identification. For example, one respondent felt that claims to resources—funding, specifically—depended on how the student identified on application materials: “I am unsure about the ability to claim funding, but I venture to say that it depends on how they identify on application materials, etc.”

Two respondents reflected on the potentially unfair or problematic institutional practices used in determining multiracial students’ minority status and allocating resources. One respondent described this problem of resource allocation below:

In a perfect world I’d allocate resources to the students who had greater need (support, money, etc.), but sometimes we have to use broader categories (e.g., minority) to do the greatest good. This exercise reminded me of the unfairness of allocating resources to someone who may not be technically a part of the majority class, but also [is] not in need of support... It has also made me curious about what criteria universities actually use, and if they are effective.

A second respondent focused on higher education institutions’ agendas in achieving diversity:

I believe that the university would benefit from a diverse population and... even though the students may not identify as a minority, they can be minoritized and with many higher education institutions, they are classified by the racial category that increases the numbers of minoritized groups in [the] campus population.

This person's comment suggests that, despite many respondents' expressed desire to respect how a student self-identified, institutions could make decisions about a student's minority status to accomplish institutional purposes regardless of how the student actually identified.

At least in responding to the survey, one respondent indicated an unintentional desire to use skin color as one of the primary decision-making factors in allocating resources for racial minorities:

Honestly, the decisions I made were often based off of the images I was creating in my head based on the descriptions that were provided to me. When discussing skin color and race, it was hard for me not to imagine what someone may look like based on the descriptions of their parents. I recognize, however, that very little information was given about the parents regarding how light their skin may be. This thought process was in stark contrast to how I had hoped to complete the activity which was to award scholarships to students who had demonstrated that they had spent a great deal of time reflecting on their racial identities.

A different respondent felt this kind of practice, where students would be included in or excluded from resources based on skin color, was highly problematic:

I believe that if multiracial-identified people are excluded by institutional practices from opportunities/resources provided for students of color, the institution does not acknowledge [the] complexity of POC experiences and risks perpetuating monoracist ideology, which can be divisive and counteractive to solidarity-building.

Echoing earlier responses, this respondent mentally aligned multiracial students with people of color ("POC") and, thus, believed resources should be provided to both groups equally. Not doing so would create a systemic injustice ("monoracism") toward multiracial students, according to this participant.

Multiracial identities can shift or change over time. Finally, four respondents pointed to the potentially shifting and changing nature of multiracial identities as contributing to the complexity associated with responding to the survey's questions. As one respondent noted, "How they choose to identify and their perceived experiences may vary [depending] on environment and degree of multiraciality, and, obviously, their opinion and self-identification should be taken into consideration." Another respondent echoed this sentiment, stating that "the salience of identity changes based upon experience(s) and while these aspects of identity may influence an individual at a point in time, the influence may change over time."

Two other respondents explained that experiences of privilege, as a result of racial identity, could also influence minority status and eligibility. One respondent, in particular, noted that some multiracial students could experience privilege based on their physical appearance, and this possibility was considered when discussing whether or not such students should receive resources targeted for minority students:

I agreed that these students should be considered minorities because they are fewer in number AND their experiences will definitely differ than those who experience full institutional privilege (looking fully white whether or not they are fully white). This made me hesitate at the length to which these students should receive resources, but they are a minority...

Not knowing the extent to which a student experiences racial privilege caused this respondent to hesitate about their receiving of institutional resources. Another respondent stated this differently, writing that "although folks [identify] as something, social constructs will determine their power or oppression." In other words, a student could identify as a racial minority but their experiences with power, privilege, or oppression would be impacted by social constructs and perceptions.

Summary of Survey Findings

Using data from the qualitative portion of this study, I created and distributed a survey that sought student affairs professionals' perspectives about the extent to which my participants were racial minorities and eligible for minority-based campus resources. The survey, first, requested respondents' demographic information. Respondents then issued ratings regarding racial minority status and eligibility for each of my participants. Two different sections were presented: one that displayed a short vignette summarizing data from participant interviews, and the other providing only demographic information about participants' racial self-identification and racial ancestry. Respondents had an opportunity at the end of the survey to explain their decision-making processes and offer any additional thoughts or comments.

Thirty-nine respondents completed the survey. They represented a variety of racial/ethnic identities, and were mostly white, women, and from institutions in California, and were either new or mid-level professionals in the field. Overall, respondents strongly agreed that my participants were racial minorities and eligible for minority-based campus resources. After conducting paired samples t-tests, I found several statistically significant differences in respondents' average ratings.

First, when comparing the average vignette and demographics ratings for each participant, the differences between Elmer's average vignette and demographics ratings for statements two and three were statistically significant; I could reject the null hypothesis (that the differences were not statistically significant) with at least 95% confidence. There was also a statistically significant difference between Susan's average vignette and demographics ratings for statement one; I could reject the null hypothesis

with 99% confidence. There were not statistically significant differences between Jordan's and Lewis's average vignette and demographics ratings.

I, then, compared all four participants' average vignette ratings, followed by a comparison of their demographics ratings. In the vignette ratings, statistically significant differences were found, first, in statement one between Lewis's and Susan's average ratings ($p=0.01$, or 99% confidence interval) and, second, in statement four between Lewis's and Jordan's average ratings ($p=0.03$, or at least 95% confidence interval). In the demographics ratings, there were three statistically significant differences between Lewis's and Elmer's average ratings in statement two ($p=0.001$, or 99.9% confidence interval), and Susan's and Elmer's average ratings in statements three ($p=0.005$, or 99% confidence interval) and four ($p=0.001$, or 99.9% confidence interval).

Conclusion

The findings helped answer this study's research questions about the extent to which college students with one white parent and one parent of color were racial minorities and eligible for minority-based campus resources. I wanted to address several gaps in the literature, chief among them that the perspectives of college students and student affairs professionals was absent from research I found. I also wanted to directly compare how multiracial college students felt about their own minority status and eligibility directly with the perspectives of student affairs professionals, which was also not present in the literature. I was also curious if student affairs professionals' opinions about my participants' minority status and eligibility would change depending on the amount of information given.

In the qualitative interviews, four participants shared that, although they considered themselves racial minorities, they did not feel definitively eligible for minority-based campus resources. Susan and Jordan did not pursue scholarships for minority students, and Elmer and Lewis did not feel comfortable accessing the campus's Black Resource Center (BRC). Susan also did not always feel comfortable in the BRC or the Black Student Group (BSG). In the quantitative findings, respondents generally rated my participants strongly as racial minorities and as eligible for minority resources. However, subtle differences did emerge. When presented with vignettes, respondents did not think Susan should be considered as much of a racial minority as the other participants, with a one-half point difference between her average rating on this item and the average ratings for both Elmer and Lewis. When presented with demographic information only, respondents consistently gave Elmer lower ratings than all the other participants on all four items.

In the next chapter, I use the literature to illuminate the flexible, static, and/or variable natures of multiracial identity, minority identity, and minority application, the influence of half white racial ancestry on my participants' perceived eligibility for minority resources, and implications for the field of higher education.

CHAPTER FIVE

DISCUSSION

There were several gaps in the literature I reviewed on multiracial identities. First, the racial minority status and minority resource eligibility of half white college students had not been explored specifically. The perspectives of student affairs professionals on this issue were also absent. Finally, studies had not yet compared the extent to which half white self-perceptions regarding minority status and eligibility compared with those of respondents i.e., individuals sharing their perceptions about other people. This study sought to address these knowledge gaps by responding to the following research questions:

1. To what extent, if at all, do half-White college students consider themselves racial minorities?
2. To what extent, if at all, do half-White college students consider themselves eligible for minority-based campus resources?
3. What are student affairs professionals' perceptions of the extent to which the participants are minorities and are eligible for minority-based resources?
4. How do the perceptions of participants and student affairs professionals compare with each other?

I used a mixed methods research design in order to collect data that responded to these research questions. First, I interviewed four college students at a predominantly white, private, faith-based institution (Southwestern University) to understand how they understood themselves as racial minorities and as eligible for minority-based campus

resources. I then used data from their interviews to create a survey that sought the perspectives of student affairs professionals about my participants' racial minority status and eligibility, and compared their perspectives with those of the participants themselves.

Findings from the data shed light on the complexity under which half white multiracial college students navigate racial minority status and eligibility. While the racial minority status of participants was clear—both participants and respondents considered them racial minorities—their eligibility for minority resources was not clear and depended upon factors like upbringing, having a white parent, experiences with racism, and physical features. In this chapter, I will, first, demonstrate the ways in which multiracial identity, minority identity, and minority application are flexible, static, and variable, respectively, based on the literature and data. Second, I will illuminate how my participants' half white racial ancestry helped contribute to feelings that they were not as eligible for minority resources in comparison to their monoracial peers. Finally, I will consider institutional implications as well as future research questions and topics.

Multiracial Identity as Flexible

As outlined in the previous chapter, the ways in which participants identified themselves demonstrated what numerous studies have found—that multiracial individuals can and do have access to a variety of identity choices concerning their race (e.g., Kilson, 2001; Renn, 2000, 2003, 2008; Rockquemore and Brunsma, 2002). Their racial ancestry affords them a flexibility and choice in the way they identify themselves to others and on documents like job and scholarship applications. Early articulations of multiracial and mixed race identity development argued that the final stage of development was an integrated biracial/multiracial identity (Poston, 1990), an identity that would “recognize

and value all of [one's] ethnic identities" (p. 154) and lead to positive mental health.

Some of my participants articulated an integrated multiracial identity. When asked how they would describe or identify their racial identity, Elmer, Jordan, and Susan each used multiracial labels. Elmer identified as black and white, Jordan as *hapa* or half Filipina and half white, and Susan as biracial or mixed. Their self-identifications would fall under the umbrella of an integrated multiracial or biracial identity.

However, other scholars (e.g., Khanna, 2011; Renn, 2000, 2003, 2008) found multiracial individuals did not always arrive at an integrated multiracial identity. This was true for Lewis, who identified firmly as a monoracial African American despite having one white parent and one black parent. In her research, Renn (2000) discovered multiracial individuals actually fell into patterns of racial identification: monoracial, multiple monoracial, multiracial, extraracial, and situational. The situational pattern of multiracial identity, in particular, recognizes the fluidity with which multiracial individuals experience and utilize their racial identity.

Though three of my four participants self-identified in ways that reflected an integrated multiracial identity, they did not always employ a strictly multiracial identity depending on the context. Participants spoke of themselves in multiracial ways when discussing the judgment they received from both white and non-white communities. Susan, for example, did not have a strong connection to her black family members because she was raised by her white mother; she also felt "watched" by her white peers at Southwestern University's predominantly white campus. Elmer also experienced judgment from black and white community members, referencing how Southwestern

University did not “recognize” him as a black person, nor did black men refer to him as their “brother.”

Participants also spoke of themselves in monoracial ways when they described their interactions within white and non-white spaces. Susan described how she often was the only person of color or “the only black person for sure” in her college classes. Lewis was one of only a few black students in his predominantly white high school, and also felt like he stood out in comparison to the majority on Southwestern University’s campus. Jordan regularly referred to herself as monoracially Filipina when talking about her involvement in the Filipino Student Organization (FSO). One such instance was when FSO received degrading comments on Facebook: “I took that personally because I identify as Filipina and I’m part of that group.”

Finally, participants also employed a situational identity when articulating the extent to which they were racial minorities and eligible for minority resources. On one hand, they identified as racial minorities and, in doing so, often spoke of and emphasized themselves as monoracially non-white. On the other, their multiracial identities mitigated the extent to which they felt they were definitively eligible to use and access minority resources. Participants’ definitions of racial minority were almost identical to one another: someone who was not white, not privileged, and not as valued by society. Susan, Elmer, and Lewis strongly identified as a racial minority. Jordan did not identify as strongly as a racial minority when just referring to her own experiences, but did have a strong minority identification when she was in solidarity with others.

Despite these strong minority identifications, participants did not strongly identify as being eligible for minority resources. Susan and Jordan shared that their lack of

experiences with racism and microaggressions (at least, in comparison to their monoracial peers) was one reason why there were less eligible for minority resources. Lewis and Susan recognized they had certain privileges that monoracial black students did not have (i.e., having a white parent or lighter skin tone), and, thus, were not as eligible for minority resources. Elmer's white upbringing—due to his mother's white upbringing—meant that, for him, his lived experiences were both that of a racial minority and of a white person. As I expand upon later in this chapter, most striking in the stories offered by Susan, Elmer, and Lewis was how the BSC made them feel as though they were less oppressed than their monoracial black peers, which these participants then used to explain why they were not as eligible for minority resources.

It was clear from participants' interviews that, like other studies demonstrated, their understanding and utilization of their multiracial identities varied greatly and also demonstrated flexibility and fluidity, even when articulating the extent to which they were minorities who were eligible for minority resources. Can the same be said of racial minority status itself?

Racial Minority Identity as Static

Participants' definitions and characteristics of racial minority aligned with the literature, and federal programs, in particular, which named specific races and experiences attributed to a minority identity. As outlined in Chapter 2, a minority was non-white i.e., African-American, American Indian or Alaska Native, Asian, Hispanic, and Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander. A minority was also a "socially disadvantaged" individual (About the 8(a) business development program, n.d.) who experienced "systematic exclusion from the economy" (Equal employment opportunity (EEO)

terminology, n.d.). Though it encompassed a broad range of experiences, the literature, federal programs, and my participants understood racial minority status as a static identity—one that either was always applicable, or was always *not* applicable. Thus, while racial minorities could choose whether or not to access minority-based resources, they could not choose their racial minority status; they either were or were not racial minorities.

Racial Minority Application as Variable

Racial minority as an identity was static, but the application of a racial minority status to multiracial students was not. Previous research found the rule of hypodescent still persists today, such that half white and half minority individuals were more likely to be perceived as a minority than not (Ho, Sidanius, Levin, & Banaji, 2011). However, in a brief review of enrollment information on several university websites, there was some inconsistency in reporting students who had identified as more than one race. One university did not include multiracial students in its count of minority students. By contrast, three universities had, and two other universities made no such distinctions regarding its minority student population.

Survey ratings from student affairs professionals also highlight the variability of applying racial minority status to half white multiracial college students. For statement one (“This student should be considered a racial minority.”), respondents, on average, gave Susan higher ratings when presented with only her demographic information than with his vignette information. This difference was statistically significant at the 99% confidence interval ($p=0.01$). For statement two (“This student is a racial minority.”), respondents, on average, gave Elmer lower ratings when presented with only his

demographic information than with his vignette information. This difference was statistically significant at the 95% confidence interval ($p=0.03$). Additionally, when respondents were presented with participants' demographic information, Elmer was given a statistically significant lower average rating for statement two when compared to Lewis's average rating for the same statement ($p=0.001$ or 99.9% confidence interval). Elmer again was given statistically significant lower average ratings for statements three and four when compared to Susan's ratings for the same statements: $p=0.005$ or 99% confidence interval for statement three, and $p=0.001$ or 99.9% confidence interval for statement four. These findings suggest that, at least to some extent, applying racial minority status to college students with one white parent and one parent of color is mitigated by the information available.

(Multi)Racial Minority as Subjectively Eligible

Good, Chavez, and Sanchez (2010) explored the extent to which multiracial individuals of part-white ancestry self-categorized as minorities and felt eligible for minority resources and affirmative action benefits. Physical appearance and connection to minority groups greatly impacted the extent to which their participants self-categorized as a racial minority. The more their participants felt connected to and believed they looked like a minority group, the more likely they were to self-categorize as a minority. Further, self-categorizing as a minority increased the likelihood that these participants perceived themselves as eligible for affirmative action.

In this study, despite explicitly articulating their status as racial minorities, my participants' perceptions of their eligibility for minority-based campus resources were not as clear and reflected some of what the literature review and survey data provided—that

there were mitigating circumstances to their eligibility for minority resources. This most often involved being half white and not perceiving themselves to encounter the same levels of racism and oppression as their monoracial peers. Further, participants almost always compared this lack of oppression to that of monoracial students in identity-based centers or groups on campus, such that their monoracial peers in those spaces faced greater levels of oppression. Lewis provided a vivid example of this when he paraphrased what he had been told in the Black Resource Center (BSC):

Just in how people treated us, I guess, that we aren't always seen as just minorities. They felt like, "you have a white mother, so people assume that you're a white, too, so you got treated somewhat like an average white person would be treated like. You weren't treated like you were... You weren't treated like as in... just in the sense of every other minority."

Lewis's peers told him, directly or indirectly, that he was not treated like other minorities, in this case black minorities in the BRC, because he had a white mother. Similarly, Susan shared that when she complained at times about experiencing racism and prejudice as a mixed person, her complaints were sometimes invalidated in the BSC. Elmer felt like his presence in the BRC was questioned, which demotivated him from accessing it as a resource.

Jordan had a slightly different experience with the Filipino Student Organization (FSO). She felt welcomed within the group because they recognized and celebrated the many different stories included under a Filipina/o identity. This helped Jordan feel like she was a part of a minority group. However, she did not pursue other minority resources available on or off campus because her experiences of being a racial minority had been "in solidarity with others." Jordan did not necessarily feel like a racial minority in her own right, perhaps as a result of appearing racially ambiguous and not having grown up

culturally as Filipina/o. Still, Jordan acknowledged several times that her experiences were not the same as her monoracial Filipina/o peers who spoke *Tagalog* and grew up participating in Filipina/o cultural traditions.

Some survey respondents' decision-making processes incorporated some of these same mitigating circumstances offered by participants. They utilized a decision-making process that mirrored that of the U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA): racial minority status was always applicable to someone because of their identity as not monoracially white, but eligibility for resources depended on other factors like (a) economic disadvantage, in the case of SBA, or (b) financial need, physical appearance, and privilege, in the case of respondents. One respondent wrote directly about their concern with multiracial minority eligibility, emphasizing the importance of understanding a multiracial student's lived experiences:

I agreed that these students should be considered minorities because they are fewer in number AND their experiences will definitely differ than those who experience full institutional privilege (looking fully white whether or not they are fully white). This made me hesitate at the length to which these students should receive resources, but they are a minority...

For this respondent, the extent to which a multiracial student looked white impacted the extent to which they should receive resources, such that the more "fully white" a student looked, the less resources they should receive. Other respondents went further, stating that identity saliency—to others and to multiracial students themselves—could also impact people differently over time. One respondent wrote, "how they choose to identify and their perceived experiences may vary on environment and degree of multiraciality, and obviously their opinion and self-identification should be taken into consideration." Another respondent shared that "the salience of identity [could change] based upon

experience(s) and while these aspects of identity [could] influence an individual at a point in time, the influence [could] change over time.” In other words, multiracial students’ self-identification as well as the extent to which that self-identification is apparent to others should influence the resources multiracial students receive.

Results from paired sample t-tests of the survey data suggest that racial ancestry was, to some degree, an influence on the extent to which half white multiracial college students were rated as eligible for resources. This was particularly reflected in Elmer’s ratings. He not only received the lowest average ratings for almost all statements (both vignette and demographics only), but also the differences between his average demographics ratings and those of other participants were statistically significant for three statements at least at the 99% confidence level ($p = 0.01$). In section three of the survey, survey respondents were provided the racial self-identification of participants as well as the racial ancestry of their parents. Elmer has a greater amount of white ancestry given that his father is white and his mother is black and white biracial; this might indicate that multiracial students’ eligibility for resources depends, at least to some extent, on their racial ancestry, such that a larger proportion of white racial ancestry (real or perceived) results in decreased eligibility. This is supported in part by existing research by Sanchez et. al (2011), who found that respondents “were more likely to categorize targets with predominantly black ancestry as black... than those of predominantly white ancestry” (p. 11). They also found that categorization of biracial individuals as black increased respondents’ perceptions that they experienced racial discrimination.

My participants and survey respondents confirmed the subjective nature of racial minority eligibility found in the literature as well as institutional practices. For some scholarships and affirmative action practices, simply being a racial minority is enough to qualify for resources or be hired into a position. For others, like the U.S. Small Business Association, an economic disadvantage as a result of a racial minority identity must also be demonstrated in order to qualify for additional minority resources. Identity-based student centers also communicated, in various ways, that half white multiracial students were not the same “kind” of minority. Those messages influenced my participants away from pursuing minority resources, at least to some extent. What does this mean for the field of higher education?

Implications

Multiracial individuals and other populations have attempted to move beyond essentialist understandings of race. Despite understanding that racial inequities have economically disadvantaged minority groups, programs like Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) and affirmative action (AA) do not necessarily consider economic disenfranchisement of racial minorities during hiring and admissions practices. Rather, there appeared to be an implicit assumption that all racial minorities have experienced the same kinds of economic disenfranchisement i.e., black individuals are all disadvantaged equally. As the U.S. Small Business Association (SBA) articulates for their development program for minority-owned business, a minority is automatically considered socially—but not economically—disadvantaged. Some universities did not report multiracial students as minorities in their enrollment data, and identity-based student centers in this study seemed to influence my participants away from pursuing minority resources due to

being half white and multiracial. There was an overall inconsistent message, even from my participants, about the extent to which they were eligible for minority resources.

The findings from this study have several implications for the field of higher education. First and foremost, identity-based student centers on college campuses, similar to findings from previous studies, were not always a welcoming place for students who have one white parent and one parent of color (e.g., Renn, 2000). My participants received various messages that their experiences were not as valid; in this study, those messages were almost exclusively from the Black Resource Center (BRC) and Black Student Group (BSG). For an institution to effectively serve its minority student populations—which, based on findings from this study, sometimes included multiracial students—its minority resources must validate and welcome students who could be considered minorities. In this case, black and white multiracial students utilized a resource available to them with varying degrees of comfort. Previous studies informing this project have articulated a call for resources specifically for multiracial students. However, given current economic restraints, this seems unlikely to become a trend. Thus, institutions may do well to broaden and diversify the frameworks informing the programming, staffing, and operations of these centers so that multiracial students feel included in the space.

In addition to improving the ways in which racial minority student resources serve *all* of their racial minority students, institutions need more consistent ways of assigning racial minority status and services to multiracial students. In this study, Southwestern University did not consistently provide my black and white multiracial participants with relevant resources. For example, Elmer, who marked black and white on his application

materials, did not receive information about certain black student resources that other monoracial black students had. Also, in a review of a small group of universities' enrollment reporting, some institutions reported multiracial students as racial minorities, others did not, and still others did not make any such distinctions. In order for the multitude of racial minority resources present in higher education to accurately serve multiracial students, there needs to be a consistent approach to the institutional categorization of multiracial students.

Future Research

Some additional questions surfaced that may be worth further exploration and research in order to more fully grasp the nature of multiracial minority status and eligibility within the contexts of higher education. First, while this research project gathered important and relevant data, the numbers of participants in both the qualitative interviews and the survey were small. Additional qualitative interviews with half white college students as well as additional survey respondents would allow for increased generalizability of the data provided by this project. In connection with more qualitative interviews, most of the literature on multiracial identities and students, including this research project, interviewed individuals with at least one white parent. There is still a dearth of literature and research on multiracial college students who do not have one white parent i.e., students who have two parents of non-white racial ancestry. Finally, a brief review of enrollment data provided on university websites illuminated some inconsistencies with which multiracial students were categorized and reported as racial minorities. What are the reporting practices of other institutions regarding multiracial students on their campuses? This information would add breadth and depth to

conversations about the extent to which multiracial students were considered minorities at an institutional level.

Conclusion

In my study, multiracial students' racial identification shifted depending on the context, reflecting previous studies that demonstrated the flexible and fluid racial identities to which multiracial individuals have access (e.g., Khanna, 2011; Renn, 2000). These shifts occurred when discussing community, white and non-white spaces, and racial minority status and resource eligibility, and fell along Renn's (2000) patterns of multiracial identity. For community, participants repeatedly mentioned feeling a lack of connection to white as well as non-white communities and family members as a result of not being fully one or the other race. When discussing white and non-white spaces, however, participants employed a monoracial identity, both as an individual ("I was the only black person") and as a collective group ("I took that personally because I identify as Filipina and I'm part of that group"). Further still, participants employed a situational identity when articulating their minority status and eligibility. Though they strongly identified as racial minorities because they were non-white, they did not identify strongly as eligible for minority-based resources because of their multiracial backgrounds. Specifically, participants identified their upbringing as children, having a white parent, skin color, and lack of experiences with racism as mitigating the extent to which they were eligible for and/or sought out resources, despite however strongly they had previously identified as racial minorities.

The number of people who will self-identify as more than one race will continue to increase, and studies have shown that multiracial college students may have different

needs than their monoracial peers (e.g., Renn 2000). Given the lack of explicit resources for multiracial students and little to no specific guidelines that help multiracial students navigate resources that are implicitly or explicitly designated for monoracial minority students, participants in my study to determine their own appropriateness in accessing and using these resources; in most cases, they deemed themselves inappropriate for a variety of reasons, including physical appearance and lack of significant racial discrimination in comparison to their non-white monoracial peers. For multiracial students to exclude themselves from or feel silenced in race-based centers and groups as a result of their multiracial identity is both unfortunate and common.

As institutions of learning, universities and colleges across the country will need to come to terms with the ever-increasing number of self-identifying multiracial individuals and help their campuses engage in conversations that expand the ways in which race is both understood and discussed. What are the purposes and frameworks of race-based student centers and groups on campus, and how are they meeting the needs of multiracial students? In what ways are advisors, staff, and faculty members working in or with these centers and groups able to provide spaces for exploring the complexity of both monoracial and multiracial experiences? Addressing these and other questions might serve as important steps for helping promote an environment where multiracial students are included and respected so their needs are more effectively met; they might also serve as gateways for helping move current, tired conversations around race forward.

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APPENDIX A

Semi-Structured Interview Protocol

Topic	Questions
<i>Identity and ancestry</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How do your biological parents identify their races and/or ethnicities? your biological grandparents? • What labels or words do you often use to describe your racial or ethnic identity? What labels or words do others use? • How do you identify your race/ethnicity? • How do you identify your gender? What pronouns do you prefer I use?
<i>Identity formation and minority understanding</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What has contributed to your understanding of your racial identity? (family, peers, elementary/high school, etc.) • For you, what constitutes a racial minority? • To what extent, if any, do you consider yourself a racial minority?
<i>Campus</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • At what institution are you currently enrolled? • What type of institution is it (e.g., public/private, faith-based, small/medium/large)? • How racially diverse is your campus?
<i>Campus resources</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What resources are available for racial minorities at your campus? In your perspective, to what extent are you eligible for these resources? • Have you ever applied for, sought out, taken advantage of, and/or received resources designated for racial minorities? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ If so, what was that process like for you? ○ If not, what prevented you not from seeking out, using, or applying for them?

APPENDIX B

Text for E-mail Solicitation of Participants

Nicholas (Nick) Franco is a PhD student in the Department of Leadership Studies at the University of San Diego, and is collecting data for his dissertation study. His study aims to explore the extent to which college students with one minority and one White parent understand themselves as minorities, and how that understanding influences the decisions they make regarding campus resources. Participation involves approximately 60 minutes of your time.

To participate in his study, you must meet the following criteria:

1. You must be at least a junior or senior undergraduate student, or have completed a minimum of 30 units/credits at the time of the study.
2. You must be enrolled full-time at a four-year college or university as an undergraduate student.
 - a. Nick is interested in interviewing students from both private and public colleges or universities.
 - b. Students at for-profit universities (e.g., University of Phoenix) are outside the scope of this study and are not eligible to participate.
3. Your biological parents must each be from different racial backgrounds.
 - a. One parent must be of White or European descent.
 - b. The other parent must be of non-White descent:
 - i. American Indian or Alaska Native
 - ii. Asian
 - iii. Black or African American
 - iv. Latino or Hispanic*
 - v. Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
 - vi. Some other non-White race

**For the purposes of this study, Latino/a or Hispanic ethnicities are considered a race.*

Please contact Nick if you meet the aforementioned criteria and would like to participate in his study, and/or please forward this message along to people who may qualify to participate. His email address is franco@sandiego.edu.

APPENDIX C

Survey Template

PAGE 1: Introduction

Nick Franco, a doctoral student at the University of San Diego, is conducting his dissertation study on undergraduate college students with one minority and one White parent. As part of his study, this survey solicits your perspective as a full-time student affairs practitioner in the USA about the extent to which you consider his study's participants to be racial minorities.

You will, first, be asked several demographic questions about yourself and your institution. Then, you will be presented with a variety of participant profiles, and will be asked to state your opinion about the extent to which participants are a) racial minorities and b) eligible for minority-based campus resources. The survey seeks your immediate reaction or response, so please do your best to respond to the questions given the information you are provided. There will be opportunities to explain your decision-making processes at the end of the survey.

Given the scope of this study, *only full-time student affairs professionals at four-year, not-for-profit colleges and universities in the USA* should complete the survey.

This survey will take approximately 15-20 minutes of your time. All responses will be anonymous, so please respond openly and honestly.

Thank you in advance for your participation.

PAGE 2: Practitioner demographic information Part 1/3

What is your race/ethnicity? Check all that apply.

- American Indian or Alaska Native
- Asian
- Black or African American
- Latino or Hispanic
- Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
- White
- Some other race: [write-in text box]

How do you identify your gender?

- Woman
- Man
- Other gender identity: [write-in text box]

PAGE 3: Practitioner demographic information Part 2/3

At what type of four-year, not-for-profit college/university do you work? Select all that apply.

- Public
- Private
- Faith-based
- Small (less than 5,000 students)
- Mid-size (5,000 – 15,000 students)
- Large (more than 15,000 students)

In which U.S. state or province is your college/university located?

- U.S. State or Province: [drop-down menu]

Does your institution enroll full-time undergraduate students? [If “no,” skips to end of survey since interview participants are undergrads.]

- Yes
- No

PAGE 4: Practitioner demographic information Part 3/3

How would you classify your professional level in the field of higher education/student affairs?

- ***New professional:*** 0-5 years of full-time professional experience
- ***Mid-level professional:*** more than 5 years of full-time professional experience, but not a senior professional
- ***Senior professional:*** chief student affairs officer (e.g., assistant vice president, dean, president)

On average, how frequently do you interact with undergraduate students *directly*?

- At least once per day
- At least once per week
- At least once per month
- Less than once per month

PAGE 5: Respondent awareness of non-monoracial issues

Do you belong to or participate in NASPA’s MultiRacial Knowledge Community (MRKC)?

- Yes
- No

Do you belong to or participate in ACPA’s MultiRacial Network (MRN)?

- Yes
- No

PAGES 6-10: Perceptions of participants based on vignettes

[VIGNETTE FROM PARTICIPANT INTERVIEW]

Based on this information, and using the scale points below, please indicate the extent to which you agree with the following:

1 = Strongly Disagree; 10 = Strongly Agree

This student *should be considered* a racial minority.

This student *is* a racial minority.

In my personal opinion, I believe this student is eligible for minority-based resources e.g., minority student resource centers, minority-based scholarships, or affirmative action-type programs.

In my role at my current institution, I believe this student is eligible for minority-based resources e.g., minority student resource centers, minority-based scholarships, or affirmative action-type programs.

PAGES 11-15: Perceptions of participants based on limited demographic information

Participant X is a [SEX/GENDER] college student. Their biological mother is [RACE], and their biological father is [RACE].

Based on this information, and using the scale points below, please indicate the extent to which you agree with the following:

1 = Strongly Disagree; 10 = Strongly Agree

This student *should be considered* a racial minority.

This student *is* a racial minority.

In my personal opinion, I believe this student is eligible for minority-based resources e.g., minority student resource centers, minority-based scholarships, or affirmative action-type programs.

In my role at my current institution, I believe this student is eligible for minority-based resources e.g., minority student resource centers, minority-based scholarships, or affirmative action-type programs.

FINAL PAGE: Explanation of decision-making

In no more than 800 characters (about four sentences), please share your thoughts and decision-making processes as you completed this exercise: [write-in text box]

APPENDIX D

Example of Lewis's Survey Information

Vignette

Participant 2 self-identifies as African-American, and is originally from a small town in central California. Growing up, Participant 2 primarily interacted with white family members, and would feel “left out” or “couldn’t relate as much” at family reunions. Participant 2 was also one of the only African-American students in elementary and high school, where peers often made assumptions about him, from work ethic to picking sports teams to celebrating Black History Month in the classroom. Participant 2 is enrolled at a university in the Pacific Southwest and is sometimes asked how tuition is covered since he is not on a sports team. Participant 2 identifies as a racial minority (in part because he claims to look more like “the minority parent”), and has applied for and received minority-based scholarships. Many of these scholarships were sent to Participant 2 directly, either by the university or via a student organization listserv. Participant 2 has also accessed black-centered student spaces on campus, but often feels like students with “one minority and one majority parent” are treated differently or even “outcasted” by students with two minority parents.

Demographic Information Only

One participant in the study is a male college student whose biological mother is white and biological father is black/African-American.



Institutional Review Board Project Action Summary

Action Date: June 23, 2014 *Note: Approval expires one year after this date.*

Type: ☐ New Full Review ☒ New Expedited Review ☐ Continuation Review ☐ Exempt Review
☐ Modification

Action: ☒ Approved ☐ Approved Pending Modification ☐ Not Approved

Project Number: 2014-06-283

Researcher(s): Nicholas Franco Doc SOLES
Dr. Robert Donmoyer Fac SOLES

Project Title: A Mixed Methods Exploration of Minority Resource Eligibility for Half-White College Students

Note: We send IRB correspondence regarding student research to the faculty advisor, who bears the ultimate responsibility for the conduct of the research. We request that the faculty advisor share this correspondence with the student researcher.

Modifications Required or Reasons for Non-Approval

None

The next deadline for submitting project proposals to the Provost's Office for full review is N/A. You may submit a project proposal for expedited review at any time.

Dr. Thomas R. Herrinton
Administrator, Institutional Review Board
University of San Diego
herrinton@san Diego.edu
5998 Alcalá Park
San Diego, California 92110-2492

Office of the Executive Vice President and Provost
Hughes Administration Center, Room 214
5998 Alcalá Park, San Diego, CA 92110-2492
Phone (619) 260-4553 • Fax (619) 260-2210 • www.sandiego.edu